MOTOJICHO.
Vantile E. Whitfield papers, circa 1930-2005

Emory University
Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Motojicho.
Title: Vantile E. Whitfield papers, circa 1930-2005
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 1159
Extent: 4 linear feet (4 boxes)
Abstract: Papers of African American playwright Vantile E. Whitfield including audiovisual material, correspondence, photographs, printed material, and scripts.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access
Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction
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Source
Gift, 2016

Citation
[after identification of item(s)], title statement, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing
Arranged and described at the box level by Sarah Quigley, October 2016.

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Collection Description

Biographical Note
Vantile Emmanuel Whitfield, African American playwright and director known as Motojicho, was born on September 8, 1930, in Washington, D.C. to Theodore Roosevelt Whitfield and Lugene Ellen Green. He attended Dunbar High School, graduating in 1948. Following high school, he joined the Air Force and served until 1952. He graduated from Howard University (Washington, D.C.) in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in theatre and design, and received a master's degree in film production from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1967. In 1963, Whitfield co-founded the American Theatre of Being in Los Angeles where he taught classes with such actors as Isabel Sanford and Whitman Mayo. He also worked in television in Los Angeles, directing a team of reporters covering the Watts riots of 1967 and 1968 and producing and co-hosting a half-hour program called "From the Inside Out." In the 1970s, he co-founded the D.C. Black Repertory Company and was founding director of the National Endowment for the Arts Expansion Arts Program in 1971. Under that program, he awarded millions of dollars' worth of grants to artists and arts organizations in minority communities. Whitfield wrote numerous plays, including Changes, which debuted at the D.C. Black Repertory Company to standing-room-only audiences in 1973. He also designed sets for the James Baldwin play The Amen Corner (1963) and produced and directed a Bill Cosby special on NBC (1971). He died in 2005.

Scope and Content Note
The collection consists of the papers of Vantile E. Whitfield from circa 1930-2005 and includes audiovisual material, correspondence, photographs, printed material, and scripts. Audiovisual material consists of recordings of Changes on cassette. Correspondence is professional in nature and relates primarily to Whitfield's work with companies such as the D.C. Black Repertory Company, Studio West, the Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles, the NEA Expansion Arts Program, and his private production company, Motojicho, Inc. Scripts contain work by Whitfield including Changes, treatments for the "The Third Bill Cosby Special," and unproduced teleplays. Scripts by others include works directed by Whitfield such as Early Anthony's Time Is Running Out and Ramla Bandele's Facing the Rising Sun, as well as drafts of a screenplay adaption of The Autobiography of Malcolm X by James Baldwin and Arnold Perl. Printed material contains posters, fliers, and playbills from African American theatre productions, and photographs consist mainly of actor headshots.

Arrangement Note
Arranged by record type.
Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Correspondence, printed material, and scripts by Whitfield and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>D.C. Black Repertory Company material, photographs, printed material, scripts</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><em>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</em> screenplay drafts, printed and published material, scripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Appointment book, cassette tapes of Changes, correspondence, D.C. Black Repertory Company material, photographs, printed material</td>
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