



Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the John Brantley Wilder papers,
1937-circa 1979, in the Archives of American Art

Rayna Andrews

Funding for the processing of this collection
was provided by the Henry Luce Foundation.

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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

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	John Brantley Wilder papers
Identifier:	AAA.wildjohb
Date:	1937-circa 1979
Extent:	1.5 Linear feet
Creator:	Wilder, John Brantley
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	The papers of painter, journalist, and civil rights activist John Brantley Wilder measure 1.5 linear feet and date from 1937 to circa 1979. The papers include correspondence; clippings; invoices; photographs; reproductions of some of Wilder's pen and ink sketches; as well as a scrapbook, which includes clippings, photographs, and printed material. Also included in the collection is a diorama representing a Sioux family.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The papers were donated by John Brantley Wilder in 1979.

Processing Information

The collection was minimally processed and a finding aid prepared by Rayna Andrews in 2017 with funding from the Luce Foundation.

Preferred Citation

John Brantley Wilder papers, 1937-circa 1979. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment and is limited to the Archives' Washington, D.C., Research Center.

Biographical / Historical

John Brantley Wilder (1909?-1990) was a painter, journalist, and civil rights activist. He worked for the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (later the Work Projects Administration, WPA) through the early 1940s and worked for the *Philadelphia Tribune* in a variety of capacities from the 1960s to the 1970s, including producing pen and ink sketches for Negro History Week, circa 1961. In addition

to his art and journalism work, in the late 1940s Wilder led a campaign urging Hollywood to expand the portrayal of African Americans in film beyond maids and servants.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter, journalist, and civil rights activist John Brantley Wilder measure 1.5 linear feet and date from 1937 to circa 1979. The papers include correspondence; invoices for paintings and materials; clippings of Wilder's articles and sketches that appeared in newspapers; a scrapbook of clippings, photographs, and printed materials; photographs and slides, primarily of artwork; and reproductions of Wilder's pen and ink sketches for the *Philadelphia Tribune*. The collection also includes a diorama representing a Sioux family. This is one of eighteen "Miniature Indian Dioramas" produced for the Works Progress Administration's Pennsylvania Museum Extension Project.

Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection, the papers are arranged as one series.

- Series 1: John Brantley Wilder papers, 1937-circa 1979 (Boxes 1-2; 1.5 linear feet, OV 3)
-

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:

Photographs

Scrapbooks

Sketches

Slides (photographs)

Names:

Sioux Nation

United States. Works Progress Administration

Occupations:

Civil rights workers -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia

Journalists -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia

Painters -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia

Container Listing

Series 1: John Brantley Wilder Papers, 1937-circa 1979

1.5 Linear feet (Boxes 1-2, OV 3)

Box 1, Folder 1-2	Correspondence, 1942, 1961-1976, undated
Box 1, Folder 3	Invoices, 1969-1977
Box 1, Folder 4	Clippings, 1968-1969 Oversized material housed in OV 3.
Box 1, Folder 5-7	Scrapbook, 1937-1976 The scrapbook was disbound.
Box 1, Folder 8	Photographs and Slides, circa 1938-circa 1979
Box 1, Folder 9	Reproductions of Pen and Ink Sketches, circa 1961
Box 2	WPA Museum Extension Project Diorama, <i>45-MD-3 Indian Family Sioux</i> , undated
Box OV 3	Oversized Clippings, 1963-1974

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