

MS 2192 Vanley Burke Archive, Introduction.

MS 2192/A Vanley Burke Exhibitions, Commissions and Projects

MS 2192/A/ A. Handsworth from the Inside

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ B. Sundays are Bloody Awful: Down and Outs

Prints

MS 2192/A/ C. Black Dance Development Trust

Prints

MS 2192/A/ D. Manor High School

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ E. Connections: Urban Landscapes, Liverpool and Manchester

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ F. Great Georges Community Cultural Project

Prints

MS 2192/A/ G. Carnival in Exile

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ H. World in Wolverhampton

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ I. John Ellis Community College, Leicester

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ J. No Time for Flowers

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ K. Racism in Our City, Peterborough

Prints

Exhibition boards

MS 2192/A/ L. 5 Years = a Lifetime

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ M. The Journey

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ N. Council of Elders: Portraits of the Veterans of the South African Liberation Struggle

Exhibition Documentary Material

Jumbo Contact Sheets

MS 2192/A/ O. Nkunzi: Photographs of Birmingham and South Africa

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ P. Handsworth Skylines

Prints

MS 2192/A/ Q. Redemption Songs: Black Voices, Gospel Spirit

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ R. Distance and Presence: Photographs of Birmingham Museums

Prints

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ S. Living Through: Personal Histories

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ T. True Stories

Exhibition Documentary Material

MS 2192/A/ U. Launch of Digital Handsworth Website

Prints

MS 2192/A/ Z. Other projects, exhibitions and related material

MS 2192/A/Z/ 1. Correspondence for various projects and commissioned work

MS 2192/A/Z/ 2. Break in the Seal

MS 2192/A/Z/ 3. Heart in Exile

MS 2192/A/Z/ 4. Black Edge

MS 2192/A/Z/ 5. Sharp Voices, Still Lives

MS 2192/A/Z/ 6. Being Here

MS 2192/A/Z/ 7. Black Style

MS 2192/A/Z/ 8. Nkunzi – Apna Life

MS 2192/A/Z/ 9. Take III

MS 2192/A/Z/ 10. Caribbean Focus

MS 2192/A/Z/ 11. Ipswich Black Focus

MS 2192/A/Z/ 12. Social Services Commission

MS 2192/A/Z/ 13. African Liberation Day

MS 2192/A/Z/ 14. Social Services Family Planning Commission

MS 2192/B Vanley Burke non-commissioned photographic and original work

MS 2192/B/ A. 35mm Transparency Slides

MS 2192/B/ B. Mixed Media Collages

MS 2192/B/ C. Photography

MS 2192/B/C/ 1. Family, Home and Community

MS 2192/B/C/ 2. Protest and Activism

MS 2192/B/C/ 3. Arts, Performance and Media

MS 2192/B/C/ 4. Faith and Religious Tradition

MS 2192/B/C/ 5. Experiments

MS 2192/C Material Collected by Vanley Burke

MS 2192/C/ A. Faith and Religious Expression

MS 2192/C/A/ 1. African Faiths and Ancestralism

MS 2192/C/A/1 1. African Edenic Community

MS 2192/C/A/1 2. Ancestral Remembrance Events

MS 2192/C/A/1 3. Igbo festivals

MS 2192/C/A/1 4. Kametic Spiritual Tradition of Ausar Auset

MS 2192/C/A/1 5. Yoruba Faiths

MS 2192/C/A/ 2. Buddhism

MS 2192/C/A/ 3. Christianity

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 1. Conventions

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/1/ 1. United Church of God (Austin Road, Birmingham)

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/1/ 2. United Church of God (National churches)

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/1/ 3. Various Churches

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 2. Funerals

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 3. Special Events

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 4. Weddings

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 5. Gospel

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 6. Groups

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/ 7. Published Material

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/7/ 1. Informational Material

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/7/ 2. Newsclippings

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/7/ 3. Publications

MS 2192/C/A/1/3/7/ 4. Publications by the United Church of God, Birmingham

MS 2192/C/A/ 4. Hinduism

MS 2192/C/A/ 5. Islam

MS 2192/C/A/ 6. Multifaith

MS 2192/C/A/ 7. Rastafarianism

MS 2192/C/A/ 8. Sikhism

MS 2192/C/A/ 9. Church of Scientology

MS 2192/C/ B. Formal Education

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1. Primary and Secondary Education

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 1. Curriculum: Teach Resources

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 2. Black Child in the School System

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 2/ 1. Conferences

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 2/ 2. Community Action

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 2/ 3. Articles

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 3. Arts in Education

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 4. Extra Curricular Initiatives

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 4/ 1. General Extra-Curricular activities

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 4/ 2. Afro-Caribbean Education Resource Project (ACER)

MS 2192/C/ B/ 1/ 5. Other primary and secondary education material

MS 2192/C/ B/ 2. Further and Adult Education

MS 2192/C/ B/ 3. Higher Education

MS 2192/C/ B/ 4. Multicultural and Educational Resources

MS 2192/C/ B/ 4/ 1. Groups and organisations

MS 2192/C/ B/ 4/ 2. Lectures

MS 2192/C/ B/ 4/ 3. Publishers and Book Distributors

MS 2192/C/ B/ 4/ 4. Publications

MS 2192/C/ C. Enterprise and Recruitment

MS 2192/C/ C/ 1. Work and Recruitment

MS 2192/C/ C/ 2. Enterprise

MS 2192/C/ D. Community Focus, Awareness and Activity

MS 2192/C/ D/ 1. Community Focus and Activity

MS 2192/C/ D/1/ 1. Community Groups

MS 2192/C/ D/1/ 2. Ex-patriot Community

MS 2192/C/ D/1/ 3. Community Newsletters

MS 2192/C/ D/ 2. Political Awareness and Activity in Community

MS 2192/C/ D/2/ 1. Black Political Activity: Empowerment and Awareness

MS 2192/C/ D/2/ 2. General Mainstream Politics

MS 2192/C/ D/2/ 3. Immigration, Settlement & Race Relations

MS 2192/C/ D/2/3/ 1. The Handsworth Disturbances 1985

MS 2192/C/ D/2/3/ 2. Race Relations: Organisations, Conferences, Reports

MS 2192/C/ D/2/3/ 3. Race Relations: Police and Policing

MS 2192/C/ D/2/3/ 4. Race Relations: Immigration, settlement, asylum and racism

MS 2192/C/ D/2/ 4. International Politics

MS 2192/C/ D/2/4/ 1. Africa and Diaspora Politics

MS 2192/C/ D/2/4/1/ 1. South Africa, Apartheid and Nelson Mandela

MS 2192/C/ D/2/4/1/ 2. Other Africa and Diaspora

MS 2192/C/ D/2/4/ 2. Other International Politics

MS 2192/C/ D/2/ 5. Charity and Protest

MS 2192/C/ D/ **3.** History and Heritage: Events & Activity in Community

MS 2192/C/ D/3/ 1. Black History

MS 2192/C/ D/3/1/ 1. Black History Events (Incl. Black History Month)

MS 2192/C/ D/3/1/ 2. Black History Information

MS 2192/C/ D/3/1/ 3. Birmingham Black Oral History Project

MS 2192/C/ D/3/1/ 4. Black History: Organisations, Research, and Funding

MS 2192/C/ D/3/ 2. Black Culture

MS 2192/C/ D/3/2/ 1. Cultural Events & Information

MS 2192/C/ D/3/2/ 2. Carnival

MS 2192/C/ D/3/ 3. Local History: Wolverhampton

MS 2192/C/ D/ **4.** Health and Social Care

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/ 1. Health

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/1/ 1. General Health

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/1/ 2. Community Focused Health Programs and Information

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/1/2/ 1. Black Health

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/1/2/ 2. Sexual Health and Anti Drug Support

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/1/2/ 3. General Health: Advice, Outreach and Events

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/ 2. Government Provision: Social Care & Social Organisations

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/2/ 1. Housing & Social Landlords

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/2/ 2. Social Care and Social Services

MS 2192/C/ D/ 4/2/ 3. Environment and Regeneration

MS 2192/C/ D/ **5.** Recreation

MS 2192/C/ D/5/ 1. Club Nights and Parties

MS 2192/C/ D/5/ 2. Sports and Family Recreation

MS 2192/C/ **E. Arts**

MS 2192/C/ E/ **1.** Performance: Dance, Theatre and Music

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 1. Dance

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 1/ 1. Black Dance: African & African Inspired Dance Companies

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 1/ 2. Other Dance

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 2. Music: Concerts and Performances

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 3. Theatre

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 3/ 1. Black Theatre

MS 2192/C/ E/1/ 3/ 2. Other Theatre Styles and Cultures

MS 2192/C/ E/ 2. Visual Arts

MS 2192/C/ E/2 1. Photography

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 1. Photography Publications

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 2. Exhibitions

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 3. Festivals

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 4. Articles about Photography

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 5. Organisations

MS 2192/C/ E/2/1/ 6. Other events

MS 2192/C/ E/2/ 2. Film

MS 2192/C/ E/2/ 3. Exhibitions and Residencies

MS 2192/C/ E/2/ 4. Visual Arts Organisations

MS 2192/C/ E/2/ 5. Galleries and Museums

MS 2192/C/ E/2/ 6. Artist Ephemera

MS 2192/C/ E/ 3. Literature, Orature and Comedy

MS 2192/C/ E/3/ 1. Events

MS 2192/C/ E/3/ 2. Information and performers and authors

MS 2192/C/ E/3/ 3. Publications

MS 2192/C/ E/3/ 4. Other documentary material relating to Literature and Orature

MS 2192/C/ E/ 4. Cross-art forms

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 1. Festivals

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 2. Community and Awareness Raising Arts Groups and Venues

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 3. Other arts organisations and venues

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 4. Publications

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 5. Listings

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 6. Workshops, Seminars and Conferences

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 7. Commissions

MS 2192/C/ E/4/ 8. Other Events

MS 2192/C/ F. Representations: Black People within media

MS 2192/C/ F/ 1. Radio and Television

MS 2192/C/ F/ 2. Print Media

MS 2192/C/ F/2/ 1. Black Magazines

MS 2192/C/ F/2/ 2. Black and Asian British Press

MS 2192/C/ F/2/ 3. Black people represented in the Press

MS 2192 Vanley Burke Archive, 1970-2005

Administrative History

'It's just about the ability to see something others may be unable to see, in terms of the value. Then show people. They need to see their contribution to this community. I mean, they have been contributing to this thing from the 50s and it's gone beyond, but there is no reference anywhere. It's about having themselves reflected, they are so desperate to see themselves. But this will be there, it isn't going anywhere.'

Vanley Burke, September 2005.

Vanley Burke was born in Morant Bay, in the parish of St. Thomas, Jamaica in 1951. He was sent a camera from his parents, who were living in England, for his 10th birthday. In 1965 he came to England to join his parents. As a parting gift to his Aunt he had a choice between leaving her his radio or his camera, and he left her his radio.

Vanley Burke began photographing in earnest from around 1967; he made a conscious decision to document the black community saying, "what I try to do is imagine a friend of mine who has never been to this country, and I say 'what would he or she like to know about this place?': what sort of houses we live in, how people use the house, how people use the environment, how they worship, how they do all of this sort of thing. And in that sense that's how I try to capture the people, in their environment, the space around them" (Excerpt from interview used on the Digital Handsworth website, <http://www.digitalhandsworth.org.uk/>). Vanley Burke's photographs not only capture his own experiences of being newly arrived in Britain and his encounters with the different landscape and ways of living, but also the experiences of the African Caribbean community itself as people try to establish their lives and their community in Birmingham and Britain. Vanley Burke's interest has recently expanded to cover other communities, besides the African Caribbean, and their experiences. This is somewhat reflected in both the photography and the documentary material sub collections. The photographic work was created, in one sense, to counteract Burke's perception of negative and stereotypical images of black people and culture found in mainstream media. The photographs re-present the black community back to themselves in an intimate portrayal and are taken from his perspective as a member of the community; as opposed to capturing a documentary image as taken from an 'outsider' perspective.

Vanley Burke's formal photography career has included working at Birmingham Polytechnic in the 1980s. He was awarded a Kodak bursary in 1979. His first major exhibition was held at the Ikon Gallery and the Commonwealth Institute in 1983. This exhibition was 'Handsworth From the Inside'; an exhibition that was first shown at Grove Lane Junior and Infants School in Handsworth, Birmingham in 1970. He has since had his work exhibited internationally, including in New York (the Caribbean Culture Centre, the Bronx Museum of the Arts and the Studio Museum in Harlem) and South Africa (Museum Africa). His work is also used in community exhibitions, in venues as diverse as clubs, churches, schools, and public houses. Vanley Burke has been commissioned to work in schools and to provide material for television programmes (such as Ebony). His work has been used in documentaries (for example Handsworth Songs), books, and record sleeves among other things.

During two trips to South Africa, in 1991 and 1996, Burke respectively photographed the life of black South Africans shortly after Mandela's release from prison, and the celebrations hosted and attended by Nelson Mandela with the ANC Party for the Anti-Apartheid veterans.

To complement and enhance his photographic documentation, Burke collects material which samples and evidences the variety of motivations, activities and developments of the black community in Britain, and related and surrounding communities. The material comprises things that may have been seen as disposable at the time of their creation but in this context take on greater significance, and provide valuable insight and evidence of the daily activities, transactions, motivations, affecting issues, cultural life, and even health concerns among many others, of the black community in Birmingham and Britain during the relevant period.

This ongoing collection is an expansive and vital resource for anyone studying or interested in the black and other minority ethnic communities in Birmingham and the U.K., their everyday lives, arts, politics and international awareness. It also contains a great deal of the photographic work by Vanley Burke both on this subject and others such as homeless people in Birmingham.

Arrangement

The collection as deposited by Vanley Burke is presented here in an arrangement that aims to reflect his collecting ethos and motivations. It is an ongoing collection and it is hoped that the structure here will allow the easy incorporation of future material.

The collection is divided into three sub-collections:

/A is 'Vanley Burke Exhibitions, Commissions and Projects' which includes original works by Vanley Burke that were commissioned, or were used for projects or exhibitions. This section also includes related correspondence regarding his projects and exhibitions, as well as other related documentary and promotional material for exhibitions and projects in which Burke was involved. This Sub Collection is divided chronologically with the earliest first, by exhibition, commission or project, with the exception of possible future accessions.

/B is 'Vanley Burke non commissioned photographic and original works'. This contains other original works by Vanley Burke that have not featured in an exhibition or project. This Sub Collection is arranged by the varying media: 35mm transparency slides, mixed media collages and photography. The further divisions of these sections follow themes that aim to reflect the thematic subject motivation of Burke's working.

/C is 'Material collected by Vanley Burke'. This section brings together the collection of material collected by Burke, giving context to his photographic and artistic work, as well as forming a resource documenting some of the activities and developments of black urban communities in Britain since the 1970s. This Sub Collection is arranged attempting to broadly represent the collector's ethos to document his community, reflecting its most prominent themes over the period.

Description

Gelatin-Silver work prints, 35mm transparencies, exhibition prints both commissioned and non commissioned. Exhibited and not exhibited original works by Vanley Burke that include multi-media collages and experimental photographic prints.

Documentary material including flyers, posters, publications, orders of ceremonies, programmes, newsletters, newspapers, business papers, press releases, correspondence and more. This material is largely related to the Birmingham and West Midlands region, but there is some national and international material.

The dates given above reflect the range of the material in this collection, however some of the images in the photographic prints were taken in

the 1960s.

Published

'The Council of Elders: A Tribute to the Veterans of the South African Liberation Struggle', Bulbulia, T. (ed.) 1997 Minaj Publishers, Lagos and London. See also MS 2192/A/N 'Council of Elders'

'Vanley Burke: A Retrospective', Sealey, Mark (ed.) 1993 Lawrence and Wishart, London. See also MS 2192/A/M 'The Journey'

Related material

City Archives collections directly related to material in this collection:

MS 1579, the Cadbury Trust records contain funding applications from groups such as the Afro-Caribbean Self Help Organisation and Black Dance Development Trust (among others) which give background detail to the groups applying.

MS 1620, papers of West Midlands Arts

MS 2209, records of the Birmingham Anti-Apartheid Organisation

MS 2220, papers of All Faiths For One Race (AFFOR)

MS 2265, photographs by Sukhvinder Singh Ubhi, includes photographs of Vaisakhi events in Birmingham

MS 2303, Vaisakhi records deposited by the Council of Sikh Gurdwaras.

MS 2350, photographs by Sue Green of Birmingham International Carnival.

MS 2356, photographs by Sangeeta Redgrave of Diwali celebrations in Birmingham

MS 2362, photographs by Max Kandhola about fashion, including black fashion and style.

MS 2364, photographs by Birmingham photographer, Pogus Caesar

MS 2448, photographs by Robert Taylor, 'Portraits of Black Achievement'

MS 2449, photographs of Handsworth, the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa and South Africans in exile by George Hallett.

MS 2478, papers of Derek Bishton, includes Ten.8 magazine and Handsworth Self Portrait records.

MS 2532, Vanley Burke prints used in the 'Echoes From the Frontline' exhibition

Collections with material pre-dating the material in this collection:

Local Studies department Central Library: Dyche studio collection of photographs of the African Caribbean and Asian communities in Birmingham.

MS 2165 Birmingham Afro-Caribbean Organisation (established in the 1940s)

The above lists are not exhaustive lists of the related sources in the archive, for example there are a number of black photographers whose work has been deposited at the City Archives.

The Local Studies Department, Central Library Birmingham holds more gelatin-silver prints of photographs taken by Vanley Burke. Other places where his prints and works are held include the Arts Council England; Castle Museum Nottingham; Walsall Library Local Studies Department; Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool; the Caribbean Culture Centre, New York; and East Midlands Afro-Caribbean Arts (EMACA), The Art Exchange, Nottingham.

Notes

With great thanks to: Shafiq Dad, Felicia Hoffman, Alan Thaxter; and extra special thanks to Jody Allen, David Savo, Sabrina, Daisy Cross, and Alex Fitzgerald: the wonderful and dedicated volunteers to the Vanley Burke Archive Preservation and Cataloguing Project.

This catalogue has been prepared as part of the Connecting Histories Project. After consultation among the project team members and advisory board, it was decided to use the terminology developed by the CASBAH project to describe people in the catalogue.

Therefore: *"the term 'black' is used to refer to peoples of African descent or those whose ancestry lies either directly, or in part, in the black African or Caribbean diasporas. The term 'Asian' is used to refer to peoples with recent or direct links with Asian countries, in particular those with recent or direct origins in Bangladesh, India, Kashmir, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Both terms include Asian and black peoples of 'dual heritage' or mixed 'race'. Black and Asian are used as sociopolitical signifiers, and the sociological, political, as well as psychological implications of sharing, or being perceived as belonging to these two 'umbrella' groups must be understood in historical as well as contemporary contexts. The historical context is in relation to the legacies of slavery, colonization, struggles against colonial rule and independence, and the postwar migration of peoples of African and Asian descent whose arrival added to the large number already resident. The contemporary context is in relation to the ongoing need to tackle racism and find ways in which to develop policies, practices and initiatives aimed at highlighting key groups in British society."*

"Our preferred terms should not be viewed as an attempt to establish concrete definitions: they are used solely to enable users to search [the catalogue] in key subject areas. Aware of the fact that terminology used to describe different social groups - not least those that have been racialised and oppressed - is fraught with difficulties, we have chosen to use terms which allow for the widest possible access to the data. We are equally aware of the problems inherent in such umbrella terminology and it is our policy to be as specific as we can in describing the diversity of groups referred to in the research resources. Lastly, it is clear that terms used to identify groups of people are not static. For instance, although the distinctions between the realities of life for British-born people of African and Asian descent is increasingly being highlighted and emphasized, many people still use 'Black' as a unifying political concept of solidarity. Thus we are aware that our preferred terms may not be suitable for use in future projects as new terms are constantly emerging to represent new social and political realities." The full wording of the CASBAH project's terminology document can be accessed online at '<http://www.casbah.ac.uk/scope.stm>'. The CASBAH project is "a demonstrator project funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) with the aim of identifying and mapping national research resources relating to Caribbean Studies and the history of Black and Asian people in the UK."

Access status

Partially closed.

Access conditions

Unless otherwise stated, the collection is open. A small amount of material may be closed due to Data Protection (1998) legislation; this is indicated at file level.

Photographic material in this collection may not be reproduced in any format without permission of the copyright holder. In most cases this is Vanley Burke, but there are a few photographs in this collection by other photographers, who hold copyright of their own work. Birmingham City Archives will assist where possible in identifying copyright holders, and all reproduction enquiries and requests will be passed on to the photographers concerned.

Condition

Good, unless otherwise stated.

Copyright

With depositor unless otherwise stated.