

James A. Emanuel Papers

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LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm95083268>

Prepared by T. Michael Womack

Collection Summary

Title: James A. Emanuel Papers

Span Dates: 1922-1995

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1960-1995)

ID No.: MSS83268

Creator: Emanuel, James A.

Extent: 4,000 items ; 12 containers containers plus 1 oversize ; 4.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English, and French

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Poet and educator. Appointment calendars, biographical material, correspondence, poems, interviews, material relating to poetry festivals and readings, anthologies and collections, subject files, teaching material, textbooks, and writings by others relating primarily to Emanuel's career.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Anderson, Keith O.--Correspondence.

Baker, Houston A.--Correspondence.

Bone, Robert--Correspondence.

Bontemps, Arna, 1902-1973--Correspondence.

Breman, Paul--Correspondence.

Brooks, Gwendolyn, 1917-2000--Correspondence.

Brooks, Gwendolyn, 1917-2000. Gwendolyn Brooks oral history interview.

Davis, Benjamin O., 1880-1970--Correspondence.

Davis, Ossie--Correspondence.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), 1868-1963--Correspondence.

Ellison, Ralph--Correspondence.

Emanuel, James A.

Emanuel, James A. James A. Emanuel oral history interview.

Fabre, Michel--Correspondence.

Franklin, John Hope, 1915-2009--Correspondence.

Fuller, Hoyt, 1923-1981--Correspondence.

Gayle, Addison, 1932- --Correspondence.

Giovanni, Nikki Nikki Giovanni oral history interview.

Gross, Theodore L.--Correspondence.

Hudson, Theodore R.--Correspondence.

Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967 Langston Hughes oral history interview.

Lamotte, Nicole--Correspondence.

Madgett, Naomi Cornelia Long--Correspondence.

Madhubuti, Haki R., 1942-

Madhubuti, Haki R., 1942- --Correspondence.

Mane, Robert--Correspondence.

McIver, Jean P., 1935-

Migrenne, Jean--Correspondence.

Murphy, Beatrice M., 1908- --Correspondence.

O'Daniel, Therman B., 1908- --Correspondence.

Randall, Dudley, 1914- --Correspondence.

Sanchez, Sonia, 1934- Sonia Sanchez oral history interview.

Suter, Anthony--Correspondence.

Watson, Doug--Correspondence.

Weixlmann, Joseph--Correspondence.
Williams, John Alfred, 1925- --Correspondence.

Organizations

City University of New York. City College--Faculty.
United States. Army.
Université de Grenoble--Faculty.

Subjects

African American arts.
African American authors.
African Americans--Intellectual life.
American literature--African American authors.
Cultural relations.
Elections--New York (State)--Westchester County--Mount Vernon.
Festivals.
Poetry--Periodicals.
Poetry.
Publishers and publishing--Correspondence.
Universities and colleges--France.
Universities and colleges--New York (State)--New York.

Occupations

Educators.
Poets.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of James A. Emanuel, poet and educator, were given to the Library of Congress by Emanuel in 1995 and 1996.

Transfers

Sound and video recordings have been transferred to the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of James A. Emanuel in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of James A. Emanuel are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, James A. Emanuel Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1921, June 15	Born, Alliance, Nebr.

- 1942-1944 Confidential secretary to General Benjamin O. Davis, Assistant Inspector General, United States Army
- 1944-1946 Staff sergeant, 93rd Infantry Division, United States Army
- 1950 B.A., Howard University, Washington, D.C.
Married Mattie Etha Johnson (divorced 1974)
- 1953 M.A., Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.
- 1954-1956 Taught at Harlem YWCA Business School, New York, N.Y.
- 1957-1983 Instructor of English (1957-1964), assistant professor (1965-1969), associate professor (1970-1972), and professor (1973-1983), City College of the City University of New York, New York, N.Y.
- 1962 Ph.D., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
- 1966 Developed and taught first course in African-American poetry at City College of the City University of New York, New York, N.Y.
Defeated in election for seat on board of education, Mount Vernon, N.Y.
- 1967 Published *Langston Hughes* (New York: Twayne. 192 pp.)
- 1968 Published *Dark Symphony: Negro Literature in America* with Theodore L. Gross (New York: Free Press. 604 pp.)
Published *The Treehouse and Other Poems* (Detroit: Broadside Press. 24 pp.)
- 1968-1969 Fulbright professor, University of Grenoble, France
- 1970 Published *Panther Man* (Detroit: Broadside Press. 32 pp.)
- 1971-1973 Visiting professor, University of Toulouse, Toulouse, France
- 1972 Published *How I Write/2* with MacKinlay Kantor and Lawrence Osgood (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 256 pp.)
Met Marie-France Bertrand (née Plassard) in France
- 1975-1976 Fulbright professorship, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
- 1978 Published *Black Man Abroad: The Toulouse Poems* (Detroit: Lotus Press. 76 pp.)
- 1980 Published *A Chisel in the Dark: Poems Selected and New* (Detroit: Lotus Press. 73 pp.)
- 1980-1981 Visiting professor, University of Toulouse, Toulouse, France
- 1983 Published *A Poet's Mind* (New York: Regents. 85pp.)
Published *The Broken Bowl: New and Uncollected Poems* (Detroit: Lotus Press. 85 pp.)
- 1984 Retired; established residence in France

- 1987 Published *Deadly James and Other Poems* (Detroit: Lotus Press. 82 pp.)
- 1991 Published *Whole Grain: Collected Poems, 1958-1989* (Detroit: Lotus Press. 396 pp.)
- 1992 Published *De la rage au coeur* with Jean Migrenne and Michel Fabre (Thaon, France: Amiot/Lenganey. 173 pp.)

Scope and Content Note

The papers of James A. Emanuel (1921-) span the years 1922-1995, with the bulk of the items concentrated in the period between 1960 and 1995. The collection, which focuses on Emanuel's work as a poet and educator, consists of three series: [General Correspondence](#), [Writings](#), and [Subject File](#). Included in the papers are appointment calendars, autobiographical writings, biographical material, correspondence, poems, transcripts of interviews, material relating to poetry festivals and readings, poetry anthologies and collections, subject files, teaching material, textbooks, and writings by others. The collection contains notes in shorthand as well as material in French. Additional papers may be found at the Jay B. Hubbell Center for American Literary Historiography at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

The [General Correspondence](#) series consists primarily of letters received and sent from poets, writers, editors, and publishers, most of whom were active in the promotion of African-American literature and culture in the second half of the twentieth century. Correspondents include Houston A. Baker, Robert Bone, Arna Wendell Bontemps, Paul Breman, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ralph Ellison, Michel Fabre, Hoyt W. Fuller, Addison Gayle, Theodore L. Gross, Theodore R. Hudson, Don L. Lee, Naomi Long Madgett, Robert Mane, Beatrice M. Murphy, Therman B. O'Daniel, Dudley Randall, Anthony Suter, Doug Watson, Joseph Weixlmann, and John A. Williams. Publishing houses and poetry journals are represented by *Black World*, *CLA Journal*, Free Press, Lotus Press, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Negro Digest*, and *Phylon*. Other prominent African-American correspondents include Benjamin O. Davis, Ossie Davis, W. E. B. DuBois, and John Hope Franklin. Additional correspondence with publishers, translators, illustrators, and individuals arranging poetry readings, including Keith O. Anderson, Nicole Lamotte, Naomi Long Madgett, and Jean Migrenne, may be found in the [Writings](#) series.

The [Writings](#) series includes writings by Emanuel and those by others. A poetry section among Emanuel's writings contains anthologies, collections, individuals' poems, material relating to poetry festivals and readings, and textbooks on writing poetry. Emanuel's first major editorial project, the publication of a collection of poetry by his mentor, Langston Hughes, is represented by only a small amount of correspondence following the theft of a trunk during the 1970s. Poetry collections by Emanuel represented in the series include *Black Man Abroad: The Toulouse Poems*; *Chisel in the Dark: Poems Selected and New*; *Panther Man*; and *Whole Grain: Collected Poems, 1958-1989*. A subsection containing individual poems reflects Emanuel's attention to detail. Multiple drafts of a given poem frequently reveal not only the creative process through alterations and corrections but also indicate the day, time, and location of composition as well as sources of inspiration, such as newspaper articles, opera tickets, photographs, and restaurant receipts. A subsection of material related to poetry festivals reflects Emanuel's involvement in these events. The poetry readings file chronicles his recitals in the United States and abroad. During his teaching stints overseas, Emanuel frequently served as a cultural ambassador for the United States to various European countries, particularly those in Eastern Europe behind the "Iron Curtain." The subsection on textbooks documents Emanuel's efforts to teach the craft of writing poetry.

The prose section in the [Writings](#) series consists primarily of an anthology, autobiographies, and transcripts of interviews by and with Emanuel. The collaborative work of Emanuel and Theodore L. Gross documented in files labeled *Dark Symphony: Negro Literature in America* represents one of the first major anthologies of African-American prose. Emanuel's personal and creative life is revealed in material relating to his two autobiographical writings, *A Force in the Field* and "Snowflakes and Steel: My Life As a Poet, 1971-1980." Files documenting individual interviews by Emanuel with Gwendolyn Brooks, Nikki Giovanni, Langston Hughes, and Sonia Sanchez as well as those with him by Don L. Lee and Jean P. McIver provide insightful exchanges between one African-American poet and another. The section also contains material relating to articles, book reviews, speeches, and writings by others.

The [Subject File](#) includes appointment calendars, biographical material, newspaper and magazine clippings, travel material, and files on African-American poets and writers. Emanuel's tenure as confidential secretary to General Benjamin O. Davis

and as staff sergeant in the United States Army during World War II are documented in a military service file. His unsuccessful election campaign in 1966 for a seat on the Board of Education in Mount Vernon, New York, in 1966 is covered in a file by that name containing letters to Robert F. Kennedy revealing Emanuel's suspicions of covert racial harassment and telephone wiretapping during the campaign. Letters in the [General Correspondence](#) series to neighbor Ossie Davis in New Rochelle, New York, relate Emanuel's experience as an African American seeking election in a mostly white neighborhood during the mid-1960s. Material relating to teaching chronicles his career at the City College of the City University of New York as well as in Poland and France. Following his first Fulbright professorship in 1968-1969 at the University of Grenoble, Emanuel held two more teaching professorships in France and made numerous extended visits, eventually moving there permanently upon his retirement in 1984.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in four series:

- [General Correspondence, 1948-1994](#)
- [Writings, 1945-1995](#)
- [Subject File, 1922-1995](#)
- [Oversize, 1973-1982](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-4

General Correspondence, 1948-1994

Letters sent and received with enclosed and related matter.

Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent, organization, or subject.

BOX 4-10

Writings, 1945-1995

Background material, correspondence, notes, drafts, master sheets, and publicity relating to articles, autobiographical writings, book reviews, interviews, poetry anthologies and collections, speeches, textbooks, and writings by others as well as material relating to poetry festivals and readings.

Arranged according to writings by Emanuel and by others and therein alphabetically by type of writing, title, or name of author.

BOX 10-12

Subject File, 1922-1995

Material relating to African-American poets and writers; appointment calendars; biographical, election campaign, and military service material; newspaper and magazine clippings; a scrapbook; and material relating to teaching and travel.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material, name of organization, or subject and chronologically therein.

BOX OV 1

Oversize, 1973-1982

Publicity for poetry readings.

Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-4	General Correspondence, 1948-1994 Letters sent and received with enclosed and related matter. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent, organization, or subject.
BOX 1	Allen, Samuel W., 1968-1973 Amis, Lola Jones, 1970 “A” miscellaneous, 1968-1981 Baker, Houston A., 1972-1983 Bank Street College of Education, New York, N.Y., 1969-1971 Bell, Bernard W., 1961-1974 Bone, Robert, 1966-1972 Bonnet, Jean-Marie, 1978-1982 Bontemps, Arna Wendell, 1962-1973 Breman, Paul, 1960-1979 Broadsides Critics Series, 1970-1975, undated Brooks, Gwendolyn, 1970-1974 Brooks, Jerome, 1971-1977 Burnett, Elizabeth A., 1986-1994 Burrows, Vinnie, 1966-1968 “B” miscellaneous, 1967-1983, undated City College of the City University of New York, New York, N.Y., 1971-1982, undated Coleman, Willie M., 1963-1980 “C” miscellaneous, 1967-1980 Davis, Benjamin O., 1952-1970 Davis, Ossie, 1966-1980 Dickinson, Donald, 1962-1968 DuBois, W. E. B., 1958 “D” miscellaneous, 1969-1980 Ellison, Ralph, 1967-1968 Etonde-Ekoto, Grace, 1972-1974 Evans, Charles J., 1968-1969 “E” miscellaneous, 1958-1974 Fabre, Michel, 1968-1978 Franklin, John Hope, 1981-1982
BOX 2	Fuller, Hoyt W., 1962-1981 “F” miscellaneous, 1966-1983 Gayle, Addison, 1966-1970 Gross, Theodore L., 1968-1972 “G” miscellaneous, 1961-1978 Haslam, Gerald William, 1968 Hudson, Theodore R., 1972-1973 “H” miscellaneous, 1962-1983, undated

General Correspondence, 1948-1994

Container

Contents

- Indiana University Press, 1969-1970
"I" miscellaneous, 1968-1969
Jackson, Blyden, 1970
Jeffers, Lance, 1970-1975
Jones, Carolyn, 1970-1972
"J-K" miscellaneous, 1963-1982
(2 folders)
Lagarde, Fernand, 1978-1982
Lask, Thomas, 1969-1980
Lee, Don L., 1969-1975
"L" miscellaneous, 1951-1982
Madgett, Naomi Long, 1977-1990, undated
(4 folders)
- BOX 3** Mane, Robert, 1973-1979 *For additional material see Container 7, Readings*
Marks, Leonard M., 1962-1970
McCawley, Ghislaine, 1980-1984
McConochie, Jean, 1977-1978 *For additional material see Container 7, Readings*
Menarini, Gianni, 1966-1975
Midwest Quarterly, 1963-1966
Murphy, Beatrice M., 1948-1968
"M" miscellaneous, 1967-1989, undated
Neal, Larry, 1970-1971
Negro Digest/Black World/First World, 1969-1977
"N" miscellaneous, 1961-1980
O'Daniel, Therman B., 1967-1979
"O" miscellaneous, 1971-1977
Patterson, Raymond R., 1969-1983
Phylon, 1958-1981
"P" miscellaneous, 1965-1982, undated
Quinn, Edward, 1976-1979
Raetz, Martha, 1973-1978 *For additional material see Container 7, Readings*
Randall, Dudley, 1966-1976
(2 folders)
Resich, Christopher and Anna, 1976-1979
"R" miscellaneous, 1967-1981
Robinson, William H., 1972-1973
Smethurst, Stella, 1972-1981
Spady, James G., 1972-1983
Suter, Anthony, 1973-1994
- BOX 4** "S-U" miscellaneous, 1958-1982
(3 folders)
Vinson, James, 1973-1981
"V" miscellaneous, 1967-1982
Walcott, Ronald, 1973-1976
Watson, Doug, 1981-1993
Weixlmann, Joseph, 1976-1979
Wilkins, Christopher *See Container 7, Readings*

General Correspondence, 1948-1994

Container

Contents

Williams, John A., 1968-1970
Williams, Kenny J., 1972-1977
Woods, Hollis A., 1962-1972
“W-Z” miscellaneous, 1965-1981
(2 folders)
Unidentified, 1950-1981, undated

BOX 4-10

Writings, 1945-1995

Background material, correspondence, notes, drafts, master sheets, and publicity relating to articles, autobiographical writings, book reviews, interviews, poetry anthologies and collections, speeches, textbooks, and writings by others as well as material relating to poetry festivals and readings.

Arranged according to writings by Emanuel and by others and therein alphabetically by type of writing, title, or name of author.

BOX 4

By Emanuel

Poetry

Anthologies

“Best of the Best,” edited by Margaret Burroughs, 1982-1983

Langston Hughes, edited by Emanuel, correspondence, 1966-1967

Sixes and Sevens, edited by Paul Breman, 1962

Collections

Black Man Abroad: The Toulouse Poems, publicity, 1978-1983, undated

“Black Tender,” draft, 1970-1973

Broken Bowl, publicity, 1983

Chisel in the Dark: Poems Selected and New

List, undated

Draft, undated

Book cover, undated

Publicity, 1980-1983

“The Chopping Block”

Lists, undated

Draft, 1988

(2 folders)

Biographical sketch and chronology, undated

BOX 5

De la rage au coeur

Text, 1987

Correspondence, Jean Migrenne, 1991-1995

Book review, 1992

Deadly James

Draft A, 1981-1990

(2 folders)

Draft B, 1987

Correspondence, Nicole Lamotte, 1987-1995

Panther Man

Printed version, annotated, 1970

Book review, 1972

“We Are Seven,” draft with musical settings, 1988

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “ <i>Whole Grain</i> and Later Poems of James A. Emanuel,” draft, parts I and II, 1995 (4 folders)
BOX 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Whole Grain: Collected Poems, 1958-1989</i> Draft, 1989-1990 Master sheets, 1991 (2 folders) Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anderson, Keith O., 1988-1994 Madgett, Naomi Long, 1989-1992 Festivals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> III Congreso de la Asociacion Española de Estudios Anglo-Norteamericanos, Santiago, Chile, 1979 Festac '77, Lagos and Kaduna, Nigeria, 1975-1980 Fougères Festival, Fougères, Belgium, 1989 Langston Hughes Festival, New York, N.Y., 1983 Liège Biennial, Liège, Belgium, 1990 Sarajevo's Poetry Days, Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, 1982 Individual poems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas, 1972-1978, undated Texts, circa 1945, 1968-1980 (2 folders)
BOX 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspondence, 1971-1995, undated (10 folders) Publicity, 1973-1982, undated <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textbooks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How I Write/2</i>, correspondence, 1971 <i>A Poet's Mind</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft A, 1981 Draft B, 1982 Draft fragments and notes, 1981-1982, undated Correspondence, 1981-1987, undated Prose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthology edited by Emanuel and Theodore L. Gross <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dark Symphony: Negro Literature in America</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book reviews, 1968 Correspondence, Kenneth L. Kaiman, Thomas O. Gay, and Velery H. Webb, 1967-1977 Publicity, 1968 Articles and essays, 1945, 1976-1977, undated Autobiographies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A Force in the Field</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background material, 1973-1974, undated Notes, 1993, undated Draft, 1993 (2 folders) Draft fragments, 1993

- Master sheets, 1995
 “Snowflakes and Steel: My Life As a Poet, 1971-1980”
 Background material, 1972-1982
 (2 folders)
- BOX 9** Draft, 1981
 (3 folders)
 Photographic supplement, 1981
 Book reviews, 1971-1977
 Interviews
 By Emanuel
 Brooks, Gwendolyn, 1970
 Giovanni, Nikki, 1970
 Hughes, Langston, 1960-1965
 (2 folders)
 Sanchez, Sonia, 1970
 With Emanuel
 Lee, Don L., 1970
 McIver, Jean P., 1990
 Unidentified, 1972, 1981
 (2 folders)
 Speeches, 1970
 By others
 Breman, Paul, “Poetry into the ’Sixties,” circa 1968
 Bone, Robert, “American Negro Poetry: On the Stage and in the Schools,” 1967
 Gottlieb, Lorri, poems, undated
 Holdt, Marvin, “James A. Emanuel: Black Man Abroad,” 1979
 Hudson, Theodore R., “Abstract of *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka: The Literary Works*,” undated
 Labrusse, Hughes, *Terrena l’arbre excessif*, 1986
 Madgett, Naomi Long, *Exits and Entrances*, 1978
- BOX 10** Polo, Marco (1952-), *Travel Nonsense and Love*, 1989
 Watson, Doug, unidentified essay, undated
- BOX 10-12** **Subject File, 1922-1995**
 Material relating to African-American poets and writers; appointment calendars; biographical, election campaign, and military service material; newspaper and magazine clippings; a scrapbook; and material relating to teaching and travel.
 Arranged alphabetically by type of material, name of organization, or subject and chronologically therein.
- BOX 10** African-American poets and writers
 Baldwin, James, 1972-1980
 Brooks, Gwendolyn, circa 1968-1971
 Dunbar, Paul Laurence, 1972
 Ellison, Ralph, 1976
 Gayle, Addison, 1975
 General, 1961-1979, undated
 Hughes, Langston, 1922-1977

Subject File, 1922-1995

Container

Contents

	Williams, John A., 1966-1967
	Wright, Richard, undated
	Appointment calendars
	1979-1987
	(2 folders)
BOX 11	1988-1989
	Biographical material, 1968-1995, undated
	Election campaign, Board of Education, Mount Vernon, N.Y., 1967
	Military service, 1941-1952
	Miscellany, circa 1922-1995, undated
	(3 folders)
	Scrapbook, 1935-1944, undated
	Teaching material
	City College of the City University of New York, N.Y., 1964-1984, undated
	(2 folders)
BOX 12	University of Grenoble, Grenoble, France, 1968-1969
	University of Toulouse, Toulouse, France, 1979-1980
	(4 folders)
	University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland, 1975-1976
	Travel file, 1972-1984, undated
BOX OV 1	Oversize, 1973-1982
	Publicity for poetry readings.
	Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	Writings
	By Emanuel
	Poetry
	Readings
	Publicity, 1973-1982, undated (Container 7)