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The Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature Collection of Frederick Douglass's Family Archive Explored in National Gallery of Art Library Installation



Andrew & Ives, *Frederick Douglass*, 1863, albumen print, 4 x 2 1/2 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund

Washington, DC—One of the most widely heard African American voices during the golden age of oratory in the United States was that of Frederick Douglass (1818–1895). One of the 19th century's most important Americans, Douglass began life as a slave and escaped to later become an abolitionist, political insider, and diplomat. Celebrating the 200th anniversary of Douglass's birth, ***In the Library: Frederick Douglass Family Materials from the Walter O. Evans Collection*** presents selections from the Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature collection of Douglass family archives, including scrapbooks, letters, photographs, drafts of speeches, and inscribed books. This focused installation provides a view of Douglass as the patriarch of a large extended family who relied on him economically and participated in his fight for liberty during the Civil War and post-

emancipation era. The installation is on view from April 22 to June 14, 2019, in the East Building Study Center, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

The installation is organized by the National Gallery of Art and is curated by Yuri Long, rare book librarian, National Gallery of Art.

### **About The Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature Collection**

Walter O. Evans has spent decades collecting, curating, and conserving a wide variety of African American art, music, and literature to preserve the cultural history of African Americans. His home in Savannah, Georgia, has become a repository of the artworks and papers of many notable figures and an important destination for scholars.

The Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature Collection includes the family scrapbooks compiled by Frederick Douglass and his sons Lewis Henry, Charles Remond, and Frederick Douglass Jr., photographic portraits of several members of the Douglass family, pamphlet editions and manuscript copies of several of Douglass's speeches, letters to and from Douglass concerning various family members, and other related ephemera. The scrapbooks contain clippings from many rare 19th-century African American newspapers that exist nowhere else.

### **Library and Rare Books Collection**

The National Gallery of Art Library holds more than 400,000 books and periodicals, including over 15,000 volumes in the rare books collection, with an emphasis on Western art from the Middle Ages to the present, particularly the Italian, Dutch, Flemish, French, German, Spanish, British, and American schools. The collection features an extraordinary range of material, from manuscripts and early printed books to annotated catalogs and price lists, from landmark publications such as Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* to serials produced by Dada artists. Special emphasis is given to the areas of collection catalogs, biographies of artists, manuals on technique and materials, architecture, color theory, the early history of photography, festival books, travel literature, emblem books, and artists' books.

The National Gallery of Art Library was founded in 1941, the year the Gallery opened to the public. In 1979 the completion of a new seven-story facility in the Gallery's East Building and the establishment of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA) allowed the library to broaden the purpose and scope of its collection. A major national art research center, the library serves Gallery staff, CASVA members, visiting scholars, and researchers.

National Gallery of Art Library installations are available for viewing from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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To access all other holdings of the library, which is open Monday through Saturday, visitors must make an appointment. Call (202) 842-6511 or email [refdesk@nga.gov](mailto:refdesk@nga.gov) for more information.

## Related Actives

### Lecture

*If I Survive: Frederick Douglass and Family in the Walter O. Evans Collection*

April 26, 1:00 pm

East Building Auditorium

Celeste-Marie Bernier, professor of black studies and personal chair in English literature, School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures, University of Edinburgh, and co-editor-in-chief, *Journal of American Studies*, Cambridge University Press; in conversation with Walter O. Evans, collector.

A signing of *If I Survive: Frederick Douglass and Family in the Walter O. Evans Collection* (2018) by Celeste-Marie Bernier and Andrew Taylor follows. *If I Survive* is a guide to the collection based on a longstanding collaboration between the authors and Dr. Walter Evans and features reproductions of letters, manuscripts, and photographs from the collection along with transcriptions and commentary.

*Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*

June 2, noon

East Building Auditorium

David W. Blight, Class of 1954 Professor of American History and Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Yale University, and the 2019 Pulitzer Prize Winner in History

A signing of *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* follows.

### Press Contact:

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## General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](https://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](https://www.twitter.com/ngadc), and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

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Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov) for more information about the **National Gallery of Art**.

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