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CARL VAN VECHTEN COLLECTION

142-1 to 142-5

Prepared by:
W. Henry Miller
November 1986

Scope Note

Carl Van Vechten was an author, fine arts critic, photo-
grapher, bibliophile, and philanthropist. The Carl Van Vechten
Collection, measuring 2 1/2 linear feet, was donated by Mr. Van
Vechten in 1946. This collection spans from the 1920s to the

mid 1950s, with most items from the 1940s.

The collection consists primarily of catalogs, programs, announcements, and invitations which serve to document Afro-American participation in the arts: visual art, photography, dance, drama, literature, and music.

Noted visual artists documented in the collection include Richard Barth &, Romare Bearden, Lois Mailou Jones, Jacob Lawrence and Hale Woodruff. Among the dancers are Josephine Baker, Janet Collins, Katherine Dunham, and Moncion Francisco. The drama series includes numerous programs of Afro-American production companies such as the Washington Repertory Players, American Negro Theatre, Rose McClendon Players, Krigwa Players, Gilpin Players, Karamu House, Howard University Players, and Dillard University Players Guild. Music, the largest series in the collection, features artists from opera and classical music to spirituals, jazz and blues. There is a small amount of material in Collection about writers, of which Langston Hughes predominates. Also there is a small number of programs and flyers from testimonial dinners, awards ceremonies, anniversary benefits, and dedication programs.

In addition to this collection of programs, Carl Van Vechten donated to Moorland-Spingarn "The Rose McClendon Memorial Collection of Photographs of Celebrated Negroes". This collection of photographs by Carl Van Vechten is indexed and available for

Biographical Data

Carl Van Vechten

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1880 June 17 | Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. |
| 1899-1903 | Attended the University of Chicago, majoring in English. |
| 1903-1905 | Worked for Chicago American newspaper. |
| 1906 | Worked as assistant music critic for the New York Times newspaper. |
| 1907 | Married Anna Elizabeth Snyder; took first trip to Europe. |
| 1908-1909 | Worked as Paris correspondent for the New York Times newspaper. |
| 1910 | Contributed music biographies to Century Dictionary. |
| 1912 | Divorced Anna Elizabeth Snyder Van Vechten. |
| 1913 | Worked as drama critic for the New |

York Press newspaper.

- 1914 Married actress Fania Marinoff; took second trip to Europe.
- 1914-1932 Worked as independent writer and novelist.
- 1932 Began serious work in photography.
- 1935 Mounted first photographic show.
- 1941 Founded Carl Van Vechten Collection of books and manuscripts in New York Public Library and also the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of Negro Arts and Letters at Yale University Library.

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- 1942-1945 Served in the American Theatre Wing during World War II.
- 1944 Founded George Gershwin Memorial Collection of Music and Musical Literature at Fisk University Library.
- 1946 Founded Rose McClendon Memorial Collection of Photographs of Celebrated Negroes at Howard University Library. (Currently housed in the Prints and Photographs Department Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.
- 1947 Founded Anna Marble Pollock Memorial Library of Books about Cats at Yale University Library.
- 1949 Founded Florine Stettheimer Memorial Collection of Books about the Fine Arts at Fisk University Library.
- 1954 The Jerome Bowers Peterson Collection of Photographs by Carl Van Vechten of Celebrated Negroes presented by Dorothy Peterson to the University of New Mexico.
- 1955 Honored on his seventy-fifth birthday

by exhibitions at Yale University and at New York Public Library.

Received honorary Ph.D. from Fisk University.

Fragments from an unwritten autobiography published by Yale.

Carl Van Vechten, A Bibliography published by A.A. Knopf Publishers.

1960 Honored on his eightieth birthday by exhibitions at Coe College (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) and at University of Pittsburgh.

Honored as a chief benefactor by New York Library

1961 Became a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

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*1964 Died in New York City.

*1966 June 17 Ashes scattered in Shakespeare Garden, Central Park.

Sources: Carl Van Vechten by Edward Lueders
*Carl Van Vechten and the Irreverent Years by Brice Kellner

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Series Description

Series A Art

Box 142-1 This series includes programs, announcements, invitations, catalogs, and articles related to photographs, sculpture, and painting exhibits highlighting Afro-American artists. Among the artists represented are

Richmond Barthe, Romare Bearden, Lois Mailou Jones, Jacob Lawrence and Horace Pippin. Items are filed by artist, gallery, or exhibit title.

Series B Dance

Box 142-1 This series includes programs, announcements and invitations related to dance performances of Afro-American individuals and groups. Some of the artists represented are Janet Collins, Francisco Moncion, Katherine Dunham, and Asadata Dafora's African Dancers. Items are filed by performer, group or production title.

Series C Drama

Box 142-2 This series includes playbills, announcements, and invitation related to the Afro-American in drama. There are souvenir programs from "Carmen Jones" and "Porgy and Bess", and synopses of the screenplays "Home of the Brave" and "The Well". These items include integrated and all Afro-American productions filed by performer, company, or production title.

Series D Motion Picture

Box 142-2 This series contains only one item; an announcement for the motion picture "We've Come A Long, Long Way", a 1944 documentary film on the progress of the Afro-American race.

Series E Music

Box 142-3 to 142-4 This series includes programs, announcements, and invitations related to Afro-American performances of the different styles of music: classical, jazz, folk/blues, spirituals, and popular. Some of the artists represented are Carol Brice, Louis Armstrong, Billy Holiday, Dorothy Maynor, and Murial Rahn. Items are filed by performer, group or pro-

duction title.

Series F Opera

Box 142-5 This series contains one announcement and five programs related to Afro-American performances of opera. One of the programs, a 1944 benefit concert for the National Negro Opera Co. at Carnegie Hall, contains notes on performers.

Series G Writers

Box 142-5 This series contains invitations, programs, announcements, and writings related to eight writers. Among the writers are Langston Hughes, Sterling Brown, and Countee Cullen. There is also a poem for Carl Van Vechten by George S. Schuyler entitled A Farewell To Carlo.

Series H Events

Box 142-5 This series contains announcements and programs related to benefits, anniversaries, and tributes in which Afro-Americans appeared or were honored. One of the items in the seating list for a dinner given Feb. 23, 1948, honoring W.E.B. DuBois' 80th birthday. Items are filed by the title of the event.

Series I Sketches

Box 142-5 This series contains three unidentified, unsigned pencil sketches.

Container List

A Art

Box Folder

142-1 1 Afro-Arts Bazaar
 2 Archer, Edmund

- 3 The Art of the American Negro
(1851-1940)
- 4 Barnett Aden Gallery
- 5 Barthe', Richmond
- 6 Bearden, Romare
- 7 Brall, Ruth
- 8 Brooks, Howard
- 9 Brown, Samuel J.
- 10 Clark, Claude
- 11 Countee Cullen Memorial Collection
- 12 Haitian
- 13 Hayden, Palmer
- 14 Hyppolite, Hector
- 15 Howard University
- 16 Jones, Lois Mailou
- 17 Lawrence, Jacob
- 18 Malebranche Andree
- 19 The Negro's Contribution to American
Culture
- 20 The Philadelphia Society for Negro
Records and Research
- 21 Pippin, Horace
- 22 Portinari, Candido
- 23 Priebe
- 24 Rivers, Haywood
- 25 Scurlock, Robert S.
- 26 Sebree, Charles
- 27 South Side Community Art Center
(Chicago)
- 28 Three Negro Artists
- 29 Van Vechten, Carl
- 30 Wilson, Ellis
- 31 Woodruff, Hale

B Dance

Box	Folder
142-1	32 Baker, Josephine
	33 Beatty, Talley
	34 Belle Rosette & Group
	35 Bruce, Mary
	36 Coleman, Leo
	37 Coles & Atkins
	38 Collins, Janet
	39 Dafora, Asadata
	40 Destine, Jean Leon

- 41 Dunham, Katherine
- 42 "An Evening In The Tropics"
- 43 Freeman, Mabel Jones
- 44 Hampton Institute Creative Dance Group
- 45 Kitchell, Iva
- 46 Marchant, Claude
- 47 Maudelle
- 48 Moncion, Francisco
- 49 Murray, Eddie
- 50 Primus, Pearl
- 51 St. Denis, Ruth

142-2 C Drama

- 1 The American Negro Theatre
- 2 American Negro Repertory Players
- 3 The (Atlanta) University Players
- 4 Bailey, Pearl
- 5 "The Bourbons Got The Blues"
- 6 Burke, Georgia
- 7 "Call Me Mister"
- 8 "Carmen Jones"
- 9 "Caukey"
- 10 "Claudia"
- 11 "Danger Corner"
- 12 Dillard University Players Guild
- 13 Frederick Douglass Players of
Solidarity Lodge 691
- 14 "Freedom's Birthplace"
- 15 "The Fruits of Freedom"
- 16 "Garden of Time"
- 17 "The Glass Menagerie"
- 18 Gilbert, Mercedes
- 19 "Hansel and Gretel"

C Drama

Box	Folder
142-2	20 "Four Episodes in the Life of Harriet Tubman"
	21 George, Zelma
	22 The Gilpin Players of the Karama House
	23 Hampton Institute Summer School
	24 Harlem Experimental Theatre
	25 "Heroines in Bronze"

26 "Home of the Brave"
 27 Howard University Players
 28 "Inside U.S.A."
 29 "Jeb"
 30 Jones, Robert Earl
 31 Karau House
 32 Kellam, Corky
 33 "King Solomon's Mines"
 34 "Kiss Me Kate"
 35 Krigwa Players
 36 "A Lady Passing Fair"
 37 Lee, Canada
 33 Little Theatre Tournament
 39 "A Long Way Home"
 40 "The Midwoman of Chaillot"
 41 Marriott, John
 42 "The Medium"
 43 The Negro Drama Group
 44 The Negro Unity Theatre
 45 "Old White Joe"
 46 "Othello"
 47 "Ouanga"
 48 "Outward Bound"
 49 The People's Theatre
 50 "Porgy and Bess"
 51 "The Power of Darkness"
 52 The Rose McClendon Players
 53 "St. Louis Woman"
 54 "Show Boat"
 55 "Skits Galore"
 56 "Tales of Manhattan"
 57 "Volpone"
 58 The Washington Repertory Players
 59 "The Well"
 60 The Wilberforce Players
 61 "Yes, M'Lord"
 62 "A Young American"

 D Motion Picture

Box	Folder	
142-2	63	"We've Come A Long, Long Way"

E Music

142-3	1	Anderson, Gareth
	2	Anderson, Marian
	3	The Apollo Theatre
	4	Armstrong, Louis

- 5 Banks, Violet
- 6 Berksteiner, Constance
- 7 Brown, Edith
- 8 Brice, Carol
- 9 Burke, Florine
- 10 Carnan, Matthew
- 11 Childress, Gladys E.
- 12 Chinn, Genevieve
- 13 Cole, Nat "King"
- 14 Cole, Joseph
- 15 Conaway, Wm. Alex.
- 16 Crawford, May
- 17 Cosme, Eusebia
- 18 D'Albert, Marc
- 19 Davis, Arthur
- 20 Davis, Ellabelle
- 21 Davis, Meta
- 22 de Paur's Infantry Chorus
- 23 Dixon, Dean
- 24 Dunbar, Rudolph
- 25 Duncan, Todd
- 26 Ellington, Duke
- 27 Evanti, Lillian
- 28 An Evening of Negro Music and Literature
- 29 Francis, Beatrice
- 30 Franzel, Carlotta
- 31 Griffin, Oscar
- 32 Hogan, Helen
- 33 Handy, W.C.
- 34 Hampton, Lionel
- 35 Hawthorne, Louise
- 36 Hayes, Roland
- 37 Hayman, Coreania
- 38 Heywood, Eddie
- 39 Holiday, Billy

E Music

Box	Folder
142-3	40 Holman, Libby
	41 Homer Smith's Melodaires
	42 Hopkins, Olyve P.
	43 Howard University Choir
	44 The Imma Sumack Trio
	45 James, Joseph
	46 Jarboro, Caterina
	47 Jessye, Eva

- 48 Jock's Music Room
- 49 Johnson, "Bunk"
- 50 Johnson, Hall
- 51 Johnson, James P.
- 52 Jordan, Lois

- 142-4 1 Kaufman, Louis
- 2 Kay, Ulysses
- 3 Ledbetter, Huddie "Lead Belly"
- 4 Lee, Alyme Dumas
- 5 Lee, Everett
- 6 Lewis, Nana
- 7 The Library of Congress - A Festival
 of Music
- 8 Lipscomb, Joseph
- 9 Lockett, Joseph
- 10 Love, Hortense
- 11 Lovelace, Henrietta
- 12 McFarlan, Ruth
- 13 McFerrin, Robert
- 14 McGhee, Novella
- 15 Mais, Monica
- 16 Matthews, Inez and Edwards
- 17 Maynor, Dorothy
- 18 Miles, Clara
- 19 Millinder, Lucky
- 20 The Negro Publication Society of
 America
- 21 Norvo, Red
- 22 Osbourne, Ada
- 23 Pankey, Aubrey
- 24 People's Songs, Inc.
- 25 Percival, Pearl
- 26 Philadelphia Conservatory of Music
- 27 Phillips, Myrtle Gauntlett

E Music (cont'd)

- | Box | Folder | |
|-------|--------|------------------------------------|
| 142-4 | 28 | Pobers, Tatina |
| | 29 | Rahn, Muriel |
| | 30 | Reckling, Frances Kraft |
| | 31 | Robeson, Paul |
| | 32 | Rowland, Jeannie |
| | 33 | "A Salute To Thomas (Fats) Walter" |
| | 34 | Savage, Roena |
| | 35 | Saxon, Luther |

36 Schuyler, Philippa Duke
 37 Scott, Hazel
 38 Sheppard, Carmen
 39 Smith, Bessie
 40 Smith, Muriel
 41 Smith, Paul A.
 42 Song Festival and Quartet Contest
 43 Snow, Valaida
 44 The Southenaires
 45 Stern, Arthur
 46 Still, William Grant
 47 Stone, Theodore Charles
 48 Swanson, Howard
 49 Taylor, Jeannette
 50 Taylor, Johnnie (52nd St.)
 51 Thigpen, Helen
 52 Thomas, A. Jack
 53 Thompson, Wallace
 54 Towles, Lois
 55 Tyler, Edward Lee
 56 Van Renssellear, Maybelle
 57 Veasy, William
 58 Voorhees, Bettye
 59 Walker, George
 60 Waters, Ethel
 61 Watson, Naomi
 62 Watts, Leontyne C.
 63 Wendell, Bruce
 64 Wesley, Charlotte
 65 White, Clarence Cameron
 66 White, Josh
 67 White, Portia
 68 Williams, Camilla
 69 Winters, Lawrence
 70 Wise, Ethyl
 71 "World's Fair of Music"

F Opera

Box	Folder
142- 5	1 "Aida"
	2 "Four Saints In Three Acts"
	3 "The Medium"
	4 The National Negro Opera Company
	5 Opera Night ... Ornstein School of Music
	7 "Troubled Island"

G Writers

- 7 Brown, Sterling
- 8 Cullen, Countee
- 9 Hughes, Langston
- 10 Johnson, James Weldon
- 11 Locke, Alain
- 12 Petry, Ann
- 13 Robeson, Eslanda Cardoza Goode
- 14 Schuyler, George S.

H Events

- 15 American Birobidja Committee -
Benefit Program
- 16 The Associated Blind, Inc. - Tenth
Anniversary
- 17 Bunche, Ralph J. - Dinner Tribute
- 18 DuBois, W.E.B. - 80th Birthday
Tribute
- 19 Keeping Fit for the American Way of
Life (Washington D.C. Public
Schools)
- 20 Georgetown Day School Annual
Christmas Party
- 21 Haiti Week of New York
- 22 I Am An American Day
- 23 National Council of Negro Women -
1944 Honor Roll
- 24 The National Urban League - "Salute
to Freedom"
- 25 Page, J.E. (Miss)
- 26 Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, Indianapolis
20th Annual Dinner
- 27 Southwest Harlem Neighborhood
Council, Inc.
- 28 Joel E. Spingarn High School Dedication

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H Events (cont'd)

Box	Folder
142-5	29 Spotlight on Spain Dinner
	30 Town Hall Spanish Recital
	31 Major James E. Walker Memorial Field Dedication
	32 Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Memorial Concert

I Sketches

33 Unidentified Sketches
