

# Building an Inclusive Database

Cataloging Race, Gender, Sexuality and Other Identities

Terri Anderson and Emily Houf

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE



New York City • April 18-21, 2016



# Building an Inclusive Database: Cataloging Race, Gender, Sexuality and Other Identities

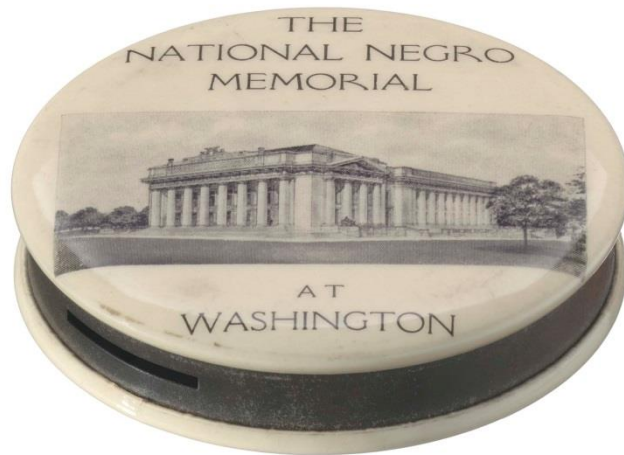
Terri Anderson and Emily Houf



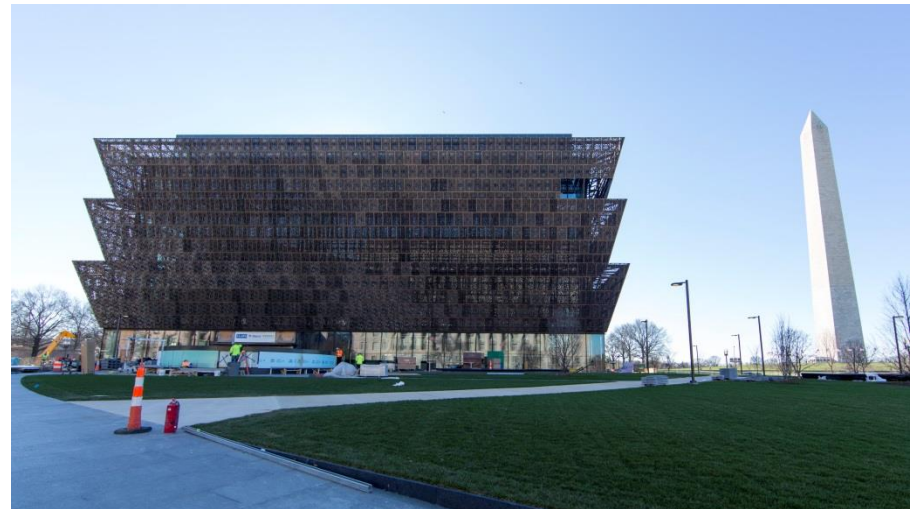
Smithsonian



# NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE



1926



2016

# Opening September 2016!

## History Galleries:

- Slavery and Freedom
- Segregation
- A Changing America: Beyond 1968

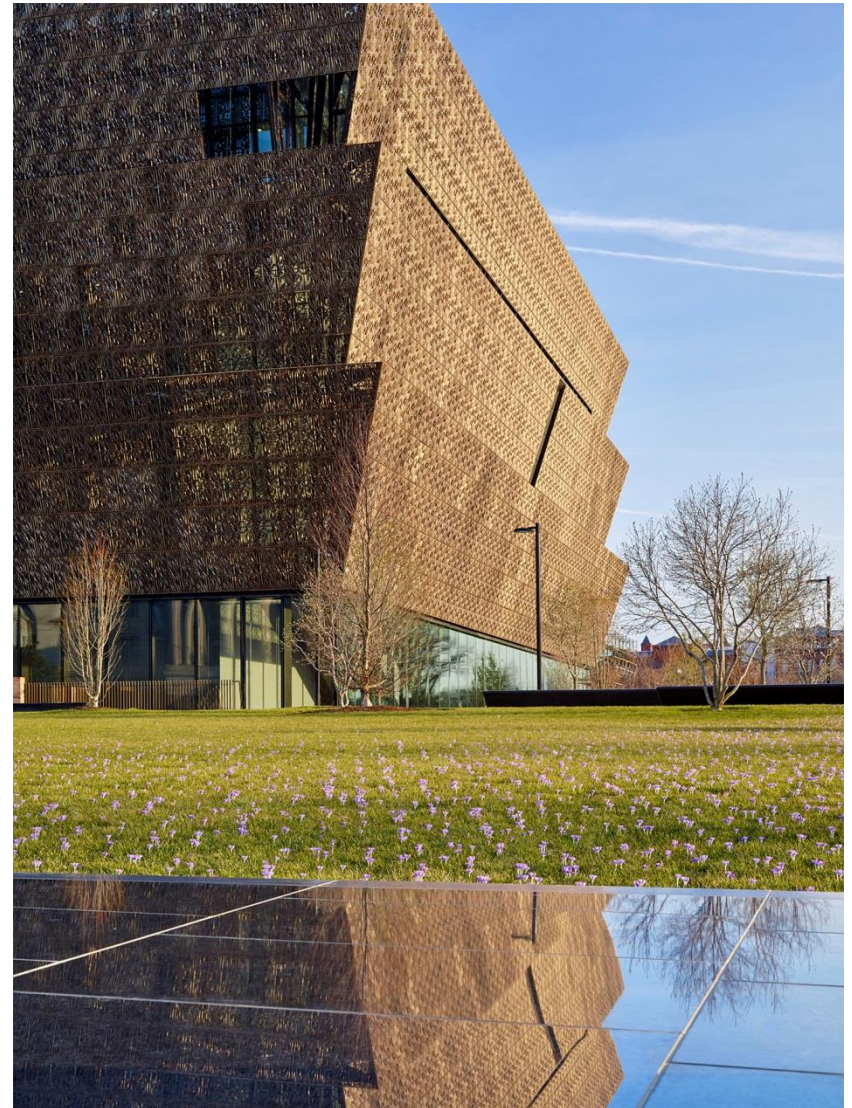
## Community Galleries:

- Power of Place
- Making a Way Out of No Way
- Military History
- Sports

## Culture Galleries:

- Musical Crossroads
- Taking the Stage
- Cultural Expressions
- Visual Arts Gallery

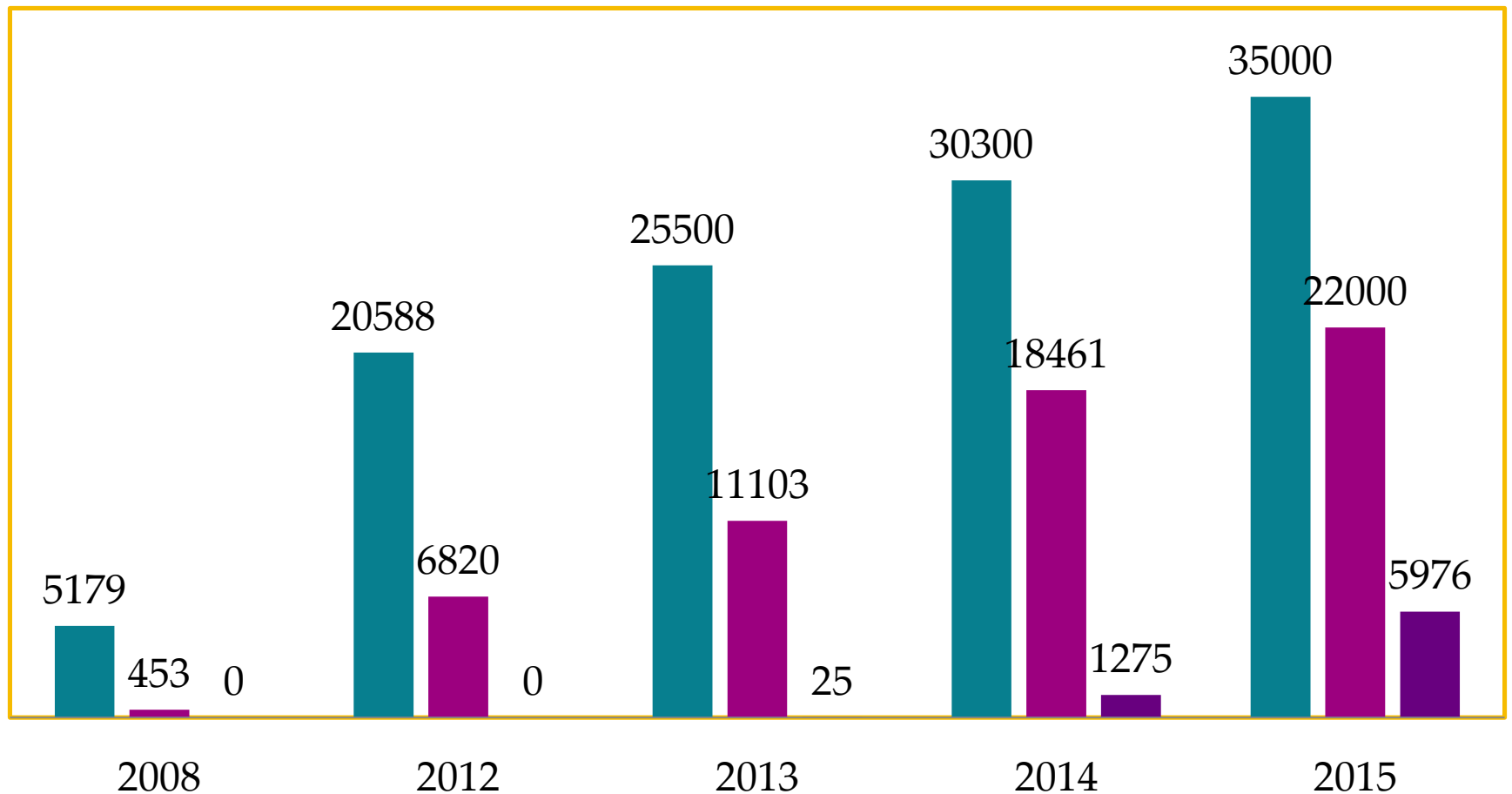
Center for African American Media Arts (CAAMA)  
NMAAHC Archives Center  
Genealogy Center

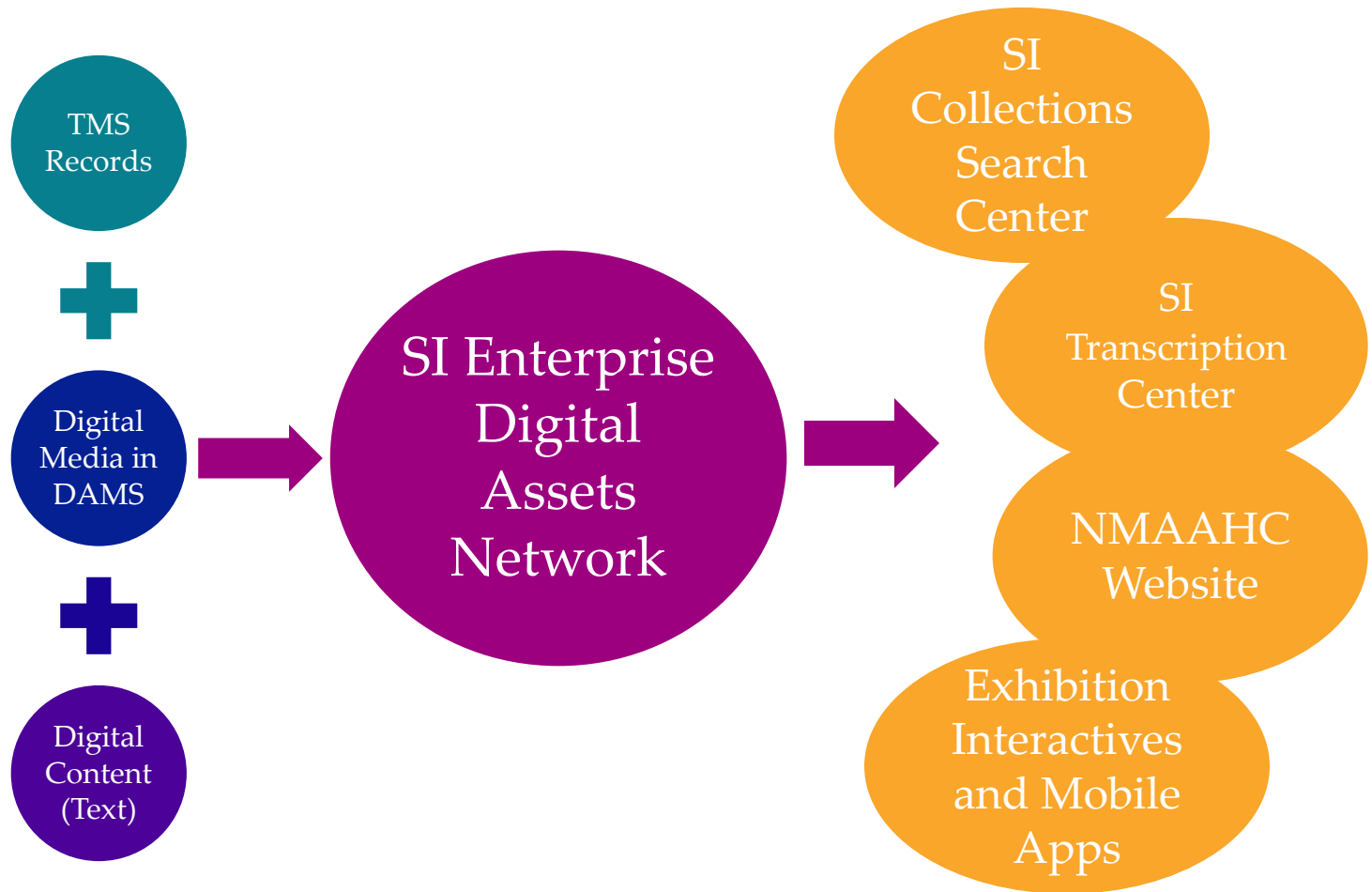




# Growth of the Collection

■ Objects   ■ TMS Records   ■ Online Records





## Born Digital Museum

Goal from Day One: 90% of collection digitized and available online

# What are we cataloging?

## Classifications:

- Adornment
- Archival Collections
- Buildings and Structures
- Clothing (Costume, Fashion, Historical)
- Decorative Arts
- Documents and Published Materials
- Media Arts (Photography, Audio, Video)
- Memorabilia and Ephemera
- Musical Instruments
- Religious and Sacred Objects
- Slavery and Freedom Artifacts
- Textiles
- Tools and Equipment
- Toys and Games
- Transportation Vehicles
- Visual Arts

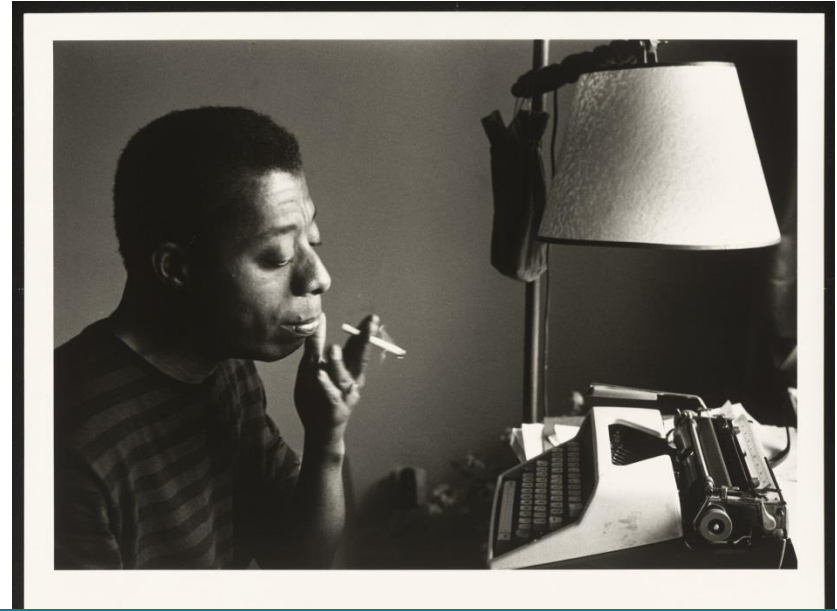


Mae's Hat Shop Collection

# How are we cataloging?

“Cataloging is an art as well as a science. Besides knowledge and skill at interpreting and applying rules, we need to call on our judgment, experience, and intuition and even occasionally our sense of aesthetics and of ‘what looks right’ to us. There’s room for creativity.”

Kathy Corcoran, Abrahams Library, Joslyn Museum



*James Baldwin by His Typewriter, Istanbul 1966, by Sedat Pakay*

What choices do we make as catalogers and how are they meaningful? What power does a catalog hold?



“Body and soul, Black America reveals extreme questions of contemporary life, questions of freedom and identity: how can I be who I am?”

June Jordan, “Black Studies: Bringing Back the Person”

“I feel most colored when I am thrown against a sharp white background.”

Zora Neale Hurston

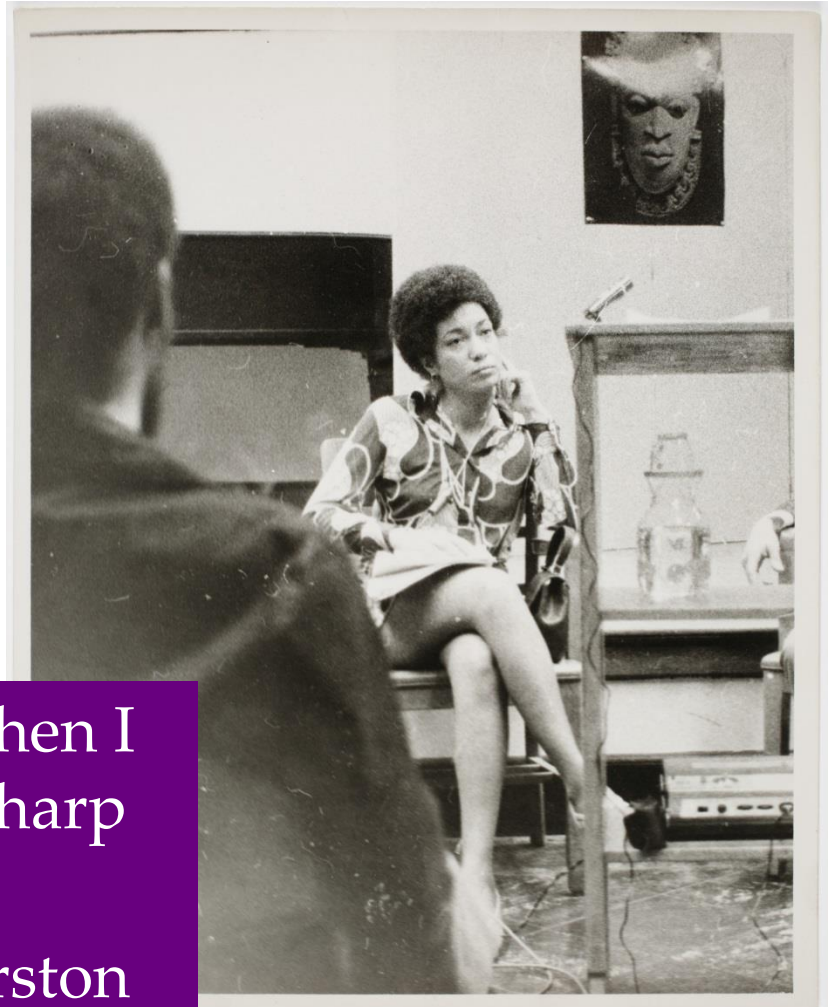
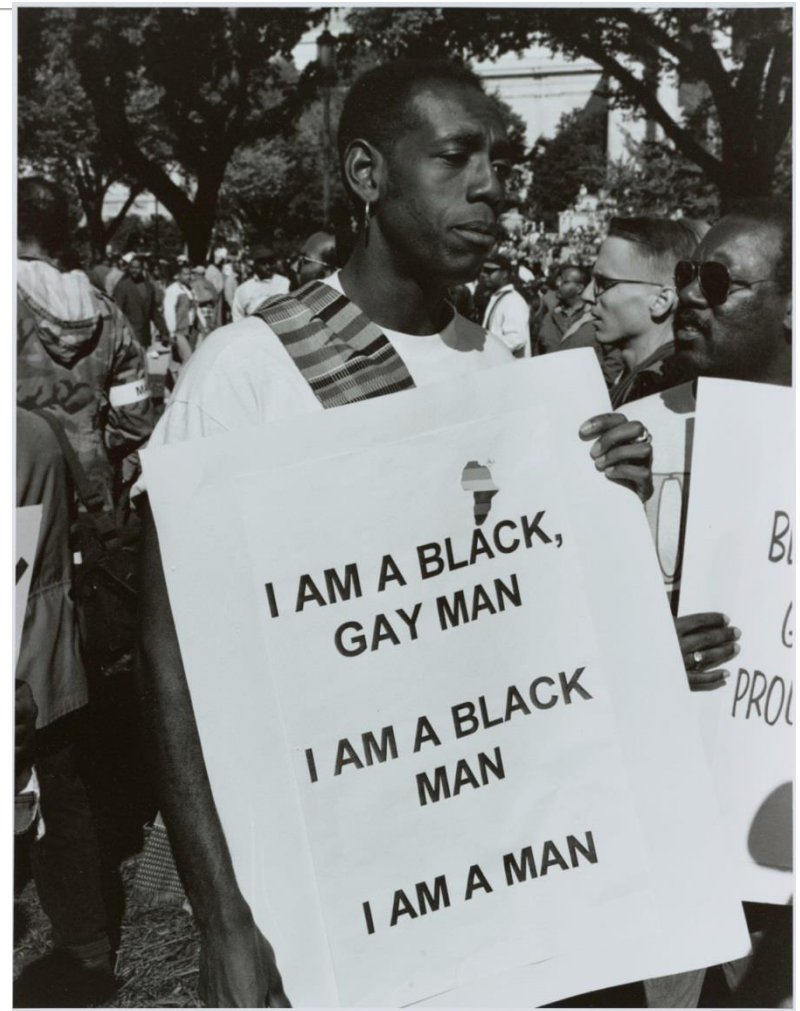


Image of June Jordan, ca. 1970,  
Lloyd W. Yearwood

## *I Am a Man*

CREATED BY:	Roderick Terry, American
SUBJECT OF:	Unidentified Man or Men
PRINTED BY:	Penn Camera, American, 1954 - 2012
MEDIUM:	silver and photographic gelatin on photographic paper
DIMENSIONS:	H x W (Image): 13 11/16 x 10 5/8 in. (34.8 x 27 cm) H x W (Sheet): 14 x 11 in. (35.6 x 27.9 cm)
TYPE:	gelatin silver prints
PLACE DEPICTED:	National Mall, Washington, District of Columbia, United States
DATE:	October 16, 1995
CLASSIFICATION:	Media Arts-Photography
TOPIC:	African American Activism Civil Rights Gender Identity Local and regional Men Photography Sexuality United States--History--1969-2001
CREDIT LINE:	Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Roderick Terry
OBJECT NUMBER:	2013.99.44
RIGHTS:	© Roderick Terry
SEE MORE ITEMS IN:	<a href="#">National Museum of African American History and Culture Collection</a>
PORTFOLIO/SERIES:	<a href="#">One Million Strong</a>
DATA SOURCE:	National Museum of African American History and Culture



*I Am a Man*, 1996, Roderick Terry



## ***I Am a Man***

Created by: Roderick Terry

October 16, 1995

silver and photographic gelatin on photographic paper

H x W (Image): 13 11/16 x 10 5/8 in. (34.8 x 27 cm)

H x W (Sheet): 14 x 11 in. (35.6 x 27.9 cm)

*Place depicted:* National Mall, Washington, District of Columbia, United States

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Roderick Terry

This black-and-white photograph depicts a man in the crowd holding a sign that reads "I AM A BLACK, / GAY MAN / I AM A BLACK / MAN / I AM A MAN." The sign has a small rainbow image of the African continent at the top right. The man wears an earring and white tee shirt with a strip of traditional African cloth draped over his right shoulder. He is turned slightly away from the viewer to the right, and gazes to the right and downward. Behind him in the crowd are other men holding signs.



Department:  
Photography/CAAMA  
Classification: Media  
Arts-Photography  
Object Number: 2013.99.44

*I Am a Man, 1996, Roderick Terry*





Carte-de-visite of Rebecca Huger, 1963,  
Charles Paxson



Tintype of a young African American woman  
with a white child, ca. 1860, Unidentified

# Label View: Description

## Carte-de-visite of Rebecca Huger, a formerly enslaved girl from New Orleans

Created by: Charles Paxson

1863

albumen and silver on photographic paper on card mount

H x W: 4 x 2 3/4 in. (10.2 x 7 cm)

Place captured: New York City, New York, United States, North and Central America

Place depicted: New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, United States, North and Central America

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Jessica B. Harris

A carte-de-visite with a sepia-toned full-length portrait of a formerly enslaved girl named Rebecca Huger. Huger is sitting in a chair, next to a full-length mirror, looking at the camera. Printed on the card below the picture is: [Rebecca. / A Slave Girl from New Orleans.] The photograph of Huger is trimmed a little unevenly, and it is adhered to the card below so that the top of the letter R is covered by the photograph. Printed on the back is the text: [No. 2 / Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1864, by S. / TACKABERRY, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the / UNITED STATES, for the Southern District of New York, / The net proceeds from the sale of these Photographs / will be devoted to the education of Colored People in the de- / partment of the Gulf, now under command of Maj. Gen'l / Banks. / CHAS. PAXON, / PHOTOGRAPHER, / New York. / N.B. -- All orders must be addressed to H. N. Bent, No. 1 / Mercer Street, New York.]



Rebecca Huger



Rebecca Huger, Charles Taylor, and Rosina Downs

### Notes

This was one of several trade cards that were made around the time of the Civil War when Colonel George Hanks of the 18th Infantry, Corps d'Afrique accompanied eight emancipated slaves from New Orleans to New York and Philadelphia to visit photographic studios. The focus of the photos often dealt with issues like miscegenation and were used to raise money to educate formerly enslaved persons in Louisiana. The young girl shown here looks white but she was racially identified as black. According to the biography published with the photograph in the January 30, 1864 issue of Harper's Weekly, "Rebecca Huger is eleven years old, and was a slave in her father's house, the special attendant of a girl a little older than herself. To all appearance she is perfectly white. Her complexion, hair, and features show not the slightest trace of negro blood."

This carte-de-visite was a gift from a friend to the donor Jessica Harris.

### Sources:

Elaine Nichols, Acquisition Justification, 7/14/2014

"Rebecca, Charley and Rosa, Slave Children from New Orleans," 2011.478, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Online Catalog.  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections/190053713>. Accessed 2/4/15.

### Notes



# Tintype of a young African American woman with a white child

Created by: Unidentified

ca. 1860

silver on iron photographic plates

H x W: 3 1/4 x 2 3/4 in. (8.3 x 7 cm)

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

A young African American woman wearing a white apron over a polkadot print dress stands next to a white toddler. Both individuals' cheeks have been hand-tinted pink. The photograph is in an oval frame.



## Attributes

Type	Value	Path	Re
Object Type	tintypes	direct positives / positives / <pho...	
Subject	Children		
Subject	Photography		
Subject	Race relations		
Subject	Slavery		
Types of Prop...	Line 01. Works of Art		

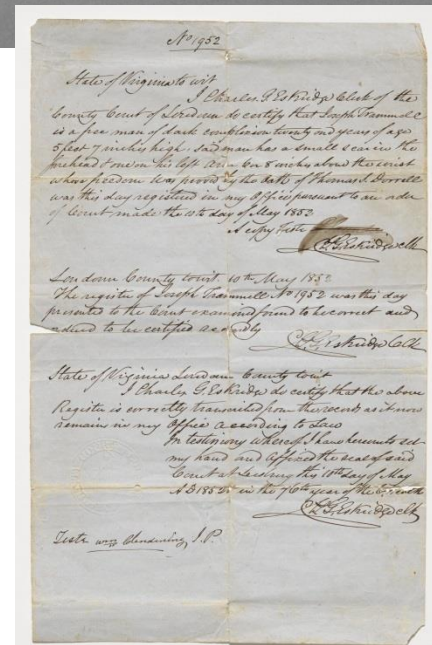
Add

Edit

Delete

# Freedom papers and handmade tin carrying case belonging to Joseph Trammell

ISSUED BY:	Loudoun County Court, American, founded 1757
CREATED BY:	Joseph Trammell, American, 1831 - 1859
USED BY:	Joseph Trammell, American, 1831 - 1859
MEDIUM:	Papers: ink on paper Box: tin
TYPE:	boxes (containers) free papers
PLACE MADE:	Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia, United States, North and Central America
DATE:	1852
CLASSIFICATION:	Slavery and Freedom Objects
TOPIC:	African American Free communities of color Freedom Identity Law
CREDIT LINE:	Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Elaine E. Thompson, in memory of Joseph Trammell, on behalf of his direct descendants
OBJECT NUMBER:	2014.25
RIGHTS:	No Known Copyright Restrictions
SEE MORE ITEMS IN:	<a href="#">National Museum of African American History and Culture Collection</a>
DATA SOURCE:	National Museum of African American History and Culture





## Constituent Assistant - 2009.47.1

### Bill of sale for an enslaved girl named Polly

Created by: H. B. Boston

#### Role Type

Object Related

	Role	Name	Date Range
1	Created by	H. B. Boston	
2	Subject of	Polly, born ca. 1819	
3	Signed by	Martin Bridgeman	

### Bill of sale for an enslaved girl named Polly

Created by: H. B. Boston

December 23, 1835

ink on paper

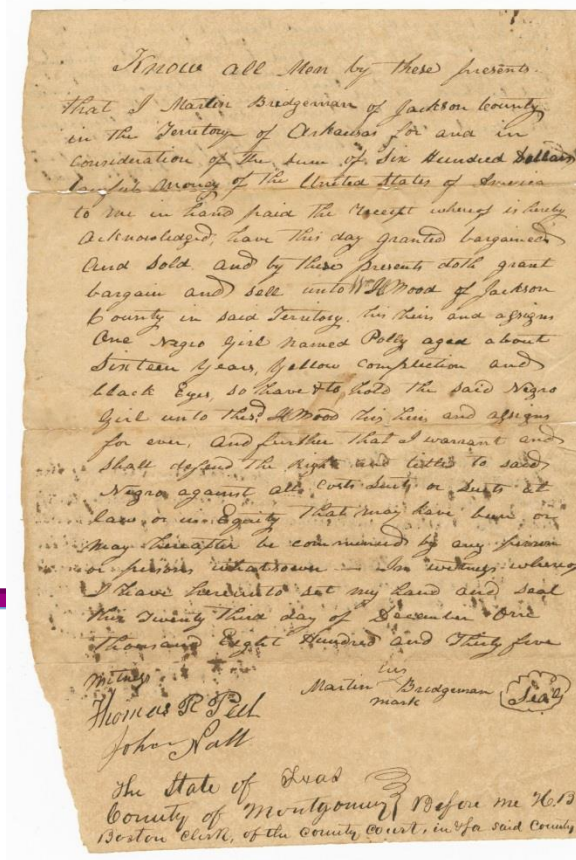
H x W: 10 1/2 x 7 in. (26.7 x 17.8 cm)

Place made: Jackson County, Arkansas, United States, North and Central America

Place depicted: Montgomery County, Texas, United States, North and Central America

Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Candace Greene

Hand-written, two-sided document transferring ownership of sixteen year-old Polly with "yellow complexion and black eyes" for \$600. The document was drawn up by H. B. Boston and signed by Martin Bridgeman of Jackson County, Arkansas. The writing is cursive in black ink on discolored paper.



Polly, born ca. 1819

**Polly**  
born ca. 1819

1 / 1

☒ Active☐ Approved☐ Public Access☐ Private Collector

6787

## Type

Individual

## Alpha Sort

Polly

## Honorific

## First Name

Polly

## Middle Name

## Last Name

## Suffix

## Salutation

## Job Title

## Culture/Group

## Institution

## Display Name

Polly

## Begin Search Date

1819

## End Search Date

## Nationality

## Display Bio

born ca. 1819

## Documentation

## Addresses

## Notes

## Alternate Names

## Alternate Bios

## Historical Dates

Description	Date Range	Remarks

## Code

## Geography Xrefs

Type	Value

Add

Edit

Delete

## Geography

Geography type	Geographical location
Associated with	Jackson County, Arkansas

View primary

Add

Edit

Delete

## Biography

Polly is identified in 2009.47.1, a handwritten document transferring ownership of sixteen-year old enslaved girl named Polly with "yellow complexion and black eyes" for \$600. The document is signed by Martin Bridgeman of Jackson County, Arkansas. Further details about Polly are unknown at this time.

## Attributes

Type	Value	Path
Constituent Classification	Enslaved or formerly enslaved persons	
Gender	Female	

Polly, born ca. 1819



copy

# SLAVES!

## LONG CREDIT SALE

OF

## PLANTATION HANDS

FROM ALABAMA, WITHOUT RESERVE.

BY N. VIGNIE, AUCTIONEER,

Office:---No. 8 Banks' Arcade Passage, and corner of Conti street and Exchange Alley.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1858,**  
**AT 12 O'CLOCK, M.**

Will be sold in the Rotunda of the  
**ST. LOUIS HOTEL,**

- No. 1. **ABSALOM**, aged 28 years, Plantation hand, fully guaranteed.  
No. 2. **NED**, aged 45 years, Plantation hand, fully guaranteed.  
No. 3. **TOM**, aged about 46 years, Plantation hand, fully guaranteed, except having a defect in the right knee.  
No. 4. **BILL**, aged about 23 years, Plantation hand, fully guaranteed, except a slight defect in one finger.  
No. 5. **FRANK**, aged about 25 years, a plantation hand, fully guaranteed, except a burn on his back and right side.  
No. 6. **ALFRED**, aged 35 years, plantation hand, a good subject, has worked in a Blacksmith shop; powerful built man.  
No. 7. **POLLY**, Negress, aged 23 years, No. 1 plantation hand and fair Cook, Washer and Ironer, fully guaranteed.  
No. 8. **GEORGE**, Grif, aged about 23 years, good plantation hand and carriage driver, very likely and intelligent. **MARTHA**, his wife, aged about 30 years, Cook, Washer and Ironer, with her four children: **NED**, aged 7 years; **NANCY**, aged 6 years; **HORACE**, 4 years, and **MARY**, aged 1 1-2 years.

☞ All of the above Slaves are from the State of Alabama, and sold with a full guarantee, except the defects above stated.

ALSO, at the same time and place the following  
**LIST OF ACCLIMATED SLAVES.**

- No. 9. **DAN**, Black, aged about 23 years, a good Cooper, acclimated.  
No. 10. **LEWIS**, aged about 35 years, general laborer, and accustomed work in a brick yard.  
No. 11. **FIRMAN**, aged about 40 years, general laborer, and accustomed work in a brick yard.  
No. 12. **MARY**, Grif, aged about 27 years, a good house servant and nurse, and No. 1 washer, and ironer, having absented once from her former owner.  
No. 13. **JIM**, Black, aged about 26, a general laborer, and good subject.

☞ All the above Slaves are fully guaranteed against the vices and diseases prescribed by law, except the defects made known.

Terms--9 months for approved city acceptances, bearing 6 per ct. interest

147 (C)

## Broadside for a New Orleans auction of 18 enslaved persons from Alabama

### Description

A single-sheet broadside with bold serif font typeface advertising an auction for the sale of eighteen slaves. It consists of black printed text on white paper. The top of the broadside reads "SLAVES! / Long Credit Sale / of / Plantation Hands / from Alabama, without reserve." The broadside lists the sale location as the St. Louis Hotel and date the sale is to take place as March 25, 1858. It then lists the names, ages and skills of the people being sold. A disclaimer in the middle of the broadside reads "All of the above Slaves are from the State of Alabama, and sold under / a full guarantee, except the defects above stated. The bottom portion of the broadside lists additional enslaved people being sold at this auction. At the bottom of the broadside an additional disclaimer and terms of sale are listed.

The enslaved persons to be auctioned are listed as follows:

Absalom, 28, plantation hand  
Ned, 43, plantation hand  
Tom, about 46, plantation hand  
Bill, 23, plantation hand  
Frank, 25, plantation hand  
Alfred, 35, plantation hand  
Polly, 23, cook, washer and ironer  
George, 23, plantation hand and carriage driver; to be sold with his wife Martha, 30 and their four children,  
Ned, 7, Nancy 6, Horace, 4, and Mary, 1  
Dan, 23, cooper  
Lewis, 35, general labor  
Firman, 40, laborer  
Mary, 27, house servant  
Jim, 26, general labor

### Geography

Geography type	Geographical location
Place used	New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, United States, North and Central America
Place depicted	Alabama, United States, North and Central America

[View primary](#)

Add

Edit

Delete





"Pvt. Gordon" / "Peter" / Jordan?



Unidentified woman from Greenville, Mississippi, 1950s – 1960s



Constituent Assistant - [2014.175.4]



Constituent Assistant - 2014.175.4

## Autographed photograph of LeRoi Jones

Photograph by: Carl Van Vechten

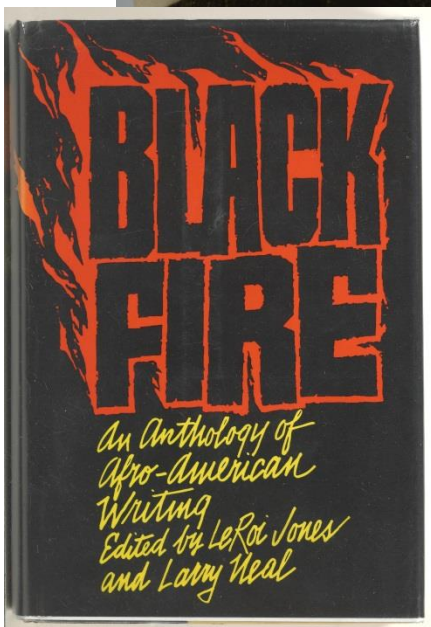
### Role Type

Object Related

	Role	Name	Date Recd
1	Photograph by	Carl Van Vechten, American, 1880 - 19...	
2	Subject of	Amiri Baraka, American, 1934 - 2014	

### Attributes

Type	Value	Path	F
Constituent Classification	Activists		
Constituent Classification	Authors		
Constituent Classification	Playwrights		
Constituent Classification	Poets		
Gender	Male		



LeRoi Jones / Amiri Baraka



### Biography

Gladys Bentley (12 August 1907 – 18 January 1960) was an American blues singer during the Harlem Renaissance. She appeared at Harry Hansberry's "Clam House" on 133rd Street, one of New York City's most notorious gay speakeasies, in the 1920s, and headlined in the early thirties at Harlem's Ubangi Club, where she was backed up by a chorus line of drag queens. She was a 250 pound woman dressed in men's clothes (including a signature tuxedo and top hat), who played piano and sang her own raunchy lyrics to popular tunes of the day in a deep, growling voice while flirting outrageously with women in the audience. On the decline of the Harlem speakeasies with the repeal of Prohibition, she relocated to southern California, where she was billed as "America's Greatest Sepia Piano Player", and the "Brown Bomber of Sophisticated Songs". She was frequently harassed for wearing men's clothing. She claimed that she had married a white woman in Atlantic City. Bentley was openly lesbian during her early career, but during the McCarthy Era, she started wearing dresses, married a man (who later denied that they ever married), and studied to be a minister, claiming to have been "cured" by taking female hormones. She died, aged 52, from pneumonia in 1960.

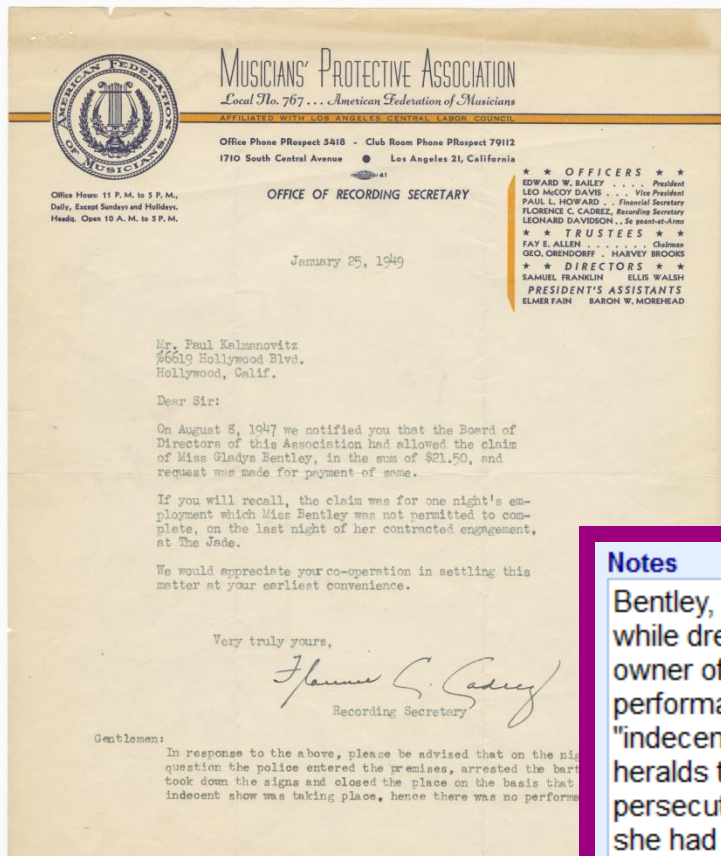
### Attributes

Type	Value	Path	Remarks
Gender	Female		
Constituent Classification	Entertainers		
Constituent Classification	Singers	Musicians	
Constituent Classification	Pianists	Instrumentalists / Musicians	

Gladys Bentley: America's Greatest Sepia Player -  
- The Brown Bomber of Sophisticated Songs



# Letter from the Musicians' Protective Association regarding an "indecent performance"



## Attributes

Type	Value
Subject	Business
Subject	Gender
Subject	Labor
Subject	Law
Subject	Music
Subject	Resistance
Subject	Sexuality

## Notes

Bentley, a black lesbian, performed regularly in gay clubs in New York and Los Angeles while dressed in men's clothes. This letter requests payment for Gladys Bentley from the owner of a nightclub in Hollywood. At the bottom is the owner's response that Bentley's performance did not take place due to a police raid that shutdown the club alleging an "indecent performance" was taking place. Regarding a performance in 1947, this letter heralds the beginning of the McCarthy era, during which homosexuals were aggressively persecuted. By 1950, Bentley had stopped crossdressing and wrote an article claiming she had "cured" her lesbianism.

-EEH

Source:

Queer Cultural Center, "Gladys Bentley Biography,"

<http://www.queerculturalcenter.org/Pages/Bentley/BentleyBio.html>. Accessed 5/24/14.

Gladys Bentley: America's Greatest Sepia Player -- The Brown Bomber of Sophisticated Songs

SONGS,  
SKETCH OF THE LIFE

TESTIMONIALS

AND OPINIONS

FROM THE

OF THE

MOST EMINENT

American and English

COMPOSERS,

PRESS,



BLIND TOM

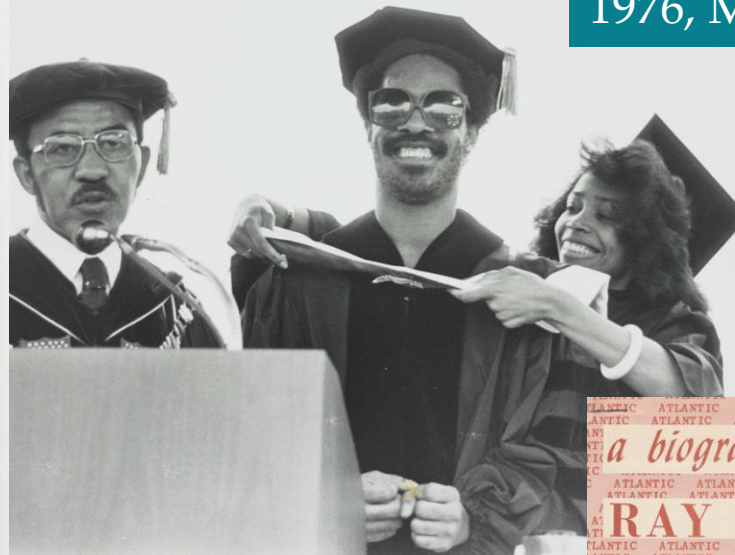
The Marvelous Musical Prodigy,

THE NEGRO BOY PIANIST,

WHOSE RECENT PERFORMANCES AT THE

Great St. James and Egyptian Halls, London, and Salle Hertz, Paris,

HAVE CREATED SUCH A PROFOUND SENSATION,



Photograph of Stevie Wonder accepting an honorary degree, 1976, Milton Williams

a biography of  
RAY CHARLES

A Biography of Ray Charles,  
ca. 1956



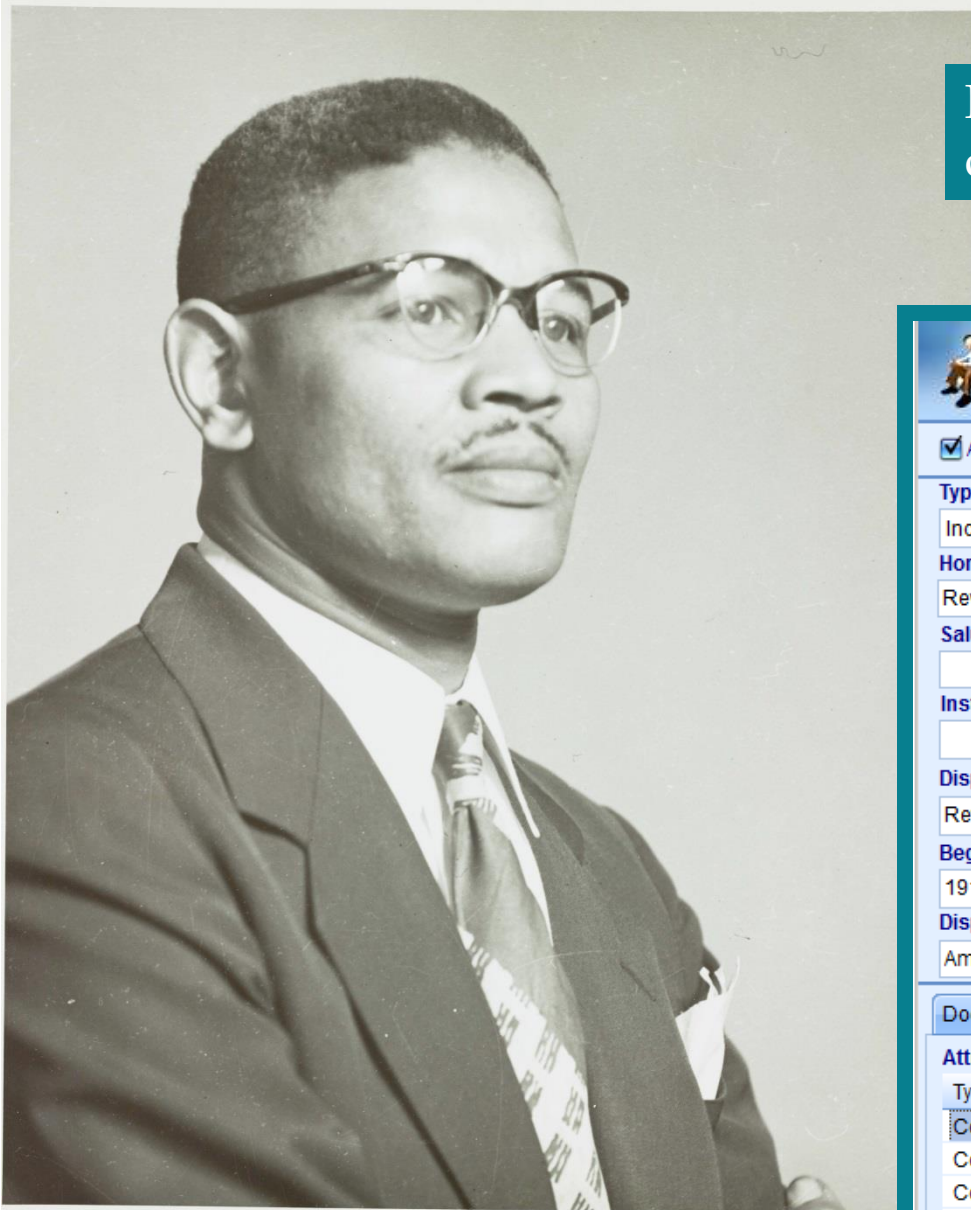
EXCLUSIVELY ON

ATLANTIC RECORDS

157 WEST 57<sup>th</sup> ST., NEW YORK 19



Portrait of Rev. Henry Clay Anderson,  
ca. 1960




**Rev. Henry Clay Anderson**  
**American, 1911 - 1998**

☒ Active
 ☐ Approved
 ☐ Public Access

**Type**  
 Individual

**Alpha Sort**  
 Anderson, Henry Clay Rev.

**Honorific**  
 Rev.

**First Name**  
 Henry

**Middle Name**  
 Clay

**Last Name**  
 Anderson

**Salutation**  
 Rev.

**Job Title**  
 Photographer

**Institution**  
 [Empty]

**Display Name**  
 Rev. Henry Clay Anderson

**Begin Search Date**  
 1911

**End Search Date**  
 1998

**Nationality**  
 American


**Display Bio**  
 American, 1911 - 1998

**Documentation**
**Addresses**
**Notes**

**Attributes**

Type	Value	Path
Constituent Classification	Activists	
Constituent Classification	Clergy	
Constituent Classification	Military personnel	
Constituent Classification	Photographers	
Constituent Classification	Politicians	
Gender	Male	

## April 4 by Sam Gilliam

 **Visual Art**  
2011.37.1  
Accessioned

☐ Curator Approved ☐ Public Access ☐ On View ☐ Internal Access

**Classification**  
Exhibition - Visual Arts Gallery  
Visual Art

**Period** **Date**  
1972

**Constituent(s)** **Group Information**  
Created by: Sam Gilliam, American, born 1933  
Subject of: Martin Luther King III, American, born 1957

**Title** **Object Name**  
April 4

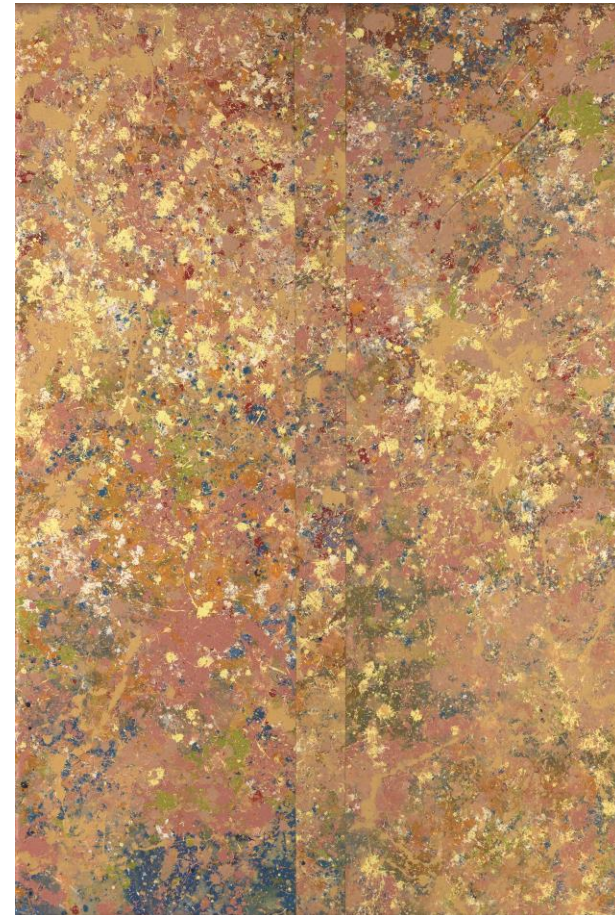
**Front Card** **Notes** **Documentation** **Media**

**Medium**  
acrylic paint on canvas

**Description**  
This is an abstract painting from the Martin Luther King series. Done with a thick layer of color, the painting field is made up of splashes of color in a variety of shades of pinks, yellows, blues, greens, and reds. There is a larger, more continuous field of blue at the bottom left hand side of the painting. There is a thin stripe of the same splash pattern down the center running from top to bottom.

**Attributes**

Type	Value	Path	Rem
Movement	African American Civil Rights Movement		
Object Type	acrylic paintings	<paintings by material or techniq...	
Subject	Art		
Subject	Civil Rights		
Subject	Dignity		
Types of Prop...	Line 01. Works of Art		



Due to his abstract style, notoriety, and success in the "mainstream" art world, Gilliam was often the subject of heated debate and criticism with regard to his non-objective artistic style... Although Gilliam maintained his artistic integrity as a Color Field painter, The Martin Luther King series may have been his way of publicly addressing the critique of his work as apolitical, reaffirming his connection with and allegiance to the African American civil rights activists.

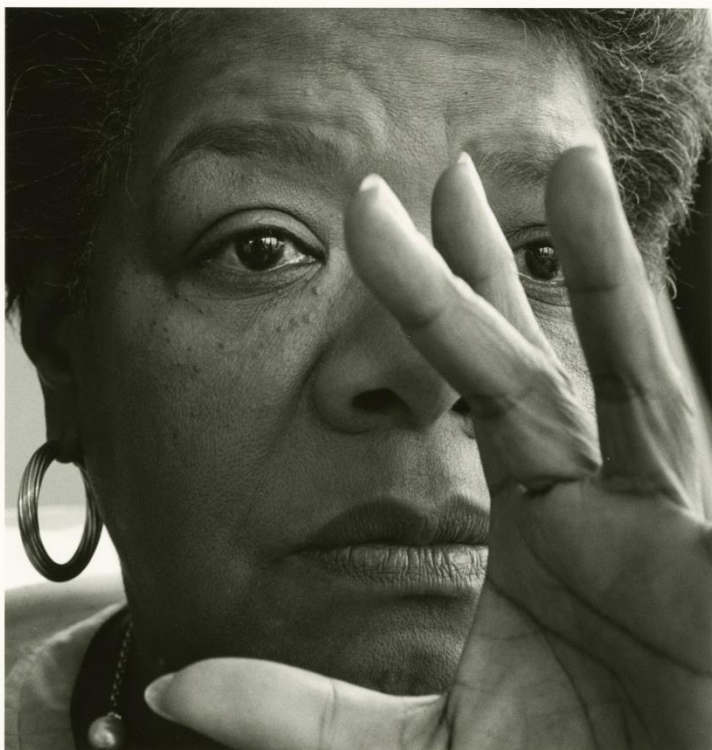


## Works in progress

- Movements / Styles / Ideologies thesaurus
- Culture attribute
- Constituent classifications
- Legal/Ethical considerations
- Public descriptions
- Events Module



*El Amado de Afrodita, The Beloved of Aphrodite, El Ciruelo Oaxaca, Mexico, 1990, Tony Gleaton*



*John Loengard*

Maya Angelou, 1992, John Loengard

“Nothing will work unless you do.” – Maya Angelou

### Search Highlights



**Women  
Pilots**



**Women  
Artists**



**Women  
Scientists**



**Civil Rights**



**African  
American  
Women**



**Social  
Reform**

SI Collections Search Center, March 2016