



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

A Finding Aid to the Joseph White  
Papers, circa 1870-2010, bulk 1971-2008,  
in the Archives of American Art

Erin Kinhart

May 31, 2011

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## Collection Overview

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Repository:</b> | Archives of American Art  |
| <b>Title:</b>      | Joseph White papers   |
| <b>Date:</b>       | circa 1870-2010<br>(bulk 1971-2008)   |
| <b>Identifier:</b> | AAA.whitjose  |
| <b>Creator:</b>    | White, Joseph   |
| <b>Extent:</b>     | 1.7 Linear feet<br>1.61 Gigabytes   |
| <b>Language:</b>   | English .   |
| <b>Summary:</b>    | The papers of Washington, DC, based painter Joseph White measure 1.7 linear feet and 1.61 GB and date from circa 1870 to 2010, with the bulk of the material from 1971 to 2008. White's career as an artist is documented through scattered biographical material, correspondence with family and friends, poetry, plays, exhibition catalogs, news clippings, source material, photographs and digital photographs of White, family, friends, and artwork. |

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Donated by Joseph White in 2010.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed and a finding aid prepared by Erin Kinhart in 2011. Born-digital materials were processed by Kirsi Ritosalmi-Kisner in 2019 with funding provided by Smithsonian Collection Care and Preservation Fund.

### Preferred Citation

Joseph White papers, circa 1870-2010, bulk 1971-2008. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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## Biographical / Historical

Joseph White (1938- ) is a painter in Washington, DC. White works with a grid system and photographs to create his paintings. In 1963 he received a B.A. from the San Francisco State University. He then moved to New York City where he exhibited abstract paintings at the 1964 and 1967 Whitney Biennials. In 1976 he moved to Washington, D.C., and focused on representational painting. He has frequently exhibited his works in Washington, DC, San Francisco, CA, and New York, NY, and is included in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, National Gallery of Art, Corcoran Gallery of Art, and San Francisco Museum of Art, among others.

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## Scope and Contents

The papers of Washington, DC, based painter Joseph White measure 1.7 linear feet and 1.61 GB and date from circa 1870 to 2010, with the bulk of the material from 1971 to 2008. White's career as an artist is documented through scattered biographical material, correspondence with family and friends, poetry, plays, exhibition catalogs, news clippings, source material, photographs and digital photographs of White, family, friends, and artwork.

Biographical material consists of documentation on White's band, Twisted Teenage Plot, as well as resumes documenting his career as a painter. Correspondence includes five letters sent to White from various people, a few postcards from White to his wife, Renee Butler, postcards to his brother, Lito White, and postcards to White from fellow artist and bandmate, Michael Clark. Writings include plays and poetry in manuscript and typescript form. Several of these writings are illustrated. Printed material consists of catalogs and announcements for exhibitions of artwork by White, as well as newspaper and magazine articles about his career. Photographs include family portraits from the late 1800s and photographs from White's childhood. Also found are handmade books of digital prints of his paintings and watercolors. Source photographs for White's paintings depict people, places, and objects. Many of these photographs include grid lines and masked-out details.

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## Arrangement

The collection is arranged as 5 series:

- Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1973-2004 (Box 1; 2 folders)
- Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1971-1999 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 3: Writings, circa 1970s-1990s (Boxes 1, 3; 0.7 linear feet)
- Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-2006 (Box 1; 6 folders)
- Series 5: Photographs, circa 1870-2010 (Boxes 1-3; 0.8 linear feet, ER01-ER04; 1.61 GB)

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Manuscripts  
Photographs  
Resumes  
Typescripts

Names:

Butler, Renee  
Clark, Michael, 1946-  
White, Lito

Occupations:

Painters -- Washington (D.C.)

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Biographical Material, circa 1973-2004

#### 2 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found here are clippings, a press release, flyers, and a 45 rpm recording by Joseph White's band, Twisted Teenage Plot. Also found are White's resumes written at several points in his career.

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 1 | Documentation on Twisted Teenage Plot, 1984-1987<br>Notes: includes 1 sound disk: 45 rpm |
|-----------------|--|

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Resumes, circa 1973-2004 |
|-----------------|--------------------------|

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## Series 2: Correspondence, circa 1971-1999

### 4 Folders (Box 1)

**Scope and Contents:** This series contains five letters sent to White from various people. One letter contains biographical information about a relative, Bishop William White. Also found are a few postcards sent by White to his wife, Renee Butler, postcards to his brother, Lito White, and postcards to White from fellow artist and bandmate, Michael Clark.

**Arrangement:** Correspondence is arranged chronologically within each folder.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Letters, 1996-1999                                  |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Postcards to Renee Butler, circa 1980s              |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Postcards from Michael Clark, 1976-1978             |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Postcards to Lito and Leslie White, circa 1971-1979 |

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## Series 3: Writings, circa 1970s-1990s

### 0.7 Linear feet (Boxes 1, 3)

Scope and Contents: Writings include typescripts and manuscripts of unpublished poems and plays by Joseph White. Many of the draft manuscripts were written in notebooks, and some of his writings are illustrated. Also found is a cloth bag which originally contained a few of White's notebooks.

Arrangement: Titled works are arranged alphabetically.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 7     | Notebook, circa 1982   |
| Box 1, Folder 8     | Poetry, circa 1970s-1990s<br>Notes: Oversized materials housed in Box 3      |
| Box 1, Folder 9     | Writing Fragments, undated   |
| Box 1, Folder 10    | "Lise Deferi: The rhino tour Nepal," Draft Notebook, undated                 |
| Box 1, Folder 11    | "Lise Deferi: The rhino tour Nepal," Typescript, undated                     |
| Box 1, Folder 12    | "Metro Blue," Draft Notebook, circa 1970s                                    |
| Box 1, Folder 13-14 | "Metro Blue," Typescripts, circa 1970s<br>2 Folders                          |
| Box 1, Folder 15    | "Metro Gold," undated  |
| Box 1, Folder 16-17 | "The Oriental Palace," circa 1973<br>2 Folders                               |
| Box 1, Folder 18-19 | "Play One Sandra: 1970 New York," 1980<br>2 Folders                          |
| Box 1, Folder 20    | "Sixty Leaves," Draft Notebook, undated                                      |
| Box 1, Folder 21    | "Sixty Leaves," Typescript, undated  |
| Box 1, Folder 22    | "The Swim Club Songs," 1980<br>Notes: Oversized materials housed in Box 3    |
| Box 3               | Cloth Bag for Notebooks, undated   |
| Box 3               | Poetry, circa 1970s-1990s<br>Notes: Oversized materials from box 1, folder 8 |
| Box 3               | "The Swim Club Songs," 1980  |



Notes: Oversized materials from box 1, folder 22

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## Series 4: Printed Material, 1944-2006

### 6 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: This series contains catalogs and announcements for exhibitions of artwork by Joseph White. Also found are newspaper and magazine articles about White, including a folder of reviews of his 2004 solo show at the Edison Place Gallery in Washington, DC.

Arrangement: Items are arranged chronologically.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 23-24 | Exhibition Catalogs and Announcements, circa 1972-2006       |
| Box 1, Folder 25    | Magazines, 1988, 1977, 1968                                  |
| Box 1, Folder 26-27 | Newspaper and Magazine Clippings, circa 1978-1991, 1944-1964 |
| Box 1, Folder 28    | Reviews of 2004 Solo Exhibition, 2004                        |

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## Series 5: Photographs, circa 1870-2010

0.8 Linear feet (Boxes 1-3)

1.61 Gigabytes (ER01-ER04)

Scope and Contents: Photographs are of White, his family, friends, works of art, and source material. Included are family portraits from the late 1800s and photographs from White's childhood. Also found are handmade books of digital prints of his paintings and watercolors. These digital images are also found in digital format. Source photographs for White's paintings depict people, places, and objects. Many of these photographs include grid lines and masked-out details. Miscellaneous photographs include a few images of musical instruments made by White.

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Box 1, Folder 29-30 | Photographs of Joseph White, circa 1941-1990s<br>2 Folders   |
| Box 1, Folder 31    | Photographs of Family and Friends, circa 1870-1990s  |
| Box 1, Folder 32    | Photograph Album of Digital Prints, "Joseph White Paintings: 1963-2003," , circa 2008                    |
| Box 1, Folder 33    | Photograph Album of Digital Prints, "Joseph White Paintings: 2004-2008," , circa 2008                    |
| Box 1, Folder 34    | Photograph Album of Digital Prints, "Joseph White Watercolors: 1967-1985," , circa 2008                  |
| Box 2, Folder 1     | Photograph Album of Digital Prints, "Joseph White Watercolors: 2004-2008," , circa 2008                  |
| Folder ER01-ER04    | Paintings and Watercolors, Digital Photographs, 2007-2010<br>1.61 Gigabytes (734 computer files)         |
| Box 2, Folder 3     | Photographs of Artwork, 1996   |
| Box 2, Folder 4-9   | Source Photographs for Paintings, circa 1974-2000s<br>6 Folders (Oversized materials housed in Box 3)    |
| Box 2, Folder 10    | Miscellaneous Photographs, circa 1970s-1990s   |
| Box 3               | Source Photographs for Paintings, circa 1974-2000s<br>Notes: Oversized materials from box 2, folders 4-9 |

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