Alan

Instructor Name

Course Number

30 April 2019

Title: Schomburg Center

The ‘Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture’ is a prominent cultural institution that engages in preservation, research, and the exhibition of resources and materials related to Black history. Initially founded as ‘the Division of Negro Literature’ in 1925, the center’s collection were part of the ‘135th Street Branch Library’ aiming to address the needs of the transforming community. It was founded by Arturo Alfonso Schomburg who was a prominent figure in the Harlem Resistance. Schomburg was a collector, activist and writer who founded the ‘Negro Society for Historical Research’ which showcase his collection of materials on Africa. These collections were added to the New York Public Library’s Harlem Branch in 1926, for which Schomburg served as a curator until his death. Today, the center has nearly 11 million items and materials in its collection (Diouf).

The collections available at the Schomburg Center contain millions of collections that cover various aspects of global black history, their culture and their arts (NYPL). The collection includes over 3000 manuscripts, 5000 books and nearly 2000 paintings and sketches (NYPL). Tens of thousands of these collections were contributed by the Schomburg himself who had spent a lifetime preserving, collecting, and showcasing materials that documented African-American and African life globally. The center now actively promotes the study and interpretation of the culture and history of all people hailing from an African-descent. The library’s division was renamed to the ‘Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature’ in 1940 which later in 1972 became designated as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, as part of the New York Public Library.

There are a number of sub divisions within the Schomburg Center besides the Books division. The Research and Reference Division now has 25,000 microforms and 300,000 volumes that are mainly in English but alongside other European and African languages. The Prints and Photographs Division contains a large collection of art photographs, 18th-century graphics, along with contemporary photographs that include portraits of musicians, political figures, artists, social activist, actors, and athletes. Another division is the ‘Moving Image and Recoded Sound Division’ that showcases a broad range of motion pictures, history recordings, and videotapes.

In addition, the ‘Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery’ is a sub-division of the center that contains around 400 highly rare documents and books especially associated with slavery, slave trade and anti-slavery movements within the Atlantic. Further complementing its research division is the ‘Digital Schomburg’ program which aims to provide access to scholarly and trusted information related to the black experience, through its collection of various articles, audios, books, video streams, and photographs. Closely related is the ‘Scholars in Residence’ Program that provides fellowship support for scholars to engage in research projects drawing from the center’s resources (NYPL).

Furthermore, the Schomburg Center also sponsors and organizes a range of ‘Education and Public Programs’ that help interpret its collections and explore various historical and cultural themes associated with people of African-descent all over the world (@Schomburg Center). Some of the recent programs conducted by the Center are outlined below

**Programs (Jan-May 2019)**

The Struggle against Jim Crow North: Police Brutality, Mass Incarceration May 2

[Oratorio: I Will Tell You the Truth about This](https://www.nypl.org/events/programs/2019/04/30/oratorio-i-will-tell-you-truth-about-i-will-tell-you-all-about-i) Apr 30

In Conversation: Dr. Carla Hayden & Tracy K. Smith Apr 29

Schomburg Reading Circle: Never Caught by Erica Dunbar Apr 27

Open Archive: The Poetics of Anti-Slavery Protest Apr 24

From Swastika to Jim Crow April 17

Community Screening: Boss: The Black Experience in Business April 17

In Perpetual Flight: The Migration of the Black Body Apr 16

Open Archive: Regina Andrews and Jean Blackwell Hutson Apr 9

First Fridays: Poetry Slam/Open Mic Edition Apr 5

Conversation in Black Freedom Studies: Black Women's Internationalism Apr 4

Shake Loose: A Celebration of Sonia Sanchez Apr 1

Women's Jazz Festival Mar 29

Schomburg Reading Circle: The Bold World by Jodie Patterson mar 23

Open Archive: Nat King Cole Mar 20

Book Talk: We Want to Do More Than Survive Mar 19

2019 Women's Jazz Festival WEEK 3: Lakecia Benjamin Mar 18

Artist and the Archive: The Art of the Slave Ship Icon Mar 14

The Lapidus Center Presents: Medical Bondage with Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens Mar 12

2019 Women's Jazz Festival WEEK 2: Sounds of Bebop Mar 11

Radical Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective Mar 7

2019 Women's Jazz Festival WEEK 1: Dear Nina Mar 4

First Fridays: Afro-Latino Edition Mar 1

The Harlem Chamber Players’ Black History Month Celebration Feb 28

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Films at the Schomburg: The Burial of Kojo Feb 26

Films at the Schomburg: African Film Festival presents "The Burial of Kojo" Feb 26

Schomburg Reading Circle: Autobiography of Malcolm X Feb 25

The Schomburg Shop Presents: Reformed School Trunk Show Feb 23

Talks at the Schomburg: Revisiting Alex Haley’s Autobiography of Malcolm X Feb 21

Screening at the Schomburg: The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X Feb 21

Open Archive: Malcolm X Feb 21

Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route Feb 19

Black New York Wikipedia Edit-a-thon Feb 16

Open Archive: The Slave Ship Feb 13

Between the Lines: A Bold World by Jodie Patterson Feb 11

Black Lives Matter Teen Conference and Teen Night Open Mic Edition Feb 9

Making Black Lives Matter in New York City Schools Feb 8

Rethinking Black Women Freedom Fighters: Gloria Richardson, Louise... Feb 7

First Fridays: Langston Hughes Birthday Edition Feb 1

Langston Hughes Birthday Bash: VIP Reception and Special Performance Feb 1

Chevalier de Saint Georges of Guadeloupe: Recital and Lecture Jan 31

Carnegie Hall Citywide: Lorraine Klaasen Jan 29

Theater Talks: Black Theater Winter Preview Jan 28

Schomburg Reading Circle: She Would Be King by Wayétu Moore Jan 26

Arturo Schomburg Lecture and Conversation: The Lost Black Scholar Jan 24

Schomburg Center's 7th Annual Black Comic Book Festival Jan 19

Spiderman: Into the Spider-Verse presented by SONY Jan 18

Blerdcon at the Black Comic Book Festival Jan 18

Between the Lines: Crusader Without Violence with Dr. Derryn Moten Jan 15

Crusader: Martin Luther King Jr. - Exhibition Opening Reception Jan 15

The Schomburg Shop Presents: Lingua Nigra Trunk Show Jan 12

First Fridays: House Music Edition Jan 4

# Works Cited

@Schomburg Center. "Upcoming events." 2019. *Schomburg Center for Research.* 30 April 2019. <https://www.facebook.com/pg/SchomburgCenter/events/?ref=page\_internal>.

Diouf, Sylviane Anna. "Artuo Alfonso Schomburg." 18 January 2007. *Black Past.* 30 April 2019. <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/schomburg-arturo-alfonso-1874-1938/>.

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