

GATHER OUT OF STAR-DUST

The Harlem Renaissance & The Beinecke Library

JANUARY 13 – APRIL 17, 2017 AT YALE UNIVERSITY

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Additional commentary by Professor Robert B. Stepto

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE: A CHRONOLOGY

A timeline of African American culture from 1910-1940, while far from comprehensive, offers a sense of the abundance, variety, and texture of documentation for this period available in the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection. The chronological arrangement gives rise to interesting juxtapositions, such as the appearance in the same year – 1917 – of Ridgley Torrence’s “Negro plays” on Broadway and the N.A.A.C.P.’s Negro Silent Protest Parade, or the emergence of Jean Toomer with *Cane* in the same year – 1923 – as the Charleston. Well-known events are placed in relation to lesser-known ones: ten days after appearing as an usher at Countée Cullen’s wedding to Yolande Du Bois, Langston Hughes escorted Gwendolyn Bennett to prom at Lincoln University.

Scholars have debated the beginning and ending events or dates of the Harlem Renaissance, though most agree that momentum for African American culture began sometime in the 1910s or early 20s, and had evolved into something quite different by 1939. This timeline suggests a variety of beginnings and endings, as well as a middle with numerous identifiable events of momentum: the 1924 Civic Club Dinner hosted by Charles S. Johnson, the publication of a special Negro issue of *Survey Graphic* in 1925, the rise of Josephine Baker that same year, and the publication of *The Weary Blues* in 1926. By the time Langston Hughes published his first memoir, *The Big Sea*, in 1940, he could make a decidedly retrospective assessment of what was by then called “the Negro Renaissance.”

1. *The Crisis*. Volume 1, Number 3.
2. W.C. Handy. “The Jogo Blues.” New York: Pace and Handy Music Co., 1913.
3. James Weldon Johnson. Scrapbook on the stage, 1917-1930. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
4. Photograph of Silent Protest Parade, 1917. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
5. E. G. Renesch. “Colored Man is No Slacker.” Chicago, 1918.
6. Marcus Garvey. *An Appeal to the Soul of White America*. New York: Universal Negro Improvement Association [?], 1923.
7. Window card for national tour of *The Emperor Jones*, 1921.
8. Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake. “I’m Just Wild About Harry,” in *Shuffle Along*. New York: M. Witmark and Sons, 1921.
9. Jessie Fauset. Letter to Langston Hughes, January 16, 1921. Langston Hughes Papers.
10. Claude McKay. *Harlem Shadows*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1922.
11. James Weldon Johnson. “A Real Poet.” *New York Age*, May 20, 1922.
12. Claude McKay’s membership card for the Russian Communist Party, March 1923. Claude McKay Collection.
13. Member’s Pass, House of Representatives, 1923. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
14. Jean Toomer. *Cane*. New York: Boni & Liveright, 1923.
15. Cecil Mack and Jimmy Johnson. “The Original Charleston.” New York: Harms, 1923.
16. Charles S. Johnson. Letter to Jean Toomer, March 6, 1924. Jean Toomer Papers.
17. Countée Cullen. Letter to Langston Hughes, May 13, 1924. Langston Hughes Papers.
18. Walter White. *The Fire in the Flint*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1924.
19. Walter White. Letter to Carl Van Vechten, August 7, 1924.
20. Guest book from the Manhattan home of James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson, 1923-1931. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
21. Alain Locke. Letter to Langston Hughes, undated. Langston Hughes Papers.
22. *Survey Graphic*, March 1925.
23. Checklist for “Exhibition of Recent Portraits of Representative Negroes,” 1925. Langston Hughes Papers.
24. *Opportunity*, June 1925.
25. Chester T. Crowell. “The World’s Largest Negro City.” *Saturday Evening Post*, August 8, 1925. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
26. Joel E. Spingarn. Draft letter to W.E.B. Du Bois, August 14, 1925. James Weldon Johnson Collection Manuscript Miscellany.

27. A. Phillip Randolph. "Pullman Porters Need Own Union." *The Messenger*, August 1925.
28. Countée Cullen. *Color*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925.
29. Photograph of Gwendolyn Bennett, 1924. Claude McKay Papers.
30. Gwendolyn Bennett. Letter to Harold Jackman, September 20, 1925. James Weldon Johnson Collection Files.
31. Photograph of Josephine Baker, 1927. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
32. Alain Locke, ed. *The New Negro*. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925.
33. Langston Hughes. *The Weary Blues*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926. Copies belonging to James Weldon Johnson and Carrie Clark, the author's mother.
34. Langston Hughes. Letter to Harry Block, [February 1926]. James Weldon Johnson Collection Manuscript Miscellany.
35. Gwendolyn Bennett. "The Ebony Flute." *Opportunity*, August 1926.
36. Carl Van Vechten. Letter to James Weldon Johnson, September 7, 1926. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
37. Anita Handy. *Guide of Harlem's Night Clubs and Amusements*, October 1926. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
38. *Fire!! A Quarterly Devoted to the Younger Negro Artists*, vol. 1, no. 1. November 1926.
39. James Weldon Johnson. Draft of "The Creation," 1918. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
40. ----. Working notes for *God's Trombones*, ca. 1927. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
41. Langston Hughes. Manuscript of *Fine Clothes to the Jew*, ca. 1927. Langston Hughes Papers.
42. Aaron Douglas. Design for Carl Van Vechten's bathroom, 1927. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
43. Portrait of Charlotte Osgood Mason. Langston Hughes Papers.
44. Invitation to the opening of *The Dark Tower*, October 1927. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
45. Scrapbook on Florence Mills compiled by James Weldon Johnson, 1927. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
46. Invitation to the wedding of Nina Yolande Du Bois and Countée Cullen, April 9, 1928. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
47. Countée Cullen. Letter to Langston Hughes, February 24, 1928. Langston Hughes Papers.
48. Langston Hughes. Letter to Gwendolyn Bennett, April 19, 1928. Gwendolyn Bennett Papers.
49. Nella Larsen. *Quicksand*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928.
50. Nella Larsen. Letter to Carl Van Vechten, August 22, 1928. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
51. *Harlem: A Forum of Negro Life*, vol. 1, no. 1. November 1928.
52. Langston Hughes. Letter to Claude McKay, June 27, 1929. Claude McKay Collection.
53. Countée Cullen. *The Black Christ*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929.
54. George S. Schuyler. *Black No More: Being an Account of the Strange and Wonderful Workings of Science in the Land of the Free, A.D. 1933-1940*. New York: The Macaulay Company, 1931.
55. Wallace Thurman. *Infants of the Spring*. New York: The Macaulay Company, 1932.
56. Carl Van Vechten. Photograph of Nora Holt, March 18, 1932.
57. Sterling Brown. *Southern Road*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1932.
58. Langston Hughes. *Scottsboro, Limited: Four Poems and a Play in Verse*. Illustrated by Prentiss Taylor. New York: Golden Stair Press, 1932.
59. Photograph of Langston Hughes, Louise Thompson, and Dorothy West aboard the S.S. Europa, June 17, 1932. Langston Hughes Papers.
60. Lobby card for *Harlem After Midnight*, 1934.
61. Ralph Ellison. Untitled typescript about abolition. Federal Writers' Project Negro Group Papers.
62. Zora Neale Hurston. Holograph manuscript of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, ca. 1937. Zora Neale Hurston Collection.
63. Richard Wright. "Blueprint for Negro Writing." *New Challenge*, Fall 1937.
64. Langston Hughes. Manuscript note and draft table of contents for *The Big Sea*, ca. 1940. Langston Hughes Papers.

THE MAKING OF A RENAISSANCE

Scholars have debated the conditions for the explosion of African American cultural production in the 1920s and 30s, with some crediting changes in American intellectual life at the turn of the century and others pointing to the consolidation of African American political power with the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909 and the National Urban League in 1910. Most historians agree that the tremendous demographic shift known as the Great Migration, in which African Americans began moving from the rural South to northern urban centers in droves beginning in the 1910s, concentrating in enclaves in Harlem, New York, U Street in Washington, D.C., and Bronzeville in Chicago, made the cultural collaborations of the Renaissance possible.

The Harlem Renaissance was also made by the individuals involved, whose partnerships, sponsorships, and friendships were the engine of cultural production. Aesthetic debates led to manifestoes from many corners about the purpose, style, and proper subject matter of African American art. Meanwhile, a culture of prizes, publishers newly amenable to black writing, and patrons eager to support budding artists made for previously unseen economic support for young artists.

The Push for Art

1. James Weldon Johnson, editor. *The Book of American Negro Poetry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.

2. James Weldon Johnson. Lecture notes on "the younger Negro poets," ca. 1930. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
3. Charles S. Johnson. "Editorials." *Opportunity*. September 1924.
4. Alain Leroy Locke. "The New Negro," in *The New Negro*. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925. Portrait by Winold Reiss.
5. W.E.B. Du Bois. "Criteria of Negro Art." *The Crisis*, October 1926.

What is Negro Art?

6. Claude McKay. *Harlem Shadows*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.
7. Jessie Fauset. Letter to Langston Hughes, June 24, 1924. Langston Hughes Papers.
8. Countée Cullen. *Color*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1925.
9. Langston Hughes. *The Weary Blues*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926.
10. Zora Neale Hurston. "Characteristics of Negro Expression," in *Negro: Anthology made by Nancy Cunard, 1931-33*. London: Wishart & Co, 1934.

How shall he be portrayed?

11. Jessie Redmon Fauset. *There is Confusion*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924.
12. "The Negro in Art: How Shall He Be Portrayed? A Symposium." *Crisis*. April 1926.
13. George S. Schuyler. "The Negro-Art Hokum." *The Nation* vol. 122, No. 3180. June 16, 1926. Facsimile from *The Nation* archive.
14. Langston Hughes. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain." *The Nation* vol. 122, No. 3181. June 23, 1926.
15. Langston Hughes. "These Bad New Negroes: A Critique on Critics," March 22, 1927. Langston Hughes Papers.

Nigger Heaven and Home to Harlem

16. Carl Van Vechten. *Nigger Heaven*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926.
17. Aaron Douglas. Advertisement for *Nigger Heaven*, 1926. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
18. Carl Van Vechten. Note concerning title of *Nigger Heaven*. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
19. James Weldon Johnson. Notes on *Nigger Heaven*, 1926. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
20. J. Rosamond Johnson. Note proposing alternate title for *Nigger Heaven*. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
21. Claude McKay. *Home to Harlem*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928.
22. Gwendolyn Bennett. "Blue-Black Symphony." *New York Herald Tribune Books*, March 11, 1928.
23. W. E. B. Du Bois. "The Browsing Reader." *The Crisis*, June 1928.

Publishers, Patrons, and Prizes

24. Jessie Redmon Fauset. Letter to Langston Hughes, May 28, 1923. Langston Hughes Papers.

25. *The Crisis*. September 1924. Cover by Laura Wheeler Waring.
26. *Opportunity*. May 1927. Cover by Aaron Douglas.
27. Gwendolyn Bennett. Letter to Harold Jackman. January 11, 1926. James Weldon Johnson Collection Files.
28. W.E.B. Du Bois. Letter to Joel Spingarn, September 16, 1924. Joel E. Spingard Collection.
29. Advertisement for Albert and Charles Boni, Inc. "Negro life" novel contest, 1926. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
30. James Weldon Johnson's Harmon Award, 1927, and Spingarn Medal, 1925. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
31. Programs for Harmon Foundation Exhibitions, 1928-1931. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
32. George S. Schuyler. "Shafts and Darts." *Messenger* May 1926.
33. Blanche Knopf. Letter to Langston Hughes, May 18, 1925. Langston Hughes Papers.
34. ----. Letter to Carl Van Vechten, May 25, 1925. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
35. Carl Van Vechten. Photograph of Alfred and Blanche Knopf, April 4, 1932. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
36. Walter White. Letter to Carl Van Vechten, April 5, 1925. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
37. Jessie Fauset. Letter to Langston Hughes, undated. Langston Hughes Papers.
38. Carl Van Vechten. Photograph of Ethel Waters and Carl Van Vechten, February 19, 1939. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
39. Charlotte Osgood Mason. Letter to Langston Hughes, undated. Langston Hughes Papers.
40. ----. Letter to Langston Hughes, undated. Langston Hughes Papers.
41. Langston Hughes. Draft letter to Charlotte Osgood Mason, June 6. Langston Hughes Papers.

Collaborations

42. Arna Bontemps. *God Sends Sunday*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1931. Jacket design by Aaron Douglas.
43. Rudolph Fisher. *Walls of Jericho*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928. Jacket design by Aaron Douglas.
44. James Weldon Johnson. *God's Trombones*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927. Illustrated by Aaron Douglas.
45. Aaron Douglas. Letter to James Weldon Johnson, June 6, 1927. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
46. *Fire!! A Quarterly for the Younger Negro Artists*. November 1926.
47. Wallace Thurman. Letter to Claude McKay, October 4, 1928. Claude McKay Collection.
48. Langston Hughes. Diaries from southern trip, 1927. Langston Hughes Papers.
49. Photograph of Jessie Fauset, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston beside *Lifting the Veil*, Tuskegee, Alabama, 1927. Langston Hughes Papers.
50. Georgia Douglas Johnson. Letter to James Weldon Johnson, January 3, 1930. Georgia Douglas Johnson Collection.

Friendships

51. Photograph of Langston Hughes standing on a pier, ca. 1925. Langston Hughes Papers.
52. Photograph of Claude McKay in Petrograd, 1923. Claude McKay Collection.
53. Claude McKay. Letter to Langston Hughes, September 22, 1924, Tolou, France. Langston Hughes Papers.
54. Claude McKay. Letter to Langston Hughes, May 9, 1925, Paris. Langston Hughes Papers.
55. Langston Hughes. Letter to Claude McKay, July 25, 1925, Washington, D.C. Claude McKay Collection.
56. Claude McKay. Postcard to Langston Hughes, August 25, 1926[?], France. Langston Hughes Papers.
57. Langston Hughes. Letter to Claude McKay, March 5, 1928, Lincoln, Pennsylvania. Claude McKay Collection.

Portraits by James Van Der Zee

1. James Van Der Zee. [Self-portrait wearing a bathing suit], 1949.
- 2-16. James Van Der Zee. Selections from *Eighteen Photographs*. Washington, D.C.: Graphics International, 1974.
 - III. The Van Der Zee Men (James, brother Walter, father John, and brother Charles), Lenox, Massachusetts, 1908.
 - IV. Kate and Rachel Van Der Zee, Lenox, Massachusetts, 1909.
 - V. Miss Suzie Porter, Harlem 1915.
 - VI. Nude, Harlem 1923.
 - VII. Marcus Garvey and Garvey Militia, Harlem, 1924.
 - VIII. Garveyite Family, Harlem, 1924.
 - IX. Dancer, Harlem, 1925.
 - X. Portrait of an Actor, Harlem, 1929.
 - XI. Swimming Team, Harlem, 1925.
 - XII. Wedding Day, Harlem, 1926.
 - XIII. Black Jews, Harlem, 1929.
 - XIV. Atlantic City, 1930.
 - XVI. Couple. Harlem, 1932.
 - XVII. The Heiress, Harlem, 1938.
 - XVIII. Daddy Grace, Harlem, 1938.

Geographies of Harlem

1. E. Simms Campbell. *Night-Club Map of Harlem*, 1932. Ink and watercolor on illustration board.
2. Bernie Robynson. *In the Heart of Harlem, U.S.A.* 1953. Langston Hughes Papers.
3. Tony Millionaire. *The Harlem Renaissance: One Hundred Years of History, Art, and Culture*. Brooklyn, NY: Ephemera Press, 2003.
- 4-6. Carl Van Vechten, Harlem Street Scenes, 1940. Carl Van Vechten Papers. *Reproduced from Van Vechten's Kodachrome slides in the Beinecke Digital Studio*.
Savoy Ballroom, 596 Lenox Avenue.
Apollo Theater, 253 West 125th Street.
Lafayette Theatre, 2225 Seventh Avenue.

VISUAL ARTS

Just as in literature, music, theater, and dance, the Harlem Renaissance saw expanded interest in visual art by African Americans: dealers, patrons, curators, and schools of art were newly invested in promoting and collecting painting, sculpture, drawings, and prints by artists largely based in New York, Chicago, and Paris. In 1919, the Knoedler Gallery in New York hosted an exhibit of the paintings of Henry Ossawa Tanner, then based in Paris. In 1921, the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library exhibited painting and sculpture by Tanner, Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller, William Edward Scott, and Laura Wheeler Waring. Perhaps the greatest single impact on the fortunes of African American artists came from the Harmon Foundation, founded in 1922, which in 1926 began awarding prizes for visual arts as well as literature; in 1928 it began hosting a juried exhibition, bringing artists like Palmer Hayden, Hale Woodruff, Sargent Johnson, Aaron Douglas, Malvin Gray Johnson, and Archibald Motley to widespread attention.

African American artists in this period drew from a wide range of subjects, but most celebrated African American culture and the heritage of the African Diaspora, often creating portraits of notable historical figures. The arts also drew heavily on African themes: when Aaron Douglas arrived in New York from Topeka, Kansas, to study with Bavarian artist Winold Reiss, Reiss instructed him to visit the African masks at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Douglas would go on to blend African statuary with modernist abstraction. Douglas's ubiquitous magazine and book illustrations and murals would create the visual vocabulary most closely associated with the Harlem Renaissance.

- 1-5. Langston Hughes and Aaron Douglas. *Opportunity Art Folio*. New York: Opportunity, National Urban League, 1926.
6. Richmond Barthé. *The Unknown Dancer*, ca. 1937. Bronze.
7. Betsy Graves Reyneau. *Portrait of Asa Philip Randolph*.
8. Laura Wheeler Waring. *Portrait of Marian Anderson*. In *Portraits of Outstanding Americans of Negro Origin, Painted by Two Women Artists*. New York: Harmon Foundation, ca. 1945.
9. Aaron Douglas. "Prodigal Son," illustration for *God's Trombones*, 1927. Gouache on paper.
10. Leslie Garland Bolling. *The Boxer, or Wild Cat*. 1933. Wood.
11. Augusta Savage. *Green Apples*, 1928. Bronze.
12. Augusta Savage. *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, 1939. Metal.
13. "Augusta Savage At Work on 'The Harp.'" *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 11, 1939. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
- 14-15. Aaron Douglas. "Bravado" and "Surrender," inspired by *The Emperor Jones*, 1926 [printed 1972]. Woodcut.
- 16-17. Albert A. Smith. *Portraits of Coleridge-Taylor and Frederick Douglass*, 1922. Etchings. Gift of Grayce Fairfax Nail.

18. Meta Warrick Fuller. *Ethiopia Awakening*, ca. 1921. Bronze.
19. Meta Warrick Fuller. *Phyllis Wheatley, Negro Servant to Mr. John Wheatley of Boston*, undated. Plaster.

FROM BLUES TO "THE EMPEROR JONES:" AFRICAN AMERICAN PERFORMING ARTS

The Harlem Renaissance marked an explosion of African American performing arts into mainstream American culture. From blues and jazz music to dances like the Charleston and the Lindy Hop, from musical theater to serious drama, commentators noted that suddenly African American performers seemed to be everywhere one looked. Langston Hughes would later write disdainfully of the persistence of blackface performance – Ethel Barrymore appeared on Broadway as the title character in *Scarlet Sister Mary* in 1930. But Broadway stages were also newly open to African American performers, with plays like *Porgy* (1927) and *Run Little Chillun* (1930) employing enormous casts.

African American participation in the performing arts was perhaps even more fraught with racialized power dynamics than the publishing or art worlds, but performers like Bill Robinson, Josephine Baker, and Paul Robeson were still often able to dictate the terms of their engagements, refusing to perform for segregated audiences. From the chorus line that was reinvented by *Shuffle Along* to the influence of blues and jazz on American popular music, African American performance of the Harlem Renaissance period had perhaps the most lasting impact.

1. Carl Van Vechten. Photograph of Bessie Smith, 1936. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
2. Langston Hughes. Letter to Carl Van Vechten. January 20, 1926. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
3. Carl Van Vechten. "Negro 'Blues' Singers." *Vanity Fair*, March 1926.
4. Ethel Waters. Letter to Carl Van Vechten. October 9, 1929. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
5. Photograph of Ethel Waters, ca. 1925. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
6. Ethel Waters, "Oh Daddy" (Black Swan 2010), 1921.
7. Mamie Smith, "Goin Crazy with the Blues" (Victor 20210), 1926.
8. Gladys Bentley, "Groundhog Blues" (Okeh 8610), 1928.
Records from Carl Van Vechten's collection appear on loan from the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library at Yale University.
9. Advertisement for Okeh Records recording of the Virginia Jubilee Singers, 1921.
10. Photograph of Duke Ellington and his orchestra, ca. 1940. Randolph Linsly Simpson African-American Collection.
11. Andy Razaf and James P. Johnson. "Aintcha Got Music," from *Harlem Hotcha*. New York: Handy Brothers Music Co., 1932.

- 12-14. Advertisement materials for the Cotton Club featuring Cab Calloway, 1931-1933.
15. Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake. "Shuffle Along." New York: M. Witmark and Sons, 1921.
16. Portrait of Florence Mills. In Miguel Covarrubias. *The Prince of Wales and Other Famous Americans*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925.
17. Edward Steichen. Photograph of Florence Mills, 1925. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
18. Photograph of Butterbeans and Susie, ca. 1925. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
19. Alain Locke. "The Negro and the American Stage." *Theatre Arts Monthly*, February 1926.
20. Photographs of Charles Gilpin in *The Emperor Jones*. Eugene O'Neill Papers.
21. Photograph of Paul Robeson, circa 1925. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
22. Provincetown Playbill for *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
23. Handbill for *Porgy*, 1927. Theatre Guild Archive.
24. Photograph of the cast of *Porgy* on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, 1929. Richard Bruce Nugent Papers.
25. Rose McClendon. Letter to Langston Hughes, ca. 1935. Langston Hughes Papers.
- 26-52. Postcards of Josephine Baker. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
- 53-60. Carl Van Vechten. Photographs of Bill Robinson, 1933. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
61. Stephen Longstreet. "Shuffling Along." Stephen Longstreet Papers.
62. ----. "Harlem fast dance." Stephen Longstreet Papers.
63. Miguel Covarrubias. "The Increasing Vogue of the Negro Revue on Broadway." *Vanity Fair*, February 1925. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
64. ----. "New York's Brown Strutters, Colorful and Coloured." *Vanity Fair*, April 1927. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.

GATHER OUT OF STAR-DUST: COLLECTING A RENAISSANCE FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE

From the anthologies gathered by James Weldon Johnson and Alain Locke, to the folkways captured by Zora Neale Hurston, Sterling Brown, and W. C. Handy, to the legendary library collections founded by Jesse Moorland, Arthur Schomburg, and Carl Van Vechten, the Harlem Renaissance was characterized by the act of collecting. African American cultural production in the aggregate would, according to Johnson, show the world that African Americans were not intellectually inferior. The collected work of writers of this period impressed onlookers enough to name the movement a "Renaissance."

The Harlem Renaissance remains one of the most studied periods in American history; this tremendous output of scholarship has been enabled in no small part because Renaissance contemporaries championed archiving African American history, from the advocacy of Carter G. Woodson to the pioneering librarianship of Dorothy Porter Wesley.

1. James Weldon Johnson, ed. *Book of American Negro Poetry*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.
2. ----. *Book of American Negro Poetry*, revised edition
3. ----. Page of notes for *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
4. James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamond Johnson, eds. *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*. New York: Viking Press, 1925.
5. ----. *The Second Book of Negro Spirituals*. New York: Viking Press, 1926.
6. Prentiss Taylor. "Zora Neale Hurston, Poses from a Crow Dance," 1935. James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
7. Zora Neale Hurston. "Harlem Slanguage." Undated. Zora Neale Hurston Collection.
8. Sterling Brown. Letter to James Weldon Johnson, January 1, 1930. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
9. ----. Letter to James Weldon Johnson, February 17, 1932. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
10. Langston Hughes. Manuscript draft of "House Rent Parties," undated. Langston Hughes Papers.
11. House Rent Party Card Collection, ca. 1925-1960. Langston Hughes Papers.
12. W.C. Handy. Letter to Langston Hughes, February 8, 1926. Langston Hughes Papers.
13. ----. *Blues: An Anthology*. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1926.
14. Miguel Covarrubias. Caricature of W.C. Handy, 1926, inscribed to Langston Hughes, 1932. Langston Hughes Papers.
15. W. C. Handy. *Father of the Blues: An Autobiography*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1941.
16. Alain Locke, ed. *The New Negro: An Interpretation*. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925.
17. Charles S. Johnson, ed. *Ebony and Topaz: A Collectanea*. New York: Opportunity National Urban League, 1927.
18. Nancy Cunard, ed. *Negro Anthology*. London: Nancy Cunard at Wishart, 1934.
19. Carter Woodson. *Important Events and Dates in Negro History*. Artwork by Lois Mailou Jones. Washington: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1936.
20. Alain Locke. "Prospectus of the Present and Proposed Collections of Negro Americana, Africana, and Documents Relating to the Negro," 1913-1915. James Weldon Johnson Collection Manuscript Miscellany.
21. Catalog cards belonging to Dorothy Porter Wesley. Dorothy Porter Wesley Papers.
22. *The Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature and History*, undated. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
23. Invitation to the Dedication of the Aaron Douglas Murals [*Aspects of Negro Life*] at the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library, ca. 1934. Clippings File of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection.
24. Carl Van Vechten. List of Items Donated to the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection, ca. 1950. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
25. Photograph of Grace Nail Johnson and Carl Van Vechten organizing the James Weldon Johnson Papers, ca. 1945. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
26. *Exercises Marking the Opening of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of Negro Arts and Letters*, January 7, 1950.
27. Samuel Kravitt. Photograph of Attendees at the Opening of the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection, Sprague Hall, January 7, 1950.
28. Allon Schoener, ed. *Harlem on My Mind: Cultural Capital of Black America, 1900-1968*. New York: Random House, 1969.
29. Michal Raz-Russo. *Invisible Man: Gordon Parks and Ralph Ellison in Harlem*. Göttingen, Germany: Steidl, Gordon Parks Foundation, Art Institute of Chicago, 2016.
- 30-35. Selected Harlem studies, 1972-2011.

MORE STAR-DUST: SONG AND DANCE FROM THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Except where noted, all sound recordings from the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of 78rpm records donated by Carl Van Vechten, in the Historical Sound Recordings Collection of the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library.

1. Ethel Waters, "Oh Daddy" (1921)
2. Marian Anderson, "Go Down, Moses" (1924)
3. Alberta Hunter with Perry Bradford's Mean Four, "Take That Thing Away" (1925)
4. Ethel Waters, "Shake That Thing" (1925)
5. Butterbeans and Susie with Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five, "He Likes It Slow" (1926)
6. Mamie Smith, "Goin' Crazy with the Blues" (1926)
7. Rent Party Blues Dance (c. 1920s,) From *At The Jazz Band Ball: Early Hot Jazz, Song and Dance From Rare Original Film Masters 1925-33*. Yazoo, 2000
8. Paul Robeson, "Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child" (1926)
9. Bessie Smith with Fletcher Henderson, "Muddy Water (A Mississippi Moan)" (1927), in *Bessie Smith: The Complete Recordings*, vol. 3
10. Bessie Smith with James P. Johnson, "Lock and Key" (1927), in *Bessie Smith: The Complete Recordings*, vol. 3
11. Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, "Black and Tan Fantasy" (1927)
12. Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra, "I'm Coming Virginia" (1927)

13. Josephine Baker, "Hello Bluebird" (1927)
14. Josephine Baker in the film *Siren of the Tropics* (1927)
15. Josephine Baker, "Then I'll Be Happy" (1927)
16. Adelaide Hall with Lew Leslie's Blackbirds Orchestra, "Baby" (1928)
17. Gladys Bentley, "Ground Hog Blues" (1928)
18. Gladys Bentley, "Worried Blues" (1928)
19. Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra, "Ain't Misbehavin'" (1929)
20. Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra, "St. Louis Blues" (1929)
21. Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra, "(What Did I Do To Be So) Black and Blue" (1929)
22. Butterbeans and Susie, "Elevator Papa, Switchboard Mama" (1930)
23. Hall Johnson Negro Choir, "Ezekiel Saw De Wheel" (1930)
24. Hall Johnson Negro Choir, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" (1930)
25. Jimmy Johnson Orchestra, "Go Harlem" (1931)
26. Bill Robinson, "Keep a Song in Your Soul" (1931)
27. Cab Calloway and His Orchestra, "Minnie the Moocher" (1931)
28. Bill Robinson, Step Dance from the film *Harlem Is Heaven* (1932)
29. Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, "Stormy Weather" (1933)
30. Earl "Snake Hips" Tucker, from the film *Symphony in Black: A Rhapsody of Negro Life* (1935)
31. Ivie Anderson and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, from the film *A Day at the Races* (1937)
32. Lindy Hop, from the film *A Day at the Races* (1937)
33. Shorty George and Big Bea, from the film *Ask Uncle Sol* (1937)
34. Cab Calloway and His Orchestra & the Nicholas Brothers, from the film *Stormy Weather* (1943)
35. Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle, "Shuffle Along Medley" (1969), in *Eighty-Six Years of Eubie Blake*
16. George Gershwin, March 28, 1933
17. Taylor Gordon, March 18, 1933
18. W. C. Handy, May 24, 1932
19. Georgette Harvey, May 23, 1932
20. Roland Hayes, January 29, 1954
21. Nora Holt, October 26, 1934
22. Langston Hughes, March 8, 1939
23. Zora Neale Hurston, April 3, 1935
24. Harold Jackman, September 11, 1932
25. James Weldon Johnson, July 15, 1936
26. Grace Nail Johnson, December 3, 1932
27. Charles S. Johnson, April 25, 1947
28. J. Rosamond Johnson, April 22, 1933
29. Hall Johnson, May 14, 1947
30. Alfred A. Knopf, March 31, 1935
31. Blanche Knopf, April 4, 1932
32. Nella Larsen, August 17, 1932
33. Alain Locke, July 23, 1941
34. Rouben Mamoulian, November 7, 1935
35. Fania Marinoff, April 18, 1932
36. Rose McClendon, November 19, 1935
37. Claude McKay, July 25, 1941
38. Richard Bruce Nugent, February 16, 1936
39. Eugene O'Neill, September 5, 1933
40. Paul Robeson, January 10, 1936
41. Bill Robinson, January 25, 1933
42. Augusta Savage, July 9, 1938
43. George S. Schuyler, July 2, 1941
44. Noble Sissle, November, 20, 1951
45. Bessie Smith, February 3, 1936
46. Arthur Spingarn, January 26, 1940
47. William Grant Still, March 12, 1949
48. Carl Van Vechten, April 3, 1934
49. Ethel Waters, June 8, 1932
50. Elisabeth Welch, January 19, 1933
51. Walter White, July 12, 1938

PORTRAITS BY CARL VAN VECHTEN

1. Marian Anderson, January 14, 1940
2. Josephine Baker, October 20, 1949
3. Albert Barnes, October 20, 1937
4. Richmond Barthé, September 23, 1939
5. Gladys Bentley, February 27, 1932
6. Arna Bontemps, August 13, 1939
7. William Stanley Braithwaite, March 27, 1947
8. John W. Bubbles, December 27, 1935
9. Cab Calloway, January 12, 1933
10. Miguel Covarrubias, October 30, 1932
11. Countée Cullen, June 20, 1941
12. Geraldyn Dismond Major, March 22, 1935
13. Aaron Douglas, April 10, 1933
14. W. E. B. Du Bois, July 18, 1946
15. Max Eastman, October 31, 1934

CARICATURE ASSASSINATION: MIGUEL COVARRUBIAS MURDERS NEW YORK

Nancy Kuhl, Curator of Poetry,
Yale Collection of American Literature

Artist Miguel Covarrubias was not yet 20 years old when he arrived in New York City from his native Mexico in 1923. He was soon introduced to popular and well-connected writer and cultural critic Carl Van Vechten, who was immediately taken by the young artist's gift for portraiture—he'd later describe

Covarrubias's talent as a kind of clairvoyance. With the help of this mentor, Miguel Covarrubias was soon sketching the most famous faces in New York City—writers, actors, editors, athletes, and politicians. For the next two decades, Covarrubias's caricature portraits appeared regularly in the most popular magazines in the City. Covarrubias's drawings were so much a part of the cultural moment that they came to shape New York's image of itself even as they documented it. His witty, memorable drawings were widely celebrated—but their sharp critical edge did not go unnoticed. Covarrubias himself called attention a darker aspect of his work when, in 1925, he titled his own self-portrait "The Murderer." In a review of his work Katherine Anne Porter considered this epitaph: "in all of [Miguel Covarrubias's caricature portraits, there is] something that belongs to metaphysics: a feeling that he has exposed the very outer appearance of a sitter that is the clue to an inner quality the sitter has spent most of his life trying to hide, or disguise. If that isn't murder, what is it? And what is?"

1. Miguel Covarrubias, *Portrait of James Weldon Johnson*, undated. James Weldon and Grace Nail Johnson Papers.
2. Miguel Covarrubias, *Negro Boy with Cap*, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
3. Miguel Covarrubias, *Nude Negro Girl*, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
4. Miguel Covarrubias, *Portrait of Alfred Stieglitz*, undated. Alfred Stieglitz & Georgia O'Keeffe Archive.
5. Miguel Covarrubias, *Portrait of Carl Van Vechten*, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
6. Miguel Covarrubias, *Portrait of Eugene O'Neill and Jimmy Durante*, undated; illustration for "Impossible Interviews" in *Vanity Fair*, July 1932. Eugene O'Neill Papers.
7. Carl Van Vechten, *Photograph of Miguel and Rose Covarrubias*, March 22, 1936. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
8. Miguel Covarrubias, *Holiday Cards* (self-portraits with Rose Covarrubias), undated/1946. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
9. Miguel Covarrubias, "Love on the Stage—and the Stage Lovers who Depict it," drawings in *Vanity Fair*, April 1925.
10. Miguel Covarrubias, *The Prince of Wales and Other Famous Americans*, with a preface by Carl Van Vechten, NY: Knopf, 1925.
11. Corey Ford, *Meaning No Offense by John Riddell*, illustrated by Miguel Covarrubias, NY: John Day, 1927.
12. --. *The John Riddell Murder Case*, illustrated by Miguel Covarrubias, NY: Scribners, 1930.
13. --. *In the Worst Possible Taste by John Riddell*, illustrated by Miguel Covarrubias, NY: Scribners, 1932.
14. Miguel Covarrubias, *Negro Drawings*, with a preface by Ralph Barton and an introduction by Frank Crowninshield, NY: Knopf, 1927.
15. Miguel Covarrubias, *Sketch of Walter White on a paper napkin*, 1925; captioned by Carl Van Vechten. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
16. Langston Hughes, *The Weary Blues*, introduction by Carl Van Vechten, NY: Knopf, 1926; inscribed by Langston Hughes, Miguel Covarrubias, and Carl Van Vechten to Walter White.
17. Miguel Covarrubias, *Drawing of Carl Van Vechten in the subject's autograph book*, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
18. Miguel Covarrubias, *Sketch of Carl Van Vechten*, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
19. Miguel Covarrubias, "A Prediction" (Carl Van Vechten as a Negro) reproduction, undated. Carl Van Vechten Papers.
20. Miguel Covarrubias, *Self Portrait with drawing of Carl Van Vechten as a Negro*, 1925. Carl Van Vechten Papers.