BRYANT, OLEN LITTLETON
PAPERS
1961-1992

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INTRODUCTION

The Olen Littleton Bryant Papers (1961-1992) are centered around the artistic and teaching career of Olen Littleton Bryant, Clarksville, Tennessee. The Bryant Papers were donated to the Tennessee State Library and Archives by his close friend, Vanderbilt faculty member and art critic, Thomas B. Brumbaugh. The collection occupies 1.89 cubic feet and numbers approximately 1350 items.

Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the Olen Littleton Bryant Papers may be made for scholarly research.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Olen Littleton Bryant Papers, containing ca. 1350 items, span the period 1961-1992. The collection is composed of advertisements, an agenda, a card, clippings, correspondence, financial documents, genealogical data, horoscopes, interviews, invitations, programs, etc., memoranda, obituaries, poetry, photographs, drawings, etc., publications, a recommendation, a report, sketches, and writings.

The bulk of the collection is comprised of sketch-laden correspondence and numerous clippings generated by artist/sculptor/educator Olen Littleton Bryant, born in Cookeville, Tennessee in 1927. Bryant graduated from Lebanon High School in 1946 and received his undergraduate education from Murray State College (presently known as Murray State University) in Murray, Kentucky. He earned his Master of Fine Arts degree at the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. He has also studied at other institutions throughout Europe and North and Central America.

While known primarily for his works as a sculptor, Bryant is recognized as an excellent educator, having taught in secondary and post-secondary institutions, including Cumberland University, Union University, and Emory University. He is currently Professor Emeritus of Art at Austin Peay State University.

The majority of correspondence consists of Bryant's communication with close friend Thomas B. Brumbaugh, art critic and faculty member at Vanderbilt University. In most cases, Bryant's correspondence was typed or handwritten on the back of correspondence sent to him. Many times this included correspondence from U.S. Representatives and Senators from Tennessee. The clippings contain mainly newspaper and magazine reviews of art exhibits in which Bryant participated. Also included are art and theatre reviews written by Bryant.

Within the collection are several biographical sketches of Bryant, as well as sketches of artists: Meyer Wolfe (1897-1985) and Edwin B. Johnson (1904-1968). Also included is a biographical sketch of Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer (1861-1951); advice columnist, commonly known by her pen name "Dorothy Dix." There also exists within the collection genealogical data and clippings related to Gilmer.

Among the publications is a catalog detailing the biographical history of African-American sculptor William Edmondson of Nashville (1883?-1951); and a publication listing photographs and documentation of some of Nashville's nineteenth century skyline architecture. These items were microfilmed and removed to the Library collection.

See clippings, biographical sketches, and interviews for valuable insight into the educational background, accolades, and humorous elements connected to the artistic philosophy of Olen L. Bryant.
Olen Littleton Bryant

1927  May 4, born in Cookeville, Putnam County, Tennessee, the son of Emmett and Tottie (Goolsby) Bryant

1940  Removed with his family to Lebanon, Tennessee

1946  Graduated from Lebanon High School in Lebanon, Tennessee

1950  Received Bachelor of Science from Murray State College (presently known as Murray State University) in Murray, Kentucky

1950-1952  Served in U.S. Army as occupational therapy technician working with psychiatric patients

1954  Received Master of Fine Arts degree from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

1954-1957  Studied at: Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, Ohio; Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Island, Maine; Instituto Allende, San Miguel, Mexico; Penland School of Crafts, Penland, North Carolina; Art Students League of New York; University of Delaware (Winterthur Museum); Various institutions throughout Europe

1958-1961  Art teacher in Shaker Heights and Marion, Ohio public school systems

1962-1965  Assistant Professor of Art at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee

1966-1991  Professor of Art at Austin Peay State College (presently known as Austin Peay State University)

1991-present  Professor Emeritus of Art at Austin Peay State University

Organizations

Who's Who In American Art
Nashville Artists Guild
American Crafts Council
World Crafts Council
**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, continued:**

**Numerous solo exhibits including:**

Tennessee Fine Arts Center  
Cheekwood  
Evansville, Indiana Museum  
Clarksville  
Chattanooga  
Atlanta

**Sources:** Olen Littleton Bryant  
Olen Littleton Bryant Papers
CONTAINER LIST

BOX NUMBER 1

1. Advertisements--"Clarksville Architecture," 1977
2. Advertisements--Williams, Olen, n.d.
3. Agendas--"Dorothy Dix Symposium: a literary and journalistic event"
4. Cards--Greeting--Bryant, Olen
5. Clippings--"A.P.S.U. supports Bicentennial," April 9, 1975
9. Clippings--Art Institute Grant awarded to Olen Bryant, 1967
10. Clippings--"Artist At Work--," November 4, 1981
11. Clippings--"Artists Honored," April 13, 1965
12. Clippings--"Art Professor Woman's Club Speaker," 1988
13. Clippings--"Attends Presidential Reception--," September 11, 1968
15. Clippings--"Bryant To Speak To Woodcarvers," December 7, 1990
17. Clippings--The Center for the Creative Arts, Fall 1986
18. Clippings--"Centers For Excellence Take Artists to the Students," December-January 1988-89
20. Clippings--Comics--"Satyre" by Ron Fontes, 1972, 1973
22. Clippings--Gilmer, Elizabeth (Meriwether) "Dix, Dorothy" (1861-1951)
23. Clippings--"Inspect Artistic Works," November 22, 1964
25. Clippings--"Olen Bryant," Fall 1978
27. Clippings--Reviews--"Audience Likes `Skin Of Our Teeth,'" review by Olen L. Bryant, October 28, 1977
28. Clippings--Reviews--Exhibition review by Olen L. Bryant, April 17, 1968
29. Clippings--Reviews--"`Greasepaint' Is Lively Production," review by Olen L. Bryant, February 5, 1976
30. Clippings--Sculpture Presented to State, 1986
31. Clippings--"Seeds" sculpture, 1988
32. Clippings--"Sophomore wins honor," n.d.
33. Clippings--"Teens Interpret Art Uniquely," July 26, 1966
34. Clippings--"Tennessee," July 1968
CONTAINER LIST, continued:

BOX NUMBER 2
Correspondence

1. Correspondence--Bain, Kittler, March 3, 1982
2. Correspondence--Brindley, Charles, December 4, 1990
3. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1962-1964
4. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1965
5. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1966
6. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1967
7. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1968
8. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1969-1971
9. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1972-1973
10. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1974
11. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1975

BOX NUMBER 3
Correspondence

1. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1976
2. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1977
3. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1978
4. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1979
5. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1980
6. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1981
7. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1982-1983
8. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1984-1985
9. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1986-1987
10. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1988-1989
11. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1990
12. Correspondence--Bryant, Olen L., 1991-1992
13. Correspondence--Grogan, Kevin, April 14, 1982
14. Correspondence--Higgs, Joanna, 1962-1963
15. Correspondence--Hochstetler, Max, 1990
17. Correspondence--Klahn, Faye G., 1980
18. Correspondence--Riggs, Robert O., Office of the President, Austin Peay State University, May 8, 1980
19. Correspondence--Toy, Randy, 1974-1991
CONTAINER LIST, continued:

BOX NUMBER 4

2. Genealogical Data--Lineage of Gilmer, Elizabeth (Meriwether) "Dix, Dorothy" (1861-1951) [1991]
3. Horoscopes--Bryant, Olen, September 30, 1975
4. Interviews--Interview of Olen L. Bryant by Homer Alexander, March 1990
5. Interviews--"Olen Bryant, Angelmaker," an interview by Thomas B. Brumbaugh, November 1968
8. Invitations, programs, etc.--Art Exhibits--"Old Hickory: A Life Sketch of Andrew Jackson," 1991
9. Invitations, programs, etc.--Austin Peay State University dedication of sculpture done by Professor Olen L. Bryant, May 25, 1980
10. Invitations, programs, etc.--Biography of Olen L. Bryant--Hunterdon Art Center, February 6-27, 1978
11. Invitations, programs, etc.--Dedication of sculpture--Olen L. Bryant, May 29, 1988
12. Invitations, programs, etc.--Hochstetler, T. Max--"Analytical Swiss Patterns," November 18-December 7, 1990
13. Invitations, programs, etc.--"Reflections of a Lifetime: Meyer Wolfe (1897-1985)"
15. Invitations, programs, etc.--"The 1987 Roy Acuff Award Dinner," November 17, 1987
16. Invitations, programs, etc.--"The 1988 Roy Acuff Award Dinner," March 7, 1989
17. Invitations, programs, etc.--"The Thirteenth Annual Senior Night," November 3, 1990
18. Invitations, programs, etc.--Union University Christmas Music Festival, December 18, 1962
19. Invitations, programs, etc.--WPLN/FM 90 Program Guides--Cover artwork by Charles Brindley, February, May, December 1991
21. Memoranda--T.A.C.A. Nomination Committee, October 6, 1975
23. Poetry--Collection--"Tower"--Austin Peay State College, 1967
25. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Bryant, Olen L., 1965-1987
26. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Crafts Fair - Centennial Park," April 1975
27. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Marie Schwartz and others at Artists' Guild, Olen Bryant sculpture," Winter 1968
28. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Olen at the Crafts Fair," May 1973
29. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Olen Bryant at Artists' Guild, Nashville, Tenn.," Winter 1968
30. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Olen Bryant sculpture"
CONTAINER LIST, continued:

BOX NUMBER 4, continued:

31. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Olen Bryant working on hackberry figure," 1964  
32. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"The Sentinel," 1980  
33. Photographs, drawings, etc.--"Union University," March 1963  
34. Photographs, drawings, etc.--Toy, Randy  
36. Publications--Booklet--"Tennessee Sculpture 1971"  
40. Publications--Catalog--"Mississippi River Craft Show," May 4-26, 1963  
42. Publications--Magazine--"Motive," December 1963  
44. Publications--Magazine--"The Tower," 1966  

BOX NUMBER 5

1. Recommendations--Lowe, Harry--for Bryant, Olen L., January 25, 1963  
2. Reports--Parker, Malcolm-- "A Two Rivers Primitive Site: Nashville-Donelson Area," 1972  
4. Sketches--Biographical--Gilmer, Elizabeth (Meriwether) "Dix, Dorothy" (1861-1951), n.d.  
7. Sketches--General--Tour of Woodstock Mansion and Grounds--Birthplace of Gilmer, Elizabth (Meriwether) "Dix, Dorothy," n.d.  
9. Writings--Bryant, Olen L.--"Seeds," March 7, 1988