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Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Allan W. McMillan public relations files**

ca. 1950-1985 [bulk 1967-1985]

Sc MG 206

## Summary

**Creator:** McMillan, Allan W., 1900-1991

**Title:** Allan W. McMillan public relations files

**Date:** ca. 1950-1985 [bulk 1967-1985]

**Size:** 4.88 linear feet (7 boxes)

**Source:** Gift, Marlene McMillan, March 1990.

**Abstract:** Allan W. McMillan, a longtime columnist for *The Amsterdam News* and the first Black syndicated columnist, made his reputation as an entertainment writer, Broadway columnist, and publicist. The Allan W. McMillan public relations files document the public relations work of McMillan on behalf of his clients.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Allan W. McMillan public relations files, Sc MG 206, 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 Janice Quinter, December 17, 2007.

## Creator History

Allan W. McMillan, a longtime columnist for *The Amsterdam News* and the first Black syndicated columnist, made his reputation as an entertainment writer, Broadway columnist, and publicist. His column for *The Amsterdam News*, "Allan's Alley", was syndicated in the late 1930s; he wrote a similar gossip column entitled "On Broadway" in the 1970s for the weekly *The New York Voice*, which billed itself as "New York's fastest growing interracial newspaper".

McMillan headed several public relations firms primarily for Black entertainers; the bulk of his clients were singers and musicians. His companies, all in New York City, were Allan McMillan and Associates, D'Or Recording Company, Jay-R-Jay Magazine and News Publishing Corporation, and T. P. Productions. He was also a personal press representative and president of the New York Business,

Civic and Cultural Association as well as editor-in-chief of the International News and Picture Syndicate.

McMillan was born in Valdosta, Georgia, in 1900, attended Morris Brown College in Atlanta, and in 1933, worked as a reporter for *The Chicago Defender*, beginning his career as the first African American to interview Al Capone. It was in Chicago that McMillan developed a friendship with the promoter Joe Glaser and began to mingle with well-known Black entertainers. He died in 1991 in New York.

## Scope and Content Note

The Allan W. McMillan public relations files document the public relations work of McMillan on behalf of his clients. The collection consists primarily of information that he maintained about his clients, most of whom were in the entertainment business. Nearly all the clients were individuals, but he also represented events sponsored by organizations. Client files include newspaper and magazine clippings of articles and advertisements for the performers, promotional flyers and postcards, itineraries, resumes, correspondence, contracts, press releases, notes about the clients, photograph captions, and a few layouts prepared by McMillan.

Among his many clients whose files are housed in this collection are B. B. King; pianists Hazel Scott and Natalie Hinderas; singers Ruth Brown, Shirley Caesar, Lu Elliot, Morgana King, and Martha Mitchell; actors Roxie Roker, Clarice Taylor, and Giancarlo Esposito; Emme Kemp (singer, pianist, composer); Carolyn Adams (dancer with the Paul Taylor Dance Company); Beaufort Express Band; pianist and conductor Margaret Harris; and poet Lou LuTour. Fan letters (1970) addressed to Aretha Franklin at Atlantic Records are also included in the collection; however, nothing in his papers indicates that McMillan represented her at that time. Some of the organizations and events he publicized include the Louis Armstrong Memorial Concert (1972), which raised money for the Louis Armstrong Memorial Cultural Arts Center and Memorial Plaza in Corona, Queens; the New York Jazz Festival (1967-1968); the Peg Leg Bates Country Club (1973); and the W. C. Handy Memorial Scholarship Club (1977). He also represented Gladys Blair Productions, which produced Loftin Mitchell's *A Lonesome Journey* (script is in the collection) and *The Computer Candidate* (book and lyrics by Elmer Zinner, M.D.). There are financial records for some of McMillan's companies, in addition to correspondence and legal documents.

**Arrangement:** Arranged into two series: I. Personal and II. Artists/Clients.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

African American actors  
African American actresses  
African American entertainers  
African American journalists  
African American musicians  
African American singers  
African American women entertainers  
African American women musicians  
African American women singers  
African Americans in mass media

African Americans in popular culture  
Authors, Black  
Public relations

**Names**

McMillan, Allan W., 1900-1991

## Container List

### Personal 1951-1979

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical information
- b. 1 f. 2 Correspondence 1951-1971
  - b. 1 "On Broadway" column 1971-1979
- Allan McMillan and Associates
  - b. 1 f. 5 Contract forms
- b. 1 f. 6-7 Financial
  - Includes bills due and bills paid.
- b. 1 f. 8 American Talent Productions
- b. 1 f. 9 D'or Recording Company
- b. 1 f. 10 Esquire Crown Productions
- b. 1 f. 11-12 International Concert Varieties
- b. 1 f. 13 Jay-R-Jay Magazine and News Publishing Corp
- b. 1 f. 14-15 Talent Showcase
  - Includes new talent, folder 15.
- b. 1 f. 16 Birthdays
- b. 1 f. 18 Colleges and universities
- b. 1 f. 19 D.J. list
- b. 1 f. 20 Financial records
- b. 1 f. 21 Promotion and publicity

### Artists/Clients

Arranged alphabetically by last name or organization.

- b. 1 f. 22 Abercrombie, Jabie
- b. 1 f. 23 Adams, Carolyn
- b. 1 f. 24 Allen, Jonelle
- Armstrong, Louis Memorial Concert
  - b. 1 f. 25-26 undated
  - b. 1 f. 27 Mailing list
  - b. 1 f. 28 News clippings
  - b. 1 f. 29 Bills
  - b. 1 f. 30 Elmcors Youth and Adult Activities
  - b. 1 f. 31 Armstrong, Louis statue
  - b. 1 f. 32 Bailey, Rene
  - b. 1 f. 33 Barnes, George and Ruby Braff
- b. 1 f. 34-36 Beaufort Express
  - Includes Joe Frazer.
- b. 1 f. 37 Blair, Pamela
- b. 1 f. 38 Bland, Jimmy
- b. 2 f. 1 Brown, Ruth
- b. 2 f. 2 Bruce, Gladys

Artists/Clients (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 3 Bruno, Rodolfo and Joe Lee Wilson
- b. 2 f. 4 *Bubbling Brown Sugar*
- b. 2 f. 5 Caesar, Shirley
- b. 2 f. 6 Carnegie Hall
- b. 2 f. 7 Cara, Irene
- b. 2 f. 8 Carpenter, Thelma
- b. 2 f. 9 Cass, Carol
- b. 2 f. 10 Charles, Ray
- b. 2 f. 11 Cleveland, James
- b. 2 f. 12 Coca Cola, "Black Treasures" study kit
- b. 2 f. 13 Coles, Emily
- b. 2 f. 14 Cooper, Blondell
- b. 2 f. 15 Creole Pete (Peter Robinson)
- b. 2 f. 16 Datcher, Irene
- b. 2 f. 17 Easley, Sheryl
- b. 2 f. 18-19 Elliott, Lu
- b. 2 f. 20 English, Barbara Jean
- b. 2 f. 21 Ephram, Bobby
- b. 2 f. 22-23 Esposito, Giancarlo
- b. 2 f. 24 *Flowers, Martha (Porgy and Bess)*
- b. 2 f. 25 Forman, Bill
- b. 2 f. 26-27 Franklin, Aretha fan mail 1970
- b. 2 f. 28 Fremon, Yvette
- b. 2 f. 29 Fremon, Claretta
- b. 2 f. 30 Foster, Leesa
- b. 2 f. 31 Gaines, "Bubba"  
Gladys Blair Productions
- b. 2 f. 32 *The Computer Candidate* 1978
- b. 2 f. 33-36 *A Lonesome Journey* 1977  
Includes playscript.
- b. 2 f. 37 Glaser, Joseph (Associated Booking Corp.)
- b. 2 f. 38 Grant, Douglas
- b. 2 f. 39 Greene, Laura
- b. 2 f. 40 Grier, Roosevelt
- b. 2 f. 41 Hammer, Jack
- b. 2 f. 42 Harris, Eddie
- b. 2 f. 43-44 Harris, Margaret
- b. 3 f. 1 Hartman, Johnny
- b. 3 f. 2 Hawkins, Jay ("Screaming Jay")
- b. 3 f. 3 Hawkins, Lucia
- b. 3 f. 4 Hinderas, Natalie

Artists/Clients (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 5 Hodges, Charlie
- b. 3 f. 6 Howard Theatre Memorabilia Exhibit
- b. 3 f. 7 Jackson, Ernestine
- b. 3 f. 8 Kairson, Ursuline
- b. 3 f. 9 Keiser, Kris
- b. 3 f. 10-15 Kemp, Emme
- b. 3 f. 16-18 King, B. B
- b. 3 f. 19 King, Morgana
- b. 3 f. 20 LaGarde, Reverend Fred H
- b. 3 f. 21 Larry Steele Show, "Smart Affairs"
- b. 3 f. 22 Longus, Vera
- b. 3 f. 23 Lundy, Pat
- b. 3 f. 24-26 LuTour, Lou
- b. 3 f. 27 Makeba, Miriam
- b. 3 f. 28 Marris, Stella
- b. 3 f. 29 Martini, Jan
- b. 3 f. 30 McLawler, Sarah
- b. 3 f. 31 Mitchell, Ella
- b. 3 f. 32 Miss USA 1976
- b. 3 f. 33 Mitchell, Martha
- b. 3 f. 34 Moore, Melba
- b. 3 f. 35 Morocco
- b. 4 f. 1 Newkirk, Eunice
- b. 4 f. 2-3 New York Business, Civic and Cultural Association  
Includes the beauty pageant.
- b. 4 f. 4-5 New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Andora Hodgkin Total Theater
- b. 4 f. 6-8 New York Jazz Festival, T. P. Productions 1967-1968
- b. 4 f. 9 Nicholas, George
- b. 4 f. 10 National Art Auction Gallery, Lobo Nocho
- b. 4 f. 11 *Of Mice and Men*
- b. 4 f. 12 Peg Leg Bates Country Club
- b. 4 f. 13 Perkins, Trudy
- b. 4 f. 14 *Pfizer and Company, The Winner*
- b. 4 f. 15 Princess Orelia
- b. 4 f. 16 Owens, Joanna
- b. 4 f. 17 Roberts, Howard
- b. 4 f. 18-20 Rogers, Timmie
- b. 4 f. 21 Sattin, Tina
- b. 4 f. 22 Scott, Hazel
- b. 4 f. 23-24 *Scope Magazine*
- b. 4 f. 25 Seville, Johnny

Artists/Clients (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 26 Shaw, Vanessa
- b. 4 f. 27 Simon, James A
- b. 4 f. 28 Singleton, Janyse M
- b. 4 f. 29-30 Sissle, Noble
- b. 4 f. 31 Sister Sledge
- b. 4 f. 32 Stage IV, "The Final Act"
- b. 4 f. 33 Taylor, Clarice
- b. 4 f. 34 The Temptations
- b. 4 f. 35 Terry, Clark
- Tuskegee Institute
- b. 4 f. 36-37 Centennial
- b. 4 f. 38 Pledgethon
- b. 4 f. 39-40 Von Blaine, Lloyd. Afro American Services, Inc
- b. 4 f. 41 Walker, Clara
- b. 4 f. 42 Walker, Lillian
- b. 4 f. 43-44 Ward, Richard
- b. 5 f. 1 Washington, Dinah
- b. 5 f. 2 Washington, Lamont
- b. 5 f. 3-4 W. C. Handy Memorial Scholarship Club
- b. 5 f. 5 Wild Man Steve
- b. 5 f. 6 Wilde, Zabeth
- b. 5 f. 7-8 Williams, Tony and Helen, and the Platters
- b. 5 f. 9 Wilson, Nancy
- b. 5 f. 10 Wilson, Timothy 1968 May
- b. 5 f. 11 Wright, Joey
- b. 5 f. 12 Yancy, Emily
- b. 6 f. 1-6 Various
- Layouts
- b. 7 f. 1 Armstrong, Louis
- b. 7 f. 2 Harris, Paul
- b. 7 f. 3 Brown, James "Don't Be a Dropout" Fan Club
- b. 7 f. 4 Sissle, Noble. "The Southland Troubador" essay
- b. 7 f. 5 News and Pictures Syndicate layout