

Thornton Jordan Papers (MC 310)

Biographical Note

Thornton Jordan was born in 1944. He taught English at Columbus State University for a number of years and was especially interested in the life and works of Carson McCullers. He retired from CSU in 1994. He bought her childhood home when it came up for sale in 1997 and was a central figure in its transfer to the Columbus State University Foundation and the establishment of the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians. He has served on the Center's board since its establishment in 2001.

Scope and Content

These papers consist of materials relating to Jordan's researches into the life and work of Carson McCullers and his involvement with the McCullers Center. In addition, there are materials concerning a symposium on the occasion of the centenary of the birth in Columbus, Georgia of Nunnally Johnson, a mid-20th century journalist and Hollywood scriptwriter; Blind Tom; steamboats and the history of the Columbus region. There are numerous newspaper and magazine clippings as well as photographic files on CD of such figures as Blind Tom, Horace King and Nunnally Johnson.

1925-2011 3 boxes (1.66 l.f.)

Permission to Publish

Permission to publish material from the Thornton Jordan Papers must be obtained from the Columbus State University Archives at Columbus State University. Use of the following credit line for publication or exhibit is required:

Thornton Jordan Papers (MC 310) Columbus State University Archives Columbus, Georgia

Provenance

Multi-part gift of Thornton Jordan.

Note to Researchers

See also:

[Ballad of the Sad Cafe Playbill \(SMC 60\)](#)

[The Bradley Memorial Library Carson McCullers Collection \(MC 184\)](#)

[Virginia Spencer Carr Collection \(MC 23\)](#)

[Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians](#)

[Carson McCullers Society Records \(MC 192\)](#)

[Loretto Chappell Collection \(MC 29\)](#)

[Carlos Dews Collection \(MC 175\)](#)

[Mary Martha Johnson Photograph Collection \(SMC 53\)](#)

[Clason Kyle Collection \(MC 86\)](#)

Jordan Masee/Carson McCullers Collection (MC 170)

Mercer/McCullers Collection (MC 296)

The Valley Reads: The Heart is a Lonely Hunter Collection (MC 179)

Margaret Sullivan Papers (MC 298)

John Zeigler and Edwin Peacock Collection (MC 82)

On-line exhibition of Nunnally Johnson Symposium of December 5th and 6th, 1997

Box and Folder/Item List

Box 1

- Folder 1 - Blind Tom & Horace King, CDs
- Folder 2 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos I, December 5/6, 1997
 - This folder contains two packets of photos of symposium-related receptions.
- Folder 3 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos II, December 5/6 1997
 - This folder contains two packets of photos of the symposium and of various Nunnally Johnson related places around town.
- Folder 4 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos III, December 5/6 1997
 - This folder contains photos of Nunnally Johnson, posters of movies he worked on, his family and people from his Hollywood and journalistic careers.
- Folder 5 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos IV, December 5/6 1997
- Folder 6 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos V, December 5/6, 1997
 - This folder contains copies of photos to be used in the Johnson exhibit mounted during the Symposium. A photocopy of the notes Thornton Jordan wrote on the original folder about the contents of this folder is included. Present are copies of movie stills, portraits, posters, etc.
- Folder 7 - Johnson, Nunnally-Symposium, Photos VI, December 5/6, 1997
 - This folder contains laser prints of various photos with annotations by his widow, Doris Johnson. Some were used in the exhibit and some were not.
- Folder 8 - MLK Day Photos, 1997
 - This folder contains reproductions of posters of movies written by Nunnally Johnson, as well as the master CD of the images from the symposium exhibit.
- Folder 9 - Nolan Map Scans, nd
 - This contains two CDs of scanned images of a 1925 map of Columbus.
- Folder 10 - Research - Columbus History, 1990s
 - This folder contains newspaper clippings on historic buildings in downtown Columbus, a proposal to develop the Wynnton Initiative for a midtown residential-commercial-cultural district, and the family of Lazarus Straus, the founder of Macy's Department Store.
- Folder 11 - Research - Dr. John Henrik Clarke (1915-1998), 1996, 1998
 - This folder contains correspondence between Thornton Jordan and Dr. Clarke from 1996 and newspaper clippings about his death in New York and his burial in Columbus, Georgia in 1998.
- Folder 12 - Research - Charlton Graham Johnson, Jr., 2000-2011
 - This folder contains material by and about Charlton Graham Johnson, Jr. (1920-2011), a cousin of Carson McCullers. It includes a photocopy of part of a lengthy memoir of Johnson's childhood. A fuller copy is present in the papers of Margaret Sullivan (MC 298), Series 3, Box 1, Folders 1 & 2. There are also photocopies of two issues of the Taylor County Tracer with articles concerning the Carson family.

Box 2

- Folder 1 - Research - Carson McCullers, 1986-2002
 - This folder contains correspondence between Jordan and Edwin Peacock about Carson McCullers, mentioning photos, McCullers' wedding, her cousin Virginia Storey and other McCullers-related topics. There is also correspondence about the development of a slide lecture, "Carson McCullers' Columbus", photocopies of ads for Lamar Smith's jewelry business and information on the possible models for characters in some of her novels and stories.
- Folder 2 - Research - Carson McCullers - Clippings, 1960s-2002s
- Folder 3 - Research - Carson McCullers - Programs, 1930s-19770s, 2001
 - These are photocopies of Playbills and other programs for Carson McCullers plays and a 2001 presentation about her given at the 92nd Street Y in 2001. In addition there are two original programs for recitals at which the young Carson McCullers performed. One is titled "Ensemble Recital by Piano Pupils of Mrs. Kendrick C. Kierce and Mrs. S. Marshall Dixon, Woman's Club, Monday, May 19th, 1930". In this recital Lula Carson Smith played the Turkish March from "The Ruins of Athens" by Beethoven. The second is titled "Piano Recital by Pupils of Mrs. Kendrick C. Kierce and Mrs. Marshal Dixon, , Woman's Club, Friday, May 29, 1931, Women's Club House." In this recital Carson Smith played Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. There is also a photocopy of the program for the concert where Paderewsky performed the same piece in Macon, Georgia on February 24, 1932, attended by Carson Smith.
- Folder 4 - Research - Carson McCullers - Script, 1967, 1969
 - This is a copy of the script of *The Lonely Hunting: A Memory of Carson McCullers* by George Gingell and directed by Charles Jones. There are also two programs, one for the first production at the Springer Opera House in Columbus in November, 1967, only a few weeks after her death, and another performance in 1969.
- Folder 5 - Research - Photos, nd
 - Among the photographic prints, negatives and contact sheets are: a postcard of Columbus mills from the Chattahoochee River, an unidentified farmhouse, the Central Fire Station and Police Headquarter in downtown Columbus, Sherwood, the home of the Howard family, a portrait of Absalom H. Chappell, Jordan Vocational High School under construction, two photos of steamboats docked at Columbus landing, 3 copies of a 1971 photograph of Dr. Joseph R. Mahan and Joseph E. Williams standing at the grave site of Governor James Johnson in Linwood Cemetery and an aerial photograph of the baseball park next to the Civic Auditorium in Columbus.
- Folder 6 - Research - Scans of vertical files and finding aids, 2002
 - This is a CD with images of articles and finding aids from the CSU Archives.
- Folder 7 - Stark Avenue House, 1990-2003
 - This legal-sized folder contains the legal documents related to Thornton Jordan's 1993 purchase of Carson McCullers' childhood home and his subsequent gift of the house to the Columbus State University Foundation in 2003.

Box 3

- This box contains unsorted newspapers and magazines mostly related to Georgia history and literature, 1930s-1960s