

**The New York Public Library
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Billy Rose Theatre Division**

Guide to the

Barry Hyams papers

1947-1963

*T-Mss-2012-019

Compiled by Robyn Hjermstad, September 2013

Summary

Creator: Hyams, Barry, 1911-1989

Title: Barry Hyams papers, 1947-1963

Size: 6.37 linear feet (18 boxes)

Source: Unknown.

Abstract: Barry Hyams (1911-1989) was an American theater producer and press representative who publicized over 40 Broadway productions throughout the course of his career. His production work was limited to Off-Broadway pieces associated with Rooftop Productions. Hyams was the head of publicity for the Lincoln Center Repertory Company during the 1960s, and the editor of *Theatre: The Annual of the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center*. The Barry Hyams papers date from 1947 to 1963 and document Hyams' work as a press representative for Broadway. The collection contains publicity files and scrapbooks for over 30 Broadway productions, many of which were produced by Robert Whitehead and the Producers Theatre. This collection is rich with material demonstrating the nature of Broadway press relations. The collection holds correspondence; photographs; press releases; drafts of stories for magazines and newspapers; scripts for radio and television announcements; programs; clippings; advertisement schedules for print, radio, and television; and proofs for advertisements and programs.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Copyright information: For permission to publish, contact the curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

Preferred citation: Barry Hyams papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Previously assigned NYPL catalog numbers were given to the majority of the files in this collection. Original order was maintained when apparent, and loose material placed into folders.

Creator history

Barry Hyams (1911-1989) was an American theater producer and press representative. Hyams publicized over 40 Broadway productions throughout the course of his career. His production work was limited to Off-Broadway pieces associated with Rooftop Productions, a production company partially founded by actor David Brooks in the 1950s.

Among the several Broadway productions that Hyams publicized were *Medea* (1947), *Kismet* (1953), *A Touch of the Poet* (1958), and *A Man for All Seasons* (1961). He represented over 30 theatrical performances for The Producers Theatre and worked closely with producer Robert Whitehead and the American National Theater and Academy. Hyams was also the head of publicity for the Lincoln Center Repertory Company during the 1960s, and edited *Theatre: The Annual of the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center*.

He had three children with his first wife, Ruth Hurok, daughter of Russian impresario Sol Hurok. His son, Peter Hyams, is a writer and director. Barry Hyams died in San Francisco in 1989.

Scope and content note

The Barry Hyams papers date from 1947 to 1963 and document Hyams' work as a press representative for Broadway. The collection contains publicity files and scrapbooks for over 30 Broadway productions, many of which were produced by Robert Whitehead and The Producers Theater. This collection is rich with material demonstrating the nature of Broadway press relations. The collection holds correspondence; photographs; press releases; drafts of stories for magazines and newspapers; scripts for radio and television announcements; programs; clippings; advertisement schedules for print, radio, and television; and proofs for advertisements and programs.

Separate Tables (1956), *The Waltz of the Toreadors* (1957), *Goldilocks* (1958), and *A Man for All Seasons* (1961) are among the better represented plays in this collection. Other production files include *Medea* (1947), *I Am a Camera* (1951), *Portrait of a Lady* (1954), *The Confidential Clerk* (1954), *Bus Stop* (1955), *The Cold Wind and the Warm* (1958), and *A Touch of the Poet* (1958), among several others.

While the amount and content of the files varies per production, all the files contain a significant amount of correspondence. The correspondence is comprehensive and reveals the broad range of activities involved in publicity campaigns for Broadway theater productions. Carbon copies of correspondence written by Hyams are generally attached to the letter he is responding to. Primary topics of correspondence include arranging opening night tickets for press and sending and receiving information on cast and plays for news stories prior to the showing of a production. Many of the letters from editors of magazines and newspapers sent after the viewing of the production refer to tear sheets. Correspondence also concerns travel and accommodations arrangements for cast and crew for touring shows, program design planning, obtaining information on newspaper advertising rates, and arrangements made with companies for tie-in promotions. Invoices for print advertising placement from companies, such as Lawrence Weiner & Associates, are present, in addition to schedules for radio and television announcements for a given production.

Primary correspondents in this collection are newspaper and magazine editors and theater critics from New York City. News editors from other cities are also represented, as many of the productions received national and sometimes international press coverage. Other press representatives, such as Lila Glaser (King) and Martin Shwartz, as well as the Producers Theatre and Robert Whitehead are among the notable correspondents. Correspondence between the writer Robert Bolt and magazines such as *Vogue* and *Esquire* are present and relate to Bolt's writing of stories for the magazines regarding *A Man for All Seasons*. A limited amount of personal correspondence from actor Emlyn Williams to Barry Hyams about the work of his children is included, as well as professional correspondence relating to setting up interviews and receptions honoring the actor. The file for *The Confidential Clerk* contains correspondence from Hyams to T.S. Eliot requesting he send a handwritten title for the program cover. Letters from high school programs, teachers, students, and fans are also included.

In addition to correspondence, this collection holds press releases, drafts of stories for magazines and newspapers, clippings, programs, and invoices for advertising. Press releases cover the initial announcement of the shows, highlights of actors' performances, closing season shows, and actor replacements. The files for *Medea*, *Saint Joan*, *The Cold Wind and the Warm*, and *Goldilocks* contain hand-drawn proofs for program covers and newspaper advertisements. Many of the files contain cast lists and biographical information on cast members. Press-related documents regarding *Portrait of a Lady* (1954) include extensive comments from David Selznick on photographs of Jennifer Jones, as well as her biographical information. One file for *41 in a Sack*, a Revue written by Israeli actor and comedian Shaike Ophir, contains correspondence from Ophir to *Jewish Day Journal* about his ideas surrounding his work. A limited partnership agreement documents the sale of Ophir's piece for an Off-Broadway production in 1960. Publicity planning in its early stages of production is well represented in the file for *Medea*. The correspondence in this file demonstrates Hyams' efforts to set up a publicity campaign and obtain information on the writer, Robinson Jeffers. Also present are invoices for estimated costs of production, running expenses, and actors' salaries.

A Man for All Seasons is the most well-represented publicity file in this collection. Its contents document the success of the production with emphasis on the wide range of audiences that were reached via Hyams' publicity efforts. This file is rich with documentation regarding theater advertising and press relations, and contains a significant amount of correspondence with theater critics and news editors, both nationally and internationally. Correspondence from Transportation Displays Inc. refers to enclosed certificates of display, which document the distribution schedule for advertisements for *A Man for All Seasons* on trains and in train stations in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Miami. A telegram from Nelson A. Rockefeller to actor Emyln Williams inviting him to a luncheon to hear a brief report on the first two years of operation of the New York State Council on the Arts (dated August 14, 1962) is present as well. The Pilot Club of New York's annual Card and Game Party frequently wrote to Hyams requesting tickets and ephemera. Material was requested for theater-themed school dances, a Brooklyn high school year book, and a Bank for Savings exhibition.

The files for *A Man for All Seasons* also include several photographs. All of the photographs are black and white, and are portraits of the actors and shots from the production. Photo credits are given to *Life Magazine* and Friedman-Abeles.

Some of the publicity files in this collection may contain material for more than one production due to Hyams' tendency to represent more than one production at a time, specifically *Goldilocks* and *Waltz of the Toreadors*. The miscellaneous publicity files contain publicity documents relating to *Separate Tables*, *Waltz of the Toreadors*, and *Goldilocks*.

The 12 scrapbooks in this collection demonstrate the outcome of Hyams' work as a publicist. The scrapbooks primarily contain clippings relating to a given production from its initial announcement through its performance. Program covers and press releases may be present as well.

Arrangement

Material is first arranged alphabetically by material type, then alphabetically by title of production. When present, previously assigned NYPL catalog numbers are noted in the container list.

Key terms

Subjects

Publicity -- United States

Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Occupations

Press agents

Theater -- Public relations

Names

Hyams, Barry, 1911-1989

The Producers Theatre (Organization)

Whitehead, Robert, 1916-2002

Special formats

Clippings (information artifacts)

Correspondence

Press releases

Scrapbooks

Container list

Publicity Files

- b.8 f.3-4 41 in a Sack, 1960 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.9 f.6 Bus Stop, 1956 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,143)
- b.7 f.5 The Cold Wind and the Warm, 1958 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.7 f.8 The Confidential Clerk, 1953-1954 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.7 f.6 Copper and Brass, 1957 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.7 f.9 Crime and Punishment, 1947-1948 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.8 f.1 Dancing in the Chequered Shade, 1955-1956 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.9 f.3 The Day the Money Stopped, 1957-1958 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.9 f.7 The Emperor's Clothes, 1953 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,143)
- b.7 f.10-11 The Flowering Peach, 1954-1955 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.7 f.2 The Frogs of Spring, 1953 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.4 f.9-12 Goldilocks, 1958 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,1444)
 - b.7 f.1 Goldilocks, 1958-1959 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.9 f.4 A Hole in the Head, 1956-1957 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.8 f.12 I Am a Camera, 1951-1952 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.9 f.9 I Am a Camera, 1951-1953 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,143)
 - b.8 f.2 Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure, 1955 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.6 f.4 The Ladies of the Corridor, 1953 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.8 f.5 Let Me Hear the Melody, 1951 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- A Man for All Seasons
 - b.1 f.1-7 1961-1963
 - b.2 f.1-5 1961-1963
 - b.3 f.1-11 1961-1963
 - b.4 f.1-8 1961-1963
 - b.10 f.3-5 1961-1963
 - b.11 f.1-9 1961-1963
 - b.7 f.7 Medea, 1947-1948 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.7 f.4 The Member of the Wedding, 1949-1952 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.11 f.10-11 Miscellaneous Publicity File, 1956-1958
8-MWEZ + N.C. 19,650
Contains publicity files for Goldilocks, Separate Tables, and Waltz of the Toreadors
 - b.8 f.6 Mrs. McThing, 1952 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.8 f.7 Portrait of a Lady, 1954 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.8 f.8 The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker, 1953-1954 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.6 f.5-6 Saint Joan, 1954 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
 - b.9 f.8 Saint Joan, 1954 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,143)
- Separate Tables
 - b.6 f.2-3 1956-1957 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,107)
 - b.9 f.10 1956-1957 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,142)

Publicity Files (cont.)

Separate Tables (cont.)

- b.10 f.1-2 1956-1957 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,142)
- b.9 f.5 The Skin of Our Teeth, 1955 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.8 f.9 Take a Giant Step , 1953-1954 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.8 f.11 Tamburlaine the Great, 1955-1956 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.9 f.1 The Time of the Cuckoo, 1953 (MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.5 f.23 A Touch of a Poet, 1958 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,107)
- b.6 f.1 A Touch of a Poet, 1959 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,107)
- b.8 f.10 The Visit, 1958 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- The Waltz of the Toreadors
- b.7 f.3 1956-1958 (8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108)
- b.5 f.1-22 1957-1958 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,1444)
- b.4 f.13-14 1957-1959 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,1444)
- b.9 f.2 Whitehead, Robert and Virginia, 1950
8-MWEZ + N.C. 25,108
Correspondence file

Scrapbooks

- b.14 Bus Stop, 1955-1956 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,176)
- b.14 The Cold Wind and the Warm, 1957-1959 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,174)
- b.14 The Emperor's Clothes, 1953 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,167)
- b.13 Goldilocks, 1956-1959 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,173)
- b.12 I Am a Camera, 1951-1952 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,168)
- b.14 I've Got Sixpence, 1952 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,167)
- b.14 Mrs. McThing , 1952 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,167)
- b.16 Much Ado About Nothing, 1959 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,175)
- b.15 Separate Tables, 1956-1957 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,171)
- b.17 A Touch of the Poet, 1958-1959 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,177)
- b.16 The Visit, 1958 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,166)
- b.18 The Waltz of the Toreadors, 1957 (MWEZ + N.C. 19,172)