



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Hale Woodruff papers, 1920-1977, bulk 1960s-1970s, in the Archives of American Art

Rayna Andrews

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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:	Hale Woodruff papers
Date:	1920-1977 (bulk 1960s-1970s)
Identifier:	AAA.woodhale
Creator:	Woodruff, Hale, 1900-1980
Extent:	0.6 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English.
Summary:	The papers of African American painter, muralist, and arts educator Hale Woodruff measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1920 to 1977 with the bulk of the collection dating from the 1960s to the 1970s. The papers contain biographical material, professional files, writings, printed material, photographs, and photocopies of a scrapbook, and of artwork.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Hale Woodruff papers were lent for microfilming by Woodruff in 1970. Most of the material was subsequently donated in 1978, along with additional material.

Separated Materials

The Archives of American of Art also holds material lent for microfilming (reel 4222), the majority of which was included in subsequent donations. Loaned materials not donated at a later date remain with the lender and are not described in the container listing of this finding aid.

Location of Originals

Some materials in this collection exist only in photocopy form. The location of originals of document photocopies, scrapbook pages, sketches, and photographs of artwork found in this collection is unknown.

Related Materials

Also found in the Archives of American Art is an oral history interview with Hale Woodruff conducted by Al Murray, November 18, 1968.

Available Formats

Portions of the collection and material lent for microfilming is available on microfilm reel 4222 at the Archives of American Art offices and through interlibrary loan. Researchers should note that the arrangement of material described in this finding aid does not reflect the order of the material on microfilm.

Processing Information

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

Preferred Citation

Hale Woodruff papers, 1920-1977, bulk 1960s-1970s. 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

Hale Aspacio Woodruff (1900-1980) was an African American painter, muralist, and arts educator. His most well-known works are the *Amistad* murals, painted between 1939 and 1940 for Talladega College's Savery Library.

Woodruff was born in Cairo, Illinois, and grew up in Nashville, Tennessee. He studied at the John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis, and at the Art Institute of Chicago. After winning an award from the Harmon Foundation, he traveled to Paris and attended the Academie Moderne and the Academie Scandinave. He also spent a summer studying mural painting in Mexico with Diego Rivera.

In 1931, Woodruff established one of the earliest art departments at a Black college at Atlanta University – teaching classes at the University's Laboratory High School, Morehouse College, and Spelman College as well. He also established the Atlanta Annuals, one of the earliest national exhibition opportunities for African American artists. In 1946 he moved to New York and taught in the art department at New York University until his retirement in 1968.

Scope and Contents

The papers of Hale Woodruff measure 0.6 linear feet and date from 1920 to 1977, with the bulk of the collection dating from the 1960s to the 1970s. The papers contain biographical material, professional files, writings, printed material, photocopies of a scrapbook, photographs, and photocopies of artwork.

Biographical material includes a resume, awards and honorary degrees, and an interview transcript.

Professional files consist of correspondence, committee files, and materials related to exhibitions and projects.

Writings include an illustrated notebook; drafts and copies of lectures, statements, articles, book reviews, and exhibition text; and notes on note cards, as well as photocopies of notes Woodruff took in Mexico while studying with Diego Rivera.

Printed Material includes exhibition announcements, exhibition catalogs, publications in which Woodruff is featured, clippings, and other assorted printed material.

The scrapbook consists of photocopies of scrapbook pages. The originals do not appear in the collection, but mostly contained clippings and printed material, with some correspondence.

Photographs include black and white photographs with an accompanying piece of correspondence, and photocopies of photographs of artwork.

Artwork includes photocopies of sketches and drawings.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as seven series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1966-1977 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 2: Professional Files, 1944-1973 (Box 1; 4 folders)
- Series 3; Writings, 1920-1977, undated (Box 1; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 4; Printed Material, 1920s-1970s (Box 2, 4 folders)
- Series 5: Scrapbook, 1927-1928, 1940-1960 (Box 2, 1 folder)
- Series 6: Photographic Material, 1926-1977 (Box 2, 2 folders)
- Series 7: Artwork, 1939-1952, undated (Box 2, 1 folder)

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 educators
African American painters
Art -- Study and teaching -- United States
Painting, American
Photographs

Types of Materials:

Interviews
Scrapbooks

Names:

Rivera, Diego, 1886-1957

Occupations:

Educators -- Georgia -- Atlanta
Educators -- New York (State) -- New York
Muralists -- New York (State) -- New York
Painters -- New York (State) -- New York

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1966-1977

4 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Biographical Material includes a copy of Hale Woodruff's resume; materials related to awards, certificates, and honorary degrees; and an interview transcript. Researchers should note that some awards materials only appear as photocopies.

Box 1, Folder 1	Resume, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Awards, certificates, honorary degrees, 1966-1977
Box 1, Folder 3	Carnegie Institute Division of Education, Hale Woodruff Award, 1971
Box 1, Folder 4	Interview transcript, 1969

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Series 2: Professional Files, 1944-1973

4 Folders (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Professional Files consist of correspondence, committee files, and materials related to exhibitions and projects. The correspondence is primarily professional in nature and arranged chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 5	Correspondence, 1944-1973, undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Committee on Art Education, 1952-1953
Box 1, Folder 7	Black Academy of Arts and Letters, 1971-1972
Box 1, Folder 8	Materials related to exhibitions and projects, 1952, 1967-1968, 1977, undated

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Series 3: Writings, 1920-1977, undated

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Writings include an illustrated notebook from Woodruff's studies at the John Herron Art Institute; photocopies of notes Woodruff took while studying with Diego Rivera; and drafts and copies of lectures, statements, articles, book reviews, and text written for exhibitions. There are also a number of note cards with notes for presentations, lectures, articles, etc.

Box 1, Folder 9	Illustrated notebook - John Herron Art Institute, 1920
Box 1, Folder 10	Photocopies of notes taken by Hale Woodruff as a student of Diego Rivera, 1936 July
Box 1, Folder 11	Articles and book reviews, circa 1947, 1961, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Articles for School Arts magazine, 1956-1958
Box 1, Folder 13	Preface and foreword - First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar, 1966
Box 1, Folder 14	U.S.I.A. review of East African art shows, 1969, undated
Box 1, Folder 15	Published articles - "My meeting with Henry O. Tanner" and "Modern art from Africa", 1970
Box 1, Folder 16	Lecture at NYU and an evaluation of the Hunter College Masters degree program in studio art, 1971, 1974
Box 1, Folder 17	Preface to Romare Bearden's show at Nassau Community College, 1977
Box 1, Folder 18	Introduction to an exhibit of the works of Kofi Antubam, undated
Box 1, Folder 19	Statements and proposals, undated
Box 1, Folder 20	Note cards - Outline for a lecture on African art, given at Detroit Institute of Art, 1969
Box 1, Folder 21	Note cards, undated
Box 1, Folder 22	Note cards, undated
Box 1, Folder 23	Note cards, undated
Box 1, Folder 24	Note cards, undated

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Series 4: Printed Material, 1920s-1970s

4 Folders (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Printed Material includes exhibition announcements and catalogs, publications in which Woodruff is featured, clippings, and other assorted printed material.

Box 2, Folder 1	Exhibition announcements and catalogs, 1940-1962, 1967-1977, undated
Box 2, Folder 2	Publications, 1943-1971
Box 2, Folder 3	Clippings, 1920s-1970s
Box 2, Folder 4	Assorted printed material, circa 1940s-1960s, undated

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Series 5: Scrapbook, 1927-1928, 1940-1960

1 Folder (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: The scrapbook series consists of a photocopy of one or two scrapbooks. The original materials are not present in the collection. Earlier pages chronicle Woodruff's time in Paris, while later pages show exhibitions. The majority of the materials represented in the scrapbook appear to be clippings and printed material, with some correspondence mixed in.

Box 2, Folder 5 [Photocopy of scrapbook, 1927-1928, 1940-1960](#)

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Series 6: Photographic Material, 1926-1977

2 Folders (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Photographs include four black and white photographs of the artist and one accompanying piece of correspondence. The bulk of this series is made up of photocopies of photographs, primarily of works of art. The original photographs are not present in the collection.

Box 2, Folder 6 [Photographs, 1951, 1968, 1977](#)

Box 2, Folder 7 [Photocopies of photographs, 1926-1951, 1967, 1974, undated](#)

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Series 7: Artwork, 1939-1952, undated

1 Folder (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Artwork consists of photocopies of drawings and sketches. Researchers should note that the originals are not present in the collection.

Box 2, Folder 8

[Photocopies of sketches, 1939-1940, 1945, 1952, undated](#)

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