

# **BALDWIN, JAMES, 1924-1987.**

## **Letters to David Moses, 1971-1983**

Emory University  
Robert W. Woodruff Library  
Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library  
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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Baldwin, James, 1924-1987.  
**Title:** Letters to David Moses, 1971-1983  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 949  
**Extent:** .25 linear ft. (1 box)  
**Abstract:** Correspondence between African American writer and civil rights activist, James Baldwin and actor David Moses which offer insight into the creative, financial, and political challenges of writing and publishing.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### **Administrative Information**

#### **Restrictions on access**

Unrestricted access.

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

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

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

[James Baldwin early manuscripts and papers](#), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

#### **Source**

Purchased from Peter B. Howard of Serendipity Books, 2002.

#### **Custodial History**

Purchased from dealer, provenance unknown.

#### **Citation**

[after identification of item(s)], James Baldwin, Letters to David Moses, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

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**Appraisal Note**

Acquired by Curator of African American Collections, Randall Burkett, as part of the Rose Library's holdings in African American culture and history.

**Processing**

Processed by Sarah Stanton, March 2003.

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**Collection Description****Biographical Note**

James Baldwin was born on August 2, 1924, in Harlem, New York. The oldest of nine children, he suffered from poverty and a troubled relationship with his strict, religious stepfather. At age 14, Baldwin became a preacher at a small church in Harlem. Baldwin graduated from high school in 1942 and eventually moved to Greenwich Village. His focus shifted from religion to writing, and he became involved with other writers of the time, including Richard Wright. In 1948, fed up with America's racism and homophobia, Baldwin moved to France, where he gained enough distance to write about the America he knew. Baldwin began living part-time in New York in 1957 and became an active participant in the civil rights movement. In the early 1960s, he moved back to the United States and continued to be an important voice for equality and universal brotherhood through his writing and his activism. Baldwin died of stomach cancer on December 1, 1987, in St. Paul de Vence, France.

**Scope and Content Note**

The collection consists of correspondence from James Baldwin to David Moses from 1971-1983. Moses is a stage, film and television actor who was a close friend of Baldwin for thirty years. They met at a party when Moses was twenty-one. From then on, Baldwin served as friend, mentor, and confidante to Moses. Baldwin included Moses in the dedication of his book *Just Above My Head*. The letters from Baldwin to Moses span more than a decade and address personal and professional matters, including Baldwin's current writing projects, as well as his health. The letters also offer insight into the creative, financial, and political challenges of writing and publishing.

**Arrangement Note**

Arranged in chronological order.

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## Container List

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
1	1	n.d., David Moses introduction to the letters, TLS, 2 pp.
1	2	[1970] February 20, TLS, 2 pp.
1	3	[1972] March 29, TLS, 1 p.
1	4	[1972 Summer], TLS, 1 p.
1	5	[1972 August], ALS, 1 p.
1	6	[1972] September 18, ALS, 1 p.
1	7	1972 November 24, ALS with envelope, 2 pp.
1	8	[1973], TLS, 2 pp.
1	9	[1973] March 30, ALS, 2 pp.
1	10	[1973] July 24, TLS, 2 pp.
1	11	[1973 August], ALS, 2 pp.
1	12	[1973] August 24, ALS, 2 pp.
1	13	[1973] October 16, ALS, 2 pp.
1	14	[1973] November 6, TLS, 1 p.
1	15	[1973] December 17, ALS with envelope, 2 pp.
1	16	[1974] September 27, TLS, 4 pp.
1	17	1974 September 27, TLS, 1 p.
1	18	1975 September 5, TLS with envelope, 1 p.
1	19	1976 January 4, TLS with envelope, 3 pp.
1	20	1976 September 7, TLS, 1 p.
1	21	1979 January 6, TLS with envelope, 2 pp.
1	22	1981 September 27, ALS with envelope, 2 pp.
1	23	1982 July 6, TLS with envelope, 1 p.
1	24	1983 May 4, ALS, 2 pp.
1	25	1983 May 5, ALS with envelope, 1 p.
1	26	n.d., March 10, TLS, 3 pp.

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