

MassArt Archives

Guide to

**Black Artists Union Collection, 1970-2017
[Bulk 1971-1980]**

**by
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MassArt Archives
621 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
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Extent: 2 boxes
Linear feet: 1.00

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

PROVENANCE

This collection was found in the closet of the Student Development office during a Records Management evaluation of the space at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, Massachusetts.

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RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS

This collection is open for research.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Black Artists Union (BAU) at Massachusetts College of Art and Design was formed in the spring of 1969¹. It was comprised of MassArt students, with consultation from graduates and Black faculty. Richard Gomez served as president. The mission of BAU was to raise awareness of Black culture at MassArt, and to support the development of Black students by establishing identity and resources for them. The BAU sought to be recognized as a “prominent, energetic force of young black artists,” as stated in an agenda from 1977. In a letter draft dated September 15, 1977, a BAU member wrote: “There are about 60 Black students to 1,000 White students at MCA, so there is an important need for identity of Black awareness at MassArt.”

The purposes and functions of the BAU included further development of cultural communications within the college community, forming and maintaining contact with Black Student Unions of colleges in the Boston area, devising programs to recruit and develop Black students in the community, recruitment of Third World students, and exposing promising Black artists to resources and opportunities towards a career. Furthermore, they sought to “focus attention and reform in the areas of curriculum and college policies, official and unofficial, where they touch the lives of Black people.

¹ Massachusetts College of Art. (1975). *MassArt Journal*, 22. Retrieved October 21, 2021, from Internet Archive website: <https://archive.org/details/massartjournal1975unse/>

To support and strengthen the Black student in the fulfillment of self and the destiny of Black people as a nation, moving in support and defense of ourselves. In essence, Black self-determination, quality education, and work².”

The Black Alumni Association of the BAU was founded on June 4, 1978. Dolores Brandow served as acting president and chairman. In a letter to BAU alumni dated December 27, 1978, Brandow stated that an alumni association was necessary “to help present MCA students cope with situations and to help us get/keep in touch with each other.” Members of the Black Alumni Association also worked with students of MassArt on portfolio reviews and funding matters. In 1979, the Black Alumni Association merged with the BAU due to lack of interest in continuing an alumni association.

In 1987, the Massachusetts Hall of Black Achievement (HOBA) was founded to “discover, detail, and disclose significant achievements of people of color.” An annual award ceremony hosted by HOBA honored two student achievers from MassArt and other students from its sister colleges. The annual ceremony was discontinued in 2011.³

Tyrone Maurice Adderley was an undergraduate student at MassArt who committed suicide around 1992. He was born on June 14, 1962 in The Bahamas, and graduated from R. M. Bailey Senior High School in Nassau, Bahamas in 1979. Adderley moved to Boston in 1988. He applied to MassArt in 1989 at the age of twenty-six, and began his studies in September of that year with a concentration in Fashion Design. In a statement of purpose, he wrote: “*My grandmother was a seamstress of sorts, and would often spend time helping me with her work, which was a lot of fun. Thus the beginnings of my interest in fashion.*” Prior to his enrollment at MassArt, Adderley had developed a clientele in Boston for whom he designed and sewed garments. In 1990, he changed his major at MassArt to Painting. He contributed to the Spring/Fall 1990 edition of *The New Spectrum Times*, a student publication of MassArt, in which he wrote an article about Japanese fashion designer Issey Miyake, published under the name Maurice Adderley⁴. To honor his memory, the Adderley Lecture Series at MassArt was developed to bring more diverse voices to the school⁵. Lorraine O’Grady gave the inaugural speech in 1995⁶.

² Massachusetts College of Art. (1973). *Student Handbook, 1973-1974*. Retrieved October 21, 2021, from Internet Archive website: <https://archive.org/details/studenthandbook1973mass/>

³ Bridgewater State University. (n.d.). *Massachusetts Hall of Black Achievement*. Retrieved October 21, 2021, from Bridgewater State University website: <https://vc.bridgew.edu/hoba/>

⁴ Massachusetts College of Art and Design. (1990). *The New Spectrum Times, 1990 Spring/Fall (Vol. II No. 2)*. Retrieved October 28, 2021, from Internet Archive website: <https://archive.org/details/newspectrumtimes1990unse/>

⁵ Cate McQuaid. (2014, October 28). *Diverse voices celebrated in MassArt’s Adderley show*. Retrieved October 21, 2021, from The Boston Globe website: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/2014/10/28/diverse-voices-styles-celebrated-adderley-show-massart/JHaHWt6dBSStXwSMNCtk0J/story.html>

⁶ MassArt. (n.d.). *Tyrone Maurice Adderley Lecture Series*. Retrieved October 21, 2021, from MassArt website: <https://massart.edu/adderley-lecture-series>

DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS

This collection contains the papers documenting the Black Artists Union (BAU) at MassArt, a student organization which was formed in 1969 to raise awareness of Black culture, and to support the development of Black students. Materials were created over a 40 year period, between 1970 and 2017 [Bulk 1971-1980].

Collection items pertain to the Black Artists Union (BAU) at MassArt, the Massachusetts Hall of Black Achievement (HOBAA), and the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MCA/MassArt). The majority of materials relate to the development, functions, and activities of these organizations.

This collection contains meeting minutes and agendas, correspondence, resumes and cover letters, bulletins and newsletters, reports, commencement programs, public relations announcements, artist pamphlets and brochures, photographs, newspaper clippings, recruitment efforts, course descriptions, class lists, and other documents related to the BAU, HOBAA, and MassArt.

Due to the varied nature of these materials, this collection has been arranged into three series based on subject matter.

Series I, “Black Artists Union, 1977-1999 [Bulk 1977-1979]”, covers the Black Artists Union at MassArt. Also included in this series are items related to MassArt student Tyrone Adderley, as well as the Black Alumni Association, the Third World Artist Union, the Committee on Minority Affairs, and Black/Third World Studies courses at MassArt.

Series II, “Hall of Black Achievement, 2004-2010 [Bulk 2004-2008]”, includes documents related to the Hall of Black Achievement at MassArt.

Series III, “Massachusetts College of Art and Design, 1970-2017 [Bulk 1971-1979]”, includes reports, correspondence, newsletters, course descriptions, and other miscellaneous documents pertaining to MassArt.

Information about the Black Artists Union, the Black Alumni Association, the Hall of Black Achievement, and Tyrone Adderley were primarily derived from collection contents. Outside sources are noted in footnotes when appropriate.

This collection does not have an original order. Thus, folders have been arranged first chronologically, then alphabetically where appropriate.

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
<i>Series I, Black Artists Union</i>			<i>1977-1999 [Bulk 1977-1979]</i>
		<p>This series includes meeting minutes and agendas, correspondence, reports, artist pamphlets, recruitment efforts, and other materials related to the Black Artists Union, founded in 1969 at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, Massachusetts.</p>	
I	1	“Resumes and Correspondence” [Director of Minority Affairs]	1973-1974
		<p>Contains mostly resumes and cover letters of applicants for the position of Director of Minority Affairs at MassArt. Also includes correspondence regarding a proposed African Art course at MassArt, a model for Vocational Education, and a press release for an art gallery opening for the artist Nefertiti.</p>	
I	2	“Tyrone Adderley Files”	1975-1992 [Bulk 1988-1992]
		<p>Contains materials related to Tyrone Adderley’s time as an undergraduate student at MassArt. Includes high school and college transcripts and certificates, and correspondence. Application materials including a statement of purpose written by Adderley, and letters of recommendation for his acceptance to the Fashion Design program, are contained as well.</p>	
I	3	“Committee on Minority Affairs”	1976-1978
		<p>Contains materials related to the Committee on Minority Affairs at MassArt. Includes a report on the committee’s first meeting of the academic year of 1977-78. Also contains an annual report, dated May 15, 1977, which discusses the committee’s efforts towards re-establishing and refilling the position of Director of Minority Affairs. Materials pertaining to the Special Meeting of the Committee on Minority Affairs from January 13, 1977 are also included.</p>	
I	4	“BAU Activities”	1977
		<p>Contains materials related to activities coordinated by the Black Artists Union at MassArt. Includes handwritten notes, attendance lists, fliers for artist exhibitions, and a 1977 media catalogue supplement for the MassArt Library. Also contains a proposal, dated December 2, 1977, for a fundraising event to support the Black Artists Union’s participation in the National Conference of Artists in Atlanta, Georgia. A draft for a letter template stating the purpose of the Black Artists Union is contained as well.</p>	

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
I	5	<p>“BAU Minutes”</p> <p>Contains several meeting minutes and agendas from 1977-1978. Also includes a list of recommendations for the Black Artists Union for the 1977-78 school year.</p>	1977-1978
I	6	<p>“BAU Public Relations Announcements”</p> <p>Contains a letter template which describes the need for a better awareness of Black and Third World students in the Boston area. Also includes an announcement for a fundraising party for the National Black Artists Conference.</p>	1977
I	7	<p>“College Student Unions/Resources” [BAU Member Names/Addresses]</p> <p>Contains an alphabetized list of Black Artists Union members and their addresses.</p>	1977-1978
I	8	<p>“BAU Alumni” [Correspondence]</p> <p>Contains correspondence from Dolores Brandow to BAU alumni and MCA president Jack Nolan. Also includes a hand-drawn map. A directory of MCA Alumni Association members from 1977-1978 is contained as well.</p>	1977-1979
I	9	<p>“BAU/MCA Committees” [BAU Grievances]</p> <p>Contains a letter to the Student Government Association, dated March 15, 1978, involving a list of grievances and recommendations of the Black Artists Union. Also includes responses to this letter from the Committee on Minority Affairs and the Director of Minority Affairs. A summary report of a workshop from January 28, 1978 regarding individual development is contained as well.</p>	1978-1979
I	10	<p>“BAU Recruitment” [Addresses, Pamphlets, Correspondence]</p> <p>Contains recruitment materials for the Black Artists Union, including a list of identified Third World applicants and their addresses, and a script for phone calls to incomplete applicants. Also includes a pamphlet describing portfolio requirements at MCA, BAU member questionnaires from 1979, various event brochures, and a scan of a newspaper article.</p>	1978-1979
I	11	<p>“Black/Third World Studies Courses”</p>	1978-1979

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
		Contains a newspaper with a list of Black Studies courses offered at Boston State College during the fall of 1978. Also includes a booklet from Harvard University, entitled "Commission on Extension Courses 78/79".	
I	12	"Exhibition Pamphlets"	1978-1979
		Contains posters, booklets, fliers, and pamphlets for artist works and exhibits, primarily in the Boston area. Also includes a newspaper article and certificate of recognition for Dana Chandler, professor of Art History in the African American studies department at Northeastern University.	
I	13	"BAU/Third World Artist Union (Folder 1 of 2)" [Member Lists]	1978-1981
		Contains an alphabetized list of MCA students, and a separate list of BAU/Third World Artist Union members for 1978. Also includes Student Information Forms filled out by BAU members. An informational packet for incoming MCA freshman for the academic year 1980-81 is contained as well.	
I	14	"BAU/Third World Artist Union (Folder 2 of 2)" [Resumes and Cover Letters]	1978-1981
		Contains resumes, cover letters, and correspondence related to the position of Director of Affirmative Action at MCA. Also includes a memorandum regarding internships at the Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists in Boston, Massachusetts.	
I	15	"Newsclippings and Pamphlets"	1978-1980
		Contains artist brochures, exhibit fliers, and a schedule for the Longwood Gallery for the academic year 1978-79. Also includes newspaper clippings about black poet Haki R. Madhubuti, who lectured at MassArt in 1978, and about plans for the college's relocation to Charlestown Navy Yard.	
I	16	"BAU Pamphlets/Brochures"	1981-1999
		Contains correspondence sent to BAU from other organizations. Also includes fliers related to events and meetings.	
I	17	"Teaching Resources and Materials on Minorities in the Visual Arts"	1988

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
		Contains a black binder with a report from 1988, entitled “Teaching Resources and Materials on Minorities in the Visual Arts”.	
I	18	“B.N.A.A. Membership List”	n.d.
		Contains a three-page annotated photocopy of a list of B.N.A.A. members.	
<i>Series II, Hall of Black Achievement</i>			<i>2004-2010 [Bulk 2004-2008]</i>
		This series includes correspondence, pamphlets, brochures, student transcripts, conference materials, and other documents related to the Hall of Black Achievement at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, Massachusetts.	
2	1	“HOBA” [Correspondence, Forms, Pamphlets]	2004-2005
		Contains materials related to the annual HOBA celebration, including response cards, correspondence, nomination materials, and pamphlets.	
2	2	“HOBA, Miscellaneous” [Correspondence, Pamphlets, Etc.]	2004-2009
		Contains miscellaneous materials related to HOBA, including pamphlets, correspondence, reports, newsletters, forms, and event programs and fliers.	
2	3	“HOBA” [Transcripts, Forms, Correspondence]	2006
		Contains HOBA nomination materials, including student transcripts, correspondence, fliers, and forms.	
2	4	“HOBA” [Transcripts, Forms, Correspondence]	2007-2008
		Contains materials related to HOBA, including pamphlets, nomination materials, correspondence, and student transcripts.	
2	5	“HOBA (Folder 1 of 2)” [Pamphlets, Correspondence]	2007-2010
		Contains materials related to HOBA, including correspondence, event programs, pamphlets, forms, and fliers.	
2	6	“HOBA (Folder 2 of 2)” [Pamphlets, Brochures]	2007-2010
		Contains HOBA Heritage Celebration materials, including invitation	

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
		cards, pamphlets, and brochures.	
2	7	“HOBA” [Student Transcripts]	2008
		Contains student transcripts.	
2	8	“HOBA, Miscellaneous” [Conference Material]	2008
		Contains miscellaneous conference materials, including brochures, correspondence, and handouts.	
<u>Series III, Massachusetts College of Art and Design</u>			<u>1970-2017 [Bulk 1971-1979]</u>
		This series includes class lists and photographs, commencement programs, departmental descriptions and reports, artist pamphlets and brochures, bulletins and newsletters, and other materials related to Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, Massachusetts.	
2	9	“MCA Class Lists/Photographs”	1970-1974
		Contains an annotated list of the graduating class of 1974 at MassArt. Also includes several photocopied pages of student directories from various years. A white envelope containing four photographs dated 1970 is contained as well. One photograph shows Paula Zambowski, and there are three copies of a group photograph of Matthew Delaney, Jim Fitts, Pat (Tirell) Delaney, and Bill O’Neil.	
2	10	“MCA Departmental Descriptions/Reports”	1971-1972
		Contains descriptions of departments and programs at MassArt. Also includes two copies of the 1971-72 annual report, and a revised draft for alcoholic beverages regulations.	
2	11	“Artist Pamphlets/Brochures”	1976-2017 [Bulk 2017]
		Contains materials primarily related to the artist Paul Peter Hatgil, including correspondence, a business card, and a photograph of his work on display at MassArt. Also includes a trifold brochure for sculpture artist George Greenamyre.	
2	12	“MCA Newsletters”	1978
		Contains weekly MassArt newsletters from the fall semester of 1978.	

Box	Folder	Contents	Date
2	13	“Commencement Programs” Contains materials related to commencement at MassArt, including programs and invitations.	1982-1996 [Bulk 1982]