



# THE ART EFFECT

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Thomas W. Barrett, Jr. archive collection has moved to the Poughkeepsie Public Library**

**POUGHKEEPSIE (March 21, 2022)** – The Art Effect and Dutchess County Art Association (Barrett Art Center), are thrilled to announce that the Poughkeepsie Public Library District will be acquiring the Thomas W. Barrett, Jr. Archive and Art Collection, in preparation for The Art Effect and Barrett Art Center’s upcoming merger. The Collection includes Thomas W. Barrett Jr’s artworks and personal papers, Barrett family papers, photos and ephemera, and Barrett Art Center’s organizational records, 1935-2021. “We found an amazing home for the collections, where not only will they be digitized, they will also be displayed! A true win for the community and great outcome of our affiliation.” says Nicole Fenichel Hewitt, Executive Director of The Art Effect.

In March of 2021, with a staggeringly high measure of participation, the voting members of Barrett Art Center unanimously approved an affiliation with The Art Effect. The affiliation was the first step towards a full merger of the two arts organizations opening doors of new opportunities for The Art Effect and Barrett Art Center at the Trolley Barn Gallery, creating spaces that match the breadth of the combined mission and merged identity.

Thomas Weeks Barrett, Jr. (1902-1947), founded the Dutchess County Art Association in 1935 with the goal of cultural and civic engagement. His artwork, the Barrett family archive, and DCAA records provide a unique account of art and culture in the City of Poughkeepsie from the nineteenth century to the present. As “American Scene” painters of the 1930s and 1940s, Barrett and other founding members of the DCAA fashioned a modern iteration of the region’s landscapes immortalized a century earlier by the founders of the nation’s first major art movement, the Hudson River School.

The collection of Barrett’s artwork includes oil and gouache paintings on canvas and board, prints (numerous impressions and proofs), drawings, wallpaper designs, commercial illustrations from the 1920s, student sketchbooks, WPA mural sketches, and photographic studies. The archival collection also contains Barrett family papers, comprising letters, diaries, books, photographs and personal objects (c. 1800 – 1956). "The Barrett art collection and archives

document Poughkeepsie's historic identity as a creative and resilient community. This move ensures that generations of city residents will be able to draw inspiration from these important documents and artworks." notes Loretta Spence, former President of the Board of Directors.

The full collection gifted to the Poughkeepsie Public Library District chronicles the history of the arts in the City of Poughkeepsie, including exhibition catalogs and press clippings, correspondence and organizational records from 1935 to the present. The Thomas Barrett collection is a perfect complement to the library's [Local History Collection](#).

"The Library District is honored to participate in the preservation of one of Poughkeepsie's most important collections! We have worked with the Barrett House over years and feel it's a natural transition in order to provide access to these important materials." Tom Lawrence, Executive Director, Poughkeepsie Public Library District

The Poughkeepsie Public Library District's acquisition of the collection will better preserve this important piece of Poughkeepsie history and enable public access to the collection through digital cataloging, exhibition, education programs, and scholarly research. The acquisition also furthers the purpose of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District to offer the community diverse services and programs that will promote lifelong learning, literacy, and reading.

**About The Art Effect:** The Art Effect empowers youth to develop their creative voice to shape their futures and bring about positive social change. The organization facilitates educational programming for youth in the Hudson Valley to explore, experience and excel in the arts. Programs provide introductions to visual arts and media, giving participants the opportunity to develop real skills in these fields and guiding them towards achieving their academic and career goals. The Art Effect is anchored by the belief that the arts have the power to create a more vibrant, caring and sustainable world led by a generation of youth who value creative thinking, diverse voices and stronger connections between all people.

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Shannon Butler (Poughkeepsie Public Library Historian), Joanna Frang (Barrett Art Center Executive Director), Kira Thompson (Head of Reference & Adult Services) go through Thomas Barrett Collection Artwork at Barrett Art Center



Shannon Butler (Poughkeepsie Public Library Historian, Kira Thompson (Head of Reference & Adult Services), Joanna Frang (Barrett Art Center Executive Director) and Nicole Fenichel-Hewitt (The Art Effect Executive Director) at the Poughkeepsie Public Library archives.