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Celebrating 175: Research File, Coleman, Floyd, circa 1975-1991

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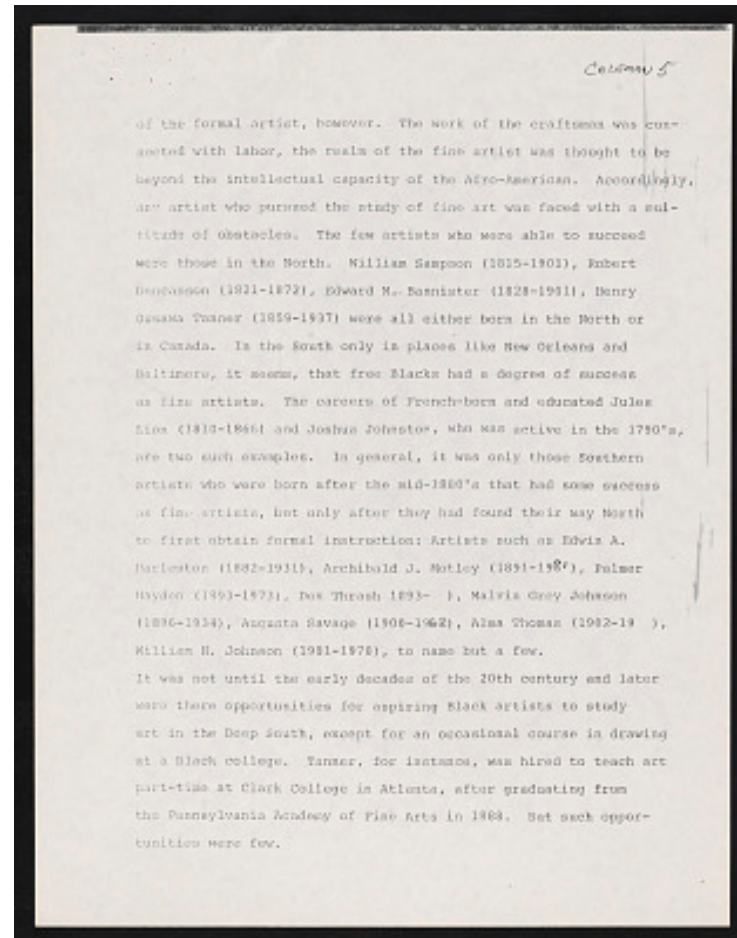
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of the formal artist, however. The work of the craftsmen was connected with labor, the realm of the fine artist was thought to be beyond the intellectual capacity of the Afro-American. Accordingly, any artist who pursued the study of fine art was faced with a multitude of obstacles. The few artists who were able to succeed were those in the North. William Sampson (1815-1901), Robert Duncanson (1859-1937), Edward M. Bannister (1828-1901), Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937) were all either born in the North or in Canada. In the South only in places like New Orleans and Baltimore, it seems, that free Blacks had a degree of success as fine artists. The careers of French-born and educated Jules Lion (1810-1866) and Joshua Johnston, who was active in the 1790's, are two such examples. In general, it was only those Southern artists who were born after the mid-1880's that had some success as fine artists, but only after they had found their way North to first obtain formal instruction: Artists such as Edwin A. Harleston (1882-1931), Archibald J. Motley (1891-1981), Palmer Hayden (1893-1973), Dox Thrash 1893- , Malvin Grey Johnson (1896-1934), Augusta Savage (1900-1962), Alma Thomas (1902-19), William H. Johnson (1901-1970), to name but a few.

It was not until the early decades of the 20th century and later were there opportunities for aspiring Black artists to study art in the Deep South, except for an occasional course in drawing at a Black college. Tanner, for instance, was hired to teach art part-time at Clark College in Atlanta, after graduating from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1868. But such opportunities were few.



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