

The New York Public Library - New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center  
Music Division

Guide to the

## **Roberta Peters collection**

1881-1998 (bulk 1951-1998)

JPB 07-6

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, April 2011

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Peters, Roberta, 1930-

**Title:** Roberta Peters collection, 1881-1998 (bulk 1951-1998)

**Size:** 84.67 linear feet (172 boxes)

**Source:** Purchased from Roberta Peters and Bert Field (husband), 1992 and 2006. Portions donated by Ithaca College, 1992., 2010

**Abstract:** The Roberta Peters Collection contains office files, photographs, programs, clippings, datebooks and diaries, scrapbooks, scores and audio/video recordings documenting every phase of her long career at the Metropolitan Opera and beyond.

**Access:** Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required. Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound (rha@nypl.org). Audio and video materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

**Copyright information:** Copyright retained by any document's creator.

**Preferred citation:** Roberta Peters Collection, JPB 07-6. Music Division, The New York Public Library

**Surrogates available:** The first 76 scrapbooks described in this finding aid were microfilmed by the Music Division and can be found under call number \*ZB-3429. These scrapbooks can only be viewed on microfilm. Two of the filmed scrapbooks, numbers 62 and 66, are missing.

### **Custodial history**

The collection came to NYPL in several stages in the 1990s and early 2000s. A final deed of gift was negotiated in 2005.

## Creator history

Roberta Peters (b. New York, May 4th, 1930) is an American soprano best known for her long career at the Metropolitan Opera. Her parents recognized her vocal talent early and took her out of school at age 13 to study music full-time. Peters was mentored by Jan Peerce, studied voice with William Hermann and was engaged by the Metropolitan Opera at 19, without previous stage experience. She made her debut in 1950 as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* as a last-minute replacement for Nadine Conner (her official debut was supposed to have been as the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, two months later). By her 25th anniversary with the company she had given 303 performances of 20 roles in 19 operas, notably *Gilda*, *Despina*, *Norma*, *Rosina*, *Oscar*, *Zerbinetta* and *Lucia*. Later she attempted to broaden her repertory in lyric soprano roles, playing *Violetta*, *Mimi* and Massenet's *Manon* outside New York and performing in musical comedy. She performed at Covent Garden (*The Bohemian Girl* under Beecham, 1951), in Salzburg (*Die Zauberflöte*, 1963), Vienna (1963), Munich (1964) and Berlin (1971), and with the Kirov and Bolshoi companies (1972), as well as with numerous smaller companies around the United States. A singer of considerable charm and flute-like accuracy, Peters maintained the Pons and Galli-Curci tradition of coloratura singing at a time when the more dramatic attitudes of Callas and, later, Sutherland were in vogue. She recorded several of her most successful roles, including *Zerbinetta* and *Rosina* with Leinsdorf and the *Queen of Night* with Böhm.

In addition to her career in opera, Peters made frequent concert appearances in piano-vocal recitals or with orchestras. She also had an active career in television, making frequent appearances on the *Voice of Firestone* opera program and *The Ed Sullivan Show*, among other variety shows of the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s she appeared on the Mike Douglas and Merv Griffin shows, the *Captain Kangaroo* program for children, and acted in the programs *One Life To Live* and *Medical Center*. She also hosted arts programs for the Bravo Network. Peters also did charity work on behalf of Jewish organizations and the nation of Israel, including a performance for Israeli troops during the 1967 six-day war. She continued performing into the mid-1990s, and received the National Medal of Arts in 1998.

Source: Martin Bernheimer. "Peters, Roberta." In *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21438> (accessed March 1, 2011).

## Scope and content note

The Roberta Peters papers contain office files, photographs, programs, clippings, datebooks and diaries, scrapbooks, scores and audio/video recordings documenting every phase of Peters's long career at the Metropolitan Opera and beyond. The office files hold correspondence, subject files, management files, touring files and itineraries, publicity materials, repertoire lists, and Metropolitan Opera files documenting her Met career and her membership in and leadership of the Metropolitan Opera Guild. Programs, photographs, clippings and scrapbooks span the 1930s to the 1990s.

The audio portions of the collection contain performances and radio appearances. The performances include such operas as *Bohemian Girl* (Covent Garden, 1951), *Il Barbiere Di Siviglia* (the Metropolitan Opera, 1954), *The Merry Widow* (Cleveland Opera, 1986), *La Traviata* (Utah Opera, 1987), and *La Bohème* (Providence Opera, 1980); concert performances in Nagoya, Japan and Seoul, Korea (1989); and orchestral performances with the St. Louis Symphony (1982) and New York Pops (1992). The radio appearances include a Larry King interview (1994), a WNYC segment (1994), and Peters's testimony in defense of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (1993).

The video portions of the collection date from the late 1950s to the late 1990s. They consist of performances and television/film appearances and interviews. The performances include four opera performances, including a duet with Robert Merrill in *La Traviata* (but only a single appearance with the

Metropolitan Opera in 1976); two editions of the Voice Of Firestone program in 1959 and 1963; appearances with symphony orchestras; solo vocal recitals; footage of Peters's tours of China in 1980 and Korea in 1987; and special performances such as the 1989 Presidential Inaugural Gala and at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1993.

The television and film appearances include talk and entertainment shows such as Edward R. Murrow's Person To Person (1957); The Jack Benny Program (1962); The Ed Sullivan Show (undated); the Mike Douglas Show (1970s); Dinah (1977); and the Merv Griffin Show (1978 and 1985). They also include her appearances on the news programs 60 Minutes (1981) and CBS Sunday Morning (1986); Captain Kangaroo (1975); several public service announcements for the United Jewish Appeal and public television; a program produced about Peters called Roberta Peters In Opera And Song (1990); her hosting appearances on the Bravo Network in the 1980s; two Kennedy Center Honors appearances in 1984 and 1986; acting roles in the soap opera One Life To Live (1982), the television series Hotel (1986) and the film City Hall (1996); and commercial appearances for Weight Watchers, American Express and Chock Full O'Nuts.

Inquiries regarding audio and video in the collection may be directed to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound ([rha@nypl.org](mailto:rha@nypl.org)). Audio and video materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

## Arrangement

The Roberta Peters collection are organized into the following series:

- Series I. Office files, 1881-1996
- Series II. Photographs, artwork and posters, 1940s-1990s
  - Photographs, 1940s-1990s
  - Artwork and posters, 1967-1982
- Series III. Programs, 1951-1998
- Series IV. Clippings, 1950s-1990s
- Series V. Datebooks and diaries, 1940s-1990s
- Series VI. Scrapbooks, 1931-1998
  - Numbered (microfilmed), 1931-1992
  - Unnumbered, 1954-1998
- Series VII. Scores, 1950s-1990s

## Key terms

### Names

Hurok, Sol, 1888-1974  
ICM Artists, Ltd.  
Ithaca College  
Metropolitan Opera (New York, N.Y.)  
Metropolitan Opera Guild  
National Council on the Arts  
National Endowment for the Arts  
Peerce, Jan, 1904-1984  
Peters, Roberta, 1930-  
Reilly, Charles Nelson  
Rudolf, Max, 1902-1995

### Occupations

singers

### Special formats

appointment books  
black-and-white negatives  
black-and-white photographs  
clippings (information artifacts)  
color photographs  
color slides  
commercial correspondence  
diaries  
itineraries  
personal correspondence  
photograph albums  
programs (documents)  
scores  
scrapbooks  
screenplays  
television scripts

## Container list

### Series I. Office files, 1881-1996

The office files consist of correspondence and subject files, publicity materials, management files, touring files, repertoire lists, awards and honors, an oral history, speech texts, and film/television scripts, among other items. The correspondence is with a wide array of friends, colleagues and people with whom Peters and her husband/manager Bert Fields were doing business. Among the friends and colleagues with significant correspondence are Jan Peerce, Max Rudolf (whose letters contain musical performance suggestions), and Charles Nelson Reilly. The subject files document performances or other events held in particular locations or associated with particular people or organizations. These include Peters's activities with Jewish and other charities, and her role in the National Council on the Arts and advocacy for the National Endowment for the Arts. The White House files document Peters's invitations to and/or performances in the White House for Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush and Clinton. Publicity materials are mainly filed under biographies. One biographical essay, *A Debut At The Met*, is filed under its author, Louis Biancolli.

The bulk of the documents are concerned with the Metropolitan Opera; Peters's agents and managers, Sol Hurok and ICM Artists, Ltd.; and her concert tours. The Met files list all her appearances from 1950 to 1972, highlighting special occasions such as the anniversaries of her debut with the company and her activities with the Metropolitan Opera Association, the Metropolitan Opera Club and the Metropolitan Opera Guild. Documents include information on her tours with the company in the late 1950s. The Hurok and ICM Artists files contain correspondence between the managers and local presenters and between management and Peters regarding her career and performances. Executed contracts for her appearances, repertoire lists and other managerial correspondence are held here. (Contracts not negotiated by either Hurok or ICM are in box 12, folder 2.) Other managerial and business figures with files in this series include managers Thea Dispeker, Jim Murtha (filed under Gurtman and Murtha), Phil Schapiro and the William Morris Agency; Lester Lewis and Norman Reich, who represented her for commercial endorsements; publicists Lillian Libman and Maurice Feldman; and Harold Stern, the attorney for Peters and her husband.

The touring files document Peters's United States tours of the late 1950s, her European tours of the 1960s and 1970s, and her trips to China and Japan in the 1980s. These files include presenter and travel correspondence and tour diaries.

The oral history transcript in this series was produced by the William E. Weiner Oral History Library of The American Jewish Committee. That transcript, along with the collection of speech texts (which includes an index of speeches), provides many biographical details and reflections on Peters's career, performances and music industry matters.

Portions of this collection were originally donated to Ithaca College. Those files document Peters's involvement with that institution, including a scholarship that she funded, as well as a partial history and description of this collection.

- b.1 f.1-4 A unsorted, 1956-1996
- b.1 f.5 Abravanel, Maurice, 1983-1990
- b.1 f.6 ABC, 1977-1979
- b.1 f.7 Academy Players Directory, 1981-1984
- b.1 f.8 Academy of Vocal Arts, 1984-1994

**Series I. Office files** (cont.)

- b.1 f.9 Accompanists, flautists and coaches, 1956-1958, 1980-1989
- b.1 f.10 Actors Fund, 1981-1987
- b.1 f.11 Adath Israel, 1985
- b.1 f.12 AIDS benefits, 1985
- b.1 f.13 Alberti, Jules, 1968-1970
- b.2 f.1 Alice Tully Hall, 1981-1982
- b.2 f.2 Allers, Franz, 1978-1985
- b.2 f.3 Altman, Stoller, & Weiss, 1977
- b.2 f.4 Alvary, Lorenzo, 1980
- b.2 f.5 Amarillo Symphony, 1979-1980
- b.2 f.6 American Arts Alliance, 1987-1991
- b.2 f.7 American Boys Choir, 1988-1989
- b.2 f.8 American Cancer Society, 1977-1987
- b.2 f.9 American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science, 1982
- b.2 f.10 American Conference of Cantors , 1989
- b.2 f.11 American Express , 1982-1983
- b.2 f.12 American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, 1968-1979
- b.2 f.13 American Friends of the Haifa Maritime Museum, Inc., 1980-1983
- b.2 f.14 American Friends of the Hebrew University, 1976-1994
- b.2 f.15 American Friends of the New Israeli Opera Tel Aviv, 1990
- b.2 f.16 American Guild of Variety Artists, 1977
- b.2 f.17 American Hungarian Foundation, 1986
- b.2 f.18 American Indian Fund, 1989
- b.2 f.19 America - Israel Cultural Foundation, 1984-1985
- b.2 f.20 American Israel Opera Foundation Corp., 1987
- b.2 f.21 American Jewish Committee, 1975-1981
- b.2 f.22 American Jewish Congress, 1976-1991
- b.2 23 American Lung Association, 1989
- b.2 24 American Mizrahi Women, 1979-1984
- b.2 25 American Music Center, 1985-1986
- b.2 26 American Nobel Anniversary Committee, 1987
- b.2 27 American Police Hall of Fame and Museum, 1986-1989
- b.2 28 American Symphony Orchestra League, 1981-1982
- b.3 f.1 AMF, 1977
- b.3 f.2 Anderson, Marian, 1992-1995
- b.3 f.3 Anti-Defamation League, 1986-1996
- b.3 f.4 ARCS (AIDS-Related Community Services), 1991
- b.3 f.5 Arizona Opera Company, 1979
- b.3 f.6 Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, 1978

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- b.3 f.7 Arthur, Beatrice, 1994
- b.3 f.8 Ashley Famous Agency Inc., 1967-1968
- b.3 f.9 Artists Association International, 1987-1988
- b.3 f.10 Association of Tennis Professionals, 1978-1980
- b.3 f.11 Athas, Alik, 1991
- b.3 f.12 Atlanta Music Club, 1985
- b.3 f.13 Audio Fidelity Records, 1969-1973
- b.3 f.14-17 B unsorted, 1968-1994
  - b.4 f.1 Baer, Jean, 1981
  - b.4 f.2 Baltimore Symphony, 1986
  - b.4 f.3 Barrett, Herbert, 1986
  - b.4 f.4 Benefits and social functions, 1956-1960
  - b.4 f.5 Benny, Jack, 1961-1970
  - b.4 f.6 Benton & Bowles, 1984
  - b.4 f.7 Berdel Travel, 1965-1970
  - b.4 f.8 Berman, Bernard, 1983-1989
  - b.4 f.9 Biaggie, Mario, 1985
  - b.4 f.10 Biancolli, Louis, 1966-1976
- b.4 f.11-12 Biographies, 1960s-1990s
- b.5 f.1-4 Birthday and get well cards, 1980s-1990s
- b.6 f.1-2 Birthday and get well cards, 1980s-1990s
  - b.6 f.3 Blier, Steven, 1988
  - b.6 f.4 Bloomingdales, 1983
  - b.6 f.5 Bookspan, Martin, 1988
  - b.6 f.6 Boone, North Carolina, 1986
  - b.6 f.7 B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, 1969-1992
  - b.6 f.8 Boss International, 1988-1989  
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  - b.6 f.9 Boston Pops, 1989
  - b.6 f.10 Boston University, 1966-1969
  - b.6 f.11 Brandeis University, 1982
- b.7 f.1 Bravo, 1983-1987
- b.7 f.2 Breslin, Herbert, 1981-1991
- b.7 f.3 Brinker, Nancy, 1988
- b.7 f.4 Bronx Week Expo, 1989
- b.7 f.5-7 Brooklyn College, 1966-1995
  - b.7 f.8 Brooklyn Philharmonic, 1986
  - b.7 f.9 Brown, Helen Gurley, 1996
  - b.7 f.10 Brown hotel, 1979

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- b.7 f.11 Brown University, 1991
- b.7 f.12 Buffalo Opera, 1992-1993
- b.7 f.13 Buffalo Philharmonic, 1985
- b.7 f.14 Business Week, 1991
- b.8 f.1-3 C unsorted, 1957-1996
  - b.8 f.4 Cable News Network, 1981
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  - b.8 f.9 Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts, 1980, 1992
- b.8 f.10 Carlisle, Kitty, 1989, 1991
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- b.9 f.1-4 Performances, 1982-1990
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- b.9 f.6-10 General, 1980-1992
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  - b.10 f.2 Casei, Nedda, 1995-1996
  - b.10 f.3 Castellano, Rose L., 1981
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  - b.10 f.5 CBS Morning Show, 1986
  - b.10 f.6 CBS Records, 1974-1975
  - b.10 f.7 Celebrity Information and Research Service, Inc., 1981
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  - b.10 f.9 Channel 13, 1973-1987
  - b.10 f.10 Charleston, SC, 1984
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  - b.11 f.2 Clugston, Linda Jo, 1990-1991



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- b.11 f.3-5 Colby College, 1981-1994
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- b.11 f.7 Columbia Artists Management, Inc., 1979
- b.11 f.8 Columbia University, 1987
- b.11 f.9 Columbus Symphony, 1980
- b.11 f.10 Comedy Productions, 1972-1973
- b.11 f.11 Compton Advertising, 1971
- b.11 f.12 Concord, NH, 1981
- b.11 f.13-16 Congratulatory notes and telegrams, 1956-1977
- b.12 f.1 Connecticut General Corp., 1981
- b.12 f.2 Contracts, 1965-1993
- b.12 f.3 Cooper, Henry, 1982-1983
- b.12 f.4 Cooper Institute, 1986
- b.12 f.5 Corbett, Patricia, 1988-1991
- b.12 f.6 Corcoran Museum of Art, 1995
- b.12 f.7 Cosby, Bill, 1979
- b.12 f.8 Council for Arts in Westchester, 1975-1990
- b.12 f.9 Courageous Challenge, 1984-1985
- b.12 f.10 Creston, Paul, 1980-1984
- b.12 f.11 Crutchfield, Will, undated
- b.12 f.12 Cuomo, Mario, 1984-1991
- b.12 f.13 Cypher, Jon, undated
- b.12 f.14-16 Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 1974-1990
- b.13 f.1-3 D unsorted, 1957-1995
- b.13 f.4 Dallas Symphony, 1985
- b.13 f.5 D'Amato, Alfonse, 1985-1994
- b.13 f.6 D'Arcy, Macmanus & Masius, 1979
- b.13 f.7 Daugherty, George, 1976-1980
- b.13 f.8 Davidson, John, 1981-1982
- b.13 f.9 Davis, Jack, 1979
- b.13 f.10 Daytona Opera, 1979
- b.13 f.11 DelBello, Alfred, 1982, 1994
- b.13 f.12 Delta Queen Opera Cruise, 1988
- b.13 f.13 de Paul, Judith, 1981
- b.13 f.14 Democratic National Convention, 1984
- b.13 f.15 Detroit Opera, 1983
- b.13 f.16 Detroit Symphony Orchestra, 1960
- b.13 f.17 Diebold, John, 1985-1989
- b.13 f.18 Dinkin, Irv, 1979

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- b.13 f.19 Dinkins, David, 1989-1993
- b.13 f.20 Discographies and videographies, undated  
Contains listing of all Peters appearances on the *Voice of Firestone* opera programs
- b.14 f.1-4 Dispeker, Thea, 1962-1984
- b.14 f.5 Doctorow, E.L., 1994
- b.14 f.6 Dole, Bob, 1987
- b.14 f.7 Donohoe, Keating, 1959-1961
- b.14 f.8 Douglas, Mike, 1970-1977  
Contains photographs of one of Peters's appearances on the Mike Douglas Show
- b.14 f.9 Drucker, Judy, 1973, 1980-1994
- b.14 f.10-11 E unsorted, 1960-1994
- b.14 f.12 Educational Alliance, Inc., 1980
- b.14 f.13 Elderly Health Screening Service, 1990-1991
- b.15 f.1 Elmira College, 1967-1978
- b.15 f.2 Encyclopedia of Jewish Women, 1996
- b.15 f.3 Endorsements, 1963-1970 (See also box 34, folder 4)
- b.15 f.4 Erie Philharmonic Symphony, 1979
- b.15 f.5 Erté, 1985-1986
- b.15 f.6 Estee Lauder Inc., 1980
- b.15 f.7 Eugene Carr Productions Inc. , undated  
Contains Peters's notes on vocalist auditions
- b.15 f.8 Eugene O'Neill Theater, 1993
- b.15 f.9-11 F unsorted, 1959-1995  
Fan club, 1953-1962
- b.15 f.11 Correspondence, 1955-1958
- b.16 f.1-4 Newsletters, 1953-1962  
Fan letters
- b.17 f.1 Autograph requests, 1961-1980  
Crank file
- b.17 f.2-4 1968-1978
- b.18 f.1-2 1979-1991  
Normal fan mail
- b.18 f.3-4 1957-1979
- b.19 f.1-5 1980-1996
- b.19 f.6 Fanshawe College, 1988
- b.19 f.7 Farrar, Geraldine, 1982
- b.20 f.1-2 Feldman, Maurice, 1962-1975
- b.20 f.3 Feldman, Trude, ca. 1988
- b.20 f.4 Fields, Pamela, 1987

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- b.20 f.5 Fields, Steven, undated
- b.20 f.6 Find magazine, 1980
- b.20 f.7 Flagello, Nicolo, 1983
- b.20 f.8 Flagstaff Symphony, 1980-1985
- b.20 f.9 Florida, 1980-1992
- b.20 f.10 Florida Citrus Commission, 1978-1980
- b.20 f.11 Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, 1992
- b.21 f.1 Folk Masters radio series, 1992
- b.21 f.2 Fontaine, Joan, 1981
- b.21 f.3 Ford Foundation, 1959-1962
- b.21 f.4 Fortunoff, 1978-1979
- b.21 f.5 Foster, Gordon, undated
- b.21 f.6 Foundation for Future Generations, 1987-1990
- b.21 f.7 Fragrance Foundation, 1990-1993
- b.21 f.8 Frankel, Max, 1982-1994
- b.21 f.9 Friars National Association, 1989-1991
- b.22 f.1 Friends of Akim USA Inc., 1992-1993
- b.22 f.2-4 G unsorted, 1958-1993
- b.22 f.5 Garneau Company concert series, 1981-1982
- b.23 f.1 Gary Stevens Associates, 1967-1969
- b.23 f.2 George London Foundation, 1981-1995
- b.23 f.3 Goodman, Roy, 1991-1993 (New York state senator)
- b.23 f.4 Griffin, Merv, 1975-1981
- b.23 f.5 Gurtman & Murtha Associates, 1975-1987
- b.23 f.6-7 H unsorted, 1962-1995
- b.24 f.1-2 H unsorted, 1962-1995
- b.24 f.3 Hadassah, 1969-1995
- b.24 f.4 Harlem School of the Arts, Inc., 1988-1996
- b.24 f.5 Hardee, Barovick & Konecky, 1973-1974
- b.24 f.6 Hammer, Armand, 1982-1985, undated
- b.24 f.7 Harris, Roy, 1961
- b.24 f.8 Harry Walker, Inc., 1980-1992
- b.24 f.9 Hausserman, John, 1970-1984
- b.25 f.1 Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1976-1990
- b.25 f.2 Henry Jaffe Enterprises, Inc., 1988
- b.25 f.3 Holland America cruise, 1994
- b.25 f.4 Hope, Bob, 1979, 1987, undated (Holiday cards only)
- b.25 f.5 Hope, Constance, 1958-1969
- b.25 f.6 Humphrey, Hubert, 1968

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- Hurok, Sol
  - b.25 f.7-9 1951-1968
  - b.26 f.1-4 1969-1976
  - b.26 f.5 I unsorted, 1961-1994
  - ICM Artists, Ltd., 1975-1997
    - Performance contracts
      - b.26 f.6 1975-1976
  - b.27 f.1-10 1977-1986
  - b.28 f.1-8 1986-1994
  - b.28 f.9 Repertoire lists, 1978-1980
  - b.28 f.10 Representation contract, 1989
  - b.29 f.1-6 General, 1976-1997
  - b.30 f.1-2 Israel, 1962-1994
    - b.30 f.3 Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, 1967-1971, 1981-1994
    - b.30 f.4 Israel Sinfonietta, 1987
  - b.30 f.5-7 Ithaca College, 1968-1995
  - b.31 f.1-2 Ithaca College, 1968-1995
  - b.31 f.3-7 Itineraries, 1956, 1967-1998 (See also Tours)
    - b.31 f.8 J unsorted, 1956-1994
  - b.32 f.1 Jewish Theological Seminary, 1968-1971
  - b.32 f.2-5 K unsorted, 1968-1995
    - b.33 f.1 K unsorted, 1968-1995
    - b.33 f.2 Kaduri, Arie, 1993
    - b.33 f.3 Kaplan, Melvin, 1969-1981
    - b.33 f.4 Kelley, Joseph J., 1972-1979
    - b.33 f.5 Kennedy Center Honors, 1984-1996
    - b.33 f.6 The King And I, 1978
    - b.33 f.7 Kollek, Teddy, 1975-1984, undated (Mayor of Jerusalem)
  - b.33 f.8-9 L unsorted, 1958-1996
  - b.34 f.1-3 L unsorted, 1958-1996
    - b.34 f.4 Lewis, Lester, 1971-1980
    - b.34 f.5 Lifestyles magazine, 1988-1989
    - b.34 f.6 Libman, Lillian, 1957-1958
    - b.34 f.7 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, 1961, 1980-1993
  - b.35 f.1 Lo Cicero, Mario, 1968-1982
  - b.35 f.2 Looking East, 1982
  - b.35 f.3-6 M unsorted, 1960-1994
  - b.36 f.1-3 M unsorted, 1960-1994
  - b.36 f.4 Mace, Michael, 1979-1980

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- b.36 f.5 Mann Music Center, 1983-1987
- b.36 f.6 Maxwell House, 1967-1970
- b.36 f.7 Medical Center, 1975-1976, 1983
- Metropolitan Opera
- b.36 f.8 Appearances, ca. 1972  
Contains listing of Peters's Met appearances from 1950-1972
- Anniversaries
- b.37 f.1 Met Centennial, 1983  
Roberta Peters
- b.37 f.2 25th anniversary, 1975
- b.37 f.3 30th anniversary, 1980
- b.37 f.4 35th anniversary, 1985
- b.37 f.5-6 40th anniversary, 1990
- b.38 f.1 Boston, 1981-1982
- b.38 f.2 Metropolitan Opera Association, 1984-1996
- b.38 f.3 Metropolitan Opera Club, 1993  
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- b.38 f.4-5 1981-1983
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- b.41 f.7 Metzenbaum, Howard, 1983-1992
- b.42 f.1 Meyer, Leopold, 1981
- b.42 f.2 Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, 1957
- b.42 f.3-4 Mixon, L.W., 1973-1975
- b.42 f.5 Mottola, Josephina, 1956-1958
- b.42 f.6 Museum of Broadcasting, 1986-1991
- b.42 f.7 Music Educators National Conference, 1985-1987
- b.42 f.8-9 N unsorted, 1958-1995
- b.43 f.1-2 N unsorted, 1958-1995
- b.43 f.3 National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, 1967-1995
- b.43 f.4 National Endowment for the Arts/National Council on the Arts, 1977-1982, 1993-1997
- b.43 f.5-6 National Institute for Musical Theater, 1987-1989

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- b.44 f.1-2 National Institute for Musical Theater, 1987-1989
- b.44 f.3 New York Pops, 1988-1994
- b.44 f.4 New York State Citizens' Committee for the Bicentennial of the French Revolution, 1989-1990
- b.44 f.5 O unsorted, 1960-1995
- b.44 f.6 Ogilvy and Mather, Inc., 1980-1988
- b.45 Oral history, 1972
- b.46 f.1 Orlando Opera, 1981-1986
- b.46 f.2-4 P unsorted, 1959-1995
- b.47 f.1 P unsorted, 1959-1995
- b.47 f.2 Parties, 1956
- b.47 f.3 Performance notes, undated (Musical and stage blocking notes)
- b.47 f.4 Philharmonic Center for the Arts, Naples, FL, 1994
- b.47 f.5 Potomac Speakers Bureau, 1988
- b.47 f.6 Program Corporation of America, 1978-1984
- b.47 f.7 Q-R unsorted, 1968-1989
- b.47 f.8-9 R unsorted, 1957-1993
- b.48 f.1 R unsorted, 1957-1993
- b.48 f.2 Queens Symphony Orchestra, 1972, 1982-1993
- b.48 f.3 Radiches, Jim, 1987
- b.48 f.4 Radio City Music Hall, 1979-1984
- b.48 f.5 Raleigh, NC, 1986-1988
- b.48 f.6 Ravinia Festival, 1973-1984
- b.48 f.7-9 RCA, 1953-1983
- b.48 f.10 Record auctions, 1986
- b.48 f.11 Red Cross, 1992-1993
- b.48 f.12 Reich, Norman, 1988-1995
- b.49 f.1-2 Reilly, Charles Nelson, 1968-1994, undated
- b.49 f.3 Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, 1986-1988
- b.49 f.4 Renaud, Zuma, 1982-1984
- b.49 f.5-6 Repertoire lists, 1969-1985, undated
- b.49 f.7 Republican party, 1991
- b.49 f.8 Resorts International, 1983-1984
- b.49 f.9 Resorts Council, inc., 1983
- b.49 f.10 Richmond, Fred, 1981-1982
- b.49 f.11 Richmond Symphony, 1981-1985
- b.49 f.12 Robbins, Philip, 1973-1975
- b.49 f.13 Rockefeller, Nelson, 1967, 1975-1979
- b.50 f.1 Rockefeller Center, 1985

**Series I. Office files** (cont.)

- b.50 f.2 Rockefeller University, 1986
- b.50 f.3-4 Rogers, Ben, 1972-1996
- b.50 f.5 Romoff, Woody, 1979-1980
- b.50 f.6 Rosary College, 1983
- b.50 f.7 Rosen, Peter, 1994
- b.50 f.8 Ross Associates, 1982-1983
- b.50 f.9 Rothberg, Davida, 1981-1988
- b.50 f.10 Rotterdam cruise, 1973, 1981-1985
- b.50 f.11 Royal Viking Lines, 1984
- b.50 f.12 Royce Carlton, 1988
- b.50 f.13 Ruder Finn, 1988-1990
- b.50 f.14 Rudolf, Max, 1968, 1974, 1983
- b.50 f.15 Ruth Leon Productions, Inc., 1985
- b.51 f.1-6 S unsorted, 1955-1995
- b.52 f.1-3 S unsorted, 1955-1995
- b.52 f.4 Sackler Foundation, 1987
- b.52 f.5 St. Johns University, 1982-1983, 1993
- b.52 f.6 St. Louis Municipal Opera, 1971-1974, 1989
- b.52 f.7 St. Louis Symphony, 1982-1990
- b.52 f.8 San Antonio, TX, 1975, 1983
- b.52 f.9 San Francisco Symphony Association, 1974, 1987
- b.52 f.10 Sansum Medical Research Foundation, 1982
- b.52 f.11 Save The Children, 1987
- b.52 f.12 Scarsdale, NY, 1979-1988
- b.52 f.13 Schaff, Fritz, 1984
- b.53 f.1-2 Schapiro, Phil, 1972-1986
- b.53 f.3 Schindler, Rabbi Alexander M., 1983-1993
- b.53 f.4 Schlang, Joseph, 1968-1975, 1997
- b.53 f.5 Schwartz, Alan, 1985
- b.53 f.6 Scobey, Raphael G., 1977-1982
- b.53 f.7-8 Scripts, 1957-1994
- b.54 f.1-4 Scripts, 1957-1994
- b.55 f.1 Seattle, WA, 1985
- b.55 f.2 Septee, Moe, 1981 (Director, Philadelphia All Star Forum.)
- b.55 f.3 Severino, Dr. Sally K., 1983
- b.55 f.4 Seward, Bill, undated
- b.55 f.5 Sight Savers, 1988-1991

**Series I. Office files** (cont.)

- b.55 f.6 Signatures, 1881, 1906, 1993-1994  
Includes correspondence from Bea Arthur, Jane Alexander, Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr., and signed photographs of vocalists Nellie Melba and Marcella Sembrich
- b.55 f.7 Sills, Beverly, 1986, undated
- b.55 f.8 Sir Thomas Beecham Society, 1965, 1974
- b.55 f.9 Sisters of Mercy of Rochester, 1987
- b.55 f.10 Sixty Minutes, 1981
- b.55 f.11 Skrobacs, Larry, 1985-1987
- b.55 f.12 Smithsonian Institution, 1986, 1994
- b.55 f.13 Social Issues Resources Series, Inc., 1989
- b.55 f.14 Society of Singers, 1989
- b.55 f.15 Solum, John, 1983-1986
- b.55 f.16 Sonya Live In L.A., 1987-1988  
The Sound of Music, 1982
- b.55 f.17 Fan mail
- b.55 f.18 General
- b.55 f.19 Southfield, MI, Congregation Shaarey Zedek, 1982-1983
- b.56 f.1-2 Speech texts, 1976-1996, undated
- b.56 f.3 Springfield Symphony, 1996
- b.56 f.4 Stern, Harold, 1962-1970
- b.56 f.5 State University of New York, Purchase, 1983-1993
- b.56 f.6 Su, Angela, 1978-1980, 1987-1990
- b.57 f.1-2 T unsorted, 1955-1991
- b.57 f.3 Teatro Alla Scala, 1951-1952  
Tours  
Files include itineraries, diaries, correspondence, travel documents, and other documentation. See also Itineraries, and scrapbook number 59 (microfilm access only)
- b.57 f.4 1957-1958 (United States)
- b.57 f.5 1960 (Russia)
- b.58 f.1 1963 (Salzburg)
- b.58 f.2-4 1964 (Europe)
- b.58 f.5-6 1966-1967 (Europe)
- b.58 f.7-9 1969-1971 (Europe)  
1972
- b.58 f.10 Europe
- b.58 f.11 Russia  
1980 (China)
- b.58 f.12 Hong Kong
- b.59 f.1 Music (Chinese songs with Peters's markings)
- b.59 f.2 Master classes



**Series I. Office files** (cont.)

Tours (cont.)

1980 (China) (cont.)

- b.59 f.3-4 General
- b.59 f.5-7 1987 (Far East)
- b.60 f.1-2 1987 (Far East)
- b.60 f.3 1988-1989 (Japan)
- b.60 f.4 U unsorted, 1959-1995
- b.60 f.5 Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1973-1978
- b.60 f.6 United Jewish Appeal, 1965-1995
- b.60 f.7 United States Air Force Band, 1995
- b.60 f.8 United States Information Agency, 1972-1978
- b.60 f.9 University of Denver, 1986
- b.60 f.10 University of Rhode Island, 1986, 1992
- b.61 f.1 Utah Opera, 1982-1990
- b.61 f.2 Utah Symphony, 1971-1990
- b.61 f.3 V unsorted, 1958-1991, undated
- b.61 f.4 Van Sant, James, 1975-1993
- b.61 f.5 Video Artists International, 1990-1995
- b.61 f.6-7 W unsorted, 1960-1997
- b.62 f.1-4 W unsorted, 1960-1997
- b.63 f.1 Washington Speakers Bureau, 1986
- b.63 f.2 Webster, William H. , 1986-1994
- b.63 f.3 Westchester Reform Temple, 1981-1990
- b.63 f.4 Westminster College, 1974  
Contains text of speech titled "Preparing For A Career In Opera"
- White House and related correspondence
- b.63 f.5 Kennedy, John F., 1961
- b.63 f.6 Johnson, Lyndon B., 1965-1971
- b.63 f.7 Nixon, Richard M., 1959-1960, 1970-1973, 1993-1994
- b.63 f.8 Ford, Gerald, 1975
- b.63 f.9 Carter, Jimmy, 1976-1981
- b.63 f.10 Reagan, Ronald, 1981-1987
- b.63 f.11 Bush, George H.W., 1989-1993
- b.64 f.1 Bush, George H.W., 1989-1993
- b.64 f.2 Clinton, Bill, 1994-1996
- b.64 f.3-4 General, 1973, 1982, 1994, undated  
Includes listing of all of Peters's appearances at the White House
- b.64 f.5 Who's Who publications, 1972-1984, undated
- b.64 f.6-7 WITF TV, Hershey, PA, 1969-1974
- b.64 f.8 Wichita, KS, 1980
- b.65 f.1 William Morris Agency, 1958-1964, 1973-1975

**Series I. Office files** (cont.)

- b.65 f.2-3 Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1972-1993
- b.65 f.4 X-Y unsorted, 1958-1990
- b.65 f.5 Z unsorted, 1959-1995
- b.65 f.6-7 unidentified, 1956-1990, undated

**Series II. Photographs, artwork and posters, 1940s-1990s**

The photographs are divided into publicity, performance, images of Peters with other people, and family/personal. The series consists mostly of prints but also includes a small amount of slides and negatives. Office files in series I also occasionally contain photographs with correspondence.

The publicity photographs were produced by the Metropolitan Opera, Sol Hurok management, ICM Artists, newspapers and local presenters. They consist of general headshots as well as promotional photos of Peters in particular opera roles. Roles include Zerbinetta in *Ariadne Auf Naxos*, Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Amina in *La Sonnambula*, Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Oscar in *The Masked Ball*, Susannah in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, the title role in *Lakme*, and Novina in *Don Pasquale*.

The performance photographs vary in quality; some are professional, while others are obviously amateur. Few to none are from the Metropolitan Opera; most come from appearances with local opera companies on tour. They do include many photographs of Peters in orchestral and recital appearances.

The photographs of Peters with other notable people are voluminous and feature her with musicians and singers such as Louis Armstrong, Andrew Lloyd Weber, Harry Belafonte, Lena Horne, Ezio Pinza, Rudolf Bing, Gian Carlo Menotti, Luciano Pavarotti, Paul Creston, Dmitri Mitropolis, Max Rudolf, Marian Anderson, Robert Merrill, Liberace, Jan Peerce, Isaac Stern, Yo Yo Ma and Emanuel Ax; actors and entertainers such as Ginger Rogers, Lauren Bacall, Johnny Weismuller, Bob Keeshan (*Captain Kangaroo*), Jimmy Durante, Jack Benny, Ed Sullivan, Danny Kaye, Bob Hope, Charles Nelson Reilly and Vincent Gardenia; the impresario Sol Hurok; the Jewish and Israeli figures Golda Meir, Shimon Peres, Elie Wiesel, and Simon Wiesenthal; U.S. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton; and other political figures such as New York mayors Ed Koch and David Dinkins, Spiro Agnew, Henry Cabot Lodge and Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Artwork and posters include an undated painting of Peters (artist unknown, ca. 1950s); two color sketches of Peters dressed for a television appearance in Cologne, Germany (artist unknown, 1967); two pencil sketches of Peters by Marvin Perry (1967); three sketches of Peters in costume for a production of *The Sound of Music* by Webb Catherwood (1982); a drawing of Peters in costume for a production of *The Merry Widow*, also by Webb Catherwood (1977); an undated sketch of Peters in costume (artist unknown); and a promotional bus poster featuring a photo of Peters and a recipe (ca. 1968).

**Series II. Photographs, artwork and posters (cont.)**

**Photographs, 1940s-1990s**

- b.66 Publicity, 1950s-1980s
- b.67 Publicity, 1950s-1980s
- b.68 Publicity, 1950s-1980s
- b.69 Publicity, 1950s-1980s
- b.70 Performance, 1950s-1990s
- b.71 Performance, 1950s-1990s
- b.72 With other people, 1950s-1990s
- b.73 With other people, 1950s-1990s
- b.74 With other people, 1950s-1990s
- b.75 Family, personal and unidentified, 1940s-1990s
- b.76 Family, personal and unidentified, 1940s-1990s
- b.77 Family, personal and unidentified, 1940s-1990s
- b.78 **Artwork and posters, 1967-1982**

**Series III. Programs, 1951-1998**

This series contains an extensive collection of concert programs spanning Peters's entire career, including opera, orchestral and recital performances around the world, benefit appearances, White House events and presidential inaugurations, synagogue and memorial performances, and award ceremonies. With the exception of a few signed programs, no Metropolitan Opera programs dating from after 1965 are included (the Music Division holds all Lincoln Center programs). Many of the programs contain Peters's notes on what she wore at the event, and some contain performance notes or signatures of Peters or other performers. For further performance information, see touring, repertoire lists, and Hurok and ICM Artists files in Series I.

- b.79 1951-1959
- b.80 Unsorted 1960s
- b.81 Unsorted 1960s
- b.82 Unsorted 1960s
- b.83 Unsorted 1960s
- b.84 Unsorted 1960s
- b.85 Unsorted 1960s
- b.86 Unsorted 1970s
- b.87 Unsorted 1970s
- b.88 Unsorted 1970s
- b.89 Unsorted 1970s
- b.90 Unsorted 1970s
- b.91 1970
- b.92 1971-1972
- b.93 1971-1972
- b.94 1973

**Series III. Programs** (cont.)

b.95	1974
b.96	1975
b.97	1976
b.98	1977
b.99	1978
b.100	1979
b.101	Unsorted 1980s
b.102	Unsorted 1980s
b.103	Unsorted 1980s
b.104	1980
b.105	1981
b.106	1982
b.107	1983
b.108	1984
b.109	1985
b.110	1986
b.111	1987
b.112	1987
b.113	1988
b.114	1989
b.115	1989
b.116	Unsorted 1990s
b.117	Unsorted 1990s
b.118	Unsorted 1990s
b.119	1990
b.120	1990
b.121	1991
b.122	1992-1998

**Series IV. Clippings, 1950s-1990s**

The newspaper and magazine clippings in this series may duplicate content found in the scrapbooks in Series VI, but many of them come from smaller towns in the United States and abroad and may not have been deemed significant enough for scrapbook inclusion

b.123	1950s-1960s
b.124	1950s-1960s
b.125	1970s-1990s

### **Series V. Datebooks and diaries, 1940s-1990s**

Most of this series consists of datebooks with extensive daily information on Peters's schedule. Only the earliest books, dating from her adolescence to the early 1950s, consist of diaries, although they do not contain many entries. Further information about Peters's travels and touring itineraries can be found in Series I under itineraries, touring, and in her Hurok and ICM Artists management files

b.126 1940s-1990s

b.127 1940s-1990s

### **Series VI. Scrapbooks, 1931-1998**

The scrapbooks consist of bound clippings, photographs, programs and other memorabilia. They are arranged in two sections: numbered and unnumbered. The 76 numbered books, which are available for viewing only on microfilm under call number \*ZB-3429, are in general chronological sequence (1931-1992). The unnumbered scrapbooks consist of photo albums documenting Peters's appearances and performances at the White House, as well as more general books with content similar to the numbered books. Further White House documentation is in both the Series I office files and in the Series II photographs.

#### **Numbered (microfilmed), 1931-1992**

b.128 1-4, 1931-1966  
b.129 5-7, 1952-1958  
b.130 8-10, 1956-1960  
b.131 11, 1959-1961  
b.132 12-13, 1960-1962  
b.133 14, 1961-1962  
b.134 15-17, 1961-1967  
b.135 18-20, 1963  
b.136 21-24, 1963-1965  
b.137 25-27, 1964-1966  
b.138 28-30, 1966-1968  
b.139 31-33, 1967-1968  
b.140 34-35, 1967-1970  
b.141 36-38, 1968-1969  
b.142 39-41, ca. 1970-1974  
b.143 42-45, ca. 1970-1974  
b.144 46-47, ca. 1970-1974  
b.145 48-49, 1975-1976  
b.146 50-52, 1976-1978  
b.147 53-55, 1977-1979  
b.148 56-58, 1979-1981  
b.149 59-61, 1980-1981  
b.150 62-64, 1981-1983  
b.151 65-66, 1983-1984

**Series VI. Scrapbooks (cont.)**

**Numbered (microfilmed) (cont.)**

- b.152 67-70, 1984-1986
- b.153 71-73, 1986-1990
- b.154 74-76, 1989-1992

**Unnumbered, 1954-1998**

White House

- b.155 1965
- b.156 1966-1992
- b.157 1970

General

- b.158 1954-1956
- b.159 1956-1957
- b.160 1957-1958
- b.161 1950s-1990s
- b.162 1965
- b.163 1965-1966
- b.164 1960s-1970s, 1987, 1997-1998
- b.165 1982, 1985-1997
- b.166 1990s

**Series VII. Scores, 1950s-1990s**

The scores are in two parts: marked and unmarked. The marked scores consist primarily of published piano/vocal reductions of operas, operettas and musicals. These include Beethoven's *Fidelio*; Bellini's *La Sonnambula*; Debussy's *Pelléas Et Mélisande*; Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, *Lucia Di Lammermoor*, *Lucrezia Borgia* and *The Elixir Of Love*; Gluck's *Orpheus*; Gounod's *Romeo Et Juliette*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, *Gli Ugonotti* and *La Pardon De Ploërmel*; Mozart's *Così Fan Tutte*; Puccini's *La Bohème*, *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Carousel*; Rossini's *Il Barbiere Di Siviglia*; Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*; and Verdi's *La Traviata*.

Other marked scores consist of pieces used by Peters in performance with orchestras or in piano/vocal recitals. These consist of copyist scores and parts for unpublished (or limited publication) pieces for soprano and orchestra or piano. These include *A Dream of Venice* by H. Rauscher; *Thema und Variationen*, Op. 164 by H. Proch; *Sacred Songs For Pantheists* by Robert Ward; *The K'dusha Symphony (Sanctification)* by Abraham Kaplan; and *Lieder und Duette* by Engelbert Humperdinck.

The unmarked scores consist of more pieces used by Peters in non-operatic performances. These include copyist scores and parts for *From Dawn To Night (A Cycle of Five Poems with Orchestral Accompaniment)*, music by Dalmazio Santini, words by Paul Lawrence Dunbar; *Il Bacio* by S. Arditi; *Six Songs for High Voice and Orchestra* by Ned Rorem (piano/vocal score only); and *Partitur of Long Long Ago* by Thomas Haynes.

- b.167 With markings
- b.168 With markings

**Series VII. Scores** (cont.)

- b.169 With markings
- b.170 With markings
- b.171 With markings
- b.171 Without markings
- b.172 Without markings