OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Title: Allan Rohan Crite Collection

Collection Date(s): 1956, 1968, 1977, 1985?

Extent and Forms of Material: Several drawings, prints, and books.

Creator: Allan Rohan Crite

Abstract: This collection consists of several drawings, prints, and books by the artist-historian Allan Rohan Crite. Crite is well-known for his work in which he recorded the people, architecture, and daily life of African Americans in Boston’s South End/Roxbury neighborhoods in the 1930s and 1940s in his oil paintings, watercolors, drawings and prints. Additionally, he is especially renowned for his liturgical art that dealt with a variety of religious themes.


Collection Number: RG A24

INFORMATION FOR USERS OF THE COLLECTION

Conditions Governing Access: The collection is open for research use.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use: Allan Rohan Crite's drawings are protected by copyright. Privacy and publicity rights may also apply. For permission contact: Jackie Cox-Crite, President, Allan Rohan Crite Research Institute and Museum, J.Cox & Associates, P.O. Box 2414, Boston, MA 02208

Finding Aid: The Allan Rohan Crite Research Guide lists and briefly describes all of the Crite works that are available in the Bishop Payne Library of the Virginia Theological Seminary, including the entirety of RG A24. The guide can be found at: https://www.vts.edu/ftpimages/95/download/AllanRohanCritePathfinder.pdf

Preferred Citation: Allan Rohan Crite Collection, African American Episcopal Historical Collection, Virginia Theological Seminary Archives, Box X, Folder X

IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Biographical History:
Allan Rohan Crite was born on March 20, 1910 in Plainfield, New Jersey. When he was still an infant, he moved with his parents, Oscar William and Annamae Palmer Crite to Boston, Massachusetts. As a child he was strongly encouraged by his mother to study the arts and expand his talents. He studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, the Massachusetts School of Art, and Boston University before graduating from Harvard University with a Bachelor of Arts in 1968. Later in his life, Crite was awarded honorary doctorates from Suffolk University and Emmanuel College for his contributions as an artist and historian. Additionally, he was awarded honorary doctorates by General Theological Seminary in 1994, and by Virginia Theological Seminary in 2004.

Crite has spent his entire career in Boston, working with agencies such as Works Progress Administration and with the Department of the Navy as a technical illustrator. He is a renowned artist, famous for his documenting of African-Americans through scenes of everyday life in his “neighborhood paintings,” his illustrations of Negro spirituals, and his images of religious themes. As a lifelong member and lay leader in the Episcopal Church, Crite is especially recognized for his liturgical art and writings, having published several texts in conjunction with the church. In addition to showcasing his works at the Crite House-Museum, which also serves as his studio and home, Crite’s work can be found on display at museums such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Corcoran Gallery, the National Cathedral, the Smithsonian Institution, the Art Institute of Chicago, Boston’s Athenaeum, the Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists and the Museum of Fine Arts. Also, his work was recently showcased at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, Washington in the exhibition, “Allan Rohan Crite: Artist-Reporter of the African American Community,” in 2001.
Allan Rohan Crite died September 6, 2007, at home in Boston, Massachusetts, and his funeral was held at Boston’s Trinity Episcopal Church, Copley Square.

**Scope and Content:**
This collection consists of several artworks that were donated by Linda Chisholm, an associate of Allan Rohan Crite. Over the years of their friendship, Crite gave her these pieces. In 2006, Chisholm made her first donation to the African American Episcopal Historical Collection—Crite’s self-portrait. The other pieces were given to the AAEHC by Chisholm in subsequent years.

The self-portrait of Crite is done in pen & ink and watercolor. The setting of the painting is the South End of Boston. It depicts Crite holding a black and white drawing of a young African American woman holding a baby while a young African American woman in a yellow dress, who looks almost identical to the woman in the drawing, peers over Crite’s shoulder. In a letter describing the content of the painting, Chisholm explained that the woman in the yellow dress was a “neighbor” and that “he was comparing real Boston African American faces with the African art as a means of determining (or guessing) at the area and tribe from which the person was descended.” The donor also mentions in her letter that this painting was “for his design of a mural he was commissioned to do on the history of Boston.” The painting was given to Chisholm when she conducted an oral history interview with Crite in 1977. A copy of the transcript of this interview is included in the African American Episcopal Historical Collection of the Virginia Theological Seminary Archives.

**Acquisition Information:** This collection was a gift of Linda Chisholm of Nyack, New York, a historian active in Anglican and Episcopal educational organizations, 2006, 2007, and 2014.

**Related Archival Materials:**
- Allan Rohan Crite Oral History Transcript, African American Episcopal Historical Collection, Virginia Theological Seminary Archives (Collection # RG A13)
**Access Points:**
Crite, Allan Rohan, 1910-2007
African American Episcopalians
African American artists
Art, American –20th century.
Boston (Mass.)

**CONTAINER LISTING**

*Items are listed chronologically.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title/Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAEHC o/s box #2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-----. <em>An Impression of an Exhibition, National Center of Afro-American Artists.</em> Pencil drawing, 9 October 1977. 8.5” x 14”. Gift of Dr. Linda A. Chisholm, October 2007. Found on reverse of <em>African American Woman Presenting Newborn Child to Friends</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>AAEHC o/s box #2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-----. <em>Self-Portrait,</em> 1977. Pen and ink and watercolor, 1977. 8.5” x 11”. Gift of Dr. Linda A. Chisholm, October 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAEHC Flat File</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-----. Untitled. Print of a painting, depicting a marching band on a city street, 1985? Approximately 17” x 24”. Gift of Dr. Linda A. Chisholm, February 2014.</td>
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