

Bascom (William R.) Collection

Finding aid created by Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology staff using RecordEXPRESS

UC Berkeley. Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology

103 Kroeber Hall

Berkeley, California 94720-3712

(510) 643-1191

PAHMA-Research@berkeley.edu

<http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/>

2021

Descriptive Summary


Title: Bascom (William R.) Collection

Dates: 1945-1998

Collection Number: see Extent of Collection

Creator/Collector: Bascom, William Russell Bascom Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology

Extent: Call Numbers: Acc.1271, Acc.1301, Acc.1370, Acc.1477, Acc.1484, Acc.1656, Acc.1683, Acc.1770, Acc.1807, Acc.1890, Acc.1950, Acc.2058, Acc.2059, Acc.2063, Acc.2067, Acc.2115, Acc.2148, Acc.2205, Acc.2256, Acc.2277, Acc.2281, Acc.2285, Acc.2303, Acc.2308, Acc.2354, Acc.2460, Acc.2580, Acc.2731, Acc.2818, Acc.2819, Acc.2916, Acc.2924, Acc.2933, Acc.2988, Acc.3023, Acc.3072, Acc.3100, Acc.3170, Acc.3193, Acc.3274, Acc.3365, Acc.3367, Acc.3446, Acc.3515, Acc.3589, Acc.4614, Acc.4659, Acc.4661, Acc.4677, Acc.4685, Acc.4692, Acc.4696. Note: languages in accessions include English, French, and German, though most are written in English. Objects are from Africa, predominantly from Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya; from the Yoruba culture/religion and Ashanti religion; wire recordings from Cuba and pots bought in Teotihuacan, Mexico.

Online items available 

https://portal.hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/?utf8=%E2%9C%93&per_page=100&view=list&search_field=objcollector_txt&q=Bascom

Repository: UC Berkeley. Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology

Berkeley, California 94720-3712

Abstract: This collection encapsulates Bascom's research during his lifetime, where he predominantly focused on the Yoruba culture and religion within Nigeria. In addition to objects, there are photographs and motion pictures by Bascom. The collection is predominantly in English, though notes are in French and German as well. PAHMA continued to receive Bascom's collection and work after his death, resulting in accession dates that surpassed him. As a result, collection dates are when PAHMA received the objects, not when originally collected. The accession files will state when the objects were collected and from where. Accompanying letters and materials can be found at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. For more information on specific accessions and information on the Bancroft collection, see attached finding aid pdf. For information about individual objects within the collection, follow the "Online Items URL".

Language of Material: English

Access

<https://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/request-a-research-visit/>

Publication Rights

Images and information are © 2020 The Regents of the University of California, all rights reserved. Images and information may be reproduced or transmitted, but not for commercial use. For commercial use, contact PAHMA-MediaPermissions@berkeley.edu. With the exception of objects and media for which the Museum does not hold copyright, this work is licensed under an Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike Creative Commons License. By downloading any information or images from this site, you agree to the terms of that license. Users are expected to abide by all copyright laws. Distribution, reproduction, or other use requires the written permission of any copyright and other rights holders unless the materials are in the public domain or authorized by fair use or other statutory exemption. It is the user's obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other use restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in this collection.

Preferred Citation

Bascom (William R.) Collection. UC Berkeley. Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology

Acquisition Information

For more information on specifics, look at the accessions in the finding aid. For further specific information, request a research visit at PAHMA: <https://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/request-a-research-visit/>

Biography/Administrative History

William Russell Bascom was born on May 23, 1912 in Princeton, Illinois, and died on September 11, 1981 in San Francisco, California. Bascom received his B.A. in 1933 from the University of Wisconsin (Physics), his M.A. in 1936 from the University of Wisconsin (Anthropology), and his Ph.D. in 1939 from Northwestern University (Anthropology). Bascom specialized in the art and culture of West Africa and the African Diaspora, and is especially known for his studies of Nigerian Yoruba culture and religion. In 1954, Bascom crafted the "four functions of folklore." He was the Director of the Robert H. Lowie Museum (present-day Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology) at the University of California, Berkeley from 1957 to 1979.

Scope and Content of Collection

Objects from various African countries and cultures, such as Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Yoruba culture/religion, and the Ashanti religion. Items within the collection include photographs of objects; photographs and prints of African countries and cultures; motion picture films titled "The Yoruba- Life in Southwestern Nigeria on the Guinea Coast of West Africa" (1950-51) and "Yoruba Crafts" (1950-51); reel-to-reel tapes on Yoruba drumming and vocal music in Nigeria (n.d.) and Cameroon music in West Africa (n.d.); wire recordings, twenty-two reels recorded in Cuba (1947-48), four reels of Yoruba Proverbs (1940), and two reels of public lectures from the University of Havana (1950); objects from various African countries include masks, figurines, carvings, stools, spoons, metalwork, mats, whistles, adzes, knives, textile samples, gold weights, drums, strings of beads; pots purchased in Teotihuacan, Mexico.

Indexing Terms

Yoruba Art

Ifa

Ashanti Art

photography

motion film

wire recordings

Bascom, William Russell

Robert H. Lowie Museum

Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology

Nigeria

Kenya

Sierra Leone

Cameroon

Cuba

Teotihuacan, Mexico

photographs

motion picture films

reel-to-reel tape

wire recordings

anthropologist

[William Russell Bascom Finding Aid](#)
