



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Bob Bilyeu Camblin Papers, 1951-1985, in the Archives of American Art

Christopher DeMairo

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Camblin, Bob Bilyeu papers
Identifier:	AAA.cambbob
Date:	1951-1985
Creator:	Camblin, Bob Bilyeu, 1928-2010
Extent:	3.1 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	The Bob Bilyeu Camblin papers measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1951 to 1985. The papers provide a snapshot of Camblin's career as an artist and educator through personal papers, printed material, artwork, photographs, and motion picture film and video recordings.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This collection was donated by Sandra Curtis Levy in a series of accessions between 1979-1986.

Separated Materials

The Archives of American Art also holds microfilm of material lent for microfilming by Mrs. Eldon Jensen on Reel 2248, including six sketchbooks, 1979-1980, containing sketches, writings, and a few letters. Loaned materials were returned to the lender and are not described in the collection container inventory.

Some of the material from reels 3461 and 3462 including correspondence, clippings, files on the Document Show, the Barter Show, B. E. and J. Holding Firm and the Venice Venture are available for use only at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and through interlibrary loan, and are not described in the collection container inventory.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection are available on 35mm microfilm reels 3461 and 3462 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in the container inventory does not reflect the arrangement of the collection on microfilm.

Processing Information

The collection was partially microfilmed on reels 3461 and 3462 after donation. The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Christopher DeMairo in 2019.

Preferred Citation

Bob Bilyeu Camblin papers, 1951-1985. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

This collection is open for research. Access to original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C. Research Center.

Researchers interested in accessing audiovisual recordings in this collection must use access copies. Contact References Services for more information.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Bob Bilyeu Camblin (1928-2010) was a modernist painter and educator active in Houston, Texas. Camblin experimented with a wide variety of media and is known for collaborative projects with many artists, including a collective known as The Holding Firm with Earl Staley and Joe Tate in Houston.

Born in Ponca City, Oklahoma, Camblin served in the United State Army (1948-1949) and Air Force (1950-1951) before receiving his bachelor of fine arts in 1954, and his master of fine arts degree in 1955. He worked as a map make from 1955-1958 before holding teaching posts at multiple institutions including the Kansas City Art Institute, the Ringling School of Art, Sarasota Florida, the University of Illinois, the University of Detroit, the University of Utah, and Rice University in Houston.

While living in Houston Camblin collaborated with artists Earl Staley and Joe Tate, as the B. E. and J. Holding Firm, or The Holding Firm. The collective worked on multiple projects including paintings, drawings, art excursions, and exhibitions.

Camblin's first one-man show was held in 1955 at the Kansas City Art Institute and his work has been exhibited in other solo exhibitions including at Oklahoma State University (1961), Plumtree Gallery, Salt Lake City, Utah (1965-1966), Windsor College, Canada (1965), David Gallery, Houston (1969-1970), and the Graham Gallery in Houston (1989). Camblin participated in many group exhibitions including *ART:USA 58* (1958), *Fulbright Artists Exhibition*, Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City (1958), *Childe Hassam Purchase Fund Show*, American Academy of Arts and Letters (1958), and *Printmaking in Texas: The 1980s* Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth (1990).

Scope and Contents

The Bob Bilyeu Camblin papers measure 3.1 linear feet and date from 1951 to 1985. The papers provide a snapshot of Camblin's career as an artist and educator through personal papers, printed material, artwork, photographs, and motion picture film and video recordings.

Personal papers include resumes and printed material such as exhibition catalogs and announcements and clippings. Camblin's artwork includes sketches, expressive writings, drawings, and prints. Photographic material includes images of artwork, friends, family, trips, and miscellany; and moving images include home videos of art, art techniques, leisure activities, and autobiographical films.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as 4 series.

- Series 1: Personal Papers, 1951-1985 (5 folders; Box 1)
- Series 2: Artwork, 1951-1985 (8 folders; Box 1)
- Series 3: Photographs, 1951-1980 (1 linear foot; Box 1, 2)
- Series 4: Moving Images, circa 1970-1976 (1.8 linear feet; Box 2; FCs 3-19)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Types of Materials:

Drawings
Moving images
Sketchbooks

Names:

Staley, Earl, 1938-
Tate, Joe

Occupations:

Educators -- Texas -- Houston
Painters -- Texas -- Houston

Container Listing

Series 1: Personal Papers, circa 1951-1985

5 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Series includes resumes from the mid-1970s, ephemera, exhibition catalogs and announcements, clippings, and bibliographic material.

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical Information, 1975
Box 1, Folder 2	Clippings, Newsletters, and Press Releases, 1951-1985
Box 1, Folder 3	Ephemera, circa 1980s
Box 1, Folder 4	Exhibition and Collection Catalogs, 1973-1985
Box 1, Folder 5	Exhibition and Event Announcements, 1967-1985

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Series 2: Artwork, 1951-1985, undated

8 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Artwork includes sketches, some paintings, and writings on a variety of material including napkins, envelopes, and restaurant menus.

Box 1, Folder 6 Drawings, Paintings, and Prints, 1951-1985

Box 1, Folder 7-11 Sketchbook Pages, 1979-1981, undated

Box 1, Folder 12 Writings and Sketches, undated

Box 1, Folder 13 Sketches, undated

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Series 3: Photographs, circa 1951-1980

1 Linear foot (Boxes 1-2)

Scope and Contents: Photographic media includes slides, black and white prints, negatives, and color snapshots of Camblin's art, friends, family, studio, and travel. Family photographs feature Camblin's wife Bonnie, daughter Robyn, and son Brian. A significant amount of the photographs feature still life scenes and objects that were presumably used by Camblin for reference purposes.

Box 1, Folder 14	Bob Camblin, circa 1960s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 15-16	Family and Friends, Photographs and Prints, 1950s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 17	Family and Friends, Negatives and Contact Sheets, 1950s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 18-20	Family and Friends, Slides, circa 1950s-1970s
Box 1, Folder 21-23	Artwork, Photographs and Prints, circa 1950s-1980
Box 1, Folder 24	Artwork, Negatives and Contact Sheets, circa 1950s-1980
Box 1, Folder 25-26	Artwork, Slides, 1951-1976
Box 2, Folder 1-2	Artwork, Miscellaneous Slides, 1950s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 3	Artwork, "The Holding Firm," Bob Camblin, Earl Staley, and Joe Tate, , 1972
Box 2, Folder 4	Camblin Painting, Slides, 1978
Box 2, Folder 5	Camblin's Houston Studio, 1970s

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Series 4: Moving Images, circa 1970-1976

1.8 Linear feet (Box 2, FCs 3-19)

Scope and Contents: Series houses Camblin's homemade recordings of candid scenes of people and places, events, his artistic processes and technique, and autobiography. Also included are films made by students and one recording of a silent cartoon.

Box 2, Folder 6	Bob Camblin to Sandra Curtis, 1985
Box 2, Folder 7	Copy of Camblin Films, undated 2 Videocassettes (VHS)
Box FC 3	Autobiography 1959, 1972 1 Film reel (Super 8)
Box FC 4	Boy Scouts, undated 1 Film reel (8mm)
Box FC 5	Cube Art, undated 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 6	Drawing, 1970 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 7	3 Exhibition Announcements, undated 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 8	Flatonia, 1972 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 9	Home Movie, 1975-1976 1 Film reel (Super8)
Box FC 10	Joe Tate's Backyard, undated 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 11	Line Drawing, undated 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 12	Metamorphosis, undated 1 Film reel (16 mm)
Box FC 13-15	Miscellaneous, undated 3 Film reels (8mm)
Box FC 16	Studio, undated 1 Film reel (8mm)
Box FC 17-18	Vacation, undated

1 Film reel (8mm)

Box FC 19

Student Films, undated
1 Film reel (16 mm)

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