

# Chambliss, III, Clifford (VA-09)

Clifford Chambliss III Poster Collection (VA-09)

June 2020

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## Title Statement

Chambliss, III, Clifford (VA-09) Finding Aids to Special Collections in the VMFA Archives | Clifford Chambliss III Artist Archives VA-09

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-01-07 07:01:50 -0500.

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

VA-09

### Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/467

### Unit Date

June 2020

### Graphic Materials

VA-09 Box 1 (Oversize)

### Language

English

### Abstract

The collection consists of artist Clifford Chambliss III's poster, "Rumors of War Wasn't a Rumor," created in response to the killing of unarmed African American George Floyd in 2020.

### Creator

Chambliss, Clifford, III

### source

Chambliss, Clifford, III

### Extent

1 item

## Repository

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Archives

# Administrative Information

## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

Clifford Chambliss III Artist Archives (VA-09). VMFA Archives, Richmond, Virginia.

# Biographical / Historical

A native of Richmond, Clifford Chambliss III, comes from a long line of civil rights activists, so it's understandable that he prefers the term patriots to protesters.

He attended Richmond Public Schools through the eighth grade, then Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for high school, where a photojournalism class had a strong impact, he says, teaching him to tell stories through images.

After attending Hampton University for college and grad school, he worked in marketing and advertising in Richmond before studying intellectual property law at the Catholic University of America. He currently works for the U.S. Copyright Office in Washington, but still lives in Richmond.

Chambliss has been involved in the local arts community since he was young, he says, first playing music then transitioning to visual arts with his photography in high school. In college, his work turned to apparel and sewing as well as screenprinting. His interest in Kehinde Wiley has been developing for years. He first became acquainted with the "Rumors of War" painting series during a retrospective show of Wiley's work at VMFA in 2016. He says that he photographed the "Rumors of War" statue in New York before it was moved to Richmond, where he shot the local unveiling.

Chambliss went out shirtless to protest June 3, 2020 to "let his Black skin be a part of the sign," he says. He was hoping photographers and other artists would notice.

"Coming from a family active in the civil rights movement, I knew I had to get out there and be a part of the peaceful protests," he recalls. "I was thinking about themes of Richmond and thought of 'Rumors.' The war on police brutality, the war on Black lives, it all resonated that rumors of war wasn't a rumor."

However, he was shocked when his sign garnered worldwide exposure and he got requests for an interview from Agence France Presse. The image went everywhere from Canada and France to Kenya, he says, covered by ABC, NBC News and Forbes.

Source: Style Weekly

# Scope and Contents

The collection consists of Clifford Chambliss III's poster, "Rumors of War Wasn't a Rumor." The poster is a two-sided cardboard sign handwritten by the artist.

# Keywords

Political art

Protest movements

Posters

Chambliss, Clifford, III

Wiley, Kehinde, 1977-

Floyd, George, 1973-2020

# Provenance

The poster was purchased by the VMFA from the artist in July of 2020.

# Description of Subordinate Components

## **Rumors of War Wasn't a Rumor**

**Unit ID** VA09.01.0.001

**Unit ID** /repositories/2/archival\_objects/70797

### **Scope and Contents**

Two-sided cardboard poster handwritten by the artist.