

**ATKINS, RUSSELL.**  
**Russell Atkins collection, 1969-1997**

Emory University  
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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Atkins, Russell.  
**Title:** Russell Atkins collection, 1969-1997  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 1412  
**Extent:** .25 linear feet (1 box)  
**Abstract:** Collection of material relating to African American poet and composer Russell Atkins, including sheet music and event programs.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### **Administrative Information**

#### **Restrictions on Access**

Unrestricted access.

#### **Terms Governing Use and Reproduction**

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#### **Related Materials in Other Repositories**

[Russell Atkins collection](#), Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

#### **Source**

Gift of Martin Simon, 2016.

#### **Citation**

[after identification of item(s)], Russell Atkins collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

#### **Processing**

Arranged and described at the item level by Sarah Quigley, August 2017.

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## Collection Description

### Biographical Note

Russell Atkins, African American poet and composer, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1926 and raised by his mother, grandmother, and aunt. He began taking piano lessons at age seven and later studied music at the Cleveland School of Arts and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He worked with the Karamu House, one of the oldest African American theaters in the United States. In 1950, Atkins co-founded *Free Lance*, a small press literary magazine dedicated to avant-garde writing. His books of poetry include *Phenomena* (1961), *Objects* (1963), *Heretofore* (1968), *Maleficum* (1971), and *Here In The* (1976). He has also written and produced what he calls "poetry in play forms," including *The Abortionist* (1954) and *The Corpse* (1954).

### Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of material relating to Russell Atkins from 1969-1997 and included two programs from events honoring Atkins and four pieces of sheet music composed by Atkins. The pieces of sheet music are photocopies with some handwritten annotations by an unidentified person.

### Arrangement Note

Arranged in alphabetical order.

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## Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
1	1	Program, Poet's League of Greater Cleveland, First Annual Northern Ohio Literary Gala, 1997 April 19
1	2	Program, "A Tribute to the Genius of Russell Atkins," Karamu House (Cleveland, Ohio), 1971 October 31
1	3	Sheet music, "The Abortionist: A Chamber Opera in One Act," circa 1985
1	4	Sheet music, "Objects II for Orchestra," undated
1	5	Sheet music, "Objects for Piano," 1969
1	6	Sheet music, "The Widow: A 'One Act' Chamber Opera in Three Acts," undated

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