



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

Guide to the

Elton C. Fax papers

1930-1974

Sc MG 40

Processed by L. Lockhart.

Summary

Creator: Fax, Elton C.

Title: Elton C. Fax papers

Date: 1930-1974

Source: Presented by Elton Fax, New York in June 1972. SCM77-71

Abstract: Writings consisting of manuscripts for his book, GARVEY: THE STORY OF A PIONEER BLACK NATIONALIST; miscellaneous typescript essays and printed articles, 1946-1974; numerous examples of Fax's art such as magazine illustrations and book jackets, 1936-1962; and photocopies of some correspondence. Also, programs, invitations, broadsides, book reviews, and news clippings concerning Fax's career.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: Elton C. Fax papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by L. Lockhart; machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

Creator History

Elton Fax was born in Baltimore on October 9, 1909. He began his career as an artist after graduating from the Syracuse University College of Fine Arts in 1931, and later became a writer as well. During his long career, Fax has taught at colleges and universities, lectured at schools and libraries throughout the world, and become well-known for his chalk-talks, lectures which he illustrates with drawings. From 1949 through 1956, he was a chaltalk artist for the New York Times Children's Book Program. A world traveller, Fax lived in Mexico in the 1950's, travelled to South America and the Caribbean as a chalk-talk artist for the U.S. Department of State Educational Exchange Program, and visited both Africa and the Soviet Union several times, including a visit to the Soviet Union as a guest of the Soviet Writers' Union in 1971. As an artist, Fax has been responsible for the illustrations of over thirty books, and has also

illustrated numerous magazine articles. Museums in New York, Baltimore, and Washington, D. C., have exhibited his work. His stature in the field is indicated by his inclusion in *Who's Who in American Art*, *The Negro In Art*, and *The American Negro in Art*. Fax has also written widely, contributing several essays and articles to various publications. Most of these, as well as his books, have focused on his travels and on black history and culture. His first book, published in 1960, was *West African Vignettes*, sketches and commentary based upon his travels in that Part of the world. *Contemporary Black Leaders* (1970) was a series of fourteen illustrated profiles of prominent blacks. In 1972 Fax received the Coretta Scott King Award for *Seventeen Black Artists* (1971), which was also a collection of profiles. Fax went on to publish *Garvey--Pioneer Black Nationalist*, a biography, in 1972; *Through Black Eyes: Journeys of a Black Artist to East Africa and Russia*, in 1974; and *Black Artists of the New Generation*, in 1977. Another book, *Hoshar*, based upon Fax's 1978 trip to the Central Asian Republics of the U.S.S.R., will be published in Moscow in 1980. Fax is married, and has one son and one daughter.

Scope and Content Note

The Elton Fax Papers, 1930-1974, consist of correspondence, writings, artwork, and printed material concerning Fax's career as a writer and artist. The writing and the artwork comprise by far the bulk of the collection; there is virtually no personal material. Aside from the handwritten and typewritten manuscript copies of *Garvey*, most of the material is printed. Except for the *Garvey* manuscript, arrangement throughout the collection is chronological. The papers have been divided into four series: Correspondence, Writings, Artwork, and Printed Material.

Key Terms

Occupations

African American artists
African American authors

Subjects

Black nationalism -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Broadsides
Illustrations (layout features)
Manuscripts

Names

Fax, Elton C.
Garvey, Marcus, 1887-1940

Container List

b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence 1956-1965

The series is very small, consisting of only one small folder. The letters are mostly routine correspondence concerning Fax's trips to Africa and South America, the books which resulted from these trips, and lectures given in schools. Some of the letters, which concern his travels and lectures, are neither to nor from Fax. All the letters are photocopies.

Writings

The series includes full manuscripts of *Garvey* in both handwritten and typewritten versions. In addition, there is a folder of miscellaneous writings composed of typescript essays and several printed articles on various subjects. This folder also contains an incomplete resume dated 1946. Newspaper articles have been photocopied.

Garvey Manuscript

b. 1 f. 2 Preface, Chapters 1-6

b. 1 f. 3 Chapters 7-13

b. 1 f. 4 Chapters 14-19

b. 1 f. 5 Chapters 20-24

Garvey Typescript

b. 1 f. 6 Forepages, Foreword, Preface, Chapters 1-7

b. 1 f. 7 Chapters 10-19

b. 1 f. 8 Chapters 20-24, Bibliography

b. 2 f. 1 Miscellaneous Writings 1946-1974

b. 2 f. 2 Artwork 1934-1962

ARTWORK, 1934-1962, is comprised of numerous samples of Fax's art, such as magazine illustrations and bookjackets. Additional material includes clippings of newspaper photographs of Fax's work and pamphlets designed by him. The clippings and magazine illustrations have been photocopied.

Printed Material

PRINTED MATERIAL, 1930-1974, includes material about Fax from a number of sources, a large proportion of which is biographical. The file consists of programs, invitations, broadsides, and clippings concerning Fax's career. Reviews of his books are also included. Clippings have been photocopied.

b. 2 f. 3 Programs and Invitations 1933-1974

b. 2 f. 4 Miscellaneous Printed Material 1949-1974

b. 2 f. 5 Clippings 1930-1974