10-1-2015

DODSON, Owen Vincent

MSRC Staff

Follow this and additional works at: http://dh.howard.edu/finaid_manu

Recommended Citation
http://dh.howard.edu/finaid_manu/59

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Finding Aids at Digital Howard @ Howard University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Manuscript Division by an authorized administrator of Digital Howard @ Howard University. For more information, please contact lopez.matthews@howard.edu.
OWEN VINCENT DODSON PAPERS
Collection 27-1 to 27-10

Prepared & Revised by:
Greta S. Wilson
June 1980

MANUSCRIPT DIVISION
Scope Note

Owen Dodson presented this collection to Howard University between the years 1963-1968. It consists of scripts of certain of his plays, two novels, reviews and programs of his publications and productions, a small amount of personal correspondence, lectures and workshop materials, sheet music, poetry, periodicals containing Dodson's contributions, clippings, prints, photographs and two scrapbooks. Among the photographs, a large array of pictures of Lillian Evanti, (Lillian Evans Tibbs) coloratura soprano from Washington, D.C., are dominant. Many of these photographs were taken in elaborate costumes from some of her performances.

The collection contains approximately 1080 items and measures 5 linear feet including two individually wrapped scrapbooks. It spans the years 1930 to 1968.
Biographical Data

1914 Born in Brooklyn, New York, the son of Sarah Elizabeth Goode and Nathaniel Barnett Dodson

1932 Graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School, Brooklyn

1936 B.A. degree from Bates College, Lewiston, Maine; elected to Phi Beta Kappa

1938, 1939 Received fellowships from General Education Board

1938-1942 Directed drama at Atlanta University and Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia

1939 Master of Fine Arts, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

1940 Won Anderson Award for Verse Drama for his Garden of Time

1941 Won contest sponsored by the Committee on Interracial Cooperation, Atlanta, Georgia, for his Gargoyles in Florida

1942 Directed drama at Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA.

1942-43 Served in U.S. Navy (Seaman I/C) during which time he directed a morale building program and wrote several verse dramas

1944 Awarded Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship

1946 His Powerful Long Ladder, a book of poems was published

1947 Appointed Associate Professor of the Department of Drama, College of Fine Arts, Howard University

1949 Under the auspices of the Department of State toured Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Germany with his Howard University Players

1951 *His Boy at the Window*, a novel, was published

1953 Awarded Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship "for creative activity in the field of fiction."

1955 Won prize in international short story contest sponsored by Paris Revue for *The Summer Fire*

1960 Promoted to full Professor, Department of Drama, College of Fine Arts, Howard University
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Toured the United States with his Howard University Players</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Named member of National Committee of the Shakespeare Anniversary Committee plan the American celebration of the Shakespeare Quadricentennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Received Doctor of Letters degree from Bates College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mr. Dodson's plays have been performed by theatre groups throughout this country and in England. His poems, plays and fiction have been translated into French, Polish, Italian, Japanese and Norwegian.
Series Description

Series A  Personal Papers
Box 27-1  Awards, certificates, diplomas, clippings, legal documents, programs, announcements and invitations surrounding his academic and professional career

Series B  Correspondence
Box 27-1  Letters, telegrams, greeting and post cards

Series C  Manuscripts
Box 27-2 to Box 27-3  Includes scripts, cast list, notes, property lists, sheet music, two novels "A Bent House" and "Boy and the Window", poems and plays written by Dodson

Series D  Programs and Reviews of Production
Box 27-4  Newspaper reviews, posters, flyers, programs relating to theatrical productions mostly directed by Dodson; some performed by the Howard Players and others. Includes reviews by Dodson.

Series E  Teaching Materials
Box 27-5  Notes and outlines from a production seminar and manuscripts from a play writing class.

Series F  Programs
Box 27-5  Programs of Charter Day exercises, Howard University commencement exercises, church services, recitals, operas, and plays

Series G  Publications
Box 27-5  Includes periodicals containing articles contributed by Dodson; and descriptions of two anthologies; American Negro Poetry and Soon, One Morning which contains contributions by Dodson

Series Howard Players
Box 27-6  Background of the Howard Players, Howard University and the Drama Department plus review of plays performed by the Players
Series Description continued

Series I  
**Howard University**
Box 27-6  
Annual report of the Summer School, 1951

Series J  
**Theatre Workshops**
Box 27-6  
Clippings, programs, reviews, proceedings invitations to productions of the following workshops: New York State Theatre Festival, Alabama, A & M College Writers Conference, Atlanta University Summer School of the Theatre, Hampton Institute Summer Theatre Arts Festival

Series K  
**Prints and Photographs**
Box 27-7 to Box 27-8  
Includes several photographs of Dodson. There are a large number of photos of Miss Lillian Evanti (Lillian Evans Tibbs), soprano from Washington, D.C., many of which are of her in ornate costumes from some of her performances. There are also numerous prints of scenes from famous plays and operas.

Series L  
**Scrapbooks**
Item 27-9 to Item 27-10  
The first Scrapbook contains clippings of the cartoon series "Dark Laughter" and "Lighter Side" by Ol Harrington: the second one contains clippings surrounding his professional career as director and author.
### Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series A</th>
<th>Personal Papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Box 27-I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bates College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 High School Diploma and Completion of study, 1929, 1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Awards**

4 Awards

**Clippings**

5 Biographical materials - clipping
6 Clippings - miscellaneous
7 Jefferson City Post Tribune

**Documents**

8 Agreement: Farrar, Straus and Co. and Owen Dodson
9 Appointment as Apprentice Petty Officer, U.S. Navy
10 Certification of Registration of a Claim to Copyright in a Dramatic or a Dramatico Musical Composition

**Organizational Affiliations**

11 Harold Jackson Memorial Committee - clippings and snapshots
12 Phi Beta Kappa, Gamma Chapter
13 Shakespeare Anniversary Committee - clippings
14 Shakespeare Anniversary Committee - correspondence

15 Thomas Jefferson High School Alumni Association - Alumni Reunion Programs

**Printed Materials**

16 Announcements
17 Contest Programs
18 Invitations
19 Ship passenger lists
20 Published materials

------------------------------

--------------------------
B  Correspondence

Letters
Box 27-1  Folder  21 Correspondence - A-B
22 Correspondence - C-F
23 Correspondence - G-H
24 Correspondence - J-N
25 Correspondence - P-S
26 Correspondence - V-N
27 Correspondence - no name and/or date
28 Other Correspondents

Cards
29 Greeting cards
30 Post cards

Telegrams
31 Telegrams

C  Manuscripts

Music
Box 27-2
32 "Naturama" by Evanti, Lillian
33 "Til Victory is Won" - Cast List, property list, etc.
34 "Til Victory is Won" - miscellaneous, notes, memos, etc.
35 "Til Victory is Won" - script

Music Scores
36 "Everybody Join Hands"
37 "He's Hitched Our Wagon to a Star"
38 "My Lord's Treasury"
39 "Sleep, Darling Sleep"
40 "We Will follow all the Way"
41 "When we were Lost"
42 Untitled scores

Novels
43 A Bent House
44 Boy at the Window

Poems
45 "Asking"
46 "Autumn"
47 "Black Mother Praying"

-----------------------------
C Manuscripts (cont'd)

Poems

Box 27-2   Folder   48  Black mother -Praying in
the summer, 1943
49  "Centaurs are half Animal,
    half men"
50  "The Confession Stone"
51  "The Decision"
52  "Finally, Lady, You Were
    Gone From Us"
53  "Guita"
54  "Ira Aldridge, 1807-1867"
draft
55  "Jonathan's Song"
56  "Metaphor for a Negro Woman"
57  "Poems for Kenneth"
58  "The Precedent"
59  "Righteousness"
60  "Sickle Pears"
61  "Someday We're Gonna Tear
    The Pillars Down"
62  "Summing Up by the Defendant"
63  "Tell Rachael, He Whispered"
64  "This is a Prayer"
65  "Those Seven Sisters"
66  "Trilogy Earle Hyman"
67  "The Widows Walk"
68  "For J.M."
69  "Doomsday Chorus"
70  "I Will Tremble Once and
    Be Forgotten Forever"
71  "Winter Death"
72  "All for fun of the World
    Well Gained"
73  "Venus and Mars"
74  "Troy is a lost City"
75  "The Dawn Risers"
76  "Slave Who Died Coming Here"
77  "On Her Birthday"
78  "Epithalamion"
79  "France 1942"
80  "Dante, 1942"
81  "The Failure"
82  "Seventy-five Years Is A Long
    Stretch of Land"
83 "Generation of Vipers"
84 "Returning Veteran"
C Manuscripts (cont'd)

Poems
Box 27-3 Folder 85 "Cradle Song"
86 "To the Intolerant"
87 Christmas Poems
88 Untitled Poems

Short Stories
89 "Come Home Early, Chile"
90 "The Sea Shell"

Miscellaneous
91 "Bury Me Over My Father"
92 Notes for a Ballard

Plays
93 "Amistad"
94 "Bayou Legend" - Script
95 "Bayou Legend - Script - Copyrighted, 1946"
96 "Bayou Legend - Script - presented by the Theatre Workshops of Hunter College May 13-21, 1950"
97 "Where You From?" A manuscript of the play

D Programs and Reviews of Production
Box 27-4
98 "Antigone"
99 "Aria da Cappo"
100 "The Bad Seed"
101 "The Amen Corner", James Baldwin
102 "Bayou Legend"
103 "Beyond the Blues"
104 "Boy at the Window"
105 "The Cave Dwellers"
106 "The Cherry Orchard"
107 "A Christmas Miracle" - clippings
108 "A Christmas Miracle" - programs
109 "The Confession Stone"
110 "Constellation of Women"
111 "Death of a Salesman"
112 "Defiant Island"
113 "Divine Comedy"
114 "A Dream Come True in White and Blue"

------------------------------------------

-----------
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 27-4</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Programs and Reviews of Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>&quot;Eaters of Dust&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>&quot;Emperor Jones&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>&quot;Freedom the Banner&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>&quot;Garden of Time&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>&quot;Guest in the House&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>&quot;Hamlet&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>&quot;Look Back in Anger&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>&quot;Macbeth&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>&quot;Mambas Daughter&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>&quot;Media&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>&quot;A Moon for the Misbegotten&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>&quot;Morning, Noon, and Night&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>&quot;My Hearts in the Highlands&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>&quot;New World a Coming&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>&quot;Noah&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>&quot;Nude With Violin&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>&quot;Oedipus Rex&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>&quot;Pelleas and Melisande&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>&quot;Powerful Long Ladder&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>&quot;Purlie Victorious&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>&quot;Pygmalion&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>&quot;Rashomon&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>&quot;The Reluctant Debutante&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>&quot;The Return&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>&quot;Simply Heavenly&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>&quot;The Summer Fire&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>&quot;Suppressed Desires&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>&quot;Tea and Sympathy&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>&quot;Thunder Rock&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>&quot;Til Victory is Won&quot; - News Release</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td>&quot;Twilight Crane&quot; and &quot;Home&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td>Reviews by Owen Dodson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E  Teaching Materials

Box 27-5

147  Production Seminar
148  Playwriting Class Manuscripts

F  Programs

149  Programs - miscellaneous

-----------------------------------------------
G  Publications Periodicals
  Containing Dodson's
  Contributions

Box 27-5  Folder  150  The Arts Quarterly, June, 1939
151  Bravo/Carnegie Hall, 1968
152  Cavalcade, November, 1941
153  The Christian Century, Jan. 7, 1942
154  Common Ground
155  The Garnet, 1934-1936
156  New Currents, Aug., 1974
158  Right Angle, 1948
159  Tomorrow, 1945
160  Trend, March 1942
161  Voices, Winter, 1950
162  The Yale Literary Magazine, 1937-1938

Anthologies
163  Anthologies- Contributions

Miscellaneous
164  Miscellaneous publications

H  Howard  Players

Box 27-6  165  The Howard Players and the Drama Department
166  Howard University Players Reviews
I Howard University

167 Howard University Annual Report of the Summer School, 1951

J Theatre Workshops

168 Alabama A & M College Writer's Conference
169 Atlanta University Summer School of the Theatre
170 Hampton Institute Summer Theatre Arts Festival
171 New York State Theatre Festival

---------------------------------------------

K  Prints and Photographs

Owen Dodson
Box 27-7  Folder  172-176

Owen Dodson and Others
172-179

Lillian Evanti
180-211

Lillian Evanti and Others
Box 27-8  212-226

Photographs Individual - Identified
227-241

Photographs Individual - Unidentified
242-243

Photographs - Group-- Identified
244-246

Photographs of Things
247-252

Prints
253-268

L  Scrapbooks

Item 27-9  Scrapbook No. 1
Item 27-10             Scrapbook No. 2 (FRAGILE)
-----------------------------------------------------------------