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### Brown, Jr., Oscar

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**Guide to the Oscar Brown Jr. Papers  
DCAAP.0064**

**Moorland-Spingarn Research Center,  
Howard University Collection Number 254**

**Finding aid prepared by Finding aid prepared by D.C. Africana Archives Project**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

December 09, 2016

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

DC Africana Archives Project  
Gelman Library  
Special Collections, Suite 704  
2130 H Street NW  
Washington DC, 20052

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	DC Africana Archives Project
<b>Title</b>	Oscar Brown Jr. Papers
<b>Date</b>	1936-1996
<b>Extent</b>	16.25 Cubic feet
<b>Location note</b>	This collection is part of the holdings of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, 500 Howard Place, NW, Washington, DC 20059. Please contact them for information on accessing these materials.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	Oscar Brown Jr. was a singer, songwriter, playwright, poet, civil rights activist, and actor. Files include correspondence (both personal and professional), writings by Brown as well as writings about Brown, photographs, contracts, business and finance files, scrapbooks, clippings, poems, and recordings, including reel-to-reel tapes.

## Biographical/Historical note

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Oscar Brown, Jr. was born in Chicago, Illinois to Helen and Oscar C. Brown Sr. Brown and was raised in both the Episcopal and Baptist traditions. Brown attended Willard Elementary School and Englewood High School. Attracted to radio broadcasting, Brown became involved in children's radio programs at an early age. In high school, Brown worked on the radio show, "Secret City," making a significant amount of money for a young black teenager in Chicago. In an effort to please the desires of his father, a lawyer and activist, Brown enrolled in several universities, but realized he wanted to pursue creative writing, broadcasting and the arts. In addition to returning to radio, Brown became an activist in Chicago. He turned his attention back to the arts and performance, signing with Columbia Records in 1960. His first album, "Sin and Soul," was released to critical acclaim, and in 1961 he made his debut at the Village Vanguard in New York and presented excerpts from "Kicks & Co.," a musical for which he wrote the book, music and lyrics. Brown reached Broadway in 1969 when Muhammad Ali starred in "Buck White," his musical adaptation of "Big Time Buck White," Joseph Dolan Tuotti's play about a black militant leader. In the 1970s, Brown served as artist-in-residence at Howard University, as well as at other institutions. While at Howard University, he directed his productions at the school. Brown wrote and debuted "Slave Song," in Washington, D.C. which was underwritten by Howard University. By 1975, Brown had recorded 10 albums and composed over 1000 songs. After an absence of 20 years, Brown again released albums in the 1990s including "Then and Now," and "Sin and Soul...and Then Some." Brown passed away on May 29, 2005.

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## Scope and Contents note

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The Oscar Brown Jr. papers document his life and work. Files include correspondence (both personal and professional), writings by Brown as well as writings about Brown, photographs, contracts, business and finance files, scrapbooks, clippings, poems, and recordings, including reel-to-reel tapes.

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## Arrangement note

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This collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

## **Administrative Information**

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### **Publication Information**

DC Africana Archives Project

### **Conditions Governing Access note**

This collection is open for research.

### **Conditions Governing Use note**

Some material may be copyrighted or restricted. It is the patron's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other case restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the collections.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Gift of Oscar Brown Jr., 1985 and 1987.

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Sony Video Tape - Oscar Brown Jr. Papers Mar. 27, 1989	2	10
South Side Bank Cancelled Checks 1967	4	38
Stationary undated	7	13
Student Program 1967	1	86

Summer Expenses 1966	1	9
"Summer in the City" 1966	1	36
"Summer in the City" undated	8	40
Summer in the City 1966	7	52
Summer in the City Photos 1966	10	31
Summer in the City Photos undated	12	2
"Sunshine and Shadows" undated	6	9
Sweden 1964	6	39
Telegrams 1967	3	9
Telegrams 1960-1961	4	47
Telemark Magazine Cover 1965	4	3
Testimonial Letters on Oscar Brown, Jr. 1958	3	22
Thank You Letters 1966-67	3	8
Time Sheets for Music Arts Creation, Inc. undated	1	52

Troubadour Contract and State 1967	4	62
TV Theory undated	1	81
Unidentified Photo undated	1	58
UniWorld Group, Inc. 1987	12	12
Unpaid Bills	1	87
UPWA Membership undated	4	9
Urban Life Center 1970	4	59
Urban Life Center 1970-1971	7	23
V.I.P. List undated	7	28
Vehicle Registration 1968	10	14
Video Tape - "Look Up & Live", Oscar Brown Jr. undated	2	11
Vignette Films 1967	3	23
Wald, Jeff 1967	1	16
"The Watermelon Man" Musical Review undated	7	9

Watts Expenses 1967	4	36
Watts Happening Coffee House undated	4	39
Watts Summer Festival 1967	4	40
WBBM-TV, CBS, Inc. 1967-1989	12	17
Weigh Tickets 1966	4	5
Welfare Council 1967	3	15
William Morris Agency 1964-1966	1	55
Word Conjurors 1990	12	9
Writer's Agreement undated	1	70
Writings undated	8	35
Y Boosters 1967	3	18
Young-Brothers/Robinson, John - Loans, Pensions California 1967	7	6