



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

Guide to the

**Samuel Edwin Heyward papers**

1917-1982

Sc MG 160

Processed by Annie Hicks.

## Summary

**Creator:** Heyward, Sammy, 1904-

**Title:** Samuel Edwin Heyward papers

**Date:** 1917-1982

**Source:** Gift of Samuel E. Heyward, July 1982. SCM82-40

**Abstract:** Collection reflects Heyward's professional life and activities, particularly his career as a performer; a significant portion of the collection consists of music manuscripts arranged and/or composed by him. Heyward's personal papers contain biographical data, sketches and programs, performance materials, contracts, family papers, and financial records, 1917-1982. Correspondence consisting of letters received from organizations concerning programs, acknowledgements and solicitations reflecting Heyward's involvement in charitable affairs, organizations, and musical events. Heyward's writings and music consisting of manuscripts of his compositions, lyrics and arrangements, as well as music and lyrics which Heyward copied, and musical arrangements for guitar. Organizational records consisting of Heyward's files from his membership in the New Amsterdam Musical Association, Duke Ellington Society, Overseas Jazz Club, and Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Alumni. Also, programs of Heyward's performances, and programs of other artists, along with news clippings.

**Preferred citation:** Samuel Edwin Heyward papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Annie Hicks; machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

### Separated Materials:

The following items were removed from the Samuel E. Heyward, Jr. Papers, accession number SCM82-40

and have been sent to the division or section indicated, either to be retained or disposed of there. Any items that should receive special disposition are clearly marked.

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2 prints of the Cathedral of St. Louis and Jackson Square, New Orleans

Typescript Collection: *Don't you want to be free* by Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes Collection (SCM82-82): *A Steady Gal* and *A Favor to me* by L. Hughes

Sheet Music Collection: *The Great Songs of Christmas*

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## Creator History

Samuel E. Heyward, Jr. was born in Savannah, Georgia on March 26, 1904, the son of Samuel Edwin Heyward, Sr. and Eloise Harper Heyward. He attended public schools in Savannah and high school in Philadelphia. In the early 1930s he attended the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and studied violin and viola. Upon finishing at the Conservatory Heyward came to New York where he continued his musical studies, becoming proficient on piano, saxophone and trumpet. At the start of his musical career he gravitated toward classical music and organized a string ensemble, but later, with the change in popular music demands, he became devoted to classical jazz which he exemplified in many forms.

Of his many musical skills Heyward was probably best known for his viola and violin abilities. He played both instruments in symphony and opera orchestras and chamber groups, as well as playing the violin in jazz combos. Additionally, Heyward was known for his skills on the guitar and appeared on radio and television and at folk festivals, theatres, colleges and churches, singing and playing guitar with his calypso quintet.

Among Heyward's original compositions are the "Ballad of Harry Moore" which he wrote with the poet, Langston Hughes, "Suite for Violin Alone," "Six Shades of Blue" and the "Freedom Train." Several of his songs were published in song collections, including the *Calypso Folk Sing* and *Great Songs of Christmas*, the latter, in collaboration with Massie Patterson.

Heyward was a member of the New Amsterdam Musical Association, an organization of black musicians which was founded in 1904 as a clearinghouse for musicians. Early members included James Reese Europe, Will Marion Cook and James Weldon Johnson. Heyward was president from 1971 to 1979 and edited the newsletter "On the Go" for several years. He was also a member of the New York City chapter of the Duke Ellington Society, the Senior Concert Orchestra of New York, Musicians Union, Local 802 and the American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers. He was well-known in church circles having been president of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Alumni from 1968 to 1973, and for the many concerts he gave for St. Mark's Roman Catholic Church in Harlem, Immanuel Lutheran Church, the Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is and St. Peter's Church.

Heyward was married to Annie Edwine Smyer for 45 years who, before her retirement was assistant superintendent of nurses and assistant director of nursing at Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx for approximately 40 years. The Heywards had no children.

## Scope and Content Note

The Samuel E. Heyward Papers, 1917-1982, have been divided into five series; PERSONAL PAPERS, GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, WRITINGS-MUSIC, ORGANIZATIONS FILE and PRINTED

**MATERIAL.** The collection principally reflects Heyward's professional life and activities, particularly his career as a performer; a significant portion of the collection consists of music manuscripts arranged and/or composed by him.

**Arrangement:** Papers organized into five series: I Personal Papers; II General Correspondence; III Writings-Music; IV Organizations File; V Printed Material

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

African American composers  
African American musicians

### **Subjects**

African American families  
African American musicians -- Societies, etc  
African Americans -- Music  
African Americans in the performing arts  
Jazz

### **Geographic Names**

Harlem (New York, N.Y.) -- Social life and customs

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scores  
Theater programs

### **Names**

Heyward, Sammy, 1904-  
Benedictine Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament  
Duke Ellington Society  
New Amsterdam Musical Association  
Overseas Jazz Club

## Container List

### Personal Papers

The series contains scattered files and biographical data, sketches and programs, performance materials, contracts, family papers and financial records.

- b. 1 f. 1 Obituary and Resumes 1935-1982
- b. 1 f. 2 Sketches for Programs 1968
- b. 1 f. 3 Performance Materials
- b. 1 f. 4 Instructional Materials
- b. 1 f. 5 Listings of Songs
- b. 1 f. 6 Contracts 1954-1957
- b. 1 f. 7 Financial Records 1943-1976
- b. 1 f. 8 Annie E. Smyer Heyward 1957-1981, n.d.
- b. 1 f. 9 Parents' Papers 1917-1979, n.d.
- b. 1 f. 10 Miscellaneous 1942-1978
- b. 1 f. 11 General Correspondence

The series consists of letters received from organizations concerning programs, acknowledgments and solicitations. The correspondence reflects Heyward's involvement in charitable affairs, organizations and musical events.

### Writings--Music

The series forms the major part of the collection and consists of manuscripts of Heyward's compositions, lyrics and arrangements, as well as music and lyrics Heyward copied and perhaps performed (Collected). There are several of his original compositions; "Ballad of Harry Moore," "Checkin' on the Freedom Train," "Dance of the Bees," an operetta, the "Elfin Ballet Suite," and several collaborations with Massie Patterson, the folksinger. The second largest category is musical arrangements (for guitar in many cases) by Heyward.

- b. 1 f. 12 "Ballad of Harry Moore"
- b. 1 f. 13 "Checkin' on the Freedom Train"
- b. 1 f. 14 Operetta - "Dance of the Bees"
- b. 1 f. 15 "Elfin Ballet Suite"
- b. 1 f. 16 Six Blues Compositions
- b. 1 f. 17 Compositions by Sammy Heyward and Massie Patterson
- b. 2 f. 1 Lyrics
- b. 2 f. 2 Music compositions
- b. 2 f. 3 Arrangements, A - L
- b. 2 f. 4 Arrangements, M - Z
- b. 2 f. 5 Arrangements, Notebook
- b. 2 f. 6 Arrangements, Notebook
- b. 2 f. 7 Lyrics Collected by Heyward
- b. 2 f. 8 Music Collected by Heyward
- b. 2 f. 9 Music Fragments

## Organizations File

The file is comprised of Heyward's files from his membership in the New Amsterdam Musical Association (NAMA), the Duke Ellington Society, the Overseas Jazz Club and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Alumni. As president of the latter organization Heyward coordinated trips and musical programs for fundraising purposes.

### b. 3 New Amsterdam Musical Association

The NAMA records are of particular interest and consist of three early minute books and a financial ledger for 1913-1917. Composer Will Marion Cook is listed in the early minutes as a member and James Reese Europe, the composer and band leader, is listed in the ledger as a dues paying member of the organization.

- b. 3 Minute Book 1906-1915
- v. Volume
- b. 3 Minute Book 1925-1927
- v. Volume
- b. 3 Minute Book 1935-1936
- v. Volume
- b. 3 f. 4 Minutes -- Board of Directors 1940-1942
- b. 4 Financial Ledger 1913-1917
- v. Volume
- b. 4 f. 2 General 1941-1979, n.d.
- b. 4 f. 3 Duke Ellington Society 1959-1976, n.d.
- b. 4 f. 4 Overseas Jazz Club 1975-1976
- b. 4 f. 5 Sisters of Blessed Sacrament Alumni 1968-1973
- b. 4 f. 6 Sisters of Blessed Sacrament Alumni -- Travel 1970-1975, n.d.
- b. 4 f. 7 Miscellaneous Organizations 1950-1980, n.d.

### Printed Material

- b. 5 f. 1 Programs 1924-1980
- b. 5 f. 2 Programs -- Other Artists 1944-1979
- b. 5 f. 3 Clippings 1952-1974, n.d.