



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Robert Geringer and Patricia Falkenhain papers

1930-1990

*T-Mss 2004-004

Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2014.

Summary

Creator: Falkenhain, Patricia

Title: Robert Geringer and Patricia Falkenhain papers

Date: 1930-1990

Size: 8.87 linear feet (27 boxes, 1 oversized folder, 1 tube)

Source: Donated by Dot Lee, 2004.

Abstract: Robert Geringer (1926-1989) and his wife Patricia Falkenhain (1927-2004) were American stage, television, and film actors. They performed together in regional, Broadway, and Off-Broadway theater. The collection (1930-1990) documents their stage acting careers through scripts, scrapbooks, photographs, and writings. Geringer's drawings and watercolors are also present.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

Conditions Governing Use: The author/creator retains copyright of materials. For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Theatre Division at theatrediv@nypl.org.

Preferred citation: Robert Geringer and Patricia Falkenhain papers, *T-Mss 2004-004. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2014.

Creator History

Robert Geringer (1926-1989) was an American stage, television, and film actor. He attended Fordham University where he studied stage design before beginning his acting career. Patricia Falkenhain (1927-2004) was an American stage actress. She made her theater debut in a 1946 performance of *Juno and the Paycock* as a member of *The Spur*, an acting group that performed at the Cherry Lane Theatre in

New York. Gerringer and Falkenhain were both members of the Off-Broadway theater group The Thirteen Players during the 1940s. The couple was married in 1950 and performed together in over 150 regional, Broadway, and Off-Broadway theater productions between 1948 and 1988. They worked extensively with the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Phoenix Theatre in New York, and the Virginia Museum Theatre in Richmond. On Broadway the couple performed in *The Waltz of the Toreadors* (1958), *The Power and the Glory* (1958), and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1959).

Gerringer's other Broadway credits include *Sean O'Casey's Pictures in the Hallway* (1956), *The Andersonville Trial* (1959), *Hedda Gabler* (1971), and *St. Joan* (1977). On television he was best-known for his role as Dr. Woodward in the series *Dark Shadows* (1967). Gerringer was also an active visual artist, working primarily in watercolor and ink. He showed works at the Pemaquid Gallery in Maine, the Cary-Windsor Gallery in Richmond, Virginia, and in small group shows in New York and Chicago. Falkenhain's other Broadway credits include *Lysistrata* (1959), *Peer Gynt* (1960), *Hamlet* (1961), *Once a Catholic* (1961), and *The House of Blue Leaves* (1986). She won the 1960 Obie for Distinguished Performance for her roles in *Peer Gynt* and *Henry IV*.

Robert Gerringer died in 1989. Patricia Falkenhain died in 2004.

Scope and Content Note

The collection dates from 1930 to 1990 and documents the stage acting careers of Robert Gerringer and Patricia Falkenhain through scripts, scrapbooks, photographs, and writings. Gerringer's drawings and watercolors are also present.

The bulk of the collection consists of scripts and scrapbooks. Scripts are chiefly for plays that Gerringer and Falkenhain acted in together and separately. Film and television scripts are also present. Some of the scripts are heavily annotated with acting notes or short analyses of scenes. Play titles include *Hedda Gabler*, *The American Bell*, *Volpone*, *Hamlet*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, *Inherit the Wind*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and *Anything Goes*. Scripts for television include *The Hemingway Play* by Frederic Hunter and Mel Brook's *Inside Danny Baker*. *The Gang that Couldn't Shoot Straight*, *The Exorcist*, and *The Wrong Damn Film* are among the film scripts. A prompt book containing Gerringer's detailed set sketches and notes on lighting, sound, and movement for a Fordham University production of Eugene O'Neill's *Ile* is present. The collection also contains a script for Alan Alda's unpublished screenplay, *The Senator*, dated 1978, and sheet music for *Utter Glory*.

Scrapbooks date from 1935 to 1988 and hold programs, newspaper articles, and photographs for shows Gerringer and Falkenhain acted in together and separately. Each scrapbook may contain material relating to Gerringer and Falkenhain's respective or combined performances. The amount of productions and the degree to which they are represented varies per scrapbook. Programs and photographs for Gerringer's high school and college stage productions are among the earliest materials in the scrapbooks. Gerringer and Falkenhain's work with the Thirteen Players from 1948 to 1949 is documented through programs and clippings for *In a Garden*, *Obsession*, and *Hedda Gabler*. Shows that the couple acted in for the New York Shakespeare Festival from the 1950s to the 1970s are well-represented through articles, reviews, and programs. Virginia Museum Theatre material consists of programs, announcements, and reviews for *The Lion in Winter*, *The Gin Game*, and *Dear Liar*, as well as biographical articles on the couple. Other productions covered in the scrapbooks include *Volpone*, *Waltz of the Toreadors*, *St. Joan*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Monsieur Amilcar*, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, and *The House of Blue Leaves*. Scrapbooks have been disassembled and the pages may span several folders or boxes.

Photographs in the collection span the bulk of Gerringer and Falkenhain's careers. The majority of the images are performance stills from unidentified stage productions. Posed production portraits, publicity headshots, backstage photographs, and personal snapshots are also present.

The collection holds Gerringer and Falkenhain's unpublished writings. Gerringer's writings consist of poems, personal narratives, scripts, and a manuscript titled *The Shattered Image*. Scripts include partial manuscript and typewritten drafts of *Zillah* and a typewritten draft of a one-act play called *So Many Faces*. Gerringer's college notes are also here. Falkenhain's writings are more limited and consist of her notes on Greek, Roman, and 18th-century theater.

The collection holds Robert Gerringer's drawings and watercolors dating from 1934 to 1988. Several of the drawings are preliminary sketches of theater characters that Gerringer studied. Detailed line drawings are also present. Subjects of the drawings and sketches include Shakespeare characters, Patricia Falkenhain, historical and fictional figures, churches, buildings, and landscapes. One sketchbook contains technical line drawings of an unidentified machine with individual drawings of the machine's units. Watercolors primarily illustrate natural landscapes, as well as paintings of characters, such as those from *The Beaux Stratagem*. In addition to works by Gerringer, two drawings by Staats Cotsworth are present.

The collection contains Falkenhain's 1985 Obie Award for Ensemble Performance in *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into the following categories: Scripts; Scrapbooks; Photographs; Writings; Drawings and Watercolors; and Obie Award. Scripts are arranged alphabetically by title.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Line drawings (drawings)
Photographs
Preliminary sketches (sketches)
Scrapbooks
Scripts
Watercolors (paintings)

Subjects

Theater -- United States

Names

Gerringer, Robert, 1926-1989

Container List

Scripts

- b. 1 f. 1 *The American Bell* 1962
- b. 1 f. 2-3 *Anything Goes* 1987
- b. 1 f. 4 *Big Henry and the Polka Dot Kid* 1976
- b. 1 f. 5-6 *The Ceremony of Innocence* 1970
- b. 1 f. 7 *Craig's Wife* 1946
- b. 1 f. 8 *Defender of the Faith* 1981
- b. 2 f. 1 *The Distaff Side* 1946
- b. 2 f. 2 *A Doll's House* 1971
- b. 2 f. 3 *Doña Rosita the Spinster* 1946
- b. 2 f. 4 *The Exorcist* 1972
- b. 2 f. 5 *The Gang that Couldn't Shoot Straight* 1971
- b. 2 f. 6 *Great Career* 1966
- Hamlet*
- b. 2 f. 7 1964
- b. 3 f. 1 1964
- b. 3 f. 2-3 1987
- b. 3 f. 4 *Hedda Gabler* 1971
- b. 3 f. 5 *The Hemingway Play* 1976
- b. 3 f. 6 *I Was a Teenage Ann Miller* 1988
- b. 3 f. 7 *Ile* 1948
Promptbook created by Gerringer.
- b. 3 f. 8 *Images of a Childhood in Yorkville* 1990
Poetry compilation by R.J. Walsh.
- b. 4 f. 1 *The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson* 1974
- b. 4 f. 2 *Inside Danny Baker* 1962
- b. 4 f. 3-5 *Inherit the Wind* 1981
- b. 4 f. 6 *Juno and the Paycock* 1972
- b. 4 f. 7-8 *Lady Windermere's Fan* 1973
- b. 4 f. 9 *The Lion in Winter* 1983
- The Marriage of Bette and Boo*
- b. 4 f. 10 1985
- b. 5 f. 1 1985-1988
- b. 5 f. 2 *Much Ado About Nothing* 1988
- b. 5 f. 3 *My Dog Tulip* 1985
- b. 5 f. 4 *Our Town* 1983
- b. 5 f. 5 *The Play's the Thing* 1987
- b. 5 f. 6 *Pride and Prejudice* 1985
- b. 5 f. 7 *A Public Affair* 1978
- b. 5 f. 8 *Quebec* 1982

Scripts (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 1 *Richard III* 1970
- b. 6 f. 2 *Room Service* 1970
- b. 6 f. 3 *The Senator* 1978
- b. 6 f. 4 *Tartuffe* 1965
- b. 6 f. 5 *The Tempest* 1987
- b. 6 f. 6 *Under Milkwood* 1961
- b. 6 f. 7-8 Untitled Scripts 1970, 1980
The Utter Glory of Morrissey Hall
- b. 6 f. 9 1978
- b. 7 f. 1 1979 (sheet music)
- b. 24 f. 4 1979 (sheet music)
- b. 7 f. 2 *Volpone* 1978
- b. 7 f. 3-4 *The War of the Roses* 1970
Parts I and II
- b. 7 f. 5 *The Way We Were* 1972
The Wrong Damn Film
- b. 7 f. 6 1975
- b. 8 f. 1 1975

Scrapbooks

- b. 12 f. 1-5 1941-1946
- b. 13 f. 1 1946
- b. 14 f. 1-4 1948-1957
- b. 15 f. 1-3 1957-1958
- b. 16 f. 1-5 1958-1961
- b. 17 f. 1-4 1962-1968
- b. 18 f. 1-4 1968-1971
- b. 19 f. 1-5 1971-1977
- b. 20 f. 1-5 1978-1983
- b. 21 f. 1-4 1983-1988

Loose Scrapbook Material

- b. 8 f. 2-7 1935-1988
- b. 9 f. 1 1983-1984

Photographs

- b. 9 f. 2-7 1930-1986
- b. 22 f. 1-5 1948-1980s
photograph album
- b. 27 f. 1-6 1955-1982
- b. 23 f. 1-4 1959-1986
photograph album
- b. 10 f. 1-2 1960-1986
- b. 24 f. 1-3 1965-1983
- b. 26 f. 7 1980s

Photographs (cont.)

b. 25 f. 1 1981

Writings

b. 11 f. 1 Falkenhain, Patricia circa 1945

b. 10 f. 3-9 Gerringer, Robert 1948-1949

Drawings and Watercolors

b. 11 f. 2-10 1934-1981

b. 25 f. 2 1950

b. 26 f. 1-6 1955-1988

b. 24 f. 6-10 1957-1980s

o. 1 Undated charcoal drawing by Staats Cotsworth
LPA C12 Dwr #19

b. 26 f. 8 Obie Award 1985

Posters

t. 1 *Hamlet* 1987

t. 1 *The Wars of the Roses* 1970