



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Palmer C. Hayden Papers, 1920-1970, in the Archives of American Art

Stephanie Ashley

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection  
was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

October 2006

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	
Administrative Information .....	1
Biographical / Historical .....	2
Scope and Contents .....	2
Arrangement .....	2
Names and Subjects .....	
Container Listing .....	
Series 1: Biographical Material, 1920-1969 .....	4
Series 2: Diaries, 1938-1967 .....	5
Series 3: Correspondence, 1922-1967 .....	7
Series 4: Printed Material, 1926-1969 .....	8
Series 5: Sketchbooks and Sketches, 1924-circa 1960 .....	9
Series 6: Photographs, 1932-1970 .....	12

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Palmer C. Hayden papers
<b>Date:</b>	1920-1970
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.haydpalm
<b>Creator:</b>	Hayden, Palmer C., 1890-1973
<b>Extent:</b>	2.4 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The papers of African-American painter Palmer C. Hayden date from 1920-1970 and measure 2.4 linear feet. The collection contains biographical material, including 32 diaries documenting Hayden's daily activities, scattered correspondence relating to art sales and Hayden's work for the Works Progress Administration, printed material, 47 sketchbooks compiled over a period of almost forty years, and photographs of Hayden and his artwork.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collection was donated by Palmer C. Hayden in 1970 and a portion of it was microfilmed shortly after receipt.

### Available Formats

The papers of **Palmer C. Hayden** in the Archives of American Art were digitized in 2007 and total 4,060 images.

Negatives of photographs of artwork have not been digitized.

### Processing Information

The collection was microfilmed at some point after receipt on reels 43-47. It was fully processed, arranged, and described by Stephanie Ashley in October 2006, and scanned, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

### Preferred Citation

Palmer C. Hayden papers, 1920-1970. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

The collection has been digitized and is available online via AAA's website.

### Terms of Use

The Archives of American Art makes its archival collections available for non-commercial, educational and personal use unless restricted by copyright and/or donor restrictions, including but not limited

to access and publication restrictions. AAA makes no representations concerning such rights and restrictions and it is the user's responsibility to determine whether rights or restrictions exist and to obtain any necessary permission to access, use, reproduce and publish the collections. Please refer to the [Smithsonian's Terms of Use](#) for additional information.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Born Peyton Cole Hedgeman, in Widewater, Virginia in 1890, Palmer Hayden received his first art instruction through correspondence courses, then studied in 1925 with Asa Grant Randall at the Boothbay Art Colony, in Maine, specializing in marine subjects. In 1927, Hayden's seascape, *Schooners*, won first prize for "Distinguished Achievement in Fine Arts" in the Harmon Foundation's first awards ceremony. With that award, and an additional grant from a patron, Hayden was able to continue his studies in Paris, where he further developed his skills in seascapes and ethnic subject matter. Hayden was among the first African-American artists to use African-American subjects and designs in his painting.

Hayden returned to the United States in 1932 and worked steadily over the next several years for the United States government, including the Treasury Relief Art Project and the Works Progress Administration. In 1944 Hayden began work on his noted *Ballad of John Henry* series of twelve paintings that would occupy him for a decade. In his later work, Hayden continued to focus on African-American themes, capturing both rural gatherings in the South and the urban milieu of New York.

Palmer Hayden died in 1973.

---

## Scope and Contents

The papers of African-American painter Palmer C. Hayden date from 1920-1970 and measure 2.4 linear feet. The collection contains biographical material, including 32 diaries documenting Hayden's daily activities, scattered correspondence relating to art sales and Hayden's work for the Works Progress Administration, printed material, 47 sketchbooks compiled over a period of almost forty years, and photographs of Hayden and his artwork.

---

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 6 series:

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1920-1969 (Box 1; 2 folders)
  - Series 2: Diaries, 1938-1967 (Boxes 1-2; 0.5 linear ft.)
  - Series 3: Correspondence, 1922-1967 (Box 2; 2 folders)
  - Series 4: Printed Material, 1926-1969 (Box 2; 2 folders)
  - Series 5: Sketchbooks and Sketches, 1924-circa 1960 (Boxes 2-6; 1.8 linear ft.)
  - Series 6: Photographs, 1932-1970 (Box 6; 4 folders)
- 

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

African American artists

Types of Materials:

Diaries  
Photographs  
Sketchbooks

Names:

United States. Works Progress Administration

Occupations:

Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

---

## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, 1920-1969

*(Boxes 1; 2 folders)*

Scope and Contents: This series includes general biographical materials such as a biographical sketch of Hayden, a Columbia University transcript, and a typescript of an essay or speech by Hayden on race relations, titled "It's Hard But It's Fair."

Box 1, Folder 1      [Address Books and Lists, undated](#)

Box 1, Folder 2      [General Biographical Material, 1920-1969, undated](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 2: Diaries, 1938-1967

*(Boxes 1-2; 0.5 linear feet)*

**Scope and Contents:** This series consists of diaries and trip logs documenting Hayden's activities through short daily entries in small pocket diaries, and more extensive accounts of travel in spiral-bound notebooks. Entries typically contain observations about the weather, meals, errands and meetings with friends and others.

**Arrangement:** The series is arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 3	<a href="#">Diaries, 1938-1940</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 4	<a href="#">Diaries, 1945-1947</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 5	<a href="#">Diaries, 1948-1950</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 6	<a href="#">Diaries, Trip Log, New York to Los Angeles, June-July 1950</a> (2 log books)
Box 1, Folder 7	<a href="#">Diary, Trip Log, New England, 1951</a>
Box 1, Folder 8	<a href="#">Diaries, 1951-1953</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 9	<a href="#">Diary, Trip Log, New England and Canada, 1952-1953</a>
Box 1, Folder 10	<a href="#">Diary, Trip Log, 1954</a> (1 log book)
Box 1, Folder 11	<a href="#">Diaries, 1954, 1955</a> (2 log books)
Box 1, Folder 12	<a href="#">Diary, Trip Log, San Francisco to Los Angeles, 1955</a>
Box 1, Folder 13	<a href="#">Diaries, 1956-1958</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 14	<a href="#">Diaries, 1959-1961</a> (3 diaries)
Box 1, Folder 15	<a href="#">Diaries, 1962-1963</a> (2 diaries)
Box 2, Folder 1	<a href="#">Diary, Trip Log, 1963</a>
Box 2, Folder 2	<a href="#">Diaries, 1964-1965</a>

(2 diaries)

Box 2, Folder 3

[Diaries, 1966-1967](#)  
(2 diaries)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



## Series 3: Correspondence, 1922-1967

*(Box 2; 2 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Correspondence in this series documents the sale and exhibition of Hayden's paintings, and includes administrative letters relating to Hayden's work for the Works Progress Administration and the Treasury Relief Art Project. The series also includes some scattered personal correspondence.

Box 2, Folder 4      [Correspondence, 1922-1929, undated](#)

Box 2, Folder 5      [Correspondence, 1931-1967](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 4: Printed Material, 1926-1969

(Box 2; 2 folders)

Scope and Contents: This series includes clippings with reviews of Hayden exhibitions, including a 1927 issue of the Paris based periodical *Revue du Vrai et du Beau* containing a review of Hayden's work. There is also a fragment of a catalog from a 1926 Hayden exhibition in New York, and a catalog of the exhibition, *The Ballad of John Henry in Paintings by Palmer Hayden*, at Argent Galleries in New York City, January 1947.

Box 2, Folder 6	<a href="#">Clippings, 1926-1969, undated</a>
Box 2, Folder 7	<a href="#">Exhibition Catalogs, 1926, 1947</a>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 5: Sketchbooks and Sketches, 1924-circa 1960

(Boxes 2-6; 1.8 linear feet)

Arrangement: This series is arranged as 2 subseries:

- 5.1: Sketchbooks and Sketches by Hayden, 1924-circa 1960
- 5.2: Sketches by Others, 1928

### Subseries 5.1: Sketchbooks and Sketches by Hayden, 1924-circa 1960

**Scope and Contents:** This subseries consists of several loose sketches and 47 sketchbooks that Hayden compiled over an almost 40 year period. Pencil is the primary medium, but there are also some sketches in ink and watercolor. The sketchbooks contain sketches of landscapes and coastal scenes, including many from 1927 to 1932 when Hayden lived in Paris and Brittany, France. Some of the sketchbooks document trips taken by Hayden and include his travel notes and notes on his daily activities.

**Arrangement:** Loose sketches are followed by sketchbooks. Sketchbooks are arranged chronologically with some overlap for those that span several years.

Box 2, Folder 8	<a href="#">Loose Sketches, undated</a>
Box 2, Folder 9	<a href="#">Sketchbook, undated</a>
Box 2, Folder 10	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "N. Y. Environs", 1924</a>
Box 2, Folder 11	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "Pelham Bay Park &amp; Envir's", circa 1924-1925</a>
Box 2, Folder 12	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "Around Pelham Bay", circa 1924-1925</a>
Box 2, Folder 13	<a href="#">Sketchbook, 1925-circa 1930</a>
Box 2, Folder 14	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1926</a>
Box 2, Folder 15	<a href="#">Sketchbook, France, circa 1926</a>
Box 3, Folder 1	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "Port Louis, France", circa 1926</a>
Box 3, Folder 2	<a href="#">Sketchbook, New York, circa 1927-1930</a>
Box 3, Folder 3	<a href="#">Sketchbook, France, circa 1927-1932</a>
Box 3, Folder 4	Sketchbook, circa 1928 <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 3, Folder 5	Sketchbook, circa 1928 <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 3, Folder 6	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1928-1930</a>
Box 3, Folder 7	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1929</a>

	Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 3, Folder 8	Sketchbook, circa 1929 Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 3, Folder 9	Sketchbook, circa 1929 Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 3, Folder 10	Sketchbook, circa 1929 Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 4, Folder 1	Sketchbook, "Concarneau", 1929
Box 4, Folder 2	Sketchbook, France, circa 1930
Box 4, Folder 3	Sketchbook, circa 1934-1952
Box 4, Folder 4	Sketchbook, "W. VA, VA and Big Bend Tunnel, 1st Trip, and Berkshires", circa 1935-1945
Box 4, Folder 5	Sketchbook, circa 1938 Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 4, Folder 6	Sketchbook, circa 1938 Image(s): Sketchbooks
Box 4, Folder 7	Sketchbook, "Cape Cod, Misc & Trip to Columbus, Ohio", circa 1938
Box 4, Folder 8	Sketchbook, "N.Y.C. & Environs", circa 1939
Box 5, Folder 1	Sketchbook, circa 1940
Box 5, Folder 2	Sketchbook, 1940s
Box 5, Folder 3	Sketchbook, circa 1941
Box 5, Folder 4	Sketchbook, circa 1941-1943
Box 5, Folder 5	Sketchbook, circa 1943
Box 5, Folder 6	Sketchbook, circa 1943-1949
Box 5, Folder 7	Sketchbook, "John Henry Sketches", circa 1944
Box 5, Folder 8	Sketchbook, "N.Y.C. and Up the River/Trip to Berkshires...", circa 1945
Box 5, Folder 9	Sketchbook, circa 1945-1949

Box 5, Folder 10	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1945-1953</a>
Box 5, Folder 11	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1946</a>
Box 5, Folder 12	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "In Canada", circa 1946</a>
Box 5, Folder 13	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "Sketches for Dutch Colonial Book and a Few John Henry", 1946-1947</a>
Box 6, Folder 1	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "2nd Trip to Big Bend and Other Points in W. VA", circa 1947</a>
Box 6, Folder 2	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1948</a>
Box 6, Folder 3	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1950</a> <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 6, Folder 4	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1950</a> <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 6, Folder 5	<a href="#">Sketchbook, "Vacations in New York State", circa 1950-1951</a>
Box 6, Folder 6	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1954</a> <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 6, Folder 7	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1954</a> <a href="#">Image(s): Sketchbooks</a>
Box 6, Folder 8	<a href="#">Sketchbook, circa 1960</a>
Box 6, Folder 9	<a href="#">Sketchbook, France, circa 1960</a>

---

### Subseries 5.2: Sketches by Others, 1928

Scope and Contents: This subseries consists of a 1928 pencil sketch of Hayden by Hale Woodruff and an undated pencil sketch inscribed "With admiration to a fine artist, Palmer Hayden, best wishes Hilda Simms."

Box 6, Folder 10      [Artwork by Others, 1928, undated](#)  
[Image\(s\): Artwork by Others](#)

---

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series 6: Photographs, 1932-1970

(Box 6; 4 folders)

Scope and Contents: Personal photographs are primarily of Hayden and include one of the artist working on a painting at St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1956. There are also photos of Hayden and others at an exhibition opening of his work at Fisk University in 1970. Photographs of artwork include studies for his series of twelve paintings illustrating *The Ballad of John Henry*. This subseries also contains negatives.

Box 6, Folder 11	<a href="#">Personal Photographs, 1932-1970, undated</a>
Box 6, Folder 12	<a href="#">Photographs of Artwork, undated</a>
Box 6, Folder 13	<a href="#">Photographs of Artwork from Sketchbooks, undated</a>
Box 6, Folder 14	<a href="#">Photographs of Artwork from Sketchbooks, Negatives, undated</a>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)