Guide to the Marcus Hall Papers

Sean Heyliger
African American Museum & Library at Oakland
659 14th Street
Oakland, California 94612
Phone: (510) 637-0198
Fax: (510) 637-0204
Email: aamlo@oaklandlibrary.org
URL: http://www.oaklandlibrary.org/locations/african-american-museum-library-oakland
© 2013
African American Museum & Library at Oakland. All rights reserved.
Descriptive Summary

Title: Marcus Hall papers
Dates: 1927-1977
Collection number: MS 22
Creator: Hall, Marcus, 1904-1977
Collection Size: .5 linear feet(1 box + 1 oversized box)
Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)

Abstract: Baritone singer Marcus Hall (1904-1977) was born on September 8, 1904 in California to William M. and Susie Hall. Hall was raised in Bakersfield, California until 1923, when the family moved to Berkeley, California where he completed his final year of high school at San Francisco's Polytechnic High School in 1924. Shortly thereafter he enrolled at the Musical Art Institute of San Francisco and he began taking voice lessons to become a professional singer. When the famous African American singer Roland Hayes heard Hall's voice, he made arrangements for him to study with his mentor Sir George Henshell in London, England. Hall travelled to London in the fall of 1929, where he spent two years as Hayes' protégé and student. Hall was the first African American singer from California to make his debut in London, and he performed in concerts in England over the next two years. In 1931, Hall returned to San Francisco, California to continue his singing career and in 1934 joined the theatrical group The Brown Skin Models, touring the U.S. over the next three years. In 1937, he returned to Berkeley and during World War II was employed by the Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond to sing at the official launching of every ship built in the shipyards between 1943-1945. Following the war, he moved to New York City to further his singing career.
career and opened a voice studio and in 1947 took over Harry T. Burleigh's position as soloist at St. George's Episcopal Church in Stuyvesant Square. The following year Hall joined Leonard De Paur's Infantry Chorus as a voice coach and over the next five years traveled throughout the U.S., Caribbean, and Central and South America. Hall left the chorus in 1953 to return to teaching in his New York City studio and three year later returned to Berkeley where he continued to sing and was active in several area churches until his death in 1977.

**Scope and Content of Collection**
Papers include concert programs, correspondence, a scrapbook, newspaper clippings, and photographs documenting the life and career of baritone singer Marcus Hall. The papers are organized into five series: concert programs, correspondence, photographs, biographical, and printed materials. The bulk of the collection are concert programs and photographs related to Hall's career as a singer and include programs of Hall, Roland Hayes, the 1939 theatrical production of The Swing Mikado, and De Paur's Infantry Chorus. Most of the photographs in the collection are related to Hall's work as a singer during the launching ceremonies of newly-built ships at Kaiser Shipyards during World War II. The biographical material includes Hall's passports, newspaper clippings, his obituary, and a scrapbook containing newspaper clippings, correspondence, concert programs and schedules, and photographs early in his career between 1929-1942. The scrapbook also includes a broadside advertising a concert featuring Paul Robeson and Lawrence Brown in 1927 at the Maison Gaveau in Paris, France.

**Arrangement**
Series I. Concert programs
Series II. Correspondence
Series III. Photographs
Series IV. Biographical material
Series V. Printed material

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
- De Paur Infantry Chorus.
- Kaiser Shipyards (Richmond, Calif.).
- Baritones (Singers).

*Marcus Hall baritone hall died at 72, The Independent and Gazette 12 March 1977.*

**Related Material**

**Concert programs**
- Physical Description: 3 folders
- Series Scope and Content Summary
  - Includes programs of concerts given by Marcus Hall, Roland Hayes, Justitia Gordon Davis, a theatrical production of The Swing Mikado, and De Paur's Infantry Chorus concerts in the U.S. and Latin America.

**Box 1:1**
- De Paur's Infantry Chorus 1948-1965

**Box 1:2**
- Hall, Marcus 1927-1933

**Box 1:3**
- Hayes, Roland circa 1940s

**Box 1:3**
- Davis, Justitia Gordon circa 1966

**Box 1:3**
- The Swing Mikado 1939

**Box 1:4**
- Correspondence
  - Physical Description: 1 folder
  - Series Scope and Content Summary
  - Correspondence related to Hall's singing engagements.
Photographs

Physical Description: 1 folder

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes photographs of Marcus Hall’s various singing engagements, mostly related to ship christening events at the Kaiser Shipyards during World War II.

Box 1:5

June Hall Saunders, William Pittman, and Tarea Hall Pittman [061] circa 1970s

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall, 1st occasion that sang in shipyard for M.H. De Young Museum [065] undated

Box 1:5

Contest in San Francisco [066] undated

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall singing to crowd [067] undated

Box 1:5

The launching day of the S.S. ‘Fisk Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [068] 1945

Box 1:5

The launching day of the S.S. ‘Allegheny Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [069] 1945

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall singing [70] undated

Box 1:5

The launching day of the S.S. ‘Lakeland Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [071] 1945

Box 1:5

The launching day of the S.S. ‘Enid Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [072] 1945

Box 1:5

The launching day of the S.S. ‘Robert S. Abbott Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [073-075, 091] 1944

Box 1:5

This is worth fighting for—Marcus Hall, baritone, Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [076] 1943

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall, our talented baritone, Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number One, Richmond, California [077] 1944

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall—baritone, Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [078] 1943

Box 1:5

Launching day of the S.S. ‘Marine Perch,’ Shipyard Number Three of the Kaiser Company, Richmond, California [079] 1945

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall at piano with unidentified person [080] 1945

Box 1:5

Marcus Hall presents hard hat to Elsa Maxwell, Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number One, Richmond, California [081] 1944

Box 1:5

Launching day of the S.S. ‘New World Victory,’ Permanente Metals Corporation, Shipyard Number Two, Richmond, California [082] 1945

Box OM6

Construction of the Matthew B. Brady, Shipway Number Two [083] circa 1940s

Box OM6

Officials attending ship launching ceremony [?] [084] circa 1940s

Box OM6

Mr. and Mrs. Fulton Lewis Jr. and Mr. Henry J. Kaiser attending the christening of the Matthew B. Brady naval ship [085] circa 1940s

Box OM6

Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Kaiser and Mrs. Fulton Lewis Jr. attending the christening of the Matthew B. Brady naval ship [086] circa 1940s

Box OM6

Mrs. Fulton Lewis Jr. christening the Matthew B. Brady naval ship as Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Kaiser look on [087] circa 1940s

Box OM6

Marcus Hall singing with band, caption: ‘Launching day of the S.S. “Berea victory”’ [088] 1945-03-03

Box OM6

Fulton Lewis Jr. speaking at microphone at ship christening ceremony [089] circa 1940s

Box 1:5

Portrait of Marcus Hall [090] undated

Box 1:5

Portrait of unidentified woman undated

Box 1:5

Scene from The Swing Mikado [093-094] circa 1939

Box 1:5

Portrait of Justitia Davis undated

Biographical material

Physical Description: 4 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes scrapbook with correspondence, programs, and photographs from Hall’s time spent in England, newspaper clippings, passports, and obituary.
Biographical material

Box 1:5  Scrapbook 1927-1945, 1965
Box 1:7  Newspaper clippings 1932-1977
Box 1:8  Obituary 1977
Box 1:9  Passports 1929, 1951

Printed material

Series Scope and Content Summary

Assorted printed items including an African American Bay Area event calendar, History of the Negro Music, and the tour schedule for the To Be Young, Gifted, and Black tour.

Box 1:10  *We: A Monthly Calendar of Bay Area Events, Vol. 1, No. 7, 1958*
Box 1:10  *History of the Negro in Music* undated
Box 1:10  To Be Young, Gifted, and Black tour schedule 1971