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E-List 7:

African-American Artists: Music, Performance Photography and Graphic Arts
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[Detail from Item 6]
1. [Featured] Van Vechten, Carl

*Suite of Fifteen Images of African-American Singers, Dancers and Performers including Ethel Waters, Eartha Kitt, Joyce Bryant, Diahann Carroll, Matilde Dobbs, Diana Sands, Carmen de Lavallade, Josephine Premice and Reri Grist.*

New York, 1938-1959. Silver gelatin photographs on postcard stock, 5 1/2 x 3 1/12 inches, all with Van Vechten's embossed stamp and inventory numbers to versos, two with Van Vechten's handwriting and cancelled stamps to versos. Matted and housed in an archival box. Near fine overall with some normal wear and excellent contrast.

A rare suite of original photographs by Carl Van Vechten of several important African-American female performers, including several scarce images. Subjects include the singer Eartha Kitt (five images, 1938-1940); the opera singer Reri Grist (two images, c. late 1950s); the singer Eartha Kitt (two images, 1952); the opera singer Mattiwilda Dobbs (one image, 1955); the opera singer Diana Sands (one image, 1963); the actress and singer Diahann Carroll (one image, 1955); the singer Joyce Bryant (one image, 1953); the actress and dancer Carmen de Lavallade and her son Leo Holder (one image, 1958); and the actress and singer Josephine Premice (one image, 1955).

As a group, the subjects show important entertainers across a range of styles, from Jazz and Broadway to Opera. Van Vechten's documentation of the New York scene growing out of the Harlem Renaissance was extensive, and despite controversy over his views and publications he shows here the breadth of his work documenting the performing arts.
This collection appears to be from a single owner, a Richard Banks (likely the artist) with three of the postcards with Van Vechten’s writing on versos, discussing the New York arts scene, sexuality (“Our world asks: ‘Are you ashamed of sex after 40?’ Dear, dear, aren’t people modest!”). One could reasonably assume that Banks was an opera or jazz enthusiast based on the subjects in the collection. Overall a very well preserved group with excellent contrast, and an uncommon opportunity to acquire a somewhat curated group of Van Vechten prints, as those on the market usually appear as single images or with less thematic cohesion.

$ 6,500
2. Bowser, David Bustill

Carte-de-Visite Photograph of D.B. Bowser’s Banner for the 3rd United States Colored Troops, Circa 1865.

Albumen carte-de-visite photograph, measuring 3 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches, with “D.B. Bowser / Artist / No. 481 North 4th St. / Philadelphia” on verso, suggesting the photograph was used by Bowser as a business card or advertisement. Fading and slight toning to verso, photograph nearly fine with excellent contrast, excellent condition overall.

David Bustill Bowser was an African-American artist, abolitionist, entrepreneur and philanthropist in 19th century Philadelphia. Along with his wife Lizzie Bowser, he was deeply involved in the organizational culture of Philadelphia, and painted several banners such as this for USCT Regiments. Most of the banners were destroyed at a fire in West Point, so the remaining photographs provide a valuable record of Bowser’s work.

“The Bowser’s made livelihoods from the era’s thriving voluntary organizational culture. Between the 1840s and 1860s, David had a profitable business painting banners, uniform hats, equipment, signs, and more for volunteer fire companies and fire insurance businesses, along with other organizations. Some business came from groups, such as the Know-Nothing Party, that were likely politically unpalatable to him. Other business reflected the organizational and fundraising prowess of the African American associational world, such as the banner ordered during the Civil War by the Contraband Relief Association (CRA) of Washington, D.C. The African American women’s group aiding wartime black refugees commissioned him to make a regimental banner for the newly established 1st U.S. Colored Infantry. Led by Elizabeth Keckley, formerly enslaved and a dressmaker to Mary Todd Lincoln, the CRA raised money especially for the banner, rather than tap into relief funds.” - Amanda Moniz, Making money and doing good: The story of an African American power couple from the 1800s, The Smithsonian Museum of American History, accessed 1/26/21.

The banner in this photograph uses a quote from Henry Highland Garnet’s “Call to Rebellion” speech at the 1843 National Negro Convention in Buffalo, New York. The 3rd USCT was mustered into service in 1863 and were training at Camp William Penn when the banner was created.

$2,500
3. Brown, Grafton Tyler

Grand Lodge F.S.A.M. of the State of Nevada [Lithographic Masonic Appointment on Vellum].

San Francisco: G.T. Brown, 1871. 377 x 452 mm. Lithograph on vellum. Imprint, “Designed by W.M. Metcalf” and “G.T. Brown & Co. Lith. San Francisco.” Overall a very fine example, with folds to vellum else fine.

Grafton Tyler Brown was California’s first African-American city view artist and lithographer. Born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, he moved to Sacramento in 1858 and later settled in San Francisco, where he worked for the commercial lithographer for Charles C. Kuchel in the early 1860s before buying the firm upon Kuchel's death. His best-known work is a series of topographic views and an illustrated book that chronicled the developing California landscape. He also worked commercially as a printer doing jobs for a range of businesses including many mining companies, before eventually selling his business to his partner William Galloway in 1872, before moving to Canada to work on surveys and eventually returning to the United States where he worked in Oregon.

Offered here is a finely printed example of a masonic appointment, printed on vellum, from Brown’s commercial period in California. The appointment is for Thomas James Hodgkinson of the Carson Lodge No. 1 (Grand Lodge No. 152), and features finely printed masonic vignettes which showcase Brown’s skill as a printer. The Grand Lodge had been established six years earlier, being the first of its kind in Nevada, and is still in existence. As nice an example of Brown's commercial work as we have encountered.

Sold

*The Supremes at Lincoln Center Philharmonic Hall. Friday, October 15, 1965.*

New York?, 1965. Lithograph poster in colors. Signed in the plate, l.l. Sheet: 38” x 24 ¾. Creases to lower right quadrant, wear to top and bottom margins, pinholes to corners, very good condition overall.

The Supremes were at the height of their popularity when they performed at Lincoln Center’s Philharmonic Hall in 1965. Offered here is the iconic poster from the concert, designed by the graphic designer Joe Eula.

$400
5. Hansen, Austin

**Collection of Twenty Photographs of Harlem Women's Events in the 1950s.**

Silver gelatin prints, measuring 8 x 10 inches. With eleven letters and documents relating to the events. Excellent contrast, near fine overall, with Hansen's marks to versos. Removed from an album and preserved in mylar album pages.

Austin Hansen had a decades-long tenure as one of Harlem’s most important photographers, documenting community events such as those depicted here. He managed a studio for forty-seven years on West 135th Street. Before that he served as a photographer in the Navy during World War Two. Some of his more iconic images include an image of a man on a picket line holding a sign that reads “Do Not Ride These Buses Until You See Negro Drivers,” images from David Dinkin’s funeral, and photographs taken after the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

The collection here, from the estate of Lenon Hoyte, the “Doll Lady of Harlem,” show various events from Harlem and the New York environs in the mid-1950s: the presentation of toys to Harlem Hospital; the awarding of scholarships; a sorority luncheon and related images; a remedial reading class; etc. Several of the images relate to the Beta Epsilon Chapter of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, including outdoor shots surrounding a Harry Belafonte concert at Loew’s Rio.

Though Hansen was quite prolific (his archive at the NYPL includes over 500,000 negatives), original prints are uncommon on the market.

*Sold*
6. [Jazz, Gospel and Folk Music] Kalischer, Clemens

Collection of Nine Photographs Taken at the Music Inn, Stockbridge, Massachusetts in the 1950s, including Portraits of Mahalia Jackson, Max Roach, and Others.

Silver gelatin prints, varying sizes, most 8 x 13 inches, the smallest measuring 9 ½ x 7 ½ inches, on larger mounts. Some toning to mounts, occasional silvering to margins and stray marks, very good to fine condition overall. All signed by Kalischer on the mounts.

The Music Inn was founded on the estate of the Countess de Heredia in 1950 by a young couple from New York City who wished to bring the culture of New York to Berkshire County, where it was met with a very lukewarm response from the local residents. The “Folk and Jazz Roundtable” series in the 1950s, started by the Hunter College Professor Marshall Stearns, was one of the first studious attempts to delineate the origins of African-American music, and the Inn played host to many jazz, folk and gospel luminaries in the 1950s and beyond.

The Berkshire County-based photographer Clemens Kalischer photographed the goings-on at the Music Inn for several decades. Offered here are nine pictures taken by Kalischer in the 1950s and probably printed later. Highlights of the group include a portrait of Mahalia Jackson and two portraits of Max Roach. Jackson visited the Inn on two occasions, in 1951 and in 1958, and this was taken in 1951 when she participated in a roundtable discussion with John Lee Hooker, Leon James, Al Minns and John Mohegan, as it shows similarities to other Kalischer photographs from the event. Several other unidentified musicians are shown in the photographs, with one photograph showing an empty bandstand. Overall an evocative group showing one of the first attempts in earnest to bring Jazz and Gospel forms into the American canon through in-person scholarship.

$3,500
7. [Jazz] Bolling, Dan

Collection of Nineteen Photographs of Jazz Musicians in Boston's Jazz Workshop and Lennie's on the Turnpike in Peabody, Massachusetts c. 1969 including Miles Davis, Pharoah Sanders, Freddie Hubbard, and Others.

Boston, c. 1969. Silver gelatin photographs, some mounted, various sizes, most around 6x8 inches. Some wear and creases to mounts, photographs range from good to fine with fine contrast, some photos with noticeable flaws. Very good overall.

An evocative collection of photographs of several important musicians taken in Boston in 1969 by Dan Bolling, a Long Island artist and photographer who was stationed at the nearby Hanscom Air Force Base. Apparently unpublished, the document the American jazz scene during the transition period between Hard Bop and Fusion. Three of the photographs show Miles Davis, two while playing and one at the coat check. They were likely taken at his October 17 or 18 date at the Jazz Workshop. The other performers include Freddie Hubbard (4); Pharoah Sanders (3); bassists Milt "The Judge" Hinton (shown in performance in Queens, NY), Buster Williams, Cecil McBee; organist Charles Earland (3); and drummers Jack DeJohnette and Lenny White, as well as one unidentified musician. Bolling is also an exhibiting painter and a member of the Long Island Black Artist Association.

$2,500
8. [Jazz] Calloway, Cab

**Three Promotional Photographs and Signed Menu from The Cotton Club.**

New York, 1940s–1950s. Three photographs measuring 8 x 10 inches, menu measuring 10 x 3 3/4.

Cab Calloway and his band began performing at the Cotton Club in 1931, enjoying an initial three year stint with many sporadic returns in the subsequent decades. Calloway’s manager, Irving Mills, played a large part in marketing Calloway’s music to a white audience. Nate Sloan, in “Constructing Cab Calloway, Publicity, Race, and Performance in 1930s Harlem Jazz,” writes: “Cab Calloway was of the most popular jazz musicians of the 1930s and 1940s whose legacy today is complicated by his repertoire of novelty songs with references to minstrelsy, his residency at a segregated Harlem cabaret, the Cotton Club, and his marketing to white audiences by manager Irving Mills. Calloway’s sound and persona—commercial, racialized, theatrical—did not square with an emergent art discourse around jazz during the 1930s. Hit songs like “Minnie the Moocher” (1931), with its dark, minor sound world, exaggerated depictions of seedy Harlem nightlife, and cultivated use of local slang, catapulted Calloway to success and stardom while erasing him from a burgeoning narrative that defined jazz as an autonomous, high-art tradition.” “Constructing Cab Calloway, Publicity, Race, and Performance in 1930s Harlem Jazz.” Offered here are three press photographs from Mills Artists, Inc., the latest of which advertises the 1956 film Stormy Monday. Also included is a signed portion of a Cotton Club menu from the same period. From the collection of the jazz photographer Jack Bradley, with his marks on rectos. Some wear and marginal tears and two with pin holes on margins, good to very good condition overall.

$450
9. [Jazz] McPartland, Marian; International Sweethearts of Rhythm

*Collection of Photographs and Ephemera Relating to the International Sweethearts of Rhythm from the Estate of Marian McPartland, Including a Typescript of McPartland's Article “The Untold Story of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm” and Photographs Collected by McPartland for her Unfinished Book on the Band.*

V.p., V.d. Twenty-two black and white photographs, each 8 x 10 inches. Typescript 26 pp, text on rectos only. Also included is a single sheet with the roster of the band over the years and McPartland's notes. Fine condition overall with McPartland's ownership marks to versos.

The International Sweethearts of Rhythm, a racially integrated band composed entirely of women, were a groundbreaking band of the late big band era of the 1940s. Originally formed in the late 1930s at the Piney Woods Country Life School, a Mississippi school for African-American children, they went on to tour at the top clubs in the nation, enjoying over a decade of success before Bebop and the intellectualization of Jazz put an end to the Swing era in the late 1940s. The band included members of many races, including “Willie Mae Wong, Chinese saxophonist,” as well as several lesbian members. The difficulties of traveling as an integrated band in the Jim Crow era made it necessary for the band to basically live, rehearse and sleep on their bus for most of their touring careers.

In 1979, the British pianist and longtime NPR host Marian McPartland was awarded a NEA grant to write a book on the history of women in Jazz, and later a Guggenheim Fellowship. She was never able to finish the book, but she did produce an essay, which is offered here, along with her photographs for the project, most bearing her ownership marks on the versos. The photographs, which are all later reproductions of originals from the 1940s, show the band in various states, with some reproductions of inscribed press photographs and a particularly interesting image of the band during their time at the Piney Woods school. Though McPartland never finished her book, much would be eventually written about the band as scholarship evolved with a more pronounced interest in the women who contributed to Jazz. Eventually the band would be the subject of the 1986 documentary *International Sweethearts of Rhythm: America's Hottest All-Girl Band.*
10. [Jazz] Jefferson, Maceo


V.p., 1920s-1960s. Photograph measuring 8 x 10 inches, compositions measuring 9 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches. Well preserved, nearly fine with some normal toning.

Maceo Jefferson was a jazz banjoist and guitarist from South Carolina who began his career in the 1920s playing with Roscoe Lee, Lucille Hegamin and Ethel Waters and then playing in the Plantation Orchestra, which played in Lew Leslie's Blackbirds Review, touring in Europe and recording in England. Jefferson married a French woman while on tour in the 1930s, and spent stints in Europe and America playing alongside Louis Armstrong, W.C. Handy, Willie "The Lion" Smith and others before being imprisoned in France by the Vichy government. Following his repatriation to the United States, Jefferson lived in New York and later Connecticut, focusing mainly on composition.

Offered here are twelve compositions from Jefferson's American period in the 1940s-1960s. Titles include: You've Got Me Now; It Won't Be Long Now; Wake Up and Live; When you Put Your Arms Around Me; Here Goes; It Must Be Pretty Tough to Want the Girl You Love; Deep In My Heart; Often; Forever For Me; Broadway; and Ever More. Jefferson maintained connections in Europe, and some of his compositions were recorded by European musicians Chris Barber and David Bee, among others, and he is noted as the writer for Jimmy Hamilton's Old Uncle Bud. Included in the group is a note addressed to "Johnson," reading "Please Budd! Don't forget if you pick one or two let me know a week or so before recording date. So as to look up copyright. Thanks. Jeff." Overall an uncommon and well preserved group.

$875
Lee Morgan's life ended tragically in 1972 at Slug's Saloon in New York City early in the morning of February 19th, 1972, when he was killed by his wife Helen Moore following an altercation. Due to the heavy snowfall outside, the ambulance was late to arrive, and Morgan bled to death from the gunshot wounds. The episode and its aftermath was chronicled in the 2016 film I Called Him Morgan, which was based off interviews done with Helen Morgan. Morgan was one of the most talented trumpet players of the Hard Bop era, recording prolifically for Blue Note Records as a leader and sideman.

Offered here is the memorial program for Morgan's funeral in Philadelphia on February 25th at the Church of the Advocate at 18th and Diamond in Philadelphia. The program offers a short biography of Morgan, noting his commitment to teaching youth at Jazzmobile Workshop. The bassist Reggie Workman, also from Philadelphia, is listed among the pallbearers, and the honorary pallbearers include a who's who of Jazz musicians including Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner and Wayne Shorter. Unrecorded in OCLC.

Concert Poster for a Concert at the New Foxhole Cafe, Philadelphia, Featuring the Archie Shepp Quartet and Hannibal, 1976.

Philadelphia, Philadelphia Resistance Print Shop, 1976. 11 x 17 inches on heavy stock, rolled, with some creases. Good to very good condition.

Philadelphia enjoyed a vibrant underground jazz scene during the 1970s during a period when many American musicians had moved to Europe, with pockets of lively club jazz in West Philadelphia and other parts of the city. This flyer advertises a concert featuring Archie Shepp and Hannibal (Hannibal Marvin Peterson), appearing alongside one another at the New Foxhole Cafe in West Philadelphia, near the Penn campus at 3916 Locust St. A very good example with some creasing and folds.

Sold
13. Mason’s Jubilee Singers; Eastern Empire Lyceum Bureau

*Portfolio of Promotional Materials for the Eastern Empire Lyceum Bureau, with Illustrated Promotional Circulars for Five Acts including Mason’s Jubilee Singers.*

Boston and Syracuse, c. 1916. Five single fold promotional sheets measuring 8 1/2 x 11 inches, folded, in a promotional folder.

An uncommon survival showing the acts promoted by the Eastern Empire Lyceum Bureau, including the African-American quintet Mason’s Jubilee Singers, who toured extensively through the Northeast and beyond for several decades beginning in the 1910s. The group was led by L.J. Mason and included Dovey Campbell, of St. Paul as leading soprano, Anna Clements as pianist, Joseph J. Miles as first tenor, Creighton Thompson as baritone, and J. L. Mason as basso. Despite their prolific touring history most contemporary accounts advertise the shows in typical promoter's prose that matches the descriptions on the circular here: “The peculiar charm of the quaint and plaintive Southern Melodies is not only indescribable but imperishable...” The other circulars advertise George Hazelton Spencer (with a handwritten note stating that he was to appear Jan 10, 1916); Pitt Parker “Crayon Wizard” Crayon Recitals; Morris Gershon Hindus Lectures on Russian literature and art; and The Pierces. Quite scarce: OCLC locates one copy of the Mason’s Jubilee circular, though there may be another held in the George Wellington Wilson papers at Syracuse, as he was involved with the Eastern Empire Lyceum Bureau.

$350 [On Hold]
14. Polk, Prentice H.

A Series of Five Photographs taken by Prentice Polk, c. 1930s.

Silver gelatin prints, measuring 8 x 10 inches.

When Prentice Polk enrolled at Tuskegee Institute at the age of eighteen, he had every intention of becoming a painter. The staff at Tuskegee decided that his goals were impractical, and at the advice of the Institute’s official photographer, C.M. Battey, Polk instead decided to pursue a career in photography. He studied with Battey for three years before dropping out of school to pursue the craft on his own. Polk moved to Chickasaw, Alabama, where he married and worked in shipyards. As no photography school would accept an African-American at this time, Polk learned the craft through a correspondence course. In 1924 Polk and his wife Margaret Blanche Thomson moved to Chicago, where Polk studied with the photographer Fred Jensen. He returned to Tuskegee in 1927, opening his own studio and working in the Institute’s photography department, assuming the role as head of the department. After a year’s stint in Atlanta in 1938, he returned to Tuskegee and served as the Institute’s official photographer for the next forty-five years.

These photographs date from the 1930s, during the second of Polk’s three periods in Tuskegee. Polk rejected Battey’s approach of softly focused idealized portraits, instead preferring a more realistic style. His work from this period included studio portraits, a series entitled “Old Characters” which depicts ex-slaves from Macon County, Georgia, and pictures of rural African-Americans, some of which were commissioned. He described one of his images, “The Boss,” as follows: “To be portrayed in her own matter-of-factness: confident, hard working, adventurous, assertive and stern. The pose, at an angle, and her expression, authoritative and firm, are not the result of my usual tactics to encourage a response. She wears her own clothes. She is not cloaked in victimization. She is not pitiful; therefore, she is not portrayed in pitiful surroundings. She is not helpless, and she is not cute. Instead she projects notions of independence, and is powerful in appearance, and is, by title, the boss.”

A wonderful group of images, indicative of Polk’s work as a whole during this period. Generally very good condition, with the portrait of the cotton pickers showing some creasing to the corners. All images except “Cotton Pickers” signed by Polk, all except “Mr. George Moore” with Polk’s stamp to versos. Polk’s images are quite uncommon on the market.

Sold

References:
15. Wiggins, Thomas aka ‘Blind Tom’

**Blind Tom Concerts at Odd Fellows’ Hall, Columbia, Thursday Evening, October 29th, ’68.**

Philadelphia, 1868. Single folio sheet folded, 51 x 236 mm. Some toning and wear, excellent condition overall.

An unrecorded handbill advertising a series of concerts at Odd Fellows Hall in Philadelphia by the prodigious pianist Thomas Wiggins, who performed as Blind Tom. The handbill extols the genius of Blind Tom: He is a Perfect Prodigy / Wonderful Powers as a Pianist / Three Airs at Once / He is a Wonder...” Though Wiggins performed extensively - sometimes as many as four times a day - for his owner-then-guardian General Neal Bethune, handbills from his concerts are uncommon, this being a particularly visually striking example.

$1,000 [On Hold]