



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Richard J. Powell Papers, 1971-1992, in the Archives of American Art

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Archives of American Art  
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<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>	Richard J. Powell papers
<b>Date:</b>	1971-1992
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.powerich
<b>Creator:</b>	Powell, Richard J., 1953-
<b>Extent:</b>	1 Linear foot
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>The Richard J. Powell papers date from 1971 through 1992 and mostly concern Powell's research and writings on painter William H. Johnson. Found is correspondence with curators, scholars, arts administrators, and U.S., Danish, and Scandinavian museums and associations. The papers also include two of Powell's illustrated research and travel journals from 1984 and 1985, printed materials concerning the exhibition Powell curated in 1991 at the National Museum of American Art <i>Homecoming: William H. Johnson and Afro-America, 1938-1946</i>, research files that contain photocopies of original Johnson archival documents from various research repositories, and photographs (copy prints) of Johnson and his artwork.</p>

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Richard Powell collected this material while conducting research on William H. Johnson. He donated it to the Archives of American Art in July, 2000.

### Related Materials

Richard Powell papers, 1960-2011, is located at Duke University David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

### Processing Information

A volunteer completed preliminary processing of the collection in 2002. In 2004, Barbara Aikens completed minimal arrangement and organization of the papers and a finding aid.

### Preferred Citation

Richard J. Powell papers, 1971-1992. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions on Access

The collection is open for research. Use requires an appointment.

### Terms of Use

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## Biographical Note

Richard J. Powell is an African American art historian and educator in Durham, North Carolina. Powell curated the exhibition *Homecoming: William H. Johnson and Afro-America, 1938-1946*, at the National Museum of American Art, 1991-1992.

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## Scope and Content Note

Papers, 1980-1992, mostly concerning art historian Richard Powell's research and writings on African American painter William H. Johnson (1901-1970). Found is Powell's correspondence with Robert Baehr, Sigrid Bondo, Adelyn Breeskin, David C. Driskell, Michel Fabre, Robert Ferris Thompson, Øystein Hjort, Margo Humphrey, Gregers Krake, Richard A. Long, Torben Lundbæk, Virginia Mecklenburg, Jostein Nerbøvik, Mette Nørredam, James Parker, Jules D. Prown, Kjetil Tandstad, Judith Wilson, Debbie Wood, and Danish and Scandinavian museums and associations. There are also two illustrated research/travel journals containing Powell's comments on Johnson's works of art, related thoughts, slide lists, notes from his lectures at the Sorbonne in Paris, and other experiences dating from July 14 to November 28, 1984, and January 1 to June 20, 1985; two wall calendars, 1984-1985, noting appointments and exhibition openings; a notebook, loose notes and other writings; postcards, research files that contain photocopies of printed material and other primary documents about Johnson including clippings from foreign newspapers with translations; printed material concerning the exhibition *Homecoming: William H. Johnson and Afro-America, 1938-1946*, curated by Powell at the National Museum of American Art, 1991-1992; photographs (copy prints, contact prints, and negatives) of Johnson and his artwork; and miscellany.

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## Arrangement

Missing Title:

- Series 1: Research and Project Correspondence, 1981-1991(Box 1; 19 folders)
  - Series 2: Travel and Research Journals and Notes, 1984-1985, 1991, undated (Box 1; 5 folders)
  - Series 3: Printed Material, 1971-1992, undated (Box 1; 9 folders)
  - Series 4: Research Files, undated (Box 1; 10 folders)
  - Series 5: Photographs and Negatives, undated (Box 1; 4 folders)
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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 painters

Types of Materials:

Travel diaries

Names:

Johnson, William H., 1901-1970

Occupations:

Art historians -- North Carolina

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Research and Project Correspondence, 1981-1991

*(Box 1; 19 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Correspondence concerning Powell's travels, his research, dissertation, and exhibition planning. Correspondents include Robert Bæhr, Sigrid Bondo, Adelyn Breeskin, David C. Driskell, Michel Fabre, Robert Ferris Thompson, Øystein Hjort, Margo Humphrey, Gregers Krake, Richard A. Long, Torben Lundbæk, Virginia Mecklenburg, Jostein Nerbøvik, Mette Nørredam, James Parker, Jules D. Prown, Kjetil Tandstad, Judith Wilson, Debbie Wood, and Danish and Scandinavian museums and associations.

Box 1, Folder 1	Early Correspondence, 1981-1983
Box 1, Folder 2-4	Personal Correspondence, 1984-1991
Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence regarding William H. Johnson Monograph and Research, 1985-1991
Box 1, Folder 6	Correspondence regarding Dissertation, 1986-1988
Box 1, Folder 7	Correspondence with Contacts in Denmark and Norway, 1983-1984
Box 1, Folder 8	Correspondence regarding Residency Permit in Denmark, 1984
Box 1, Folder 9	Correspondence with Contacts in the U.S., 1983-1984
Box 1, Folder 10	Correspondence regarding Fulbright Grant, 1983-1985
Box 1, Folder 11	Correspondence regarding Lectures in Europe, 1984-1985
Box 1, Folder 12-13	Correspondence regarding Travel Arrangements, 1984-1985
Box 1, Folder 14	Correspondence regarding Research in Denmark (includes research notes), 1984-1985
Box 1, Folder 15	Correspondence regarding Research in Norway (includes research notes), 1984-1985
Box 1, Folder 16	Correspondence regarding Research in Sweden (includes research notes), 1985
Box 1, Folder 17	Correspondence regarding Research in United States (includes research notes), 1985-1990
Box 1, Folder 18	Correspondence regarding Research in South Carolina (includes research notes), 1985-1991

Box 1, Folder 19

Correspondence and Proposal for Book and Exhibition, circa 1989

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## Series 2: Travel and Research Journals and Notes, 1984-1985, 1991, undated

*(Box 1; 5 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Found are two illustrated research/travel journals containing Powell's comments on Johnson's works of art, related thoughts, slide lists, notes from his lectures at the Sorbonne in Paris, and other experiences dating from July 14 to November 28, 1984, and January 1 to June 20, 1985; two wall calendars, 1984-1985, noting appointments and exhibition openings; a notebook, loose notes and other writings.

Box 1, Folder 20-21      Travel and Research Journals, 1984-1985

Box 1, Folder 22      Research Notebook, circa 1989

Box 1, Folder 23      Notes, undated

Box 1, Folder 24      Calendars, 1984-1985

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## Series 3: Printed Material, 1971-1992, undated

*(Box 1; 9 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Found are photocopies of printed materials, as well as magazine and newspaper clippings, and postcards.

Box 1, Folder 25      Postcards, undated

Box 1, Folder 26-33      Printed Materials, 1971-1992

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## Series 4: Research Files on William H. Johnson, undated

(Box 1; 10 folders)

Scope and Contents: Research files composed by Powell concerning William H. Johnson and family. Files contain mixed printed materials and numerous photocopies from archival research repositories.

Box 1, Folder 34	Research Files, Johnson, Holcha Krake , 1932-1944, undated
Box 1, Folder 35	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Correspondence about Mental Condition, 1947-1948, undated
Box 1, Folder 36	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Correspondence, Disposition of Art, 1950-1959, undated
Box 1, Folder 37	<a href="#">Research Files, Johnson, William H., Education as Artist , 1921-1925</a>
Box 1, Folder 38	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Personal Correspondence, 1929-1967, undated
Box 1, Folder 39-40	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Newspaper Reviews , circa 1930-1947
Box 1, Folder 41	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Exhibition Catalogs, 1980-1991
Box 1, Folder 42	Research Files, Johnson, William H., Reviews on Art Exhibits , 1926-1946, undated
Box 1, Folder 43	Voll, Christoph (W.H. Johnson's Brother-in-Law), 1932-1960, undated

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## Series 5: Photographs and Negatives, undated

*(Box 1; 4 folders)*

Scope and Contents: Photographs (copy prints, contact prints, and negatives) of William H. Johnson and his artwork.

Box 1, Folder 44-46	Photographs of William H. Johnson and his Artwork, undated
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Box 1, Folder 47	Negatives, undated
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