Hoffman, Richard.

Richard Hoffman - August Wilson collection
1988-1999

Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 510
Title: Richard Hoffman - August Wilson collection
Inclusive Dates: 1988-1999
Extent: .3 linear feet and oversize removals (1 box)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 510, Richard Hoffman - August Wilson collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes (1 inch); Removals: Shelved in SPEC MSS oversize boxes (32 inches)

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/

Source: Purchase, 2005.


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.

August Wilson

American playwright August Wilson (1945-2005) was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Wilson's dramatic work explores the black experience in twentieth-century America and is perhaps best known for the series of ten plays that portray the African-American life set specifically in Wilson's own Hill District of Pittsburgh in each decade of the twentieth century. Called The Pittsburgh Cycle (alternatively, the Century Cycle), this series of plays include some of his most critically acclaimed works, including Ma Rainey's Black Bottom (the only one of the cycle not set in Pittsburgh), which was performed on Broadway in 1984; Fences (1985), The Piano Lesson (1989), and Joe Turner's Come and Gone (1986).

Wilson dropped out of school at the age of sixteen and began educating himself at the public library. He became active in theater after founding a theater company in Pittsburgh in 1968 called Black Horizons on the Hill with fellow playwright Rob Penny. Wilson's many honors and awards include two Pulitzer Prizes (for Fences and The Piano Lesson), a Tony award (for Fences), a National Humanities Medal (1999), Rockefeller and Guggenheim fellowships in playwriting, and several New York Drama Critics' Circle awards.

Sources:


Scope and Content Note

The Richard Hoffman - August Wilson Collection consists of two playbills and one poster from stage productions of African-American playwright August Wilson's plays *Seven Guitars*, *King Hedley II*, and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* spanning the dates between 1988 and 1999. Included are programs from the Walter Kerr Theatre production of *Seven Guitars*, one playbill from Boston University's Huntington Theatre Company production of *King Hedley II*, and a theater poster of *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* from the Ethel Barrymore Theatre in New York, signed by Wilson.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Wilson, August.

Topical Terms

American drama--20th century.

American drama--African American authors--20th century.

Form/Genre Terms

Playbills.

Posters.

Occupation

Playwrights.

Personal Contributors

Wilson, August.

Related Materials in this Repository

MSS 484 Richard Hoffman - Neil Simon collection
MSS 485 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
**Detailed Description of the Collection**

*Seven Guitars* playbill, 1996 [Box 1 F1]

[text]

Issue of *Playbill*, volume 96, issue 3, featuring *Seven Guitars* performed at the Walter Kerr Theatre. The production was directed by Lloyd Richards and features Keith David. Opening night, March 28, 1996. 2 copies.

*King Hedley II* playbill, possibly 1999 [Box 1 F1]

Playbill for performance by Boston University’s Huntington Theatre Company. Directed by Marion Isaac McClinton.

*Joe Turner's Come and Gone* theater poster, [1988] [Box 1 F2] (Removed to SPEC MSS oversize boxes (32 inches))