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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.) photograph collection [graphic]

194--[199-

Sc Photo Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.) Collection

Summary

Creator: Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.)

Title: Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.) photograph collection [graphic]

Date: 194--[199-

Size: 2.5 linear feet (4 boxes/517 items); 12 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 35 x 26 cm. and smaller; 12 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 35 x 26 cm. and smaller; 8 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 35 cm. and smaller; 8 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 35 cm. and smaller; 118 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 21 cm. and smaller; 118 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 21 cm. and smaller; 217 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 21 x 26 cm. and smaller; 217 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 21 x 26 cm. and smaller; 12 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 12 x 9 cm. and smaller; 12 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 12 x 9 cm. and smaller; 5 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 9 x 12 cm. and smaller; 5 photographic prints, silver gelatin b&w, 9 x 12 cm. and smaller; 4 photographic prints, col, 26 x 21 cm. and smaller; 4 photographic prints, col, 26 x 21 cm. and smaller; 21 photographic prints, col, 21 x 26 cm. and smaller; 21 photographic prints, col, 21 x 26 cm. and smaller; 2 contact sheets, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 28 cm. and smaller; 2 contact sheets, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 28 cm. and smaller; 81 contact sheets, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 21 and smaller; 81 contact sheets, silver gelatin b&w, 26 x 21 and smaller; 32 negatives, b&w, 20 x 19 cm. or smaller; 32 negatives, b&w, 20 x 19 cm. or smaller; 4 slides, col, 7 x 7 cm; 4 slides, col, 7 x 7 cm; 1 portrait drawing, pencil b&w, 16 x 11 cm; 1 portrait drawing, pencil b&w, 16 x 11 cm

Abstract: The Urban Arts Corps (UAC) Photograph Collection depicts the Corps' activities as well as documents aspects of the professional career of its founder/director, Vinnette Carroll. The collection consists of individual and group portraits of Carroll, cast members, and technical and artistic staff; publicity scenes and candid shots of actors and directors in rehearsal and off-stage; and views of award ceremonies, cast parties, television interviews and other related events. Some productions, cast members and events are unidentified.

Preferred citation: Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.) photograph collection [graphic], Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Related Materials:

Creator History

The Urban Arts Corps (UAC), a theater group, was founded by actress-director Vinnette Carroll in 1967 who served as the company's artistic director. The Corps emerged as a pilot project of the Ghetto Arts Program which was sponsored by the New York State Council of the Arts. Initially its members were African-American and Puerto Rican youth, but by the third season UAC became multi-racial. Among the objectives of UAC was to stimulate an interest in the arts by providing outdoor performances in under-served urban communities, and to also develop a major repertory company that produced new plays by black playwrights.

During the 1972-1973 season, UAC premiered its most successful musical, "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope." This production was later picked up by Broadway where it was directed by Vinnette Carroll, making her one of the first women to direct a Broadway show. In the 1975-1976 season, UAC produced "Your Arms Too Short to Box with God" which also later moved to Broadway. Both of these plays continue to be performed since they were first introduced more than 25 years ago.

The date of the dissolution of UAC is unknown. Until the late 1990s, Carroll was the artistic director of the Vinnette Carroll Repertory Company, a church affiliated theater built in Carroll's honor and located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Scope and Content Note

The Urban Arts Corps (UAC) Photograph Collection depicts the Corps' activities as well as documents aspects of the professional career of its founder/director, Vinnette Carroll. The collection consists of individual and group portraits of Carroll, cast members, and technical and artistic staff; publicity scenes and candid shots of actors and directors in rehearsal and off-stage; and views of award ceremonies, cast parties, television interviews and other related events. Some productions, cast members and events are unidentified. The Production series, which constitutes the major portion of the collection, consists mainly of various UAC productions, some of which are unidentified. Among the plays represented are "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope" (1972) and "Your Arms Too Short to Box with God" (1976). An outdoor performance in a New York City neighborhood of "Croesus and the Witch" is documented as are views of school audiences attending performances. Also included in this series are views of rehearsals, some showing Vinnette Carroll directing, as well as portraits of cast members and technical and artistic staff, backstage activities, and cast parties. The Events series documents Vinnette Carroll's participation in a variety of award ceremonies as well as her appearances on television shows. Many of the award ceremonies are unidentified. Her television appearances, which promoted the work of the UAC, consists of three visits to NBC's "The Today Show" (1969-1970), one appearance each on WNEW's "News" and WCBS's "News" (both in 1969). The Portrait series consists mainly of studio portraits, candid shots, and portrait studies in character, of Vinnette Carroll at different points in her career. Also included in this series are portraits of singer-composer Micki Grant.

Arrangement: Organized into three series: I. Productions, 196?-199?; II. Events, 196?-199?; III. Portraits, 194?-199?

Key Terms

Subjects

African American actors
African American actresses
African American theater -- New York (State) -- New York
African American women entertainers
African Americans -- Performances and portrayals -- New York (State) -- New York -- 1960-1989
African Americans in the performing arts -- New York (State) -- New York
Arts, Black -- New York (State) -- New York
Black arts movement
Theater audiences -- New York (State) -- New York -- 1960-1989
Theater rehearsals
Theatrical producers and directors -- United States
Theatrical productions -- New York (State) -- New York -- 1960-1989

Titles

All the kings men
Bury the dead
But never jam today
Croesus and the witch
Don't bother me, I can't cope
Moon on a rainbow shawl
Schomburg NEH Blacks on Stage: African-American Theater Arts Collections Project
The boogie-woogie rumble of a dream deferred
The ups and downs of Theophilus Maitland
Your arms too short to box with God

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Contact sheets -- 1960-1999
Dye coupler prints -- 1960-1999
Gelatin silver film negatives
Gelatin silver prints -- 1960-1999
Group portraits -- 1960-1989
Pencil works
Portrait photographs -- 1960-1989
Publicity photographs -- 1960-1989
Slides

Names

Urban Arts Corps (New York, N.Y.)
Afro-American Folk Loric Troupe
Aldridge, Mary
Allen, Jonelle
Ambrose, Amanda
Andrews, Bert
Atkin, Jonathan, 1968-
Bailey, Ed
Beal, Russell
Beatty, Talley
Bey, Salome
Bishop, Paul
Blackman, Barry M
Bradford, Alex
Carroll, Vinnette
Carter, Maryce
Clifton-Allen, Lynne
Columbus, Charles

Crawford, Joseph J
De Lain, Marguerite
De Luca, John
Dean, Hannah
Derricks, Clinton
DuBois, Jacquelyn
Estwick, Pat
Evans, Damon
Fleming, Juanita
Grant, Micki, 1941-
Green, Al, 1946-
Green, John
Hainesworth, James
Hall, Delores
Hemsley, Sherman, 1938-
Hemsley, Winston DeWitt
Hill, Bobby.
Jacob, Norman L.
Jeffry, Alix
Johnson, Bernard, 1933-2003
Kelly, Paula, 1949-
Keull, Steven
Kilpatrick, Eric
King, Billy
King, Bobbie
LaBelle, Patti
Legerra, Jean
Lewis, Garry Q
Malone, Deborah
Manzano, Sonia
Marsh, Bernard
Marshall, William, 1924-2003
McBean, Angus, 1904-1990
Ostertag, Barna
Patterson, Linda
Peiken, Terry
Peters, Brock
Petri, Felix
Pillsbury, Garth
Policastro, Frank
Premice, Josephine
Primus, Mark
Robinson, Mabel Louise, 1874-1962
Russell, Mabel
Samrock, Carl
Schatt, Roy
Silvestro, Richard
Simon, Barbara
Smith, Vernon L.
St. Johns, Jai Oscar
Stout, Eileen
Swope, Martha
Thomas, Marie (Thomas Foster)
Tupay, P
Turner, George
Tyson, Cecily

Van Scott, Glory
Weeks, Alan (Dancer)
White, Myrna
Willard, Avery
Yancy, Emily
Ghetto Arts Program
New York State Council on the Arts
Wagner International Photos, Inc. (New York, N.Y.)
Your Image, Inc. (New York, N.Y.)