



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

Aaron Douglas papers

Archives of American Art  
750 9th Street, NW  
Victor Building, Suite 2200  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/services/questions>  
<https://www.aaa.si.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Aaron Douglas papers
<b>Date:</b>	1921-1973
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.dougaaro
<b>Creator:</b>	Douglas, Aaron
<b>Extent:</b>	4 Microfilm reels
<b>Language:</b>	English .

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Lent for microfilming 1991 by Special Collections Department, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

### Location of Originals

Originals and master negative in: Fisk University, Special Collections Department.

### Related Materials

Fisk University Special Collections holds the Aaron Douglas collection, 1921-1973 and the Aaron Douglas Collection Addendum, 1937-1974. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library holds the Aaron Douglas papers, 1924-1939.

### Available Formats

35mm microfilm reels 4520-4523 available at Archives of American Art offices, at Fisk University and through interlibrary loan.

### Restrictions

The Archives of American art does not own the original papers. Use is limited to the microfilm copy.

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## Biographical / Historical

Aaron Douglas (1899-1979) was an African American painter, muralist, and illustrator in Nashville, Tennessee. He is commonly regarded as a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance. In 1937 Charles S. Johnson, the first African American president of Fisk University, invited Douglas to develop the university's art department. He served as the department head until his retirement in 1966.

## Scope and Contents

This microfilm collection of the papers of African American painter, muralist, and illustrator Aaron Douglas primarily concern Douglas' years at Fisk University, the development of the art department, and the management of the Stieglitz art collection. The collection consists of biographical material; correspondence; artwork including prints, drawings, and sketchbooks; and teaching material including drafts of lectures and teaching notes. Also included are printed material such as exhibition catalogs and clippings; reports and printed material concerning the Sigma Pi Phi fraternity; and photographs of Douglas and his works of art.

Among the correspondents are Charles Alston, Claude Clark, John Cowles, William Dawson, Jeff Donaldson, Cedric Dover, David Driskell, Mary Beattie Brady of the Harmon Foundation, John Davis Hatch, William C. Haygood of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, and Walter Pach.

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## Arrangement

Collection was microfilmed in the order as received from Fisk University.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- African American artists
- African American educators
- Art -- Study and teaching -- Tennessee -- Nashville
- Art, American
- HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities)

### Types of Materials:

- Drawings
- Sketchbooks

### Names:

- Fisk University. Art Dept

### Occupations:

- Educators -- Tennessee -- Nashville
- Illustrators -- Tennessee -- Nashville
- Muralists -- Tennessee -- Nashville
- Painters -- Tennessee -- Nashville