

Harold Billings:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Correspondence from Jonathan Williams at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

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| Creator: | Harold Billings, 1931-2017 |
| Title: | Harold Billings Correspondence from Jonathan Williams |
| Dates: | 1967-1981 |
| Extent: | 1 box (.42 linear feet) |
| Abstract: | Approximately sixty communications to Harold Billings, a director of the University of Texas Libraries, from poet Jonathan Williams, the founder and publisher of the Jargon Society. |
| Call Number: | Manuscript Collection MS-05022 |
| Language: | English |
| Access: | Open for research |

Administrative Information

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| Acquisition: | Gift, 2006 (G12489) |
| Processed by: | Molly Schwartzburg, 2006 |
| Repository: | Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin |

Scope and Contents

Approximately sixty communications to Harold Billings, a director of the University of Texas Libraries, from poet Jonathan Williams, the founder and publisher of the Jargon Society, make up this collection. The materials are arranged chronologically in a single series, I. Correspondence, 1967-1981.

The correspondence began in the mid-1960s while Billings was compiling an anthology of works by the fiction writer Edward Dahlberg from materials in the Ransom Center's Dahlberg Collection. Williams shared Billings' interest in promoting Dahlberg's writing and other experimental literature. The collection is composed for the most part of letters, many of significant length and substantive content regarding the Jargon Society's publications, Williams' activities in the literary world, the placement of the Jargon Society's papers, and the work and reception of Dahlberg. Most of the correspondence is some combination of letters and enclosures. The enclosures range widely, from travel schedules, photocopied letters to/from third parties, and publication announcements, to broadsides, serials, and a manuscript. The manuscript is a four page handwritten "Acrostic for ED to sit in at 70," a draft of a Williams composition for a festschrift honoring Edward Dahlberg's seventieth birthday. Also included are an issue of the serial publication *Vort* inscribed to Billings from Barry Alpert and a small anthology of poems about Lorine Niedecker published by the Jargon Society, *Epitaphs for Lorine*.

The Ransom Center also possesses a small collection of Jonathan Williams manuscripts, diaries, and letters from the 1960s. Other Ransom Center collections with Jonathan Williams correspondence include Russell Banks, Edward Dahlberg, Guy Davenport, Hugh Kenner, George MacBeth, Gerard Malanga, Christopher Middleton, Kenneth Patchen, Ezra Pound, and Louis Zukofsky. The Ransom Center's book collections contain an almost complete run of Jargon Society publications.

Related Material

Corresponding letters from Billings to Williams are located in the Jargon Society Collection at the University of Buffalo.

Series I. Correspondence, 1967-1981

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| 1967 | Box 1 Folder 1 |
| 1968-1970 | Folder 2 |
| 1971-1973 | Folder 3 |
| 1974 | Folder 4 |
| 1975-1981 | Folder 5 |