

# Guide to the Michael Benedikt Papers

YCAL MSS 589



by Michael L. Forstrom

May 2013

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:** YCAL MSS 589

**CREATOR:** Benedikt, Michael, 1935-2007

**TITLE:** Michael Benedikt papers

**DATES:** 1951-2002

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.46 linear feet (4 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Collection contains correspondence, writings, and personal papers documenting the personal and professional life of author Michael Benedikt. Correspondence in the collection consists of letters to Benedikt from authors and artists, editors and publishers, literary agents and organizations, academic institutions, and others dating largely from the late 1950s to early 1980s. Correspondents include Duane Ackerson, Anna Balakian, Alan Brilliant, A. Poulin, Carolee Schneemann, and others. Writings feature annotated versions of early printed works by Benedikt, such as *Changes* (1961) and *The Body* (1968), printed versions of essays, and a few drafts and proofs of individual poems. Personal Papers include a curriculum vitae, electronic files, notebooks, photographs, records documenting a dispute with a New York City landlord, and other materials.

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

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## 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.benedikt>.

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](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

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

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Asako Kitaori and Gerard Malanga, 2007.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 4 (computer disks): Restricted Fragile Material. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Michael Benedikt 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.

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### Preferred Citation

Michael Benedikt Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Michael Benedikt (1935-2007)

Michael Benedikt was born 26 May 1935 in New York City and educated at New York University (1956) and Columbia University (1961). From the late 1950s through 1970s, Benedikt served as an editor and held teaching and writing positions at various publications and institutions in the Northeast. He served an editor at Horizon Press (1959-1961), associate editor with *Art News* (1963-1972), poetry editor with the *Paris Review* (1974-1978), and contributing editor with the *American Poetry Review*. During this period he taught at Bennington (1968-1969), Sarah Lawrence (1969-1973), Hampshire (1973-1975), Vassar (1976-1977), and Boston University (1977-1979).

Benedikt's books of poetry include *Changes* (1961), *The Body* (1968), *Sky* (1970), *Mole Notes* (1971), *Night Cries* (1976), and *The Badminton at Great Barrington* (1980). Benedikt also authored plays, translations, and edited works on the theatre, and contributed poems, essays, and reviews to journals such as *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Iowa Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Agni*, *Partisan Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *Tri-Quarterly*. He died 27 February 2007.

Biographical information taken from "Michael Benedikt." *Contemporary Authors Online*. Detroit: Gale, 2001. *Biography In Context*. Web. 16 May 2013.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection contains correspondence, writings, and personal papers documenting the personal and professional life of American poet and author Michael Benedikt. Correspondence in the collection consists of letters to Benedikt from authors and artists, editors and publishers, literary agents and organizations, academic institutions, and others dating largely from the late 1950s to early 1980s. Correspondents include Duane Ackerson, Anna Balakian, Alan Brilliant, A. Poulin, Carolee Schneemann, and others. Writings features annotated printed versions of early works by Benedikt, such as *Changes* (1961) and *The Body* (1968), printed versions of essays, and a few drafts and proofs of individual poems. Personal Papers include

a curriculum vitae, electronic files, notebooks, photographs, records documenting a dispute with a New York City landlord, where Benedikt resided late in life, and other materials.

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## **Arrangement**

Organized into three series: I. Correspondence, 1957-1997. II Writings, 1951-1980. III. Personal Papers, 1968-2002.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1957-1997

0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)

Series I. Correspondence consists of letters to Benedikt from authors, editors and publishers, literary organizations, academic institutions, and others dating largely from the late 1950s to early 1980s.

Arranged alphabetically by name.

b. 1	Ackerson, Duane	1997 November 5
b. 1	Balakian, Anna	1971 May 5
b. 1	Borchardt, Georges	1965 April 5
b. 1	Brilliant, Alan	1966 December 24
b. 1	Hudspith, Vicki	1978 March 6
b. 1	Kelleher, Ann Includes poems	1970-1973, undated
b. 1	Letters of recommendation (copies)	1975-1979
b. 1	Mussman, Toby	1968 November 10
b. 1	New School for Social Research (New York, N.Y.) Includes clippings	1957, 1963
b. 1	Ono, Yoko	1971 September 28
b. 1	<i>The Paris Review</i>	1981 June
b. 1	Phillips, Louis	1977 December 14
b. 1	Poetry Society of America	[1988?] September 16
b. 1	Poulin, A. Includes poems	1975-1976
b. 1	Sarah Lawrence College	1972-1973, undated
b. 1	Schneemann, Carolee	1978-1979
b. 1	Stephenson, Gregory	1979
b. 1	Treacle Press	1979, undated
b. 1	Others	1967-1982

b.1

Empty envelopes

1979, undated

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**Series II: Writings, 1951-1980***0.21 linear feet (1 box)*

Series II. Writings features annotated printed versions of early works by Benedikt, such as *Changes* (1961) and *The Body* (1968), printed versions of essays, and a few drafts and proofs of individual poems.

Organized into subseries for Writings by Michael Bendikt and Writings of Others.

## Writings by Michael Benedikt

b. 1	"Alphaville and Its Subtext," essay, printed version, <i>Jean-Luc Goddard</i>	1968
b. 1	<i>The Badminton at Great Barrington; Or, Gustave Mahler &amp; the Chattanooga Choo-Choo</i> , printed version, annotated	1980
b. 1	<i>The Body</i> , printed version, annotated	1968
b. 1	"The Burning Down of Jenny's Restaurant..." proof (copy) corrected, with proofreaders' marks	1979
b. 1	<i>Changes</i> , printed version, annotated	1961
b. 1	"The Dangerous Word Dude," poem, proof (copy), corrected, with proofreaders' marks	undated
b. 1	"Letter to Joan Mercury..." proof (copy), corrected, with proofreaders' marks	[1978?]
b. 1	["Naked naked as my mistress..."], poem, typescript, corrected Includes letter from Gerard Malanga	undated
b. 1	"New York: The Experimental Theatre," essay, printed version, <i>Ambit</i>	1965
b. 1	"Poems," printed version, <i>Ambit</i>	1966
b. 2	<i>Sky</i> , printed version, annotated	1970
b. 2	"Yoko Notes," essay, printed version, <i>art and artists</i>	1972
b. 2	Unidentified work, contents and drafts, typescript	undated

## Writings of Others

Balakian, Anna

b. 2	<i>André Breton: Magus of Surrealism</i> , printed version, annotated	1971
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Carlson, Laura

b. 2	"Brecht: Theatre as a Dialectical Organ," essay, typescript	1975 April
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Kennedy, R. C.

b. 2	[Introduction], typescript	1968 July
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Mallarmé, Stéphane

b. 2	<i>Poems</i> , printed version, annotated	1951
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Payack, Peter



Writings of Others > Payack, Peter (continued)

b. 2

"How We Built the Matterhorn," printed version

1978

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**Series III: Personal Papers, 1968-2002***0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

Series III. Personal Papers include a curriculum vitae, electronic files, notebooks, photographs, records documenting a dispute with a New York City landlord, where Benedikt resided, and other materials.

Arranged alphabetically by name.

b. 3	"Business relationship between Michael Benedikt + Milton Gilman"	1980-1981, undated
b. 3	Career Staffing Center application	1981
b. 3	Curriculum vitae	[circa 1978]
	Electronic files (8 computer disks) Stored in: Restricted Fragile Material, Box 4 2007-ycal-11630-0001 - 2007-ycal-11630-0008  Computer disks are restricted. Copies of electronic files may be requested through Access Services.	undated
b. 3	Empty booklet	undated
b. 3	Health records	1988-2001, undated
b. 3	Housing records	1989
b. 3	"Landlord dispute" 3 Folders	2000-2002, undated
b. 3	Negatives and cut film	undated
b. 3	Notebooks 3 Folders	undated
b. 3	Photographs and slide 3 Folders	undated
b. 3	Printed ephemera	1968-1995, undated
b. 3	Sarah Lawrence college material	1972-1973, undated

Restricted Fragile Material  
0.21 linear feet (1 box)

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

b. 4	Computer disks (8 computer disks)	undated
b. 4	VSN: 3B44-1E02 mb To do 97 Travel Disk-NJ 12/24/96 94 new pmes 95 "" 96 "" 26-pmes 14 July of do-97 tr do-97 univdo97 ne-pr[?] tc pref88 155 KB jne 1423TOT SONY 9 MB DO '97 2007-ycal-11630-0001 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	Compressed: 10 to 19 96 tot space 13.23 MB Audio Adv G Mouse player files copied from 486 D-DRV tb-cd stratos (most of it?) see AvdAdv FileList - window system (incl 2vd 2dv driver*) SONY 3 compr :1 2007-ycal-11630-0002 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	[no label information] 2007-ycal-11630-0003 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	SONY 4 2c23 OBCF 2007-ycal-11630-0004 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	VSN0658-1E05 SONY 10 mb's mt 1:1 2007-ycal-11630-0005 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	486 SYSTEM DISK on this disk as command.com (also on mardon [?] ct-updisk) Autoexec.bat Config.sys system.ini win.ini *done after TTTY inst* 2/25/96 1457664 bytes tot disk space 1332520 bytes free TO DO copy files to backup sys disk? So as not to erase any? 2007-ycal-11630-0006 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	
b. 4	DOS 6.22 UNINSTALL 2.3/86 3/2/96 DISK unusadr Label : uninstd 6.22 NOT USED YET just in case aka Uninstall 2 (TO UNDO ANY FAULTY LOADING of Dos 6.22 + ReInst Dos 6.20) 2007-ycal-11630-0007 <i>13.5_floppy_disk 1474560 bytes (1.47 Megabytes. This reflects the size of the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files available for research.)</i>	

Computer disks (continued)

- b. 4                    mt Vol S#: 121F-OAD1 ms backup sez full then File Not Found Disc A= Nyet  
                         used to copy 2 12/94 BLANK DOS sez Diskette types or drive types NOT  
                         COMPAT.  
                         2007-ycal-11630-0008  
                         *13.5\_floppy\_disk 1492992 bytes (1.49 Megabytes. This reflects the size of  
                         the carrier media, but may not accurately reflect the extent of digital files  
                         available for research.)*
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## **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**

American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- 20th Century -- Archives  
Poets, American -- 20th Century -- Archives

### **Geographic Names**

New York (N.Y.) -- Intellectual life -- 20th Century

### **Genres / Formats**

Born digital  
Electronic documents  
Photographic prints

### **Occupations**

Authors -- United States -- 20th Century  
Poets -- United States -- 20th Century

### **Names**

Ackerson, Duane, 1942-  
Balakian, Anna, 1915-1997  
Benedikt, Michael, 1935-2007  
Brilliant, Alan  
Poulin, A., Jr., 1938-1996  
Schneemann, Carolee, 1939-