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Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Children's Art Carnival records**

1971-1995 [bulk 1976-1988]

Sc MG 561

Compiled by Heather Lember, 2015

## Summary

**Creator:** Children's Art Carnival (New York, N.Y.)

**Title:** Children's Art Carnival records

**Date:** 1971-1995 [bulk 1976-1988]

**Size:** 24.1 linear feet (59 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by Children's Art Carnival, 1996

**Abstract:** The Children's Art Carnival, founded in 1969, was a Harlem-based non-profit organization that provided arts and educational programs for youth, training courses for educators, and career development services for young adults. The Children's Art Carnival records date from 1971 to 1994 (bulk dates 1976-1988), and consist of correspondence, meeting minutes, financial documents, program proposals, memoranda, grant applications, events materials, press releases, and programming documentation. The files contain records of the programs, events, and services offered over the years, as well as a glimpse into the day-to-day operations of the organization.

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**Processing note:** Compiled by Heather Lember, 2015

## Creator History

The Children's Art Carnival (CAC) was founded in 1969 as a pilot-community-outreach program of the Museum of Modern Art. Partnering with twelve New York City schools, CAC hosted after-school art

workshops in painting, printmaking, ceramics, puppetry, photography, filmmaking, writing, graphic design, printing, sewing, and costume design for over 2,000 youth in its first year. Artist Betty Blayton-Taylor served as executive director from the program's inception, overseeing the organization's expansion in the subsequent decades.

In 1971, the CAC held their first annual summer festival, which featured the creation of a major outdoor mural. They also expanded their after-school programming, partnering with 83 schools and 30 head-start community centers, and reaching over 6,000 participants. In 1973, CAC's Title 1 program proposal, "Creative Reading through the Arts," was awarded funding by the New York City Board of Education.

After five years of successful programming, all of which was provided at no cost to participants, CAC incorporated as an independent community-based art institution, and was awarded 501 (c) 3 tax exempt status by the IRS in 1974. The CAC moved their offices to a recently renovated brownstone located at 62 Hamilton Terrace in Harlem, which became the CAC's permanent headquarters.

In 1975, the Title 1 program expanded to serve students in Queens and Brooklyn, and the CAC was recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts as a "model in alternative education for the nation." The following year the CAC received funding from an NEA challenge grant, and a new program, called "Communication Arts Production Training," received federal funding from the United States Department of Education.

The CAC earned national recognition from the United States Department of Education for their career-training program. The after-school career development and job training program offered artist-apprenticeships with professional artists for Harlem teenagers. The teens also assisted with instruction at summer art classes for 4 to 14 year olds in mural painting, graphic design, offset printing, silk-screening, filmmaking, photography, and writing.

The core programs remained the Visual and Communication Arts Training, which offered workshops in partnership with area schools for pre-school, elementary, and junior high school students; the Title 1 creative reading program; classes for disabled students; and a summer program for 4 to 19 year olds. The CAC also established a Teacher Training and dissemination program, which trained educators in teaching methods that reflected the principles of CAC's creative education programs. The program developed marketing strategies and printed materials for distribution to urban minority youth populations that aimed to promote awareness of cultural heritage and inspire creativity.

In 1982 the CAC hosted the first annual Men Who Cook benefit, which became their most successful fundraising event. The event drew crowds of well over 1,000 attendees, who paid an admission fee to sample recipes prepared by men volunteering their time on behalf of CAC. The event was organized by benefit coordinator, Lana Turner, until 1988 when it was renamed Gourmet Gents.

In 1983, the CAC was awarded three vacant buildings on Amsterdam Avenue by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. The space was used to house CAC's new for-profit business, Harlem Textile Works, which provided discounted services in design, graphics, and merchandising. The program created jobs for local young artists, and served as a source of funding for the CAC.

In 1985 the CAC was invited to participate in a gifted and talented program sponsored by the New York City Board of Education. A multi-cultural curriculum was developed with funding from the NEA, and the programs were administered in New York City Public Schools. In 1989, the CAC was awarded the New York State Governor's Art Award, and Betty Blayton-Taylor received two community leadership awards.

## Scope and Content Note

The Children's Art Carnival (CAC) records, dating from 1969 to 1994 (bulk dates 1976-1988), consist of administrative files providing insight into the day-to-day operations, programming, event planning, development and fundraising, marketing strategies, Board of Trustees obligations, and funding sources of the organization. Included are budgets, correspondence, grant applications, memoranda, meeting minutes, newsletters, planning documents, program proposals and evaluations, and press releases compiled from the CAC's inception until the departure of founder and Executive Director Betty Blayton-Taylor, in 1996. The Board of Trustees files contain agendas, meeting minutes, and lists of board members during the 1980s. These files illustrate the procedural administrative functions of the board, and predominantly address financial matters. Of special interest is a copy of the CAC's by-laws, which is an essential document in identifying the administrators' legal and core responsibilities as defined by the non-profit's founders.

The collection is strong in revealing funding sources of the CAC and its arts programs. The development and fundraising files include information on benefit events; appeals to corporations, foundations, and individual donors; grant applications; meeting minutes of the Friends of the Children's Art Carnival, which was the CAC's fundraising committee; and listings of contributors. The event organizers kept meticulous records of their annual benefit, Men Who Cook, which includes records of fundraising, logistics, outreach, promotions, and event planning. Among the Men Who Cook materials are advertising and marketing plans, event programs, lists of participants, records of donations, and food items featured at the benefits.

The financial records of the CAC include budget documents, financial ledgers, and reports. These files disclose the organization's economic standing over time and their annual budgetary planning strategies.

Files related to the CAC's operations illustrate a struggle to retain focus on the organization's arts education mission in the midst of constant fundraising, proposal writing, and logistical coordinating. Included are calendars and schedules; conference files; correspondence; information on the physical CAC building in Harlem; meeting minutes; memoranda; reports; and staff information.

Within the operations reports files are annual reports; five-year plans; interim reports; monthly statistical reports; narrative program reports; program attendance reports; and year-end narratives. These files offer a vivid picture of the CAC's operational standing, and serve as a chronological summary of the vast array of administrative activities necessary to sustain a non-profit organization.

The staff files include a number of job descriptions and organizational charts which clarify individuals' roles and responsibilities, recruitment tactics, and the manner in which duties shifted over time.

Information about CAC's programming and curriculum is contained in the program files. Included are files for many of the arts workshops and educational programs; program proposals; descriptions and evaluations of workshops; and a small sample of student work. The proposal files contain information on programs that were successfully implemented, as well those that were not enacted. The evaluations are all for the CAC's Title I (later Chapter 1) funded program, Creative Reading through the Arts. The evaluations were prepared by outside agencies, primarily the mandatory reporting performed by the Board of Education.

Within the student work files are letters written by students about their experiences at CAC. There are also some samples of reading lessons and worksheets completed by program participants.

The public relations files convey the CAC's marketing strategies and highlight the perpetual behind-the-scenes labor necessary in order to make the public aware of the CAC and its events and programs. The public facing side of the CAC is chronicled through flyers and brochures; lists of media contacts and mailing lists; newsletters; various iterations of press kits; press releases; public service announcements; and television and radio appearances.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged by categories that reflect the administrative structure of the Children's Art Carnival. The categories are Board of Trustees, Development and Fundraising, Financials, Operations, Programs, and Public Relations and Marketing. Files are arranged chronologically, and folders are arranged alphabetically by title. CAC folder names were preserved.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Art in education  
Nonprofit organizations -- New York (N.Y.)  
Reading (Elementary)  
Reading (Secondary)  
Reading -- Remedial teaching  
Women in nonprofit organizations -- New York (N.Y.)

### **Occupations**

Artists -- New York (N.Y.)  
Students -- New York (N.Y.)  
Teachers -- New York (N.Y.)

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Auditors' reports  
Correspondence  
Educational Reports  
Financial statements  
Fliers (printed matter)  
Memorandums  
Minutes (Records)  
Newsletters  
Pamphlets  
Press releases

### **Geographic Names**

Harlem -- New York, (N.Y.)

### **Names**

Taylor, Betty Blayton

## Container List

- Board of Trustees
  - b. 1 f. 1 By-laws 1974
  - b. 1 f. 2-21 Agendas, Meeting Minutes, and Member Information 1982-1990
- Development and Fundraising
  - Benefits
    - b. 1 f. 22 Five Benefit 1971
    - b. 1 f. 23-31 1972-1978
    - b. 1 f. 32-35 10th Anniversary Events 1979
      - b. 2 f. 1-5 1979-1980
      - b. 2 f. 6-7 2nd Annual Benefit 1980
      - b. 2 f. 8-28 1980-1982
  - Blue Hill Troupe
    - b. 2 f. 29-32 1982
    - b. 3 f. 1-16 1982-1983
    - b. 4 f. 1-13 1982-1983
    - b. 4 f. 16-22 1982-1984
  - Men Who Cook
    - b. 4 f. 23-27 1982-1983
    - b. 5 f. 1-21 1983-1985
    - b. 6 f. 1-22 1985-1986
    - b. 7 f. 2-24 1986-1988
    - b. 7 f. 1 Masquerade Benefit 1985-1986
    - b. 7 f. 25-26 1988
  - Gourmet Gents
    - b. 8 f. 1-37 1987-1989
    - b. 9 f. 5-9 1989-1995
    - b. 9 f. 1-4 20th Anniversary Celebration 1989
- Foundations and Corporations
  - b. 9 f. 10-21 1974-1981
  - b. 10 f. 1-26 1981-1987
  - b. 11 f. 1-20 1984-1986
  - b. 12 f. 1-20 1986-1988
  - b. 13 f. 1-28 1988-1989
  - b. 14 f. 1-29 1989-1993
  - b. 15 f. 1-8 Friends of the Children's Art Carnival 1980-1986
  - b. 15 f. 9-23 Individual Appeals and Donations 1979-1985
- Lists of Contributors
  - b. 57 1977-1981
  - b. 58 1977-1981

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Lists of Contributors (cont.)

- b. 59 1981
- b. 15 f. 24-29 1979-1988
- b. 16 f. 1-2 1984-1989

Financials

- b. 16 f. 3-26 Budgets 1979-1991

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- b. 17 f. 1-5 1978-1987
- b. 56 1984-1985
- b. 18 f. 1-3 1986-1987

Reports and Statements

- b. 18 f. 4-19 1974-1982
- b. 19 f. 1-27 1982-1988
- b. 20 f. 1-21 1986-1993

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- b. 20 f. 22-37 Calendars and Schedules 1981-1990
- b. 21 f. 1-5 Conferences 1985-1989

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- b. 21 f. 6-39 1974-1982
- b. 22 f. 1-41 1982-1983
- b. 23 f. 1-33 1983-1985
- b. 24 f. 1-29 1985-1986
- b. 25 f. 1-17 1985-1987
- b. 26 f. 1-42 1986-1991
- b. 27 f. 1-11 1991-1993

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- b. 27 f. 12-24 1973-1989
- b. 28 f. 1-8 1989-1990

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- b. 28 f. 9-43 1974-1988
- b. 29 f. 1-3 1989

- b. 29 f. 4-24 Memoranda 1980-1990

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- b. 29 f. 25-33 1970-1982
- b. 30 f. 1-32 1980-1985
- b. 31 f. 1-29 1985-1988
- b. 32 f. 1-27 1988-1993
- b. 33 f. 1-44 Staff Records 1979-1992

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After School Program

- b. 33 f. 45-48 1977-1981
- b. 34 f. 1-17 1981-1989

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- b. 34 f. 18-19 Apprenticeship Program 1985-1988  
Arts Partners
- b. 34 f. 20-24 1984-1986
  - b. 35 f. 1-3 1985
- b. 35 f. 4-18 Basic Skills 1980-1983
- b. 35 f. 19-22 Career Training 1978
  - b. 36 f. 1-2 Ceramics 1985-1986
- b. 36 f. 3-20 Communication Arts 1981-1989  
Creative Reading Through the Arts
- b. 36 f. 21-31 1971-1981
  - b. 37 f. 1-27 1980-1983
  - b. 38 f. 1-20 1982-1984
  - b. 39 f. 1-20 1984-1987
  - b. 40 f. 1-14 1986-1991
  - b. 41 f. 1-28 1991-1994
- Evaluations
  - b. 42 f. 1-15 1974-1981
  - b. 43 f. 1-20 1981-1993
- b. 44 f. 1-15 Doo-It Day 1979-1989
- b. 44 f. 16-27 Exhibitions 1979-1985
  - b. 44 f. 28 Father's Story Hour 1984
  - b. 44 f. 29 Film Program 1984
- b. 44 f. 30-31 Handicapped Program 1984
  - b. 45 f. 1-21 Harlem Textile Works 1983-1994
- b. 45 f. 22-26 Harlem Week 1983-1985
  - b. 46 f. 1-4 Lecture Series 1974
  - b. 46 f. 5 Media Workshops 1985
  - b. 46 f. 6-10 Murals 1978-1985
  - b. 46 f. 11 Music 1984
- b. 46 f. 12-14 Painting 1984
  - b. 46 f. 15 Passport to the World of Performing Arts 1989
  - b. 46 f. 16 Photography 1973
- b. 46 f. 17-18 Portfolio Workshop 1981-1982
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- b. 47 f. 12-18 Saturday Tutorial 1984-1986  
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- b. 47 f. 19-21 1973-1983
  - b. 48 f. 1-15 1983-1990

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- b. 48 f. 16 Sewing 1982
- b. 48 f. 17-19 Summer in the Parks 1981-1985
- b. 48 f. 20-29 Summer Program 1982-1989
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- Program Proposals
- b. 49 f. 9-17 1974-1982
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- b. 51 f. 11-31 Workshop Descriptions and Evaluations 1977-1987
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- b. 52 f. 1-24 Flyers and Brochures 1981-1992
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- b. 52 f. 25-32 1979-1986
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- b. 53 f. 9-13 Newsletters 1972-1982
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- b. 54 f. 1-5 Photographs 1976-1983
- b. 54 f. 6-10 Press Kits 1971-1984
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- b. 55 f. 10-16 Public Service Announcements 1981-1983
- Radio and Television
- b. 55 f. 17-25 1973-1988
- origsr.227866 "On the Real Side" Interview with Betty Blayton Taylor and James Bethea  
1982  
sound recording (unavailable)
- origsr.227867b.55 "On the Real Side" Interview with Betty Blayton Taylor and James Bethea  
f.26 1982  
sound recording (unavailable)
- origsr.227863 "Rapping with Patricia Stevens:" Interview with Betty Blayton Taylor and  
Robin Dupree 1982  
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- origsr.227868 Action Woman: Betty Blayton Taylor 1982  
sound recording (unavailable)
- origsr.227862 Interview with Arlene Frances and Betty Blayton Taylor 1983  
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- b. 55 f. 26 Reports and Press Updates 1976-1986