



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Hughes-Neilson music collection and additions

1934-1980

Sc MG 218

Summary

Collector: Neilson, Kenneth P.

Title: Hughes-Neilson music collection and additions

Date: 1934-1980

Size: 1.29 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Gift of Kenneth P. Neilson, 1986-1993.

Revision History: Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

Abstract: Kenneth P. Neilson is an educator, artist, composer, author, and founder of All Seasons Art, a multimedia production center which seeks to gain exposure for developing African American and Hispanic artists. The Hughes-Neilson music collection consists of musical settings of the poetry and lyrics of Langston Hughes.

Conditions Governing Access:

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Preferred citation: [Item], Hughes-Neilson music collection and additions, Sc MG 218, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Accessioned by Mary Yearwood, 1986-1988, and Diana Lachatanere, 1993. Processed through the Schomburg NEH Automated Access to Special Collections Project.

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the Art and Artifacts Division: poster.

Transferred to Broadside collection, Sc MG 929, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division: poster

Transferred to the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division: audio materials. For more information, please contact the division at schomburgaudiovisual@nypl.org or 212-491-2270.

Creator History

Kenneth P. Neilson is an educator, artist, composer, and author. For nearly thirty years, he worked for the New York City public school system as a teacher and supervisor. In 1977, he founded All Seasons Art, a multimedia production center which seeks to gain exposure for developing African American and Hispanic artists through a series of exhibitions, publications, concerts, and theatrical productions. It also works to develop audience appreciation for the visual, literary, and musical arts through special programs devoted to the life and work of well known artists. In 1984, All Seasons Art, in cooperation with the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center, sponsored a special program entitled "The World of Langston Hughes Music: A Concert of Poems and Musical Settings."

Scope and Content Note

The Hughes-Neilson music collection consists of musical settings of the poetry and lyrics of Langston Hughes. Composers represented include David Amram, Leonard Bernstein, W.C. Handy, Hall Johnson, Elie Siegmeister, Hale Smith, Howard Swanson, Kurt Weill, and donor Kenneth P. Neilson. Printed music is composed of song sheets, operatic scores, and anthologies. Included is a copy of singer Rawn Spearman's dissertation, "A Study and Selected Musical Settings for Solo Voice and Piano of the Poetry of Langston Hughes" (1973), and a comprehensive listing of the musical settings of Hughes's works compiled by Neilson, entitled "The World of Langston Hughes' Music" (1982). Additions include similar content, plus printed matter on Hughes and Al Hirschfeld, a comic strip that references Hughes, and a book Hughes's poems with illustrations by a fourth-grade class.

Arrangement: Mostly arranged alphabetically by author's last name, with additions at the end.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American artists
African American composers
African American musicians
African American poets
African Americans -- Music

Names

Bernstein, Leonard
Handy, W. C. (William Christopher), 1873-1958
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967
Johnson, Hall, 1888-1970
Neilson, Kenneth P.
Smith, Hale, 1925-2009

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 *Albert Christ-Janer, Charles, W. Hughes, and Carleton Sprague Smith, eds. American Hymns Old and New*
- b. 1 f. 2 *Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers (by Willis C. Patterson) 1977*
- b. 1 f. 3 *Bernstein, Leonard. Songfest: A Cycle of American Poems for Six Singers and an Orchestra 1977*
Includes program.
- b. 1 f. 4 Curry, Darryl. "I Used to Wonder" 1994
- b. 1 f. 5 Davison, Henrietta. "Fields of Wonder" undated
- b. 1 f. 6 Glick, Mike 1980
Includes "Daybreak in Alabama" and "Song for Billie Holiday".
- b. 1 f. 7 *Handy, W. C. Blues: An Anthology 1972*
- b. 1 f. 8 Harris, Edward. "Moan" 1934
- b. 1 f. 9 Heilner, Irwin 1964
Includes "Democracy", undated, and "Southern Mammy Sings", 1964.
- b. 1 f. 10 Hille, Waldemar undated
Includes "A Dream Deferred", "The Negro Mother", "Song for a Dark Girl", and "Sun's a Raisin" (all undated).
- b. 1 f. 11 Hovey, Serge 1949-1952
Includes "I, Too, Sing America", 1952, and "Night Song", 1949.
- b. 1 f. 12 Hughes, Langston. "Freedom Land" 1964
- b. 1 f. 13 Huntley, Jobe. "Moon Outside My Window" 1964
- b. 2 f. 1 Irvine, Weldon, Jr. "Backlash Blues" undated
- b. 2 f. 2 Johnson, Hall 1970
Includes "Fi-yer (Fire)" and "Mother to Son", both from 1970.
- b. 2 f. 3 Kafen, Sergins. "Drum" 1954
- b. 2 f. 4 Koval, Marian. "Oh, What Singers" 1939
- b. 2 f. 5 Martin, David. "Simply Heavenly" undated
Includes program.
- b. 2 f. 6 Meyerowitz, Jan 1954-1959
Includes "How Godly Is the House of God", 1959, "On a Pallet of Straw", 1954, and program.
- b. 2 f. 7 Musto, John. "Shadow of the Blues"
Neilson, Kenneth P
- b. 2 f. 8 Various 1982-1996
Includes "Dreams", 1982, "Friendly in a Friendly Way", 1984, "What Happens to a Dream Deferred", 1983, "Year Round", 1984, "Brand New Clothes", 1984, "Grand Pa's Stories", 1984, "There's Always Weather", 1984, and "The World of Langston Hughes Music", 1982-1996.
- b. 2 f. 9 "Catalog of a Collection of Musical Settings of the Work of Langston Hughes" 1986
- b. 2 f. 10 Price, Florence. "Songs to the Dark Virgin"
- b. 2 f. 11 *Raim, Walter, ed. Excerpts from The Josh White Song Book 1963*
- b. 2 f. 12 Raphling, Sam 1958-1982
Includes "The Dream Keeper", 1982, and "Lincoln Monument", 1958.
- b. 2 f. 13 Schuman, William. "The Lord Has a Child" 1957

- b. 2 f. 14 Seeger, Pete. "Waitin' on Roosevelt" 1973
- b. 2 f. 15 Smith, Hale 1959
Includes "Beyond the Rim of Day", undated, and "In Memoriam: Beryl Rubinstein", 1959.
- b. 2 f. 16 "Songs of Elie Siegmeister"
- b. 2 f. 17 Spearman, Rawn. "A Study and Performance of Selected Musical Settings for Solo Voice and Piano of the Poetry of Langston Hughes" program 1973
- b. 2 f. 18 Swanson, Howard 1949-1950
Includes "Joy", 1950, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", 1949, "Night Song", 1950, and "Pierrot", 1950.
- b. 2 f. 19 Thomas, Frances. "No Crystal Stair"
- b. 2 f. 20 Weill, Kurt. "Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed" 1942
- b. 2 f. 21 Wolfe, Jacques. "Sad Song in De Air" 1934
- b. 2 f. 22 Woollen, Russell. "Wealth" undated

Additions

Mostly arranged alphabetically by author or title.

- b. 1a f. 1 Amram, David. "Let Us Remember" 1966
- b. 1a f. 2 Herb and Jamaal. "Fun and Games" comic strip 1997-2006
- b. 1a f. 3 Hirschfeld, Al. Printed matter and notes ca. 1990-1999
- b. 1a f. 4 "Kurt Weill: From Berlin to Broadway"
Neilson, Kenneth P
- b. 1a f. 5 Articles on John Brown (photocopies), by Neilson and others ca. 2003-2011
- b. 1a f. 6 "Sam Raphling, A Tribute: Other Articles and Poems" 2012
- b. 1a f. 7 "Poet's Corner: A Knowledge Cards Deck of Great Poems"
- b. 1a f. 8 Programs and clippings on Hughes
Siegmeister, Elie
- b. 1a f. 9 "The Face of War" 1978
- b. 1a f. 10 "Madam to You" 1975
- b. 1a f. 11 "The Sweet and Sour Animal Book", poems by Langston Hughes and illustrations by 4th graders in Florence Stiefeld's class, PS 233K 1995 Spring
- b. 1a f. 12 Miscellaneous
- b. 2a f. 1 *Hughes, Langston and Mary Antonelli. Celebrating Langston* 1991
- b. 2a f. 2 *Hughes, Langston and John Belisle American Artsong Anthology, Vol. 1* 1982
- b. 2a f. 3 Hughes, Langston and Jiri Dvoracek. "I Too Am America (Seven Songs to the Poems of Langston Hughes)" ca. 1983
- b. 2a f. 4 Compilation of music of Sam Raphling (compiled by Irving R. Abrams) ca. 1993