



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Francis Wolff Jazz Photoprints

NMAH.AC.1238

David Haberstich

2018

Archives Center, National Museum of American History
P.O. Box 37012
Suite 1100, MRC 601
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
archivescenter@si.edu
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Arrangement.....	2
Scope and Contents.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3
Series 1: Photoprints, 1953-1966.....	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Francis Wolff Jazz Photoprints
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1238
Date:	1953-1966 1953-1966
Extent:	0.5 Cubic feet (1 box)
Source:	Cuscuna, Michael Wolff, Francis
Language:	English
Summary:	Collection consists of photographic prints from negatives by the eminent jazz photographer Francis Wolff, depicting such greats as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and other important artists.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Images, June 3, 2011.

Processing Information

Collection processed by David Haberstich. 12 prints shown in the "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," Archives Center exhibition space, National Museum of American History, April 1-July 1, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Preferred Citation

Francis Wolff Jazz Photoprints, Archives Center, National Museum of American History. Gift of Michael Cuscuna.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Michael Cuscuna retains copyright. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Wolff (born 1907 or 1908 in Berlin, Germany, died March 8, 1971 in New York City) was a record company executive, photographer and record producer. After a career as a commercial photographer in Germany, Wolff emigrated to the United States in 1939. In New York his childhood friend Alfred Lion, had co-founded Blue Note Records in the same year, and Wolff joined Lion in running the company. During Lion's war service, Wolff worked for Milt Gabler at the Commodore Music Store, and together they maintained the company's catalog until Lion was discharged. Until Lion retired in 1967, Wolff concentrated on the financial affairs of the business and only supervised occasional recording sessions produced during his visits to Europe. For the last four years of his life, when Blue Note was no longer an independent label, Wolff shared production responsibilities with pianist and arranger Duke Pearson. Wolff took photographs during the recordings sessions, usually shot during session rehearsals, throughout the period of Lion's involvement in Blue Note Records. They were used on publicity material and LP album sleeves, and have continued to be used in CD reissue booklets. [Redacted from Wikipedia entry.]

Scope and Contents

Twenty-five silver gelatin photographic prints (on fiber-based paper, 20" x 16") from negatives by the eminent jazz photographer Francis Wolff, depicting such greats as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and other important artists. Descriptions of prints supplied by the donor, Michael Cuscuna.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into one series.

Series 1: Photoprints, 1953-1966

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States

Types of Materials:

Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin -- 1950-2000

Names:

Blue Note Records
Coltrane, John, 1926-1967
Cuscuna, Michael
Davis, Miles
Monk, Thelonious

Container Listing

Series 1: Photoprints, 1953-1966

Box 1, Item 1

Art Blakey at his January 24, 1962 session for "The African Beat" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1962 January 24

[Image\(s\)](#)

Art Blakey at his January 24, 1962 session for "The American Beat" at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1962

1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Art Blakey at his January 24, 1962 session for "The American Beat" at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blakey, Art, 1919-1990
Blue Note Records

Topic: Drums
Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States

Genre/ Form: Later prints
Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 2

Clifford Brown at his August 28, 1953 session for "The Clifford Brown Sextet (Blue Note) at Audio-Visual Studios, New York City, 1953 August 28

[Image\(s\)](#)

Clifford Brown at his August 28, 1953 session for "The Clifford Brown Sextet (Blue Note) at Audio-Video Studios, New York City [black-and-white photoprint], 1953

1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Clifford Brown at his August 28, 1953 session for "The Clifford Brown Sextet \(Blue Note\) at Audio-Video Studios, New York City \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names:	Blue Note Records Brown, Clifford
Topic:	Jazz Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States Trumpet
Genre/ Form:	Later prints Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Culture:	African Americans

Box 1, Item 3

Ron Carter at Sam Rivers's May 21, 1965 session for "Contours" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1965 May 21

[Image\(s\)](#)

Ron Carter at Sam Rivers's May 21, 1965 session for "Contours" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1965
1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Ron Carter at Sam Rivers's May 21, 1965 session for "Contours" \(Blue Note\) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstick, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Carter, Ron, 1937-

Topic: Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States

Genre/
Form: Later prints
Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 4 Paul Chambers at John Coltrane's September 15, 1957 session for "Blue Train" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. , 1957 September 15i

Box 1, Item 5 Don Cherry and Henry Grimes at Cherry's December 24, 1965 session for "Complete Communion" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1965 December 24

Box 1, Item 6 Ornette Coleman at his Sept. 9, 1966 session for "The Empty Foxhole" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1966 September 9

[Image\(s\)](#)

Ornette Coleman at his September 9, 1966 session for "The Empty Foxhole" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1966

1 item (paper 20" x 16".; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Ornette Coleman at his September 9, 1966 session for "The Empty Foxhole" \(Blue Note\) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

Coleman playing violin.

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Coleman, Ornette

Topic: Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States
Violin

Genre/
Form: Later prints
Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 7

John Coltrane and Lee Morgan at Coltrane's Sept. 15, 1957 session for "Blue Train" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. , 1957 September 15

[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 1, Item 8

J.J. Johnson and Miles Davis at Davis's session of April 20, 1953 for "The Miles Davis All Stars" (Blue Note) at WOR Studios, New York City. , 1953 April 20

[Image\(s\)](#)

J.J. Johnson and Miles Davis at Davis's session of April 20, 1953 for "The Miles Davis All-Stars" (Blue Note) at WOR Studios, New York City [black-and-white photoprint], 1957

1 Item (paper 20" x 16".; 36.5 x 36.5 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): J.J. Johnson and Miles Davis at Davis's session of April 20, 1953 for "The Miles Davis All-Stars" \(Blue Note\) at WOR Studios, New York City \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Davis, Miles
Johnson, J.J., 1924-

Topic: Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States

Genre/
Form: Later prints
Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 9 Eric Dolphy at his Feb. 25, 1964 session for "Out to Lunch" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1964 February 25

Box 1, Item 10 Curtis Fuller at his June 16, 1957 session for "The Opener" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. This became the album's cover image. (Missing), 1957 June 16

[Image\(s\)](#)

The Opener [Curtis Fuller] [black-and-white photoprint], June 16, 1957, 1957
1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): The Opener \[Curtis Fuller\] \[black-and-white photoprint\], June 16, 1957.](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

Curtis Fuller at his June 16, 1957 session for "The Opener" at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey. Recording session with Mobley, Timmons, Chambers, Taylor. Fuller plays trombone and smoke curls above his head. This photograph became the album's cover image.

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Fuller, Curtis, 1934-

Topic: Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States
Smoke
Trombone

Genre/
Form: Later prints
Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 11

Dexter Gordon and Freddie Hubbard at Gordon's May 6, 1961 session for "Don' All Right" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studios, Englewood Cliffs, N.J, 1961
May 6

[Image\(s\)](#)

Dexter Gordon and Freddie Hubbard at Gordon's May 6, 1961 session for "Doin' All Right" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1961

1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Dexter Gordon and Freddie Hubbard at Gordon's May 6, 1961 session for "Doin' All Right" \(Blue Note\) at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Gordon, Dexter, 1923-1990
Hubbard, Freddie, 1938-

Topic: Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States
Saxophone
Trumpet

Genre/
Form: Later prints

Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 12

Joe Henderson at the Blue Note offices, New York City in October 1963. This became the cover image for his album "Our Thing" (Blue Note). , 1963 October

[Image\(s\)](#)

Joe Henderson at the Blue Note offices, New York City in October 1963
[black-and-white photoprint], 1963
1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Joe Henderson at the Blue Note offices, New York City in October 1963 \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

This became the cover image for Henderson's album "Our Thing" (Blue Note).

Henderson is shown smoking a cigarette, with curling smoke.

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names: Blue Note Records
Henderson, Joe, 1937-

Topic: Cigarettes -- 1950-2000
Jazz
Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States
Smoking -- 1930-1980

Genre/ Later prints
Form: Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints
-- Silver gelatin

Culture: African Americans

Box 1, Item 13

Freddie Hubbard at Andrew Hill's October 8, 1965 session for "Compulsion" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1965 October 8

- Box 1, Item 14 Kiane Zawadi and Howard Johnson at Hank Mobley's March 18, 1966 session for "A Slice of the Top" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1966 March 18
- Box 1, Item 15 Philly Joe Jones at an August 1957 rehearsal for "John Jenkins with Kenny Burrell" (Blue Note). He did not appear on the album., 1957 August
- Box 1, Item 16 Hank Mobley and Pepper Adams at Mobley's Oct. 20, 1957 session for "Poppin" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J., 1957 October 20

[Image\(s\)](#)

Hank Mobley and Pepper Adams at Mobley's October 20, 1957 session for "Poppin" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1957

1 Item (paper 20" x 16".; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Hank Mobley and Pepper Adams at Mobley's October 20, 1957 session for "Poppin" \(Blue Note\) at the Van Gelder Studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names:	Adams, Pepper Blue Note Records Mobley, Hank
Topic:	Jazz Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States Saxophone
Genre/ Form:	Later prints Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Culture:	African Americans

Box 1, Item 17

Alfred Lion and Thelonious Monk at Monk's May 30, 1952 session for "Genius of Modern Music" (Blue Note) at WOR Studios, New York City., 1952 May 30

[Image\(s\)](#)

Alfred Lion and Thelonious Monk at Monk's May 30, 1952 session for "Genius of Modern Music" (Blue Note) at WOR Studios, New York City [black-and-white photoprint], 1952

1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 36.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Alfred Lion and Thelonious Monk at Monk's May 30, 1952 session for "Genius of Modern Music" \(Blue Note\) at WOR Studios, New York City \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstick, curator.

Names:	Blue Note Records Lion, Alfred Monk, Thelonious
Topic:	Jazz Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States
Genre/ Form:	Later prints Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Culture:	African Americans

Box 1, Item 18

Thelonious Monk at Sonny Rollins's April 14, 1957 session for "Sonny Rollins Volume II (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. , 1957 April 14

Box 1, Item 19

Lee Morgan at John Coltrane's September 15, 1957 session for "Blue Train" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. , 1957 September 15

John Coltrane and Lee Morgan at Coltrane's September 15, 1957 session for "Blue Train" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey [black-and-white photoprint], 1957

1 Item (paper 20" x 16"; 35.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

Image(s): [John Coltrane and Lee Morgan at Coltrane's September 15, 1957 session for "Blue Train" \(Blue Note\) at the Van Gelder studio, New Jersey \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names:	Blue Note Records Coltrane, John, 1926-1967 Morgan, Lee
Topic:	Jazz Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States Saxophone Trombone
Genre/ Form:	Later prints Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Culture:	African Americans

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Box 1, Item 20 | Bud Powell and his son John Earl Powell at a December 1958 rehearsal at Birdland, New York City for Powell's "The Scene Changes" (Blue Note). This became the cover image for the album. , 1958 December |
| Box 1, Item 21 | Max Roach at Sonny Rollins's December 16, 1956 session for "Sonny Rollins Volume One (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, N.J. , 1956 December 16 |
| Box 1, Item 22 | Wayne Shorter at Lee Morgan's February 15, 1964 session for "Search for the New Land" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1964 February 15
Image(s) |
| Box 1, Item 23 | Wayne Shorter and McCoy Tyner at Shorter's April 29, 1964 session for "Night Dreamer" (Blue Note) at the Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. , 1964 April 29 |

[Image\(s\)](#)

Box 1, Item 24

Horace Silver at the November 23, 1955 session for "The Jazz Messengers at Café Bohemia (Blue Note) (Missing), 1958 April 7

[Image\(s\)](#)

Horace Silver at the November 23, 1955 session for "The Jazz Messengers at Cafe Bohemia (Blue Note) [black-and-white photoprint], 1955
1 Item (paper 20" x 16".; 35.5 x 36.0 cm. on)

[Image\(s\): Horace Silver at the November 23, 1955 session for "The Jazz Messengers at Cafe Bohemia \(Blue Note\) \[black-and-white photoprint\].](#)

Wolff, Francis, 1907?-1971, Photographer

Cuscuna, Michael, Donor

Mosaic Images, Donor

In box 1.

Unrestricted research use on site by appointment.

Copyright held by Michael Cuscuna, Mosaic Records.

Silver gelatin on paper.

Local Numbers

AC1238-0000001 (AC Scan)

Exhibitions Note

Displayed in "The Blue Note Photographs of Francis Wolff," National Museum of American History, April 1-June 30, 2016; David Haberstich, curator.

Names:	Blue Note Records Cafe Bohemia Silver, Horace, 1928-2014
Topic:	Jazz Jazz musicians -- 1950-2000 -- United States Piano
Genre/ Form:	Later prints Photographs -- 1950-1960 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin
Culture:	African Americans

Box 1, Item 25

Jimmy Smith and Donald Bailey at Smith's April 7, 1958 session for "Cool Blues" (Blue Note), live at Small's Paradise, New York City. , 1958 April 7

[Image\(s\)](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)