



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

Guide to the

Donald Eno Washington papers and additions

1968-2015

Sc MG 495

Summary

Creator: Washington, Eno

Title: Donald Eno Washington papers and additions

Date: 1968-2015

Size: 5.93 linear feet (9 boxes, 1 oversize folder)

Source: Gift of Donald Eno Washington, 1993-2015.

Revision History: Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

Abstract: Donald Eno Washington is a performing dance artist and instructor with a specialty in dance of West Africa and Mali. The Donald Eno Washington papers include personal and professional material regarding his dance career and travels.

Preferred citation: [Item], Donald Eno Washington papers and additions, Sc MG 495, 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 Janice Quinter, 1993; Berlena Robinson, 1994; C. Buie, 1996; and Alexandra Mitchell, 2015.

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the Art and Artifacts Division: posters.

Transferred to the Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division: periodicals.

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

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs.

Creator History

Donald Eno Washington is a performing dance artist and instructor with a specialty in dance of West Africa and Mali. Born in 1951, in St. Louis, Missouri, he began studying African dance with Ahmad Sahir and his company, "The Black and Tan Afro-American Revue", while in high school in Portland, Oregon. He became the principal dancer for the company and performed with several other companies, including his own. Washington holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Massachusetts (1981) and a Master of Arts from Smith College (1983). He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to the National Ballet of The Gambia (1983-1984). Washington held teaching positions and conducted workshops at several institutions (University of Massachusetts and Mount Holyoke College, among others) and performed in many locations across the United States and in West Africa. He conducted research into the dance of Mali and The Gambia, as well as the link between West African and popular African American dances of the twentieth century. The 1992 documentary video about Washington, *Dance on the Wind*, examines these connections as well as his early experiences with African American religious and secular movement traditions. As a person living with AIDS, Washington has been active in the AIDS community, most notably dancing in his retirement performance for an AIDS benefit in October 1992.

Scope and Content Note

The Donald Eno Washington papers reflect personal and professional aspects of this dancer and choreographer. Neither series contains many letters or supporting documentation he prepared for his professional activities. The Personal series includes correspondence with his wife and sons and numerous personal letters from his many friends, many of which discuss his dancing and ability to teach and perform. Other papers deal with his health problems, including complications resulting from AIDS. The Professional series is comprised of Washington's resumes and incoming letters pertaining to his performances and teaching schedules. His journeys to Africa in the early 1980s are documented by diaries he maintained during his trips. The collection also encompasses papers he wrote about African dance, such as the dance of ancient Mali and its contemporary manifestations in the United States; manuscripts and notes for his autobiography, *Dance on the Wind*; his notes on African religion, songs, and philosophy; and articles written by other researchers. The collection also includes programs and flyers, a scrapbook, and news clippings and articles, primarily referring to Washington.

Arrangement: Collection organized into two series: I. Personal; II. Professional; and III. Additions.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American Choreographers
African American dancers
African Americans in the performing arts
Authors, Black
Dance -- Africa
Dance -- Study and teaching
Dance, Black

Names

Washington, Eno

Container List

- Personal 1968-2000
 - b. 1 f. 1 1991-1994
 - b. 1 f. 2 Family papers
 - Family correspondence
 - b. 1 f. 3-4 Steward, Rebecca (wife) 1968-2000
 - b. 1 f. 5 Steward-Washington, Ethan and Seth (sons) 1992-1993
 - b. 1 f. 6 1991-1994
 - Other correspondence
 - b. 1 f. 7 Outgoing 1992-1994
 - Incoming
 - b. 1 f. 8 1980-1989
 - b. 1 f. 9 1991
 - b. 1 f. 10-15 1992
 - b. 1 f. 16-24 1993-1994
 - b. 1 f. 26 Seaward-Huntington, Donna 1993-1994
 - b. 1 f. 27-28 Medical papers
 - b. 1 f. 29 Report on psychological sessions with Washington by Glenn Benson-Lewis 1992
 - b. 1 f. 30 Last will and testament 1992
 - b. 1 f. 31 Funeral arrangements 1993
 - b. 1 f. 32-33 Seaward-Huntington, Donna 1992-1994
 - Includes journal in folder 33.
 - b. 1 f. 34 Address book
 - b. 1 f. 35 Handmade get well cards undated
- Professional 1968-2006
 - b. 2 f. 1 Resumes
 - b. 2 f. 2 Applications to graduate schools
 - b. 2 f. 3 Smith College 1981-1982
 - b. 2 f. 4 Certificate and recommendation for awards 1977-1994
 - b. 2 f. 5 Recommendations 1985-1986
 - Professional correspondence
 - b. 2 f. 6 1977
 - b. 2 f. 7 1981-1993
 - b. 2 f. 8 1994
 - Diaries
 - b. 2 f. 9 Nigeria 1981
 - b. 2 f. 10 Senegal and the Gambia 1982
 - b. 2 f. 11 1984-1992
 - Writing

Professional (cont.)

Writing (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 12 "Information on Traditional Ballets of the Ancient Malian Empire and Their Contemporary Manifestations in the United States," as compiled by Washington 1990
- b. 2 f. 13 Papers written by Washington
- b. 2 f. 14-15 "Dance on the Wind: The Memoirs of a Mississippi Shaman" 1991-1993
Includes correspondence, notes, and a program.
- b. 2 f. 16-17 AIDS benefits 1993-1994
- b. 2 f. 18-19 Interviews and oral histories 1985-1993
Includes New York Public Library Dance Collection Oral History Project in folder 18.

Notes

- b. 2 f. 20 African religion and philosophy 1982
- b. 2 f. 21 Haiti
- b. 2 f. 22 General
- b. 2 f. 23 Songs and poetry
- b. 2 f. 24 Financial 1994
- b. 2 f. 25 Grant proposals 1981-1993
- Teaching
- b. 2 f. 26 Performances and teaching schedules 1983-1992
- b. 2 f. 27 Journals on classes with Washington and Angel Huntington 1986-1994
- b. 2 f. 28-29 Mount Holyoke College, student papers 1991

Writing by others

- b. 2 f. 30 Report about Washington by Jarrett Sparks 1993
- b. 2 f. 31 Research papers 1984-1986
- b. 2 f. 32 1989
- b. 2 f. 33-36 Programs, flyers, and poster 1991-1993
- b. 2 f. 37 Scrapbook 1977-1982
- b. 3 f. 1 Wolof, Mandinka. African language instruction books

Printed matter

- b. 3 f. 2-4 Clippings and articles 1978-1993
- b. 3 f. 5 Miller, Ivor
- b. 3 f. 6-11 Correspondence 1992-1995
Includes incoming correspondence from Maya Angelou (folder 9).
- b. 3 f. 12 Choreographic and annotated program notes
- b. 3 f. 13 Stoneleigh-Burnham/Sorvino Dance Project 1995
- b. 3 f. 14-16 "Dance on the Wind" 1992-1997
Includes articles, flyers, and correspondence.
- b. 3 f. 17 Poems for Washington 1992-1997
- b. 3 f. 18 Research material
- b. 3 f. 19 Osumarea, Bamidele 1995
- b. 3 f. 20 Resume 1985
- b. 3 f. 21 de Mille, Rosalind 1981-1994
- b. 3 f. 22 Correspondence 1990-1993
University of Massachusetts

Professional (cont.)

University of Massachusetts (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 23 University Without Walls 1977-1980
- b. 3 f. 24 Five College Black Studies Faculty 1979-1983
- Smith College
- b. 3 f. 25 1982-1986
- b. 3 f. 26 West African dance class, teaching fellow 1980-1984
- b. 3 f. 27 "Dance Africa" typescript ca. 1985
- b. 3 f. 28 "Dance on the Wind" video 1992-1993
- Printed matter
- b. 3 f. 29 Programs of Washington's performances 1968-1993
- b. 3 f. 30 Clippings on Washington 1968-1998
- b. 3 f. 31 Wedding list 1988 July
- b. 3 f. 32 Articles on West African dance
- Correspondence
- b. 3 f. 33 1978-1986
- b. 3 f. 34 1990-1997
- b. 3 f. 35 Student letters 1994-1995
- b. 3 f. 36 Outgoing carbon copies 1996-1997
- b. 3 f. 37 Notes to Washington 1996-1997
- b. 3 f. 38 Printed matter 1997-2000
- b. 4 f. 1-3 Correspondence 1984-1995
- b. 4 f. 4 Miscellaneous typescripts
- b. 4 f. 5 Choreographic and program notes
- b. 4 f. 6 Research material
- b. 4 f. 7 Certificates
- Printed matter
- b. 4 f. 8-9 Clippings 1992
- b. 4 f. 10 o. 1 Flyers and broadsides
- b. 7 Posters
- b. 4 f. 11 Health care information
- b. 4 f. 12 Journals
- b. 4 f. 13-14 Student papers 1982-1986
- b. 4 f. 15 Copies of photographs
- b. 5 f. 1-3 Correspondence 1997
- Printed matter
- b. 5 f. 4 Flyers 1997
- b. 5 f. 5 Clippings 1991-1998
- b. 5 f. 6-8 Correspondence 1998-1999
- Dance notes ca. 1988-1999
- b. 5 f. 10 Cards 1998-1999
- b. 5 f. 11 Williams, Barbea 1998-1999
- b. 5 f. 12 Programs 1997-1999

Professional (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 13 Arizona PLUS 1999
- b. 5 f. 14 Flyers 1998-2000
- b. 6 f. 1-2 Correspondence and cards 2000
- b. 6 f. 3 Dance courses and philosophy 1999-2001
- b. 6 f. 4 POG (dance group)
- b. 6 f. 5 Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation 2000
- b. 6 f. 6 Tucson Urban League, Inc
- b. 6 f. 7 African dance journal 2000
- b. 6 f. 8 Family internet searches 2003
- b. 6 f. 9-10 Outgoing correspondence and notes
Applications
- b. 6 f. 11 PhD programs
- b. 6 f. 12 University of Arizona job application
Incoming correspondence
- b. 6 f. 13-18 ca. 2000
- b. 8 f. 1-3 2001-2006
- b. 8 f. 4 Dance class presentations 2001
- b. 8 f. 5-6 Programs 1998-2000
Includes memorial programs, folder 6.
- b. 8 f. 7 Student papers
- b. 8 f. 8 Klabunde, Martin. "Research Methodology: Designing Ethnography with
Ethical Research Protocols" undated
- b. 8 f. 9 Clippings, general
- b. 8 f. 10 Amur-El-Kais. Kemetic studies
- Additions 1982-2015
- b. 1 additions f. 1 Notebooks and journals 2015
- b. 1 additions f. 2 Programs and flyers
- b. 1 additions f. 3 Obituaries
- b. 1 additions f. 4 Last will and testament 2015
- b. 1 additions f. 5 Funeral arrangements 2015
- b. 1 additions f. 6 Insurance documents
- b. 1 additions f. 7 Personal correspondence, outgoing
- b. 1 additions f. 8 Newspaper clippings 1982-1994
- b. 1 additions f. 9 Newsletters 2011-2013
- b. 1 additions f. 10 Notes
- b. 1 additions f. 11-14 Personal correspondence, incoming
- b. 1 additions f. 15 Biographical
- b. 1 additions f. 16 Miscellaneous