

Inventory of the Romney Brent Papers, 1934-1975

*T-Mss 1998-011

Billy Rose Theatre Division



The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, New York

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Romney Brent Papers, 1934-1975

Collection ID: *T-Mss 1998-011

Creator: Romney Brent .

Extent: .41 lin. ft. (1 box); 2 reels of microfilm

Repository: Billy Rose Theatre Division.
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open to the public. Photocopying prohibited.

Preferred Citation: Romney Brent Papers, *T-Mss 1998-011, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Processing Information: Collection was reprocessed with a finding aid written in 1998.

Biographical Note

Romney Brent actor, writer, director and producer was born in Mexico in 1902. He became an actor after viewing a Theatre Guild production, having tried both engineering and the law. His first role was as an acrobat in the production *He Who Gets Slapped*. Brent's acting career included roles in plays such as: *Peer Gynt*, *The Devil's Disciple*, *The Squall*, *Androcles and the Lion*, in which he played The Lion, *The Merchant of Venice* as Launcelot Gobbo and many others.

During the 1940's he began directing as well as acting. Some productions he directed include: *The Winter's Tale*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Brigadoon* and a Spanish language production of *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. Romney Brent was a member of the State Department sponsored tour of South America in 1956, Europe and Latin America in 1961, and the Far East, with Helen Hayes, in 1965.

He wrote the comedy *The Mad Hopes* in 1932 and collaborated on *Nymph Errant* with Noel Coward. He married the actress Gina Malo in 1937 and they had one daughter. Romney Brent died in Mexico City in 1976 at the age of 74.

Scope and Content Note

The Romney Brent Papers document his career and contain correspondence, photographs and 2 scrapbooks. The collection is incomplete in that it contains correspondence only from his later years and photographs and scrapbooks from his early career. There is a large gap in the materials for the 1940's and 1950's. Some production photographs were separated to the Theatre Collection photo files. The photographs remaining in the collection are special appearances, the State Department sponsored tours and personal photographs.

Organization

- Series I: Papers
- Series II: Photographs
- Series III: Scrapbooks (available on microfilm *ZC-566)

Series Descriptions and Container Listing

Series I: Papers, 1969-1975

.21 lin. ft.

Alphabetical

The papers consist of letters to Romney Brent from friends and business contacts in the theater. Correspondents include: Ilka Chase, Marc Connelly, Alfred Lunt, Helen Hayes, Lillian Gish, Mary Martin, Lillebel Ibsen, Armina Marshall, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Emlyn Williams and Peggy Wood, among others.

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|------|------|---|
| b. 1 | f. 1 | Correspondence / Ilka Chase, 1969-1973
1 folder (15 photographs)
Correspondence from Ilka Chase to Romney Brent. |
| b. 1 | f. 2 | Correspondence "C"
1 folder
Correspondence to Romney Brent from friends and acquaintances. |
| b. 1 | f. 3 | Correspondence / Agnes De Mille, 1972-1973
1 folder (3 letters)
Correspondence from Agnes De Mille to Romney Brent. |
| b. 1 | f. 4 | Correspondence / Mary Ellis.
1 folder (5 letters, 6 pgs.)
Correspondence from Mary Ellis to Romney Brent. |

- b. 1 f. 5 **Correspondence / Pierre Fresnay, 1971.**
1 folder (2 letters)
Correspondence from Pierre Fresnay to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 6 **Correspondence / Tamara Geva.**
1 folder (4 letters, 8 pgs.)
Correspondence from Tamara Geva to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 7 **Correspondence / Lillian Gish, 1972-1974.**
1 folder (4 letters)
Correspondence from Lillian Gish to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Correspondence / Helen Hayes, 1969-1974.**
1 folder (18 letters, 3 postcards, 3 cards)
Correspondence [1969-1974; undated] from Helen Hayes to Romney Brent. Includes postcards.
- b. 1 f. 9 **Correspondence / Lillebil Ibsen, 1969-1975.**
1 folder (7 letters, 5 cards)
Correspondence [1969-1975; undated] from Lillebil Ibsen to Romney Brent. Includes postcards.
- b. 1 f. 10 **Correspondence / Alfred Lunt, 1969-1975.**
1 folder (11 letters, 2 cards)
Correspondence from Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 11 **Correspondence / Armina Marshall, 1969-1973.**
1 folder (20 letters, 2 notes, 2 postcards)
Correspondence [1969-1973; undated] from Armina Marshall to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 12 **Correspondence / Mary Martin, 1971-1973**
1 folder (3 letters, 1 note)
Correspondence [1971-1973; undated] from Mary Martin to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 13 **Correspondence "K-M", 1971-1973**
1 folder
Correspondence [1971-1973; undated] from friends and business acquaintances of Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 14 **Correspondence / Dorothy F. Rodgers, 1970-1973**
1 folder (4 letters)
Correspondence [1970-1973; undated] from Dorothy Rodgers to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 15 **Correspondence "R", 1970**

- 1 folder
Correspondence to Romney Brent from friends and business acquaintances.
- b. 1 f. 16 **Correspondence / Cornelia Otis Skinner, 1975**
1 folder (4 letters, 2 notes, 1 postcard
Correspondence [1975 and undated] from Cornelia Otis Skinner to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 17 **Correspondence / Dorothy Stickney, 1970**
1 folder (3 letters
Correspondence from Dorothy Stickney to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 18 **Correspondence "S-V", 1945-1972**
1 folder (2 letters
Correspondence to Romney Brent from friends and business acquaintances.
- b. 1 f. 19 **Correspondence / Dame Rebecca West, 1969**
1 folder (2 letters
Correspondence from Rebecca West to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 20 **Correspondence / Emlyn Williams, 1971-1972**
1 folder (3 letters, 4 pp.
Correspondence from Emlyn Williams to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 21 **Correspondence / Peggy Wood, 1970-1975**
1 folder (9 letters
Correspondence from Peggy Wood to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 22 **Correspondence / Blanche Yurka, 1971**
1 folder (1 letter
Correspondence from Blanche Yurka to Romney Brent.
- b. 1 f. 23 **Lecture for U.S. State Department tour / Romney Brent.**
1 folder
Lecture given by Romney Brent during the U.S. State Department tour.

Series II: Photographs, 1956-1967

.21 lin. ft.

Chronological

The photographs consist of publicity shots from a variety of tours and special appearances. Included are images from the US

State Department Tours, as well as photographs with friends such as Helen Hayes and Peggy Wood. Of special note is the wedding photograph of Viveca Lindfors.

- b. 1 f. 24 **Romney Brent in Havana, 1956**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent during a Havana trip.
- b. 1 f. 25 **Romney Brent in Caracas, 1957**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent during a trip to Caracas.
- b. 1 f. 26 **Romney Brent in Tennessee, 1959**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent during a trip to Tennessee.
- b. 1 f. 27 **Romney Brent arriving in Palm Beach, 1959**
1 folder
Photograph of Romney Brent arriving in Palm Beach.
- b. 1 f. 30 **Romney Brent at the Brooklyn Museum**
1 folder
Photograph of Romney Brent at the Brooklyn Museum.
- b. 1 f. 31 **U.S. State Department tour, 1961**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent during the U.S. State Department tour.
- b. 1 f. 32 **Romney Brent at the Haitian American Institute, 1964**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent at the Haitian American Institute in Port-au-Prince.
- b. 1 f. 33 **Romney Brent in South America, 1964**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent in South America.
- b. 1 f. 34 **Romney Brent in Port-au-Prince, 1967**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent in Port-au-Prince.
- b. 1 f. 35 **Romney Brent with Tom Chalmers**
1 folder
Photographs of Romney Brent during a radio show with Tom Chalmers.

- b. 1 f. 36 Romney Brent with Helen Hayes
1 folder
Photograph of Romney Brent with Helen Hayes in her dressing room.
- b. 1 f. 37 Wedding photograph / Viveca Lindfors.
1 folder
Photograph of Viveca Lindfors with her husband after her wedding in Paris.
- b. 1 f. 38 Romney Brent in Mexico City
1 folder
Photograph of Romney Brent in Mexico City.
- b. 1 f. 39 Romney Brent with Peggy Wood
1 folder
Photograph of Romney Brent and Peggy Wood during a TV rehearsal.
- b. 1 f. 40 Friends of Romney Brent
1 folder
Autographed photographs of Mrs. Edward G. Robinson and Louise Closser Hale.

Series III: Scrapbooks (Microfilm *ZC-566), 1933-1937
2 scrapbooks on 2 reels of microfilm

Chronological

Scrapbooks contain clippings documenting the career of Romney Brent from 1935 to 1937. Works included are: *Three Men on a Horse*, *Co-respondent Unknown*, *East Meets West*, *The Dominant Sex*, *Under the Red Robe*, *Dinner at the Ritz*, *Nymph Errant*, *Garrick Gaieties*, *Man of Destiny*, *Getting Married*, *The Inspector General*, *The Streets of New York*, *The Pillars of Society*, *He Who Gets Slapped* and *The Merchant of Venice*, among others

- *ZC-566 Reel 1 Scrapbook / Romney Brent, 1933-1935
Scrapbook # 1
Scrapbook documenting the career of Romney Brent.
- *ZC-566 Reel 2 Scrapbook / Romney Brent, 1936-1937
Scrapbook # 2
Scrapbook documenting the career of Romney Brent.