



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Joshua Johnson manumission record

Archives of American Art
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Joshua Johnson manumission record
Date:	1782 July 15
Identifier:	AAA.johnjosh
Creator:	Johnson, Joshua, fl. 1796-1824
Extent:	1 Microfilm reel (4 pages)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Lent for microfilming 1996 by the Maryland Historical Society.

Location of Originals

Originals returned to lender after microfilming. The originals have now been digitized and are available through the Maryland Historical Society.

Available Formats

35mm microfilm reel 5135 available at Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan.

Restrictions

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

Biographical / Historical

Joshua Johnson, or Johnston (circa 1765-circa 1830) was an African American portraitist in Baltimore, Maryland. Johnson was the son of a white man and an enslaved woman and was sold to his father, who acknowledged him as his son and agreed to free him when Johnson either completed an apprenticeship with a blacksmith or turned 21, whichever came first. Johnson was listed in Baltimore City directories as a painter or limner beginning in 1796. He is the first documented African American professional artist.

Scope and Contents

This microfilm collection documents African American artist Joshua Johnson's formal emancipation from slavery on July 15, 1782. The manumission is recorded in pages 298-300 of a volume of Baltimore County Chattel Records, 1773-1788.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

African American artists
Slaves -- Emancipation -- Maryland -- Baltimore

Occupations:

Painters -- Maryland -- Baltimore