



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Stormé DeLarverie papers

1980-2014

Sc MG 901

Processed by Tiana M. Taliep, ca. 2017.

Summary

Creator: DeLarverie, Stormé, 1920-2014

Title: Stormé DeLarverie papers

Date: 1980-2014

Size: 2.63 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Gift of Lisa Cannistraci and Michele Zalopany, 2014.

Abstract: The Stormé DeLarverie papers document DeLarverie's long career as a singer, male impersonator, and gay rights activist from the 1980s-2008. The bulk of the collection contains personal and professional correspondence, biographical information, passport, promotional material, death certificate, and funeral arrangements.

Preferred citation: [Item], Stormé DeLarverie papers, Sc MG 901, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Tiana M. Taliep, ca. 2017.

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

Creator History

Stormé DeLarverie was born on December 24, 1920, in New Orleans, Louisiana, to an African American mother and a white father. She is known for being a singer, male impersonator, bouncer, and gay rights activist.

From the mid-1950s through the 1960s, DeLarverie was the master of ceremonies of the Jewel Box Revue, America's first racially inclusive traveling revue of impersonators. The show was called "25 Men and 1 Girl", as DeLarverie dressed as a man and the rest of the cast members, all men, dressed as

women. She was one of the most successful male impersonator and drag kings of her day and a prized performer. On June 28, 1969, DeLarverié's name would become legendary in the gay community. At fifty years old, she is credited as having thrown the first punch against a policeman as they raided the Stonewall Inn, sparking a riot and igniting the modern gay rights movement. DeLarverié's role in the movement lasted long after 1969. For decades, she was a self-appointed guardian and supporter of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. She was a member of the Stonewall Veterans' Association, holding the offices of Chief of Security, Ambassador, and in 1998 through 2000, Vice President. DeLarverié was well-known in the community and participated in the annual New York City Gay Pride Parade with the Stonewall Veterans and "Stormé's baby", the historic 1969 Cadillac convertible, or the "Stonewall Car". In 2000, DeLarverié received a "Gay Lifetime Achievement Award" from Senior Action in a Gay Environment (SAGE). Often referred to as the "Rosa Parks" of the gay rights movement, DeLarverié was a fierce woman and advocate who stood up for the LGBT community on countless occasions. On May 24, 2014, she passed away in her sleep from a heart attack at the age of 93.

Scope and Content Note

The Stormé DeLarverié papers document DeLarverié's long career as a singer, male impersonator, and gay rights activist from the 1980s-2008. The bulk of the collection contains personal and professional correspondence, biographical information, passport, death certificate, and funeral arrangements. Promotional material of DeLarverié's career, such as journals, programs, flyers of her performances in the Jewel Box Revue, newspapers clippings, and reviews, is also found here. Personal items, such as her leather jacket and helmet, as well as a trophy and plaques she received in recognition of her efforts in the LGBT community, are included in the collection.

Arrangement: Organized into 4 series: I. Personal; II. Professional; III. Printed material; and IV. General

Key Terms

Subjects

African American entertainers
African American lesbians
African American musicians
African American singers
Authors, Black
Gay bars -- United States
Gay liberation movement
Gay rights -- United States
Lesbian activists -- United States
Male impersonators -- United States
Stonewall Riots, New York, N.Y., 1969

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Fliers (Ephemera)
Programs (documents)
Reviews

Names

DeLarverie, Stormé, 1920-2014

Jewel Box Revue (Musical group)

Container List

Personal

- b. 1 f. 1 Personal items
- b. 1 f. 2 Passport
- b. 1 f. 3 Personal correspondence
- b. 1 f. 4 Artwork
- b. 1 f. 5 DeLarverie vs. Chelsea Hotel
- b. 1 f. 6-7 C.A.B.S. Nursing Home Company, Inc
- b. 1 f. 8 Occupational therapy and physical therapy evaluation
- b. 1 f. 9 Jewish Association for Services for the Aged Community Guardian Program
- b. 1 f. 10 Concerned Friends and Neighbors of Stormé DeLarverie
- b. 1 f. 11 Guardianship case
- b. 1 f. 12 Annual report of guardianship
- b. 1 f. 13 Death certificate
- b. 1 f. 14 Funeral arrangements
- b. 1 f. 15 Viewing and memorial service

Professional

- b. 1 f. 16 Jewel Box Revue journals
- b. 1 f. 17 Professional correspondence
- b. 1 f. 18 Business cards
- b. 1 f. 19 SAGE
- b. 1 f. 20 Stonewall Veterans Association
- b. 1 f. 21 Rainbow Aging Awareness Project certificate

Printed material

- b. 2 f. 1 Newspaper clippings
- b. 2 f. 2 Flyers
- b. 2 f. 3 Programs
- b. 2 f. 5 Books

b. 2-4 General

Includes leather jacket, headband, helmet, trophy, and plaque.