Hoffman, Richard.

Richard Hoffman - Neil Simon collection
1955-1993

Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 485
Title: Richard Hoffman - Neil Simon collection
Inclusive Dates: 1955-1993
Extent: 3 linear feet and oversize materials (3 boxes)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 485, Richard Hoffman - Neil Simon collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-3: Shelved in SPEC MSS record center cartons; Removals: Shelved in SPEC MSS oversize boxes (32 inches); Removals: Shelved in SPEC MSS oversize mapcases

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/


Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

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Biographical Notes

Richard Hoffman

Brooklyn-based theater collector and book dealer Richard Hoffman built a number of literary collections around American playwrights over a period of many years. Hoffman has said that he entered the United States Army in the 1950s as an actor and left as a writer. His military experience led to an assignment to create a television program titled "Your Army in View," which consisted of interviews and live drama. After his discharge from the service in 1955, Hoffman taught in the drama department of The City University of New York. During this period he was awarded a Eugene O'Neill fellowship for playwriting. He also began to seriously collect rare books and first editions of contemporary American dramatists, notably the playwrights Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller, and Neil Simon. Hoffman's interest in collecting first editions led to his career as an antiquarian book dealer.

Neil Simon

American playwright Neil Simon has emerged as one of the twentieth century's most popular and commercially successful American writers of stage comedies. His best known comedies include Barefoot in the Park (1963), The Odd Couple (1965), Plaza Suite (1968), The Prisoner of Second Avenue (1971), and The Sunshine Boys (1972). Simon's more serious works, however, including his autobiographical trilogy, Brighton Beach Memoirs (1982), Biloxi Blues (1984), and Broadway Bound (1986), have earned him respect as a serious dramatist. Many of Simon's plays have been successfully adapted for the screen, including Barefoot in the Park (1967), The Odd Couple (1968), and The Sunshine Boys (1975).

Simon was born July 4, 1927, in the Bronx, New York, a setting that often recurs in his work. He began his career co-writing comedy sketches for radio with brother Danny Simon in the 1940s. During the 1950s the pair wrote for television personalities such as Sid Caesar, Phil Silvers, and Jackie Gleason, occasionally working with writers Mel Brooks and Woody Allen. The brothers also co-wrote the early Broadway success Come Blow Your Horn (1959).

Simon has received numerous awards and honors during his career, including Emmy awards for Sid Caesar's Your Show of Shows(1957) and The Phil Silvers Show(1959); and Antoinette Perry awards (the "Tony") for The Odd Couple (best playwright, 1965), for Biloxi Blues (best drama, 1985), and for Lost in Yonkers (best play, 1991). Simon received a special Tony Award for overall contributions to the theater in 1975; and Academy Award nominations for The Odd Couple (1968) and California Suite (1978). The Sunshine Boys (1975) and The Goodbye Girl (1977) received Academy Award nominations as well as nominations for Golden Globe awards. Simon was honored with the New York Drama Critics Circle Award in 1983 for Brighton Beach Memoirs and with a Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1991, for Lost in Yonkers.

Sources:

Scope and Content Note

The Richard Hoffman - Neil Simon collection spans the dates between 1955 and 1993 and comprises three linear feet of playscripts, film scripts, correspondence, posters, flyers, periodicals, theater programs, and photographs related to the American playwright Neil Simon. Assembled by the writer and Brooklyn-based bookdealer Richard Hoffman, the collection also includes Simon's published plays, which are cataloged individually and housed with printed collections in the Special Collections Department at the University of Delaware Library. The archival collection is arranged into two series: I. Dramatic works; and II. Ephemera. The collection includes ephemera such as souvenir programs and playbills, and autographed photographs of Neil Simon and his wife, American actress Marsha Mason.

Series I. comprises the majority of the materials in the collection and consists of playscripts, film scripts, posters, programs, and other materials related to Simon's plays and the films produced from his screenplays. Included are material for some of Simon's best known work, such as *Barefoot in the Park* (1963), *The Odd Couple* (1965), *Plaza Suite* (1968), *The Prisoner of Second Avenue* (three copies, including a film script, 1971), *The Sunshine Boys* (two copies, 1972), the autobiographical *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (1982) and *Broadway Bound* (1986), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Lost in Yonkers* (three copies, 1991). Additionally, there are scripts associated with cast and crew members via correspondence, including Dick Latessa for *The Curse of Kulyenchikov*, Richard Bright for *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, and set and costume designer Santo Loquasto for *Lost in Yonkers*. Also included are three scripts and a film script for *Chapter Two*, as well as a script bearing the alternate title "George Feiffer, Meet Annie Malone." Also present is a first draft of a film script for an apparently unmade project, "Mr. Bad News." Material in this series is arranged alphabetically by title of the work.

Series II. consists of signed photographs of Neil Simon and Marsha Mason.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names
Simon, Neil.

Topical Terms
American drama--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms
Screenplays.
Scripts (documents)
Posters.
Theatre programs.
Photographs.

Occupation
Playwrights.

Personal Contributors
Simon, Neil.

Related Materials in this Repository
MSS 484 Richard Hoffman - Arthur Miller collection
MSS 490 Richard Hoffman - David Rabe collection
MSS 496 Richard Hoffman- David Mamet collection
MSS 505 Richard Hoffman - John Guare collection
MSS 508 Richard Hoffman - Lorraine Hansberry collection
MSS 510 Richard Hoffman - August Wilson collection
Arrangement

I. Dramatic works

II. Miscellaneous ephemera
Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Dramatic works, 1955-2001

After the Fox

Screenplay, 1965 [Box 1 1a]

Barefoot in the Park

Playscript, 1964 [Box 1 1]


Pressbook, 1967 [Box 1 3]

Promotional film poster, 1967 [Box 1 4]

Brighton Beach Memoirs

Screenplay, 1985 [Box 1 5]

Poster, [1984] [Box 1 6]

Broadway Bound

Playscript, 1987 [Box 1 7]

California Suite

Playscript, 1976 [Box 1 8]

Catch a Star

The Playbill for the Plymouth Theatre, New York, 1955, 1955 [Box 1 9]

Chapter Two

Playscript, 1977 [Box 1 10]

Playscript, 1977 [Box 1 11]

Film script, 1979 April [Box 1 12]
Series I.

Souvenir program, 1977 [Box 1 13]

*The Cheap Detective*

Film script, 1976 [Box 1 14]

*Come Blow Your Horn*

Playscript, undated [Box 1 15]

Playscript, 1959 [Box 1 16]

Poster, lobby card, 1963 [Box 1 17]

Poster, 1963 [Box 1 17]

*The Curse of Kulyenchikov*

Playscript, 1980 [Box 1 18]

Playscript, 1980 [Box 1 19]

Playscript, 1981 [Box 1 20]

*The Dinner Party*, 2000

Poster, The Music Box Theatre, New York City, 2000 [Box 1 21A]

*Fools*

Playscript, 1981 [Box 1 21B]

*George Feiffer, Meet Annie Malone [Chapter Two]*

Playscript, 1977 [Box 1 22]

*The Gingerbread Lady*

Playscript, undated [Box 1 23]

*Curtain Time*, 1971 December [Box 1 24]

*God's Favorite*

Playscript, 1974 [Box 2 25]
Playscript, 1974 [Box 2 26]

Poster, 1974 [Box 2 27]

Souvenir program, New York: Gloria Enterprises, 1975, 1975 [Box 2 28]

*The Good Doctor*

Playscript, 1973 [Box 2 29]

Playscript, 1973 [Box 2 30]

Script, undated [Box 2 31]

*The Goodbye Girl*

Film script [Box 2 32]

*The Heartbreak Kid*

Screenplay, 1972 [Box 2 33]

Promotional poster, 1973 [Box 2 34]

*I Ought to be in Pictures*

Playscript, 1981 [Box 2 35]

Screenplay, 1981 [Box 2 36]

Poster, Twentieth Century Fox Films, 1982, 1982 [Box 2 37]

*Jake’s Women*

Playscript, 1988 [Box 2 38]

Playscript, 1992 [Box 2 39]

Playscript, 1991 August [Box 2 39a]

*Last of the Red Hot Lovers*

Playscript, 1969 [Box 2 40]

Screenplay, 1971 [Box 2 41]
Laughter on the 23rd Floor

*Playbill,* Richard Rodgers Theatre, New York, March 1994. [Box 2 43]

Little Me

Playscript, 1971 [Box 2 44]

London Suite

Script, [1996] [Box 2 44a]

The Lonely Guy

Screenplay, 1983 [Box 2 45]

Screenplay, 1983 [Box 2 46]

Lost in Yonkers

Playscript, 1990 [Box 3 47]

Playscript, 1991 [Box 3 48]

Playscript, 1991 [Box 3 49]

Promotional portfolio, Columbia Pictures Industries, 1993 [Box 3 50]

Max Dugan Returns

Screenplay, 1982 [Box 3 51]

Mr. Bad News

Screenplay, undated [Box 3 52]

The Odd Couple

Playscript, 1965 [Box 3 53]

*Playbill,* The Plymouth Theatre, New York City, January 1966, 1966 January [Box 3 54]

Plaza Suite
Series I.

Playscript, 1968 [Box 3 55]

The Prisoner of Second Avenue

Playscript, 1971 [Box 3 56]

Playscript, 1971 [Box 3 57]

Film script, 1973 [Box 3 58]

Souvenir program, New York: Faye Programs, [1972], 1972 [Box 3 59]

Compact disc audio recording, 2001 [Box 3 59]

Promises, Promises

Playscript, undated [Box 3 60]


Proposals

Playbill, [New York]: Broadhurst Theatre, Nov. 6, 1997., 1997 November 6 [Box 3 61]

The Slugger's Wife

Screenplay, 1983 [Box 3 62]

The Star Spangled Girl

Playscript, 1966 [Box 3 63]

Poster, 1967 [Box 3 64]

The Sunshine Boys

Screenplay, 1975 [Box 3 65]

Screenplay, 1975 [Box 3 66]

Promotional film poster, 1975 [Box 3 67]

Handbill, Lyceum Theatre, New York City, [1997], 1997 [Box 3 68]

Sweet Charity
Series I.

Playscript, undated [Box 3 69]

Souvenir program, Universal City Studios, Inc., 1969, 1969 [Box 3 70]

They're Playing Our Song

Screenplay, 1984 [Box 3 71a]

Playscript, 1978 [Box 3 71]

Playscript, 1980 [Box 3 72]

Souvenir program, New York: Raydell Publishing & Distributing Corp., [1978], 1978 [Box 3 73]

Series II. Ephemera

Photographs

8x10 black and white publicity photograph of Simon, autographed [Box 3 74]

8x10 black and white photograph of Marsha Mason, inscribed to Richard [Hoffman]. [Box 3 74]