



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**William Hairston papers**

1928-2000

Sc MG 593

## Summary

**Creator:** Hairston, William

**Title:** William Hairston papers

**Date:** 1928-2000

**Size:** 5.08 linear feet (13 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of William Hairston, January 1997 and 2001.

**Abstract:** William Hairston was an actor, writer, director, producer and administrator. The collection contains biographical information about Hairston; correspondence; manuscripts for books, playscripts, musicals, poetry, comedy writing, television and film; and scrapbooks.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], William Hairston papers, Sc MG 593, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by Steven G. Fullwood, February 1998.

## Creator History

William Hairston was an actor, writer, director, producer, and administrator. Born in 1928, in Goldsboro, North Carolina, Hairston appeared in several off-Broadway productions; television, including *Harlem Detective* (1953); and films, such as *Take the High Ground* (1953). Additionally, Hairston was the production coordinator and co-producer at the Greenwich Mews Theatre in New York City; theatre manager for the New York Shakespeare Festival; director of *Jerico-Jim Crow* by Langston Hughes, produced in New York City; co-director of community relations at the NYSF Mobile Theatre Unit; and assistant to the director at the Arian Stage in Washington, DC. Hairston also worked in radio as a correspondent and radio news editor for the Democratic National Committee. He also worked in the District of Columbia Executive Office of the Mayor, as the executive manager of personnel. Hairston wrote a number of plays, including "Walk In Darkness" and "Ira Frederick Aldridge (The London Conflict)"; books, such as *The World of Carlos* and *Sex and Conflict*; and scripts. He also served as an editor and publisher of the government employer's newsletter, *D.C. Pipeline*. Throughout his career as a

writer, actor and producer, he was awarded several grants including the Ford Foundation Theatre Grant, 1965-1966; NEA Literary Study Grant, 1967; and the Group Theatres Multi Cultural Playwrights Festival Award, 1988. Hairston died in 2020.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The collection contains biographical information about Hairston; correspondence with literary agents, publishers, and prominent theater and literary talents, including Langston Hughes, Owen Dodson, Joseph Papp, Alvin Ailey, Ossie Davis and Frederick O'Neal; manuscripts for books, playscripts, musicals, poetry, comedy writing, television, and film; and scrapbooks pertaining to published works, produced plays, and his acting career. The additions consist of additional biographical material, correspondence, and writing (ebooks, playscript, and poetry) through 2000.

**Arrangement:** Organized into five series: I. Personal; II. Correspondence; III. Writing; IV. Scrapbooks; and V. Additions.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American actors  
African American dramatists  
African American poets  
African American theater  
African Americans in radio broadcasting  
African Americans in the motion picture industry  
African Americans in the performing arts  
Authors, Black

### **Names**

Aldridge, Ira Frederick, -1867  
Hairston, William  
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967

## Container List

### Personal

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical information
- b. 1 f. 2 Acting career
- b. 1 f. 3 Family information
- b. 1 f. 4 Who's Who in America
- b. 1 f. 5 The New York Shakespeare Theatre
- b. 1 f. 6 Democratic National Committee
- b. 1 f. 7 Government of the District of Columbia
- b. 1 f. 8 Resumes
- b. 1 f. 9 Ford Foundation Fellow (theater manager, arena stage)
- b. 1 f. 10 National Endowment for the Arts literary grant
- b. 1 f. 11 The William and Enid Hairston Scholarship Fund 1995

### Correspondence

- b. 2 f. 1 1950-1959
- b. 2 f. 2 1960
- b. 2 f. 3 1961
- b. 2 f. 4 1962
- b. 2 f. 5 1963
- b. 2 f. 6 1964
- b. 2 f. 7 1965
- b. 2 f. 8 1966
- b. 2 f. 9 1967
- b. 2 f. 10 1968
- b. 2 f. 11 1969
- b. 2 f. 12 1970-1979
- b. 2 f. 13 1980-1989
- b. 2 f. 14 1990-1995
- b. 2 f. 15 undated
- b. 3 f. 1 Awards
- b. 3 f. 2 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
- b. 3 f. 3 Carey, Richard E
- b. 3 f. 4 Changawa, Arthur
- b. 3 f. 5 Clarke, John Henrik
- b. 3 f. 6 Dodson, Owen
- b. 3 f. 7 Gribble, Harry Wagstaff
- b. 3 f. 8 Horne, Lena
- b. 3 f. 9 Hughes, Langston
- b. 3 f. 10 King, Woody, Jr
- b. 3 f. 11 Light, Alan

Correspondence (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 12 MCA Artists, Ltd
- b. 3 f. 13 Marton, Elisabeth
- b. 3 f. 14 NAACP
- b. 3 f. 15 National Geographic Society
- b. 3 f. 16 National Playwrights Directory
- b. 3 f. 17 New York Public Library
- b. 3 f. 18 O'Neal, Frederick
- b. 3 f. 19 Phelps, Jack
- b. 3 f. 20 Richards, Stanley
- b. 3 f. 21 Sadd, Julia
- b. 3 f. 22 *Showbiz newsletter*
- b. 3 f. 23 Stock, Mildred
- Literary agents
- b. 3 f. 24 Klausner, Bertha
- b. 3 f. 25 Lahn, Ilse
- b. 3 f. 26 Publishing information
- Writing correspondence
- b. 3 f. 27 "Forbidden Fruit" 1961
- b. 3 f. 28 "In This Corner"
- b. 4 f. 1 "Ira Frederick Aldridge"
- b. 4 f. 2 *Jerico-Jim Crow*  
Includes royalties.
- b. 4 f. 3 "Mayor of Harlem"
- b. 4 f. 4 "Passion Flowers"
- b. 4 f. 5 "Showdown at Sundown"
- b. 4 f. 6 "Spaced Out!"
- b. 4 f. 7 "Two for Tea"
- b. 4 f. 8-9 "Walk in Darkness"
- b. 4 f. 10-11 *The World of Carlos*  
Includes contracts and galley.

Writing

Books and playscripts

- b. 5 f. 1 "Blood and Flesh"
- b. 5 f. 2 "The Living End"
- b. 5 f. 3 "Passion and Politics"
- b. 6 f. 1 *Sex and Conflict*
- b. 6 f. 2 "Showdown at Sundown"
- b. 6 f. 3 "Shuttle Craze"
- b. 6 f. 4 "Spaced Out!"
- b. 6 f. 5-6 *The World of Carlos*  
Includes two manuscripts, one revised.
- b. 7 f. 1 "Angel in Love"

Writing (cont.)

Books and playscripts (cont.)

- b. 7 f. 2 "Forbidden Fruit" ca. 1961
- b. 7 f. 3 "Main Street, USA"
- b. 7 f. 4 "Mayor of Harlem"
- b. 7 f. 5 "Rhythm 'n Blues"
- b. 7 f. 6 "Summer-Time, USA"
- b. 7 f. 7 "Black Antigone"
- b. 7 f. 8 "Cricket Hope"
- b. 7 f. 9 "Danny Boy"
- b. 7 f. 10 "Double Dare"
- b. 7 f. 11 "The Honeymooners"
- b. 7 f. 12 "In This Corner"
- b. 8 f. 1-2 "Ira Aldridge (The London Conflict)"
- b. 8 f. 3 "Love and Peace"
- b. 8 f. 4 "The Neighbors"
- b. 8 f. 5-6 "Passion Flowers"
- b. 8 f. 7 "Peace on Earth"
- b. 8 f. 8 "Requiem in Rock 'n Roll"
- b. 8 f. 9 "Swan Song of the 11th Dawn" 1962
- b. 8 f. 10 "Two for Tea" ca. 1961
- b. 8 f. 11 "Up Against It"
- b. 8 f. 12 "Walk in Darkness"
- b. 9 f. 1-2 Includes draft in composition book.
- b. 9 f. 3 "Home for Christmas"
- b. 9 f. 4 "Julius Rosenwald and His Investment in People" 1994
- b. 9 f. 5 "The Orphan Panther" 1996
- b. 9 f. 6 Comedy writing
- b. 9 f. 7-8 Poems and songs  
Includes "Crying for Your Love", song from "Requiem in Rock 'n Roll".
- US Information Agency
  - b. 9 f. 9 "Apollo II: Man on the Moon"
  - b. 9 f. 10 "Charles White..."
  - b. 9 f. 11 "Conference on Dryland Farming"
  - b. 9 f. 12 Correspondence
  - b. 9 f. 13 English teacher training film
  - b. 9 f. 14 "Festival of Heritage"
  - b. 9 f. 15 General scripts
  - b. 9 f. 16 Eartha Kitt film
  - b. 9 f. 17 "Kwasi Addae"
  - b. 9 f. 18 "Masterworks of Art from Zaire"
  - b. 9 f. 19 "Project Money-Wise Bread Basket"
- b. 9 f. 20-21 Treatments 1967-1968
- b. 9 f. 22 *D.C. Pipeline*

Writing (cont.)

b. 9 f. 23 "Phati'tude"

Scrapbooks

b. 10 f. 1 "Black Antigone"

b. 10 f. 2 "Curtain Call, Mr. Aldridge, Sir!" with Ossie Davis

b. 10 f. 3 "Double Dare"

b. 10 f. 4 "Ira Aldridge"

b. 10 f. 5 *Langston Hughes's Jerico-Jim Crow*

b. 10 f. 6 *Sex and Conflict*

b. 10 f. 7 *The World of Carlos*

b. 11 "Walk in Darkness"

b. 12 "William Hairston: Actor, Playwright, Director, Theatre Manager, and Other Artistic Endeavors"

Additions 1928-2000

b. 1 additions f. 1 Biographical information 1928-2000

b. 1 additions f. 2 Correspondence 1966-1999

Writing

b. 1 additions f. 3-4 "Ira Aldridge (The London Conflict)" ebook and press release 2000  
Press release announces Howard University's 2000 theatrical season, which included this play.

b. 1 additions f. 5 "Showdown at Sundown" ebook

b. 1 additions f. 6 "Spaced Out" ebook

b. 1 additions f. 7 "Senior Passion" playscript

b. 1 additions f. 8 Miscellaneous poetry

b. 1 additions f. 9 "Poetry and Prose of Passion and Compassion" manuscript 2000 March