

# Guide to the James Purdy Papers

YCAL MSS 44



by Diane J. Ducharme

April 1990

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
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**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 44

**CREATOR:** Purdy, James, 1914-2009

**TITLE:** James Purdy papers

**DATES:** 1944-1973

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 9 linear feet (20 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers document aspects of Purdy's early literary career. Major correspondents include Carl Van Vechten, John Cowper Powys, Edith Sitwell, Paul Bowles, and Gerald Brenan.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.purdy>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.purdy>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

The James Purdy Papers were the gift of James Purdy between 1962 and 1973, with the exceptions of Purdy's letters to John Cowper Powys, which are the 1964 gift of Phyllis Playter, and the autographed score of Robert Helps's "The Running Sun," which is the 1972 gift of the composer.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The James Purdy Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

James Purdy Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## JAMES PURDY (1923- )

James Purdy was born in Ohio on July 17, 1923, the third of five sons of William Purdy and Vera Covick Purdy. The Purdys divorced in 1926, and in the following years James moved frequently, living at various times with his mother, his father, and his grandmother. He eventually left home and went to Chicago, where he graduated from high school in 1940. In the following year, he attended classes at the University of Chicago, but was soon drafted into the Army. Upon his discharge, Purdy traveled to Mexico and studied at the University of Puebla.

During the 1940s, Purdy was employed first as an English teacher at a school for boys in Havana, and later as an interpreter and translator in Latin America, France, and Spain. He joined the faculty of Lawrence College in Wisconsin in 1949, but left in 1953 in order to write full-time. Over the next three years, however, his short stories were consistently rejected by publishers and magazines.

The Chicago businessman and critic Osborn Andreas was impressed by Purdy's work, and in 1956 he subsidized the publication of about 1,000 copies of *Don't Call Me by My Right Name*. In the same year Purdy's friend Jorma Jules Sjoblom borrowed money to subsidize the printing of Purdy's novella *63: Dream Palace*. Purdy sent copies of both these works to a number of authors and critics in England and America. Edith Sitwell admired them and was instrumental in persuading Victor Gollancz to publish an English edition of both works under the title *63: Dream Palace*.

Purdy received enthusiastic reviews from such literary figures as Angus Wilson and John Cowper Powys, and the attention the book received attracted American publishers. The same material, with two stories added, was brought out in the United States under the title *Color of Darkness* in 1957 by New Directions.

Purdy received a National Institute of Arts and Letters grant and a Guggenheim fellowship in 1958. *Malcolm* was published in the following year and received much praise, including an enthusiastic review by Dorothy Parker. The novel has been translated into fifteen languages and was adapted for the stage by Edward Albee in 1966.

Purdy settled in New York City in 1960. He received a Ford Foundation grant in 1961 and a second Guggenheim in 1962. *Malcolm* was followed in 1960 by *The Nephew* and in 1961 by *Children Is All*, a collection of stories and plays. His best-known play, "Cracks," was produced off-Broadway in 1963. The satiric novel *Cabot Wright Begins* appeared in 1964, and the controversial *Eustace Chisholm and the Works* in 1967.

In the next two decades, Purdy published eleven more novels including *I Am Elijah Thrush* (1972); *The House of the Solitary Maggot* (1974); *In a Shallow Grave* (1976); *Narrow Rooms* (1978); *Mourners Below* (1981); and *On Glory's Course* (1984) which was nominated for the P.E.N.-Faulkner Award in 1985. Purdy has also authored several collections of short stories, poems, and plays. Several of the plays have been produced off-Broadway and in regional theaters, and Purdy poems have been set to music by Richard Hundley and Robert Helps. In 1982, Purdy visited Israel, Finland, and Germany as a lecturer for the United States Information Agency. His most recent publication is the collection *Candles of Your Eyes* (1986).

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## Scope and Contents

The James Purdy Papers document aspects of the literary career of James Purdy, particularly its earlier years. The papers span the dates 1944-1973, but the bulk of the material dates from 1956-63.

The collection consists of four series. [Series I, Correspondence](#), is alphabetically arranged and housed in Boxes 1-9. Boxes 10-13 house Series II, *Writings*, arranged by type and alphabetically. Series III, *Other Papers*, consists of personal papers and writings by others and is housed in Boxes 14-15. *Photographs by Carl Van Vechten* make up Series IV, which is located in Boxes 16-18.

Almost all of the correspondence in Series I pertains to the beginning of Purdy's literary career. In 1956, Purdy sent copies of his collection of short stories, *Don't Call Me by My Right Name*, to a large number of writers, critics, and other prominent people. Many of the recipients responded with thank-you letters and praise for Purdy's work; Simone de Beauvoir, for example, said "Thank you for the pleasant stories." This category of correspondents includes Nelson Algren, John Betjeman, Elizabeth Bishop, Malcolm Cowley, Dudley Fitts, Erich Fromm, Horace Gregory, Langston Hughes, Matthew Josephson, Lincoln Kirstein, Norman Mailer, Marianne Moore, Laurence Olivier, Kenneth Rexroth, Elmer Rice, Muriel Rukeyser, Stephen Spender, Alice B. Toklas, and Thornton Wilder.

In several cases, the recipients were inspired to become friends of Purdy and to champion his writings. Box 4, folders 117-20 contain the letters of Edith Sitwell, one of his earliest and strongest supporters. Her first letter to Purdy calls his stories "superb: nothing short of masterpieces. They have a terrible, heart-breaking quality." Subsequent letters detail her admiration of Purdy's work and her efforts to find a British publisher for it, as well as her anger at Leonard Russell's refusal to print her article on Purdy because of the "language problem," reminding her that Graham Greene in 1955 "recommended *Lolita* and was attacked, as was the *Times*." Other topics include Gollancz's acceptance of the books, Purdy's reception in Britain, Yeats, Lana Turner's daughter, and Sitwell's own unhappy childhood.

Another early British supporter was the author John Cowper Powys, whose letters to Purdy are located in Boxes 3-4, folders 94-100. In addition to his admiration for Purdy's works, the letters discuss Welsh and English poetry, classical literature, Powys's disbelief in immortality, and the anti-vivisection movement.

Purdy's replies to Powys, the gift of Phyllis Playter, are found in Box 5, folders 101-05. Purdy expresses his gratitude for Powys's support, analyzes his writings, and informs Powys about the progress of his literary reputation. A July 1957 letter denounces the "Freudians" as "paltry bourgeois idiots," while a November letter gives Purdy's impressions of Paul Swan: "a nearly naked man danced--then gave a lecture on individualism and the Greeks." After Powys expressed enthusiasm for the hero of *Cabot Wright Begins*, "a well-known young rapist," Purdy admitted that his publisher was "somewhat sad I have chosen this story."

Purdy's early work also attracted the attention of American author Carl Van Vechten, whose letters to Purdy are located in folders 132-208 (Boxes 5-9). Almost all of these are extremely brief notes containing a few lines of advice, gossip, or humor. Many, particularly during 1957, are responses to comic pieces sent by Purdy to Van Vechten, which can be found in Box 14, folders 303-12. As early as February 1957, Van Vechten urged Purdy to donate his literary papers, assuring him that "Yale would be delighted and honored to have your letters, any or ALL of them. Yale EATS letters." Other letters mention Van Vechten's photography, parties, literary acquaintances, and the New York social scene. Van Vechten also occasionally reminisced about his contemporaries, noting, for instance, that "Gertrude Stein had the most beautiful voice in existence, except for Mabel Luhan," and commenting on Alice B. Toklas' conversion to Catholicism.

Two other friendships were begun by Purdy's mailing of complimentary copies. The correspondence of Gerald Brenan opens with thanks and praise of Purdy's work, and grows to include reflections on literature in general, the American vernacular, Robert Fitzgerald, Henry James, Brenan's own writing, politics, and the financial difficulties that led Brenan to sell his letters and manuscripts. His letters also contain many descriptions of and reflections on expatriate life in Málaga, to which he referred in a July 1960 letter as "a world of semi-delinquent, grownup children."

The correspondence of Bettina Schwarzchild is located in Box 4, folders 112-15. Her enthusiasm for Purdy's works led to a series of extensive letters in which she analyzed the major themes of his stories and their importance as a critique of American life and society in the 1950s. Other subjects discussed by Schwarzchild include Freudian psychology, the relationship between the sexes, her experiences as a child in Nazi Germany, female movie stars, Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, Tennessee Williams, and dream interpretation.

Other friends represented in the collection include Paul Bowles, Norman MacLeish, Eugene Olson, William Peden, John Rood, and Hui-Ming Wang. Bowles's letters contain news of his wife Jane's health, his reactions to Purdy's books, descriptions of his life in Morocco and of the Beats who visited there. A 1961 letter describes the visit of William Burroughs, Allen Ginsburg, Gregory Corso and Peter Orlovsky to Tangiers, explaining that the Moslems were convinced "that they were members of an American religious sect." MacLeish's letters contain comments on Allentown, gardening, his brother Archibald's poetry, and his own painting. Eugene Olsen's interests included Purdy's use of language, and modern jazz music.

Box 9, folders 211-21 hold Purdy's correspondence with Victor Gollancz and other members of that firm. In addition to standard business information, Gollancz's own letters detail his admiration of Purdy's work and his difficulties in attempting to present the book's subjects and language to the British reading public. The file also contains a copy of a preface Gollancz wrote to *63: Dream Palace*, praising its "devastating irony and most moving compassion."

The letters of James Laughlin (Box 2, folders 64-65) and of editors of his New Directions press (Box 2, folders 79-80) provide information on Purdy's publishing history with that firm. In addition, Laughlin's letters contain his personal reactions to Purdy's writing, messages of encouragement, and publicity advice. A November 1957 letter about the forthcoming appearance of *Color of Darkness* notes that Laughlin has "made up a list of nearly 100 names to whom I think we should send complimentary copies."

Additional information concerning the publication and reception of Purdy's early works can be found in the letters from the publishing houses of Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, Inc.; Martin Secker and Warburg, Ltd.; New Directions; and Pearn, Pollinger and Higham, Ltd. Purdy's correspondence with his translators Marie Canavaggia and Hui-Ming Wang, and with Rudolf Burckhardt, editor of *Der Kreis*, also contains comments on stylistic issues and problems of publication. Lillian Hellman's brief letters contain appreciation of Purdy's plays and hopes for their production.

[Series II, Writings](#), is housed in Boxes 9-13 and has been divided into four sections. The first section, *Books*, contains setting typescripts for several of Purdy's early works, including *63: Dream Palace*, *Don't Call Me by My Right Name*, *Malcolm*, *The Nephew*, and *Eustace Chisholm and the Works*. Box 10, folders 228-30 contain reviews of the German translation of the collection *Color of Darkness*. Material on *63: Dream Palace* includes the final pages of the book as marked for editing by Victor Gollancz, the British publisher, who felt that several vocabulary changes were needed for the British edition. Box 12, folders 262-69 hold typescripts of Purdy's plays *Children Is All* and *Cracks*, as well as reviews and opening night telegrams related to the 1963 production of *Children Is All*. *Poetry* has been alphabetically arranged by title of poem or group of poems and is found in folders 270-79. Most of these poems date from 1957; many of them are dedicated or addressed to Carl Van Vechten.

The fourth section of Series II, *Short Stories*, contains typescripts and corrected typescripts of seventeen short stories, alphabetically arranged by title. Several of the stories were published in Purdy's collections, and additional copies of these can be found in the Books section under the title of the work. Box 13, folder 293 contains the typescript of "The Pupil," which Purdy submitted to *Der Kreis* in 1957.

[Series III, Other Papers](#), is located in Boxes 14-15. The most prominent items in this series are the two collections of short humorous pieces, "Life in the Empire State," and "Recipes of the Masters, or, the Carlo Magno Cookbook" (Box 14, folders 303-12). They consist of photocopies of comic sketches, satiric advertisements, and mock newspaper stories, which Purdy composed and sent to Carl Van Vechten between 1957 and 1960. The items often feature recurring characters and situations, including the figure of "Carlo Magno," Carl Van Vechten himself, and his supposed misadventures with "the Baroness." "Recipes of the Masters" also includes elaborately humorous recipes.

Boxes 14-15, folders 313-20 contain Writings of Others. This section includes bound page proofs of Edith Sitwell's autobiography *Taken Care Of*, as well as proofs of Terry Southern's novel *The Magic Christian*. There are also several items concerning Purdy's work, such as the typescript of David Daiches' "A Preface to *Malcolm*" and Webster Schott's "James Purdy: American Dreamer."

[Series IV, Photographs by Carl Van Vechten](#), is housed in Boxes 16-18 and consists of copies of Van Vechten photographs which he sent or gave to Purdy between 1956 and 1964. The photographs themselves are undated, and nearly all of them are portrait shots. Subjects include Tallulah Bankhead, Diahann Carroll, Ossie Davis, William Faulkner, Ella Fitzgerald, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Billie Holliday, Le Roi Jones, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Henry Miller, Paul Robeson, Ned Rorem, Bobby Short, Gene Tunney, Carl Van Vechten, and Gore Vidal. Folder 374 contains photographs of drawings by James Purdy. Unidentified photographs, again mostly portraits, are located in Box 18, folders 377-90.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1954-73

3.75 linear feet (9 boxes)

Series I, *Correspondence*, is housed in Boxes 1-9 and contains alphabetically arranged correspondence. Letters are in chronological order within each folder.

|                |                                   |               |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 1-2   | "A" general                       | 1957-72       |
| b. 1, f. 3     | Aiken, Conrad                     | 1960          |
| b. 1, f. 3     | Algren, Nelson                    | 1956          |
| b. 1, f. 3     | Atkinson, Brooks                  | 1956-60       |
| b. 1, f. 4-5   | "B" general                       | 1956-63, n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 6     | Barker, Margaret                  | 1962-63       |
| b. 1, f. 6     | Beals, Carleton                   | 1958-62       |
| b. 1, f. 6     | Beauvoir, Simone de               | 1956          |
| b. 1, f. 7     | Bergler, Edmund                   | 1956-61       |
| b. 1, f. 8     | Bertram Rota, Ltd.                | 1956-62       |
| b. 1, f. 9     | Betjeman, John                    | 1956          |
| b. 1, f. 9     | Bishop, Elizabeth                 | 1956          |
| b. 1, f. 9     | Blake, James                      | 1959          |
| b. 1, f. 10    | <a href="#">Bowles, Paul</a>      | 1958-72       |
| b. 1, f. 11-13 | Brenan, Gerald                    | 1956-73, n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 14    | <a href="#">Burkhardt, Rudolf</a> | 1956-58       |
| b. 1, f. 15    | "C" general                       | 1956-63       |
| b. 1, f. 16    | Canavaggia, Marie                 | 1960-62       |
| b. 1, f. 17    | Coward, Noel                      | 1957          |
| b. 1, f. 17    | Cowley, Malcolm                   | 1956          |
| b. 1, f. 18    | <a href="#">Creeley, Robert</a>   | 1954-63       |
| b. 1, f. 19    | Crommie, Richard                  | 1961-62       |
| b. 1, f. 20    | "D" general                       | 1957-72       |
| b. 1, f. 21    | Daiches, David                    | 1958-61       |
| b. 1, f. 22    | <a href="#">Desnos, Edmundo</a>   | 1958-65       |
| b. 1, f. 23-24 | <a href="#">Druce, Jeannette</a>  | 1961-62       |



|                |  |               |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 25    | Du Brock, Neal   | 1958-61       |
| b. 1, f. 26-27 | Duval, Elga  | 1961          |
| b. 1, f. 28    | "E" general  | 1957-64       |
| b. 1, f. 29    | Eden, Sydney   | 1961-62       |
| b. 1, f. 30    | Evans, Edith   | 1956, 1957    |
| b. 1, f. 31    | "F" general  | 1957-61       |
| b. 2, f. 32-33 | Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, Inc.  | 1958-62       |
| b. 2, f. 34    | Farrell, James T.  | 1958-62       |
| b. 2, f. 35    | Ford, Edsel  | 1961          |
| b. 2, f. 36    | <a href="#">Ford, Ruth</a>   | 1961-62       |
| b. 2, f. 37    | <a href="#">Frazier, Forrest</a>   | 1961-71, n.d. |
| b. 2, f. 38    | French, Warren   | 1961-62       |
| b. 2, f. 39    | "G" general  | 1956-72       |
| b. 2, f. 40    | Gallup, Donald   | 1957-71       |
| b. 2, f. 41    | Giles, Brother   | 1956-57       |
|                | Giroux, Robert   |               |
|                | <a href="#">See: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, Inc., Box 2, folders 32-33</a> |               |
| b. 2, f. 42    | Gish, Lillian  | 1956-61       |
| b. 2, f. 43    | Giulio Einaudi editore, s.p.a.   | 1958-62       |
| b. 2, f. 44    | Greenberg, Martin  | 1961          |
| b. 2, f. 45    | Gregory, Horace  | 1956          |
| b. 2, f. 45    | Grimer, John   | 1956-57       |
| b. 2, f. 46    | Guggenheim Foundation  | 1958-62       |
| b. 2, f. 47    | "H" general  | 1957-63       |
| b. 2, f. 48    | <a href="#">Hefter, Ed</a>   | 1958-63       |
| b. 2, f. 49    | Hellman, Lillian   | 1958-61, n.d. |
| b. 2, f. 50    | Herr, Paul   | 1961          |
| b. 2, f. 51    | Hughes, Langston   | 1956-57       |
| b. 2, f. 52    | Hundley, Richard   | 1962-64, n.d. |
| b. 2, f. 53    | "I" general  | 1956, 1962    |

|                |  |               |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| b. 2, f. 54    | Insel Verlag   | 1957          |
| b. 2, f. 55    | "J" general  | 1957-72       |
| b. 2, f. 56    | Josephson, Matthew   | 1956          |
| b. 2, f. 57    | "K" general  | 1956-63       |
| b. 2, f. 58    | Kaminski, Edmund   | 1961          |
| b. 2, f. 59    | Kellner, Bruce   | 1956-59       |
| b. 2, f. 60    | Kelly, Eileen  | 1962          |
| b. 2, f. 61    | Kirstein, Lincoln  | 1956          |
| b. 2, f. 62    | Krutch, Joseph Wood  | 1956-61       |
| b. 2, f. 63    | "L" general  | 1956-72       |
| b. 2, f. 64-65 | Laughlin, James<br><a href="#">See also: New Directions, Box 3, folder 79-80</a> | 1956-72       |
| b. 2, f. 66    | Lewis, R. W. B.  | 1959-62       |
| b. 3, f. 67    | "M" general  | 1956-72, n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 68    | MCA Artists, Ltd.  | 1961-62       |
| b. 3, f. 69    | MacLeish, Norman   | 1957-72       |
| b. 3, f. 70    | McNamara, Eugene   | 1962, n.d.    |
| b. 3, f. 71    | Mailer, Norman   | 1956-57       |
| b. 3, f. 72    | Martin Secker and Warburg, Ltd.  | 1959-62       |
| b. 3, f. 73    | <a href="#">Maugham, Somerset</a>  | 1956, n.d.    |
| b. 3, f. 73    | Maurois, André   | 1956          |
| b. 3, f. 74    | <a href="#">Merrill, James</a>   | 1959, 1961    |
| b. 3, f. 75    | Miller, Nolan  | 1961-69       |
| b. 3, f. 76    | Moore, Marianne  | 1956          |
| b. 3, f. 77    | <a href="#">Motley, Willard</a>  | 1958-62, n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 78    | "N" general  | 1957-61       |
| b. 3, f. 79-80 | New Directions   | 1957-62       |
| b. 3, f. 81    | <i>New Yorker</i>  | 1957          |
| b. 3, f. 82    | "O" general  | 1958-64       |
| b. 3, f. 83    | <a href="#">Olivier, Laurence</a>  | 1956          |

|                 |  |               |
|-----------------|--|---------------|
| b. 3, f. 84-85  | Olson, Eugene                          | 1960-62, n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 86     | "P" general                            | 1957-62       |
| b. 3, f. 87     | Pargellis, Stanley                     | 1956-61       |
| b. 3, f. 88     | Parker, Dorothy                        | 1958          |
| b. 3, f. 89-90  | Pearn, Pollinger and Higham, Ltd.      | 1956-72       |
| b. 3, f. 91     | <a href="#">Pearson, Norman Holmes</a> | 1960-62       |
| b. 3, f. 92     | Peden, William                         | 1958-69       |
| b. 3, f. 93     | Playter, Phyllis                       | 1963          |
| b. 3, f. 93     | Porter, Katharine Anne                 | 1957-61       |
| b. 3, f. 94-96  | Powys, John Cowper                     | 1956-57       |
| b. 4, f. 97-100 | Powys, John Cowper                     | 1958-62       |
| b. 4, f. 101-05 | Purdy, James to John Cowper Powys      | 1957-63       |
| b. 4, f. 106-07 | "R" general                            | 1951-72       |
| b. 4, f. 108    | Rexroth, Kenneth                       | 1956-57       |
| b. 4, f. 109    | Rood, John                             | 1956-62       |
| b. 4, f. 110    | Rukeyser, Muriel                       | 1957, 1961    |
| b. 4, f. 111    | "S" general                            | 1957-72       |
| b. 4, f. 112-15 | <a href="#">Schwarzschild, Bettina</a> | 1963          |
| b. 4, f. 116    | Scott, Winfield Townley                | 1958-63       |
| b. 4, f. 117-20 | <a href="#">Sitwell, Edith</a>         | 1956-59, n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 121    | <a href="#">Sjoblom, J. J.</a>         | 1972          |
| b. 5, f. 122    | <a href="#">Sparrow, Phil</a>          | 1957-62       |
| b. 5, f. 123    | Strassman, Toni                        | 1957-58, n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 124    | Swan, Paul                             | 1957-62, n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 125    | "T" general                            | 1957-71       |
| b. 5, f. 126    | Tarshis, Lorie                         | 1957, n.d.    |
| b. 5, f. 127    | <a href="#">Taylor, Deems</a>          | 1956-59       |
| b. 5, f. 128    | Thomson, Virgil                        | 1956-70, n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 129    | Thorndike, Sybil                       | 1956-62       |
| b. 5, f. 130    | Toklas, Alice B.                       | 1956          |

|                  |  |                      |
|------------------|--|----------------------|
| b. 5, f. 131     | "V" general                              | 1961-71              |
| b. 5, f. 132-41  | Van Vechten, Carl                        | 1956-1957 Aug        |
| b. 6, f. 142-57  | Van Vechten, Carl                        | 1957 Aug-1959<br>Mar |
| b. 7, f. 158-80  | Van Vechten, Carl                        | 1959 Apr-1961<br>Aug |
| b. 8, f. 181-205 | Van Vechten, Carl                        | 1961 Sep-1964        |
| b. 9, f. 206-08  | Van Vechten, Carl                        | n.d.                 |
| b. 9, f. 209     | Van Vechten, Fania                       | 1959-62              |
| b. 9, f. 210     | Vanderbilt, Gloria                       | 1963                 |
| b. 9, f. 211-12  | Victor Gollancz, Ltd.                    | 1956-57              |
| b. 9, f. 213     | "W" general                              | 1956-72              |
| b. 9, f. 214-15  | Wang, Hui-ming                           | 1961-62              |
| b. 9, f. 216     | Warren, Robert Penn                      | 1956-63              |
| b. 9, f. 217     | Wilder, Thornton                         | 1956                 |
| b. 9, f. 218     | Williams, Tennessee                      | 1956                 |
| b. 9, f. 219     | <a href="#">Williams, William Carlos</a> | 1956-61              |
| b. 9, f. 220     | Wilson, Angus                            | 1957-60, n.d.        |
| b. 9, f. 221     | Wilt, Napier                             | 1958-61              |
| b. 9, f. 222     | Wright, William G.                       | 1958                 |
| b. 9, f. 222a    | Wright, Elsa Gress                       | 1960-1962            |
| b. 9, f. 223     | "Y" general                              | 1957                 |
| b. 9, f. 224-26  | Unidentified                             | 1956-62, n.d.        |
| b. 9, f. 226a    | Empty envelopes                          | 1957-1959            |

**Series II: Writings, 1957-63***1.5 linear feet (4 boxes)*

Boxes 10-13 hold Series II, *Writings*, which is divided into four sections, *Books*, *Plays*, *Poetry*, and *Short Stories*. Individual works are filed alphabetically within each section.

## BOOKS

*Cabot Wright Begins*

15 illustrations by Eugene Olson  
[See: Oversize, Box 19, folders 392-406](#) 1961, n.d.

*Color of Darkness*

|                   |                                   |      |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------|
| b. 10, f. 227     | Publicity material                | 1958 |
| b. 10, f. 228-230 | Reviews of the German translation | 1959 |
| b. 10, f. 231     | Script for radio broadcast        | 1959 |

*Don't Call Me By My Right Name*

|                  |                       |      |
|------------------|-----------------------|------|
| b. 10, f. 232-34 | Typescript, corrected | n.d. |
|------------------|-----------------------|------|

*Eustace Chisholm and the Works*

|                  |                               |      |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| b. 10, f. 235-41 | Setting typescript, photocopy | n.d. |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------|

*I Am Elijah Thrush*

|                  |                               |      |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| b. 10, f. 242-45 | Setting typescript, photocopy | n.d. |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------|

*Malcolm*

|               |                                    |      |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------|
| b. 11, f. 246 | Typescript, corrected, of excerpts | n.d. |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------|

*The Nephew*

|                  |  |         |
|------------------|--|---------|
| b. 11, f. 247-54 | Setting typescript, corrected  | n.d.    |
| b. 11, f. 255    | Galleys  | 1960    |
| b. 11, f. 256    | Page proofs  | 1960    |
| b. 11, f. 257    | Publicity material and review  | 1961-63 |
|                  | Illustrations by Ross Roseton<br><a href="#">See: Oversize, Box 20, folder 407</a> | n.d.    |

*63: Dream Palace*

|                  |                                 |      |
|------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| b. 11, f. 258-60 | Original typescript, corrected  | n.d. |
| b. 11, f. 261    | Pages edited by Victor Gollancz | n.d. |

*The Running Sun*

## BOOKS &gt; The Running Sun (continued)

"The Running Sun: for Soprano and Piano." Music by Robert Helps, text by James Purdy. Autographed score

[See: Oversize, Box 19, folder 391](#)

## PLAYS

*Children Is All*

|                  |                             |             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| b. 12, f. 262-63 | Typescript, photocopy       | n.d.        |
| b. 12, f. 264-65 | Typescript, photocopy       | n.d.        |
| b. 12, f. 266    | Reviews                     | 1963        |
| b. 12, f. 267-68 | Telegrams for opening night | 1963 Sep 30 |

*Cracks*

|               |                          |      |
|---------------|--------------------------|------|
| b. 12, f. 269 | Typescripts, photocopies | n.d. |
|---------------|--------------------------|------|

## Untitled one-act play set in the Rooming House in Brooklyn

|                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
| b. 12, f. 269A | Typescript, corrected and signed (photocopy)<br>Former call number: Uncat ZA File 308 | circa 1993 |
|----------------|---|------------|

## POETRY

|               |  |        |
|---------------|--|--------|
| b. 12, f. 270 | "After Many a Moon"  | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 270 | "Attention-bringing death"   | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 270 | "Death Is an Evening Caller"   | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 271 | "Dondé se fué?"  | n.d.   |
| b. 12, f. 271 | "The Eagle the Dove"   | [1957] |
| b. 12, f. 271 | "Fields vineyards groves and orchards"   | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 272 | "The Fruits of Success"  | n.d.   |
| b. 12, f. 272 | "Les Six Grands"   | [1957] |
| b. 12, f. 272 | "Love"   | [1957] |
| b. 12, f. 273 | "Memoirs of an Assassin"   | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 273 | "Merry-go-round horses and carrousel"  | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 274 | "Odes"   | 1957   |
| b. 12, f. 274 | "The Peacock beyond Garden Walls"  | 1957   |
|               | "Poems dedicated to Carl van Vechten"  |        |
| b. 12, f. 275 | "Cuban Mocking-Bird" "Sea of Marmara" "In the Event of" "Birds" "I See<br>Circles" | 1957   |

## Poems for Carl van Vechten

## POETRY &gt; Poems for Carl van Vechten (continued)

|                  |   |            |
|------------------|---|------------|
| b. 12, f. 276    | "What" "The Lover" "The Hero's Friend" "Everybody Nobody" "and a Coda 'Pussy willow'" | 1957       |
| b. 12, f. 277    | "Rain"  | 1957       |
| b. 12, f. 277    | "Sodom's Rose"  | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 277    | "Song and Ode"  | 1957       |
| b. 12, f. 278    | "To a Procrastinator"   | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 278    | "To a Whore"  | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 278    | "The Tower"   | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 279    | "Vendra"  | 1957       |
| b. 12, f. 279    | "When the yellow lynx"  | n.d.       |
| SHORT STORIES    |   |            |
| b. 12, f. 280    | <a href="#">"A Chance to Say No": typescript, carbon</a>                              | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 281    | "Color of Darkness": typescript, corrected  | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 282-83 | "Daddy Wolf": typescript carbons, corrected   | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 284    | "Everything Under the Sun": typescript, carbon  | n.d.       |
| b. 12, f. 285    | "Encore": typescript, corrected   | [1957?]    |
| b. 12, f. 286    | "Home by Dark": typescript  | 1957       |
| b. 12, f. 287    | "It's Not Everybody that Can Tell You": typescript, corrected                         | n.d.       |
| b. 13, f. 288    | "The Lesson": typescript, corrected   | 1957       |
| b. 13, f. 289    | "Mrs. Benson": typescript   | 1958       |
| b. 13, f. 290    | "Night and Day": typescript   | 1958       |
| b. 13, f. 291    | "O'Reilly Morgan McGowan's Reply to Lady Coyle": typescript                           | 1957       |
| b. 13, f. 292    | "Pastor Hill's Sermon on Invincibility": typescripts, corrected                       | 1957, n.d. |
| b. 13, f. 293    | <a href="#">"The Pupil": typescript</a>   | n.d.       |
| b. 13, f. 294-95 | "Sermon": typescripts, corrected and photocopy  | n.d.       |
| b. 13, f. 296    | "Sonata in 2/": typescript, corrected   | n.d.       |
| b. 13, f. 297    | <a href="#">"Talk About Yesterday": typescript</a>                                    | 1957       |
| b. 13, f. 298    | "You Reach for Your Wraps": page proof  | 1957       |

**Series III: Other Papers, 1944-72***0.75 linear feet (2 boxes)*

Series III, *Other Papers*, is housed in Boxes 14-15 and arranged alphabetically by type of material. Works under the heading "Writings of Others" are arranged alphabetically by author.

|                                   |   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| b. 14, f. 299                     | Newspaper clippings   | 1944-47          |
| b. 14, f. 300                     | Miscellaneous notes   | 1954-56, n.d.    |
| Music by Richard Hundley          |   |                  |
| b. 14, f. 300a                    | "Ballad on Queen Anne's Death, 1619"  | 1964             |
| b. 14, f. 300b                    | "For your Delight"  | 1962             |
| b. 14, f. 300c                    | "Maiden Snow"   | 1961             |
| b. 14, f. 300                     | "Postcard from Spain"   | 1964             |
| b. 14, f. 300e                    | "Softly the Summer"   | 1963             |
| b. 14, f. 300                     | "Spring (Shakespeare)"  | 1963             |
| b. 14, f. 300g                    | "Wild Plum"   | 1961             |
| b. 14, f. 301                     | Obituaries  | 1963, 1972       |
| b. 20, f. 408                     | Ink and watercolor painting<br>Hui-Ming Wang ink and watercolor painting of characters in James Purdy's Malcolm. Signed and dated. Inscribed by the artist to Purdy.<br>Former call number: Za Objects, Art Stack 2 | 1961 December 27 |
| b. 14, f. 302                     | Printed material  | 1954, 1956       |
| Sketches sent to Carl van Vechten |   |                  |
| b. 14, f. 303-09                  | "Life in the Empire State": typescript photocopy  | 1957-60          |
| b. 14, f. 310-12                  | "Recipes of the Masters, or, the Carlo Magno Cookbook": typescript photocopy  | 1957-59, n.d.    |
| Writings of Others                |   |                  |
| b. 14, f. 313                     | Daiches, David, "A Preface to <i>Malcolm</i> ": typescript  | 1961             |
| b. 14, f. 314                     | Fandel, John, "Posies": mimeograph  | 1962             |
| b. 14, f. 315                     | G., H. W., "The Cat and the Cur": typescript  | 1962             |
| b. 14, f. 316                     | Kolve, Del, "James Purdy: An Assessment" in <i>Time and Tide</i>  | 1961 Mar 23      |
| b. 14, f. 317                     | Schott, Webster, "James Purdy: American Dreamer": typescript and printed copy   | 1964             |
| b. 14, f. 318                     | Schuyler, George, "The Van Vechten Revolution": offprint  | 1950             |
| b. 14, f. 318a                    | Seguin, J.A.R., "The Gentlemen's Magazine and the London Bill of Mortality"   | 1963 Nov 1       |



## Writings of Others (continued)

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|               |   |      |
|---------------|---|------|
| b. 15, f. 319 | Sitwell, Edith, <i>Taken Care Of</i> : page proofs        | n.d. |
| b. 15, f. 320 | Southern, Terry, <i>The Magic Christian</i> : page proofs | n.d. |

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**Series IV: Photographs by Carl van Vechten, n.d.***1.5 linear feet (3 boxes)*

*Photographs by Carl Van Vechten, Series IV, are arranged alphabetically by subject. Miscellaneous and unidentified photographs are located at the end of the series.*

|               |  |      |
|---------------|--|------|
| b. 16, f. 321 | Ailey, Alvin                           | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 321 | Allgood, Sara                          | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 322 | Bailey, Pearl                          | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 322 | Bankhead, Tallulah                     | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 322 | Banks, Danny                           | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 322 | Banks, Dick                            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 323 | Buechner, Frederick                    | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 323 | Burt-Mangeld, Adolfo                   | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 323 | Carroll, Diahann                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 324 | Carter, Jack                           | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 324 | Chookasian, Lili                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 324 | Claire, Ina                            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 325 | Colum, Padraic                         | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 325 | Cooper, Gladys                         | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 325 | Cross, James A. (and Wyckoff, William) | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 326 | Daniels, Jimmie                        | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 326 | Davis, Jimmie                          | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 327 | Davis, Ossie                           | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 327 | Dobbs, Mattwilda                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 328 | Fatone, Charles                        | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 329 | Faulkner, Trader                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 329 | Faulkner, William                      | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 330 | Fitzgerald, Ella                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 330 | Fitzgerald, F. Scott                   | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 331 | Franklin, Sidney                       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 332 | Gibson, Althea                         | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 332 | Gielgud, John                          | n.d. |

|                  |                          |      |
|------------------|--------------------------|------|
| b. 16, f. 333    | Gish, Lillian            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 334    | Graham, Martha           | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 334    | Grausman, Philip         | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 335    | Greenwood, Marianne      | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 335    | Gross, Chaim             | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 336    | Hersey, John             | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 336    | Holiday, Billie          | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 336    | Hurst, Fannie            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 337    | Isherwood, Christopher   | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 338    | Jones, Earle             | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 338    | Jones, James Earl        | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 338    | Jones, Le Roi            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 339    | Julian, Doris            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 339    | Kaloah                   | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 340    | Kemp, Tom                | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 340    | King, Alexander          | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 340    | Laing, Hugh              | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 341    | Lee, Canada              | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 341    | Leona (?)                | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 342    | McCleary, Stinnette      | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 342    | Merrick, Alan            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 342    | Miles, Lizzie            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 343    | Millay, Edna St. Vincent | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 343    | Miller, Henry            | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 343    | Moncion, Francisco       | n.d. |
| b. 16, f. 344-46 | Mostel, Zero             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 347    | Noble, Sissle            | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 347    | Olaf, Pierre             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 348    | Ortega, Domingo          | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 349    | Pesenyi, Peter           | n.d. |

|               |                            |      |
|---------------|----------------------------|------|
| b. 17, f. 349 | Peterson, Louis            | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 349 | Reiner, Luise              | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 350 | Rey, Georges               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 350 | Robeson, Paul              | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 350 | Robinson, Bill             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 351 | Rodgers, Guy               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 352 | Rodriguez, Percy           | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 352 | Romero, Cesar              | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 352 | <a href="#">Rorem, Ned</a> | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 353 | Sands, Diana               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 353 | Savage, Archie             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 353 | Schuyler, George           | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 354 | Schuyler, Philippa Duke    | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 354 | Scoll, Harold              | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 354 | Scott, Zachary             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 355 | Sessell, Charles           | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 355 | Short, Bobby               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 355 | Singer, Israel Joshua      | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 356 | Skipper, William           | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 356 | Slaff, Bertram             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 356 | Smith, Bessie              | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 357 | Solov, Zachary             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 357 | Stegman, Philip            | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 357 | Stephens, Jack             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 358 | Stern, G. B.               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 358 | Stewart, James             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 358 | Stokes, Al                 | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 359 | Sullivan, Maxine           | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 359 | Tamayo, Rufino             | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 359 | Taylor, Paul               | n.d. |

|                   |                                 |      |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| b. 17, f. 360     | Thayer, Al                      | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 360     | Thompson, Claude                | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 360     | <a href="#">Thomson, Virgil</a> | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 361     | Tunney, Gene                    | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 362     | Tynes, Margaret                 | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 362     | Van Vechten, Carl               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 363     | Verdy, Violette                 | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 363     | Verrett-Carter, Shirley         | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 363     | Vidal, Gore                     | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 364     | Vidor, Florence                 | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 364     | Wagner, Bruce                   | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 364     | Wallace, Babe                   | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 365     | Walpole, Hugh                   | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 365     | Warfield, William               | n.d. |
| b. 17, f. 365     | Washington, Fredi               | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 366-367 | Waters, Ethel                   | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 368     | Webster, Beveridge              | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 368     | Welch, Elisabeth                | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 368     | Wescott, Glenway                | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 369     | White, Carl Darrow              | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 369     | White, Jane                     | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 370     | White, Josh                     | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 371     | White, Walter                   | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 371     | Wood, Peggy                     | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 372     | Wycka, Ronald                   | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 372     | Yalmon, Junc                    | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 373     | Yow, A. J.                      | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 373     | Zimbalist, Efram                | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 373     | Zorn, Eugene                    | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 373     | Zorn, Robert                    | n.d. |

|                  |   |      |
|------------------|---|------|
| b. 18, f. 374    | <a href="#">Drawings by James Purdy</a> | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 375    | Paintings by Banks, Richard             | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 376    | New York, miscellaneous                 | n.d. |
| b. 18, f. 377-90 | Unidentified                            | n.d. |

**Oversize**

Oversize material has been placed here in series order.

|                   |   |                     |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| b. 19, f. 391     | "The Running Sun: for Soprano and Piano." Music by Robert Helps, text by James Purdy. Autographed score | 1972 Aug            |
| b. 19, f. 392-406 | 15 illustrations by Eugene Olson  | 1961, n.d.          |
| b. 20, f. 407     | Illustrations by Ross Roseton   | n.d.                |
| b. 20, f. 408     | Ink and watercolor painting   | 1961 December<br>27 |

## **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.

### **Subjects**

American fiction -- 20th Century  
American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors and patrons  
Authors and publishers

### **Occupations**

Authors

### **Names**

Bowles, Paul, 1910-1999  
Brenan, Gerald, 1894-1987  
Canavaggia, Marie  
Druce, Juliette  
Gallup, Donald, 1913-2000  
Gollancz, Victor, 1893-1967  
Hellman, Lillian, 1905-1984  
Laughlin, James, 1914-1997  
MacLeish, Norman  
Olsen, Eugene  
Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975  
Porter, Katherine Anne, 1890-1980  
Powys, John Cowper, 1872-1963  
Purdy, James, 1914-2009  
Rood, John  
Sitwell, Edith, 1887-1964  
Van Vechten, Carl, 1880-1964