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10-27-2014

#### The James Merrill Digital Archive: Channeling the Collaborative Spirit(s)

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#### Recommended Citation

Davis, Shannon and Minor, Joel, "The James Merrill Digital Archive: Channeling the Collaborative Spirit(s)" (2014). *University Libraries Presentations*. 2.

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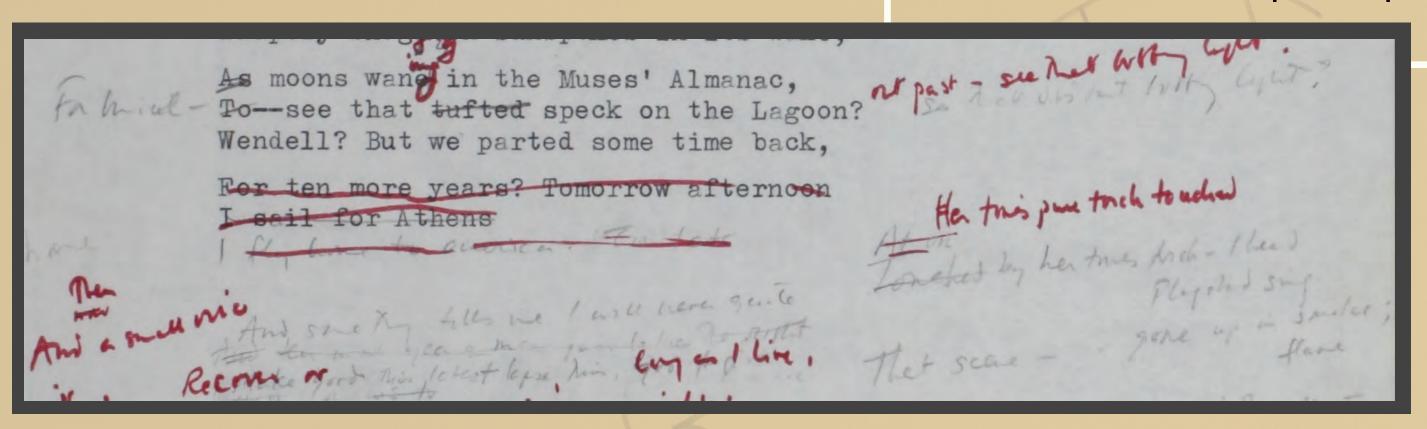
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# The James Merrill Digital Archive: Channeling the collaborative spirit(s)

## CONTENT

#### THE BOOK OF EPHRAIM

- Merrill's first epic poem, part of his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, Divine Comedies
- Chronicles the Ouija sessions in which Merrill and his partner converse with the spirit, Ephraim



### OUIJA TRANSCRIPTS

- Merrill transcribed each Ouija session by hand, as it happened, then typed the transcripts up later for use in his poetry
- The James Merrill Papers hold over 500 leaves of transcripts, all available in the James Merrill Digital Archive

SCRIBE O MIND A SSUME MY AWESOMESELF. SUMMON RE I WILL IN MMEANTIME ASSUME MY AWESOMESELF. SUMMON RE BIOLOGIST + NOO, PHY SICIST IN HELAB + WHACK & UT OF HEM A DEFINITIVE EXPLANATION! ADIEU.

#### MERRILL IN PROCESS

- Notes, manuscripts and typescripts documenting the development of each section of the poem
- Curated by Washington University graduate students a work-in-progress

The degree of my failure cannot be appreciated without a fuller account of the novel I had begun to write. Impatient with a surfeit of enthralling harrative effects in our century,

## CODING

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           <add place="superlinear">the very</add>
           <del rend="strikethrough"><unclear/></del>
         </subst> individuality</l>
       <|><del rend="strikethrough">The very personality I <unclear reason="illegible" quantity="2" unit="words"/></del></l>
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       <|>longed to be free of. What I'd written</|>
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           <del rend="strikethrough">The scenes</del>
         </subst><del rend="strikethrough" rendition="#pencil">I <subst rendition="#pencil">
             <add>wrote</add>
             <del>sketched</del>
           </subst>,</del></l>
```

## COLLABORATORS

#### **FACULTY**

- Provided initial direction for project
- Help set priorities
- Recruit undergraduate and graduate students
- Liaison with Merrill's literary executors

#### STAFF

- Organize and provide access to paper materials
- Train students on scanning, transcription, and encoding
- Create TEI XML document models for transcriptions
- Oversee creation of Omeka digital exhibit, including design, custom JavaScript coding for navigation, and configuration of Omeka plug-ins

#### STUDENTS

- Digitize transcripts, drafts, and other materials (over 1,700 pages so far)
- OCR and transcription work on typeset drafts with handwritten notes (Section A done so far)
- TEI encoding of all typescript drafts (Section A done so far)
- Set up comparison of draft versions using Juxta collation software

## COMING UP...

- Transcription of handwritten notes, possibly using Omeka's Scripto plug-in
- Move section-by-section through the poem to OCR, transcribe, and encode drafts in TEI
- Demonstrate comparisons between versions using Juxta collation software
- Add content from other drafts in the James Merrill Papers
- Add content from Yale University's Stephen Yenser Papers Relating to James Merrill