

# Guide to the Margaret Bonds Papers

JWJ MSS 151



by Karen Spicher

2015 January

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** JWJ MSS 151

**CREATOR:** Bonds, Margaret, 1913-1972

**TITLE:** Margaret Bonds papers

**DATES:** 1928-1983

**BULK DATES:** 1960-1969

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.87 linear feet (13 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Vocal music, most 1960s or undated, consisting of autograph manuscript drafts and arrangements, transparencies, and diazo reproductions, some accompanied by copies of published music; and a small amount of other papers. Autograph manuscript music includes spirituals arranged for solo voice or chorus; *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, *Songs of the Seasons*, *Three Dream Portraits*, and other songs on texts by Langston Hughes; songs on texts by Edna St. Vincent Millay and other poets; and musicals and songs with lyrics by Janice Lovoos, some with related correspondence. Other papers consist of a scrapbook containing photographs, clippings, and ephemera, most circa 1928-1930, some relating to Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, and Lawrence Richardson; and two books containing biographical information about Bonds and analysis of her music: *Mildred Denby Green, Black Women Composers: A Genesis* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), and *Alice Tischler, Fifteen Black American Composers: A Bibliography of Their Works* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1981).

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.bonds>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.bonds>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from William Reese Company (Doyle Books sale, New York, 2012 November 5, lot 152) on the Carl Van Vechten Fund and the Edwin J. Beinecke Book Fund, 2012.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Margaret Bonds Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

Margaret Bonds Papers. James Weldon Johnson Collection in the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

American composer, pianist, and teacher. Bonds's vocal music includes songs on texts of Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and other poets, and arrangements of African American spirituals. In 1940, Bonds married Lawrence Richardson (1911-1990); they had a daughter, Djane Richardson (1946-2011).

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## Scope and Contents

Vocal music, most 1960s or undated, consisting of autograph manuscript drafts and arrangements, transparencies, and diazo reproductions, some accompanied by copies of published music; and a small amount of other papers. Autograph manuscript music includes spirituals arranged for solo voice or chorus; *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*, *Songs of the Seasons*, *Three Dream Portraits*, and other songs on texts by Langston Hughes; songs on texts by Edna St. Vincent Millay and other poets; and musicals and songs with lyrics by Janice Lovoos, some with related correspondence. Other papers consist of a scrapbook containing photographs, clippings, and ephemera, most circa 1928-1930, some relating to Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, and Lawrence Richardson; and two books containing biographical information about Bonds and analysis of her music: Mildred Denby Green, *Black Women Composers: A Genesis* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), and Alice Tischler, *Fifteen Black American Composers: A Bibliography of Their Works* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1981).

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## Arrangement

Organized into two series: I. Music, 1930-1971. II. Other Papers, 1928-1983.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Oversize Music, 1930-1971, undated

0.83 linear feet (10 boxes)

Arranged alphabetically by work title.

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 1	<i>African dance</i> (SBar, piano)	undated
	<i>The Ballad of the Brown King</i> (cantata) See: Box 11, folder 60	
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 2	<i>Bright Star</i> (SATB, piano) See also: Box 11, folder 61	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 3	<i>Dem Bones</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 4	<a href="#">Diary of a Divorcée (song cycle)</a>	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 5	<i>Didn't It Rain</i> (spiritual)	c1966-1967
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 6	<i>Don't Speak</i> (song)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 7	<a href="#">Every Time I Feel the Spirit (spiritual)</a>	1966, undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 8	<i>Ezek'el Saw the Wheel</i> (spiritual) See also: Box 11, Folder 62	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 9	<i>Faith in Thee</i> (song)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 10	<a href="#">Feast (song)</a>	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 11	<a href="#">Fields of Wonder (song cycle)</a> See also: Box 11, Folders 63-64	undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 12	<a href="#">Five Spirituals (voice and orchestra)</a> See also: Box 11, Folder 65	c1946, undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 13	<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (spiritual) See also: Box 11, folders 66-67	1959-c1966, undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 14	<a href="#">Going for Water (song)</a>	1962, undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 15	<a href="#">Group Dance (voices, piano)</a>	undated

b. 3 (Oversize), f. 16	<i>Hand Me Down</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 17	<i>He Never Said a Mumblyin' Word</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 18	<i>Hold On</i> (spiritual) See also: Box 11, folders 68-69	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 19	<i>Hold the Wind</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 20	<i>How Strange</i> (vocal music; fragment)	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 21	<a href="#">Hyacinth (song)</a>	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 22	<a href="#">I Got a Home in that Rock</a> (spiritual)	c1968, undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 23	<a href="#">I Know My Mind</a> (song) Also titled "Sonnet II."	undated
	<i>I Shall Pass Through this World</i> (SATB, piano) See: Box 12, folders 70-71	
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 24	<a href="#">I Talk With the Angels</a> (song)	c1967
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 25	<a href="#">I Want Jesus to Walk With Me</a> (spiritual) See also: <i>Sinner, Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 26	<a href="#">I Wish I Knew How it Would Feel to be Free</a> (spiritual)	undated
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 27	<i>Joshua Fit Da Battle of Jericho</i> (spiritual)	c1966-1967, undated
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 28	<a href="#">Joy</a> (SAT, string quartet, piano)	undated
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 29	<i>Lizzie</i> (musical) About Elizabeth Keckley and Mary Todd Lincoln. With related letters from Janice Lovoos. See also: Box 12, folder 72	c1968, 1971, undated
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 30	<i>Los Angeles: Then and Now</i> (musical) See also: Box 12, folder 73	undated
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 31	<a href="#">Love's Runnin' Riot in My Bones</a> (song)	undated

	<i>Montgomery Variations. VI. Lament</i> (orchestra)	undated
	See: <i>I Want Jesus to Walk With Me</i> (spiritual)	
	See: <i>Sinner, Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass</i> (spiritual)	
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 32	<i>The Negro Speaks of Rivers</i> (song) See also: Box 12, folder 74	undated
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 33	<i>No Good Man</i> (song)	undated
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 34	<a href="#">The Pasture (song)</a>	1930, undated
b. 7 (Oversize), f. 35	<i>Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 7 (Oversize), f. 36	<a href="#">Pot Pourri (song cycle)</a>	1968, undated
b. 7 (Oversize), f. 37	<a href="#">Rise Up Shepherd (spiritual)</a>	undated
b. 7 (Oversize), f. 38	<i>Run Sinner Run</i> (spiritual)	undated
b. 7 (Oversize), f. 39	<a href="#">Sing Aho (spiritual)</a>	c1960, undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 40	<a href="#">Sinner, Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass (spiritual)</a> Accompanied by <i>Adoration of the Master</i> (setting of the spiritual <i>I Want Jesus to Walk with Me</i> ), part of <i>The Montgomery Variations. VI. Lament</i>	1964, 1969, and undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 41	<a href="#">Sleep Song (SSAA, piano)</a>	undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 42	<a href="#">Songs of the Seasons (song cycle)</a>	undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 43	<a href="#">Sonnet: Even in the Moment (song)</a>	undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 44	<a href="#">Sonnet: What My Lips Have Kissed (song)</a>	undated
b. 8 (Oversize), f. 45	<a href="#">Sonnet: Women Have Loved Before (song)</a>	undated
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 46	<a href="#">Stan' Up an' Fight (song)</a>	undated
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 47	<i>Standin' in the Need of a Prayer</i> (spiritual)	1966, undated
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 48	<i>Steady, Jesus Listenin'</i> (spiritual)	undated

b. 9 (Oversize), f. 49	<a href="#">Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening (song)</a>	1957, undated
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 50	<a href="#">This Little Light of Mine (spiritual)</a>	1969
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 51	<i>Three Dream Portraits</i> (song cycle)	undated
b. 9 (Oversize), f. 52	<i>To a Brown Girl, Dead</i> (song)	c1956, undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 53	<a href="#">To One Who Might Have Borne a Message (song)</a>	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 54	<i>Tropics After Dark</i> (musical)	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 55	<a href="#">Troubled Water (spiritual)</a>	undated
	<i>We Shall Overcome</i> (spiritual) See: Box 12, folder 75	
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 56	<a href="#">Western Skies (song)</a>	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 57	<a href="#">When the Dove Enters In (song)</a>	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 58	<i>Winter Night's Dream. Children's Sleep</i> (children's opera)	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 59	<a href="#">Unidentified fragments</a>	1962, undated



**Other Music***0.83 linear feet (2 boxes)*

b. 11, f. 60	<i>The Ballad of the Brown King</i> (cantata)	c1961
b. 11, f. 61	<i>Bright Star</i> (SATB, piano)	c1968
b. 11, f. 62	<i>Ezek'el Saw the Wheel</i> (spiritual)	c1966
b. 11, f. 63-64	<a href="#">Fields of Wonder (song cycle)</a> 2 Folders	undated
b. 11, f. 65	<i>Five Spirituals</i> (voice and orchestra)	c1964, undated
b. 11, f. 66-67	<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (spiritual) 2 Folders	c1962
b. 11, f. 68-69	<i>Hold On</i> (spiritual) 2 Folders	c1966
b. 12, f. 70-71	<i>I Shall Pass Through this World</i> (SATB, piano) 2 Folders	c1967
b. 12, f. 72	<i>Lizzie</i> (musical)	c1969
b. 12, f. 73	<i>Los Angeles: Then and Now</i> (musical)	undated
b. 12, f. 74	<i>The Negro Speaks of Rivers</i> (song)	c1942
b. 12, f. 75	<a href="#">We Shall Overcome (spiritual)</a> Accompanied by a letter from Leontyne Price, 1969 November 12.	undated
b. 12, f. 76	<a href="#">Lists of works</a>	undated

**Series II: Other Papers, 1928-1983***0.21 linear feet (1 box)*

b. 12, f. 77	Scrapbook	1928-1930, undated
b. 13, f. 78	Green, Mildred Denby. <i>Black Women Composers: A Genesis</i> (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983) Inscribed to "the Richardsons," undated	1983
b. 13, f. 79	Tischler, Alice. <i>Fifteen Black American Composers: A Bibliography of Their Works</i> (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1981)	1981

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## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### Subjects

African American Composers  
Choral music -- Scores  
Composers -- United States  
Musicals -- Librettos  
Musicals -- Vocal scores with piano  
Song cycles  
Songs with piano  
Spirituals (Songs) -- United States  
Women composers, Black -- United States  
Women composers -- United States

### Genres / Formats

Photographs -- United States -- 20th Century  
Scrapbooks -- United States -- 20th Century

### Occupations

Composers -- United States -- 20th Century

### Names

Bonds, Margaret, 1913-1972  
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967 -- Musical settings  
Lovoos, Janice  
Lovoos, Janice -- Musical settings  
Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 1892-1950 -- Musical settings  
Richardson, Lawrence, 1911-1990

### Corporate Body

Lincoln University (Pa.) -- Students