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Collection Overview

Repository: Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Creator: Robbins, Warren M
Title: Warren M. Robbins Papers
Dates: 1923-2009
Quantity: 5 cu. ft. (5 record storage boxes)

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Descriptive Entry

This accession consists of the personal papers of Warren M. Robbins, founder and director of the Museum of African Art which became a part of the Smithsonian Institution in 1979 and was later renamed the National Museum of African Art. The records document his early life growing up in Worcester, Massachusetts; his work in the Foreign Service; his work at the Museum of African and the National Museum of African Art; his lectures and interviews regarding African art; and his personal relationships with a variety of individuals including Saul Bellow, Maya Angelou, Chaim Gross, S. I. Hayakawa, Frances Humphrey Howard, Hubert H. Humphrey, and Raphael Soyer. Materials include correspondence, memoranda, publications, lectures, audiovisual materials, images, clippings, and other related materials. Some materials are in German and French.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:
Art, African
Museum directors.

Types of Materials:
Audiotapes
Black-and-white photographs
Clippings
Color photographs
Color transparencies
Manuscripts
Videotapes

Names:
Angelou, Maya
Bellow, Saul
Gross, Chaim, 1904-1991
Hayakawa, S. I. (Samuel Ichiye), 1906-1992
Howard, Frances Humphrey
Humphrey, Hubert H. (Hubert Horatio), 1911-1978
Museum of African Art (U.S.)
National Museum of African Art (U.S.)
Robbins, Warren M.
Smithsonian Institution
Soyer, Raphael, 1899-1987
United States. Foreign Service
Box 1

Biographical
Birth certificate, September 4, 1923
Classical High School - 1941, 2001-2004
Classical High School - 50th reunion - Class of 1941, 1991
University of New Hampshire - Academic record, 1941-1942
University of New Hampshire - Yearbook, 1945
University of New Hampshire - 50th reunion - Classes of 1945 and 1946, 1995
American Dependents High Schools of Germany - Erinnerungen, 1950
American Dependents High Schools of Germany - Erinnerungen, 1951
Lebanon Valley College, 1975
Passports, 1950-1998
Identification cards, 1949-1997

Family
Correspondence and clippings, 1935-1948, 1977-1982
Correspondence
The Aspen Institute, 1981-1995
Saul Bellow, 1977-1998
Caring Institute, 1991-1996
Hillary Rodham Clinton, 1997
Duke Ellington School of the Arts, 1979-1987
Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, 1980-1987
Museum of African Art, 1966-1975
Charles O. Perry, 1988
Jesse O. Tanner, 1977-1980
Letters to the Editor, 1961-1999

Cards, 1978-1979

Chronological Files

January to June 1993 (2 folders)

Box 2

July to December 1993

January to June 1994 (2 folders)

July to December 1994 (2 folders)

1995

January to July 1996

July 1996 to February 1997

February to December 1997

1998

1999 (2 folders)

2000

2001

January to April 2002

April to October 2002

2003

2004

Box 3

Europe

Correspondence - 1951

Correspondence - 1952

Correspondence - 1953

Correspondence - 1954

Correspondence - 1955

Correspondence - 1956

Correspondence - 1957-1963
Correspondence - France, 1967-1991
Correspondence - Italy, 1981-1990
State Department, 1961-1962
United States Information Agency, 1949-1962 (4 folders)
Germany, 1949-1962 (3 folders)

Box 4
Germany - Personal, 1955-1960
Germany - Teaching, 1949-1950
Germany - Publication - Erziehung, 1952-1952
Publications - General, 1952-1955
McCarthyism in Austrian papers, 1953-1954
Washington, D.C. - Work to be done, 1958-1960
Lectures
Brochures and announcements, 1986-1991
Awards and Honors
University of New Hampshire - Honorary degree, 1979
Certificate of Public Service - Advisory Council of the Bureau of African Affairs, October 15, 1970

Subjects
Sale of the Frederick Douglass townhouses, 1989
Friends of the Frederick Douglas Museum, 1991
Duke Ellington School of the Arts - Pan African Day, 1989
Duke Ellington School of the Arts - Sculpture garden, 1985-1989
General, 1982-1995
Clippings, 1953-1996
Images
Warren Robbins - Individual portraits, 1974, 2004
Warren Robbins - Early life

Maya Angelou
Leonard Baskin
Saul Bellow, 1982-1983
Wilbur J. Cohen
R. Buckminster Fuller
Chaim Gross, 1983
Francoise Gilot
S. I. Hayakawa, 1979, 1982
Frances Humphrey Howard
Hubert H. Humphrey
Lady Bird Johnson
Lyndon B. Johnson, 1967
Mary McFadden
Eleanor Roosevelt
Raphael Soyer, 1983
Europe and the Foreign Service, 1950-1963 (2 folders)
Frederick Douglass Museum
Smithsonian, 1981
University of Michigan Outstanding Achievement Award, 1994
General, 1983-2004

Box 5

Audiovisual

Hawaii - Lecture, 1994 (VHS tape)

Frostburg State University - 109th commencement, morning ceremony, December 19, 1996 (VHS tape)

In Black America, 1984 (audiocassette)

Sierra Leone (audiocassette)
African Art festival - Tape 3, 1989 (audiocassette)

National Museum of African Art opening at Quadrangle, September 15, 1987 (audiocassette)

Interview with Bill Rubin about Picasso (audiocassette)

Discussion of Picasso and Braque exhibition (audiocassette)

Museum of African Art - Dinner, July 25, 1978 (audiotape)

African art discussion with Mr. Adeyemi and Mr. Chindongo (audiotape)

Warren Robbins interview with Steve Allison (side 1) and Funny Girl, You are a Woman, etc. (Side 2) (audiotape)

Warren Robbins speech for Grant Hillaber farewell party, 1963 (audiotape)

Radio Smithsonian - Art of Africa, program no. 527, 26:30 minutes (audiotape)

Window on Washington - Anne Blair interview with Warren Robbins, 27:30 minutes, March 24, 1972 (audiotape)

Warren Robbins (audiotape)