

Guide to the Robert Adams Papers

WA MSS S-4150



Stephanie Bredbenner

2021 March

P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-4150

CREATOR: Adams, Robert, 1937-

TITLE: Robert Adams papers

DATES: circa 1880-2018

BULK DATES: 1950-2018

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 14.14 linear feet (18 boxes) + 4 broadside

LANGUAGE: Chiefly in English. Some materials in German.

SUMMARY: The collection documents the life and career of American photographer Robert Adams, including photographs, correspondence, clippings, writings, posters, printed material, born digital material, and audiovisual material. Photographs include landscape photographs throughout the western United States, portraits, family photographs, and photographs of Adams's exhibitions at galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad. Also present are posters for Adams's exhibitions, reviews of his books and exhibitions, some of his early writings, and his art, primarily drawings.


ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.robertadams>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.robertadams>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.	box
f.	folder
	item barcode

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Robert Adams, 2018.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Box 20 (digital media) and Boxes 21-22 (audiovisual material): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Boxes 16-19 (alphabetical files): Restricted until 5 years after the deaths of Robert Adams and Kerstin Adams. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Conditions Governing Use

The Robert Adams Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Robert Adams Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

Processing Information

5 boxes of publications were transferred to Yale University Art Gallery in 2019.

Separated Materials

Printed material received with the collection was removed for separate cataloging and can be accessed by searching the library's online catalog.

Biographical / Historical

Robert Adams (1937-) is an American photographer whose work focuses on the changing landscape of the American West. Adams was born in New Jersey to Ross Adams and Lois Hickman Adams. He received his

B.A. in English from Redlands University in 1959 and Ph.D. from University of Southern California in 1965. Adams married Kerstin Mornestam in 1960. He began taking photographs while teaching at Colorado College in 1963, and became a full-time photographer in 1970. Adams has published over 40 photography books and his photography has been exhibited at galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad.

Scope and Contents

The collection documents the life and career of American photographer Robert Adams, including photographs, correspondence, clippings, writings, posters, printed material, born digital material, and audiovisual material. Photographs include landscape photographs throughout the western United States, portraits, family photographs, and photographs of Adams's exhibitions at galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad. Also present are posters for Adams's exhibitions, reviews of his books and exhibitions, some of his early writings, and his art, primarily drawings.

Arrangement

Organized into seven series: I. Photographs, circa 1880-2013. II. Exhibitions, circa 1971-2017. III. Reviews and Press, circa 1970-2018. IV. Early Writings, 1959-1972. V. Artwork, circa 1960-2006. VI. Restricted Papers. VII. Computer and Audiovisual Media.

Collection Contents

Series I: Photographs, circa 1880-2013

6.71 linear feet (7 boxes)

Circa 228 photographs documenting the life, career, and family of Robert Adams. Includes photographs by Robert Adams, his wife Kerstin Adams, and family photographs. Also includes 20 photographs by Robert Adams's grandfather C. A. Hickman, who was also a photographer.

Series I is organized into two subseries: Robert Adams and Adams Family Photographs and Photographs by Others.

Robert Adams and Adams Family Photographs circa 1880-2013

Photographs of Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Sweden, and Germany, including some landscape photographs by Robert Adams. The subseries also contains family photographs and Adams's portraits of friends and family. Includes photographs of Adams's homes in Michigan, Oregon, and Colorado. Finally, includes Kerstin Adams's photographs of Robert Adams, including portraits, photographs of his studio and work spaces, and several photographs of him taking and developing photographs.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 1, f. 1-3	Adams and Hickman family photographs	circa 1880-1920
b. 1, f. 4	Adams and Hickman family photographs	circa 1930-1940
b. 1, f. 5	Adams and Hickman family photographs	circa 1940-1970
b. 1, f. 6	Photographs of Havasupai Canyon, Arizona	1956
b. 2, f. 7	Color slides of Colorado, Michigan, and Montana	circa 1953-1965
b. 2, f. 8	Robert Adams family portraits	circa 1960-1965
b. 2, f. 9	Kerstin Adams portraits of Robert Adams	circa 1960-1965
b. 2, f. 10-11	Photographs of Colorado and New Mexico	circa 1960-1969
b. 3, f. 12	Color slides of Oregon	circa 1960-1967
b. 3, f. 13	Color slides of Glen Canyon	1962
b. 3, f. 14	Color slides of Sweden and Germany	1968
b. 3, f. 15	Color slides of Colorado	circa 1970-1985
b. 3, f. 16-17	Photographs of Colorado, Oregon, and Germany	1970-1979
b. 3, f. 18	Photographs of Robert Adams and Nick Nixon	1980
b. 3, f. 19-20	Family photographs and portraits	circa 1980-1985
b. 4, f. 21-23	Kerstin Adams portraits of Robert Adams	circa 1980-1985
b. 4, f. 24-25	Photographs of Astoria, Oregon	1985-1986
b. 4, f. 26	Photograph near Del Norte, Colorado	circa 1985-1989

Robert Adams and Adams Family Photographs (continued)

b. 4, f. 27	Scene from the Peace Park	circa 1987
b. 4, f. 28	Photographs of Robert Adams	circa 1990-1993
b. 5, f. 29	Portrait of Ross Adams	1991
b. 5, f. 30	Self portrait	1993
b. 5, f. 31	Photographs of Robert Adams with proofs for <i>Listening to the River</i>	circa 1994
b. 5, f. 32	Kerstin Adams portraits of Robert Adams	2004
b. 5, f. 33	Photographs of Kerstin Adams and Judith Ross	2006
b. 5, f. 34	Photograph of Robert Adams and Carolyn Dunn	circa 2006
b. 5, f. 35	Hasselblad ceremony	2009
b. 5, f. 36-37	Photographs of Robert Adams and Kerstin Adams in Oregon	2009-2013
b. 6, f. 38	Photograph of Rocky Mountain National Park	undated
b. 6, f. 39	Photographs of Yampa River Canyon and Split Mountain Canyon	undated
b. 6, f. 40-41	Other undated photographs	undated
	Photographs by Others	circa 1890-1993
	Photographs by C. A. Hickman and other photographers.	
	Organized into two groupings: C. A. Hickman Photographs and Other Photographs.	
	C. A. Hickman Photographs	circa 1890-1900
	4 negatives and 16 prints by Robert Adams's grandfather C. A. Hickman. Photographs depict landscapes and people in Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota.	
	Some of the prints are Hickman's originals while others are negatives made by Richard Benson, or copy prints made by Adams from Benson's negatives.	
b. 7, f. 42-45	C. A. Hickman photographs	circa 1890-1900
	Other Photographs	circa 1968-1993
b. 7, f. 46	Other photographs	circa 1968-1993

Series II: Exhibitions, circa 1971-2017*0.63 linear feet (2 boxes) + 4 broadside*

Photographs and posters of Robert Adams's exhibitions in the United States and abroad.

Series II is organized into two subseries: Photographs of Exhibitions and Exhibition Posters.

Photographs of Exhibitions		1971-2017
Photographs of Robert Adams's photography exhibitions at galleries and museums in the United States and abroad. Some photographs depict the installation and preparation for exhibitions, while others show visitors viewing the exhibitions. In several cases, there are photographs of the same exhibition at different museums and galleries.		
Arranged chronologically.		
b. 8, f. 47	Museum of Modern Art, <i>Photographs by Robert Adams and Emmet Gowin</i>	1971-1972
b. 8, f. 48	Castelli	1976
b. 8, f. 49	Museum of Modern Art, <i>Prairie</i>	1979
b. 8, f. 50	Castelli	1979
b. 8, f. 51	Museum of Modern Art, <i>Three Americans</i>	1984
b. 8, f. 52	Kunstverein München, <i>Robert Adams/Albert Renger-Patzsch</i>	1985
b. 8, f. 53-54	Philadelphia Museum of Art retrospective	1989
b. 8, f. 55	Miscellaneous	circa 1990-2016
b. 8, f. 56	Hanover, Germany <i>What We Bought</i>	1995
b. 8, f. 57	Columbia College Chicago	1996
b. 8, f. 58	Andrew Roth, <i>Eden and Commercial Residential</i>	1999-2003
b. 8, f. 59	Yale, <i>What We Bought</i>	2002
b. 8, f. 60	Fraenkel	2003
b. 8, f. 61	San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <i>Turning Back</i>	2005
b. 8, f. 62	Munich, <i>Turning Back</i>	2005
b. 8, f. 63-64	Matthew Marks, <i>Turning Back</i>	2005
b. 8, f. 65-66	Yale retrospective - Vancouver B.C.	2010-2011
b. 8, f. 67	Billboard on the High Line	2011
b. 8, f. 68	Matthew Marks	2012
b. 8, f. 69	Yale retrospective - Los Angeles	2012
b. 9, f. 70	Yale retrospective - at Yale	2012
b. 9, f. 71	Yale retrospective - Bottrop, Germany	2013

Photographs of Exhibitions (continued)

b. 9, f. 72	Portland Art Museum	2013
b. 9, f. 73	Madrid retrospective	2013
b. 9, f. 74-75	Matthew Marks	2015
b. 9, f. 76	Fraenkel, <i>Around the House</i>	2016
b. 9, f. 77	Hanover, Germany	2016
b. 9, f. 78	Matthew Marks, <i>Trees</i>	2017
	Exhibition Posters	circa 1984-2014
	17 posters for Robert Adams's photography exhibitions at galleries and museums in the United States and abroad.	
	Arranged as received.	
b. 10 (Broadside)	Posters	circa 1984-2014
b. 11 (Broadside)	Posters	circa 1984-2014
b. 12 (Broadside)	Posters	circa 1984-2014
b. 13 (Broadside)	Posters	circa 1984-2014

Series III: Reviews and Press, circa 1970-2018*0.5 linear feet (1 box)*

Clippings and computer printouts with reviews of Robert Adams's exhibitions and books.

Arranged as received.

b. 14, f. 79	<i>Along Some Rivers</i> reviews	2006
b. 14, f. 80	<i>Beauty in Photography</i> reviews	circa 1981
b. 14, f. 81	<i>Commercial/Residential</i> reviews	2003
b. 14, f. 82	<i>Cottonwoods</i> reviews	2018
b. 14, f. 83	<i>Denver</i> reviews	1979
b. 14, f. 84	<i>Eden</i> reviews	1999
b. 14, f. 85	<i>From the Missouri West</i> reviews	1979-1981
b. 14, f. 86	<i>I Hear the Leaves</i> reviews	1999
b. 14, f. 87	<i>Interiors</i> reviews	2006
b. 14, f. 88	<i>Listening to the River</i> reviews	1994
b. 14, f. 89	<i>Los Angeles Spring</i> reviews	1986-2006
b. 14, f. 90	<i>The New West</i> reviews	1972-1975
b. 14, f. 91	<i>Notes for Friends</i> reviews	2000-2005
b. 14, f. 92	<i>Our Lives and Our Children</i> reviews	1984
b. 14, f. 93	<i>Perfect Times, Perfect Places</i> reviews	1988-1989
b. 14, f. 94	<i>Pine Valley</i> reviews	2005
b. 14, f. 95	<i>Prairie</i> reviews	1978-1979
b. 14, f. 96	<i>Summer Nights</i> reviews	1985-1986
b. 14, f. 97	<i>To Make It Home</i> reviews	1989-1990
b. 14, f. 98	<i>Turning Back</i> reviews	2006
b. 14, f. 99	<i>West from the Columbia</i> reviews	1992-1995
b. 14, f. 100	<i>What We Bought</i> reviews	1995-1996
b. 14, f. 101	<i>White Churches</i> reviews	1970
b. 14, f. 102	<i>Why People Photograph</i> reviews	1994-1995
b. 14, f. 103	Miscellaneous shows reviews	circa 1974-2008
b. 14, f. 104-106	Miscellaneous press and reviews	circa 1976-2006

Series IV: Early Writings, 1959–1972

0.5 linear feet (1 box)

Early writings by Robert Adams, 1959-1972. Includes papers Adams wrote for his coursework at University of Redlands and University of Southern California and printed material, primarily journals containing Adams’s academic writing. Also includes a typescript entitled “Summer 1968” which details a trip Adams took to Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Germany. Also present is a typescript entitled “With Wahoo,” which contains an account of rafting trips Adams took with his father Ross Adams between 1953 and 1963.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 14, f. 107-109	Printed materials	circa 1959-1972
b. 14, f. 110-111	Coursework	1959–1960
b. 14, f. 112	Summer 1968	1968
b. 14, f. 113	With Wahoo	1968

Series V: Artwork, circa 1960-2006

0.96 linear feet (1 box)

Artwork created by Robert Adams, primarily pencil drawings and pen and wash drawings with a few prints. Most of the drawings depict nature, including landscapes and flowers.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 15, f. 114	Artwork	1960–1969
b. 15, f. 115-117	Artwork	1970–1979
b. 15, f. 118-120	Artwork	1980–1989
b. 15, f. 121	Artwork	1990–2006
b. 15, f. 122	Artwork	undated

Series VI: Restricted Papers

3.21 linear feet (4 boxes)

Robert Adams’s alphabetical files, which contain correspondence, notes, clippings, and other papers documenting his career and personal life.

Restricted until 5 years after the deaths of Robert Adams and Kerstin Adams. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. 16	Alphabetical files
b. 17	Alphabetical files
b. 18	Alphabetical files
b. 19	Alphabetical files

Series VII: Computer and Audiovisual Media*1.63 linear feet (3 boxes)*

Computer and audiovisual material documenting the career of Robert Adams. Includes recordings of interviews with Adams and photographs and videos of his exhibitions.

Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Series VII is organized into two subseries: Computer Media and Audiovisual Materials.

Audiovisual Materials

Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

b. 21,  39002137150018	Hannover Show, Robert Adams, NTSC, made for German ETV <i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:15:28 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Slight video line smearing in upper third of picture that last for about a minute. Tape is in poor condition. Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1995
b. 21,  39002137150026	WHYY, Philadelphia Public TV, "Spotlight on Robert Adams: To Make It Home" <i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:04:30 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 21,  39002137150034	Citigroup Photography Prize 2004, Joel Sternfield/Peter Fraser/David Goldblatt/Robert Adams <i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:03:55 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	2004
b. 21,  39002137150042	"Robert Adams: To Make It Home"...Photographs of the American West, Members Opening, Philadelphia Museum of Art <i>1 Videocassette (VHS) 00:52:53 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Videotape starts abruptly. Tape is in poor condition. Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1989 February 18
b. 22,  39002093758036	National Gallery of Art "Film to Tape Mastering of Kodachrome", CR #1 <i>1 Film Reel (8mm) 00:19:55 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Silent film. Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 22,  39002093758044	"The Gift of Light", Barry Lopez in conjunction with: Robert Adams Exhibition, Amon Carter Museum <i>1 Audiocassette 01:15:34 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> The program starts and ends abruptly. Audio has a hum and hiss, Audio is distorted. Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1990 February 17

Audiovisual Materials (continued)

b. 22, 
39002093758051

Robt. Adams on "Fresh Air", interview in Phila, Lois/Russ K MUN; "New
Voices" - Program 143

1 Audiocassette 00:10:18 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)

The program starts and ends abruptly. Audio is distorted. Audio has a hiss
and hum.

Audiovisual material: Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested.
Consult Access Services for further information.

1988 December
12-1989 April

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Landscape photography -- United States
Landscape photography -- West (U.S.) --
Pictorial works
Photographers -- United States -- Archives
Photography -- Exhibitions

Occupations

Photographers -- United States -- 20th Century

Geographic Names

Arizona -- Pictorial works
Colorado -- Pictorial works
Montana -- Pictorial works
New Mexico -- Pictorial works
Oregon -- Pictorial works
West (U.S.) -- In art
West (U.S.) -- Pictorial works

Genres / Formats

Audiovisual materials
Born digital
Drawings (visual works)
Photographs
Posters

Names

Adams, Kerstin
Adams, Robert, 1937-
Hickman, C. A.

Contributors

Adams, Robert, 1937-
Hickman, C. A.
Adams, Kerstin