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Guide to the

New Federal Theatre records

1971-2015

Sc MG 930

Compiled by Valerie Wingfield, 2017.

Summary

Creator: New Federal Theatre (New York, N.Y.)

Title: New Federal Theatre records

Date: 1971-2015

Size: 5.47 linear feet (13 boxes, 1 volume); 624.1 mb (81 computer files)

Source: Donated by Woodie King and New Federal Theatre, 2016.

Abstract: The New Federal Theatre records document several decades of the New Federal Theatre founded by Woodie King Jr., mostly through production scripts.

Conditions Governing Access:

Access. All reproduction requests subject to limitations noted in divisional policies on reproduction. Sound and video materials are unavailable pending digitization. Electronic records are currently unavailable.

Preferred citation: [Item], New Federal Theatre records, Sc MG 930, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

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Creator History

Woodie King Jr. is an African-American director and producer who founded the New Federal Theatre in 1970, on the Lower East Side of New York City. The Theatre was initially funded by the Henry Street Settlement. The early performances during the 1960s were produced with Mobilization for Youth (MFY), a social services program. The performance space offers a place for actors, directors, and playwrights to develop their creative talents. The theatre has been a proving ground for many established and emerging African-American artists to work on the national stage.

In 1974, King founded The National Black Touring Circuit to broaden the appeal of theatre to African-

American audiences.

Scope and Content Note

The New Federal Theatre records, dated 1971 to 2015, document the history of the Theatre through scripts, many of which were for productions adapted for the National Black Touring Circuit. Scripts were solicited or unsolicited and may not have been produced at the theater. Scripts may also be annotated or accompanied by other materials, including lighting and stage blueprints, actors' sign-in sheets, contact sheets, playbills, rehearsal reports, and audio recordings. A few productions are comprised of both electronic and physical files.

Productions represented in the collection include *The Balm Yard* by Don Kinch; *Boy and Tarzan Appear in a Clearing* by Amiri Baraka; *In My Many Names and Days* by Charles Fuller; *Lost in Language and Sound: a Choreoessay Envisioned by Ifa Bayeza* by Ntozake Shange; and *Zion* by Beverly Trader.

Arrangement: The arrangement is alphabetically by script title.

Key Terms

Occupations

Actors (performing artists)
Producers and directors

Subjects

African American actors
African American theatrical producers and directors
Theatre -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographs
Playbills
Prompt books
Scripts

Names

King, Woodie, Jr., 1937-

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 *Amer/Cain Gothic: A Mystery Play in Two Acts* 1985
Revised script by Paul Carter Harrison.
- b. 1 f. 2 *American John and Lizzie. A History Play* 2013
File includes a letter from the playwright Emory Wilson.
- b. 1 f. 3-5 *The Balm Yard* 1991
By Don Kinch. File also includes a lighting design plan, press release, and two scripts (one edited).
- b. 1 f. 6 *A Beautiful Home for the Incurable* 2015
By Ian Walker. File includes a letter of solicitation from the playwright.
- b. 1 f. 7 *The Biography of Margaret Dawson* 2015
By Marv Siegel.
- b. 1 f. 8 *Blood Weddin'* 1988
By Michael Abbensetts.
- b. 1 f. 9 *Boogie Woogie and Booker T. A Play in Two Acts* 1987
By Wesley Brown.
- b. 1 f. 10 *Boy and Tarzan Appear in a Clearing* 1980
By Amiri Baraka. File includes a playbill.
- b. 1 f. 11 *Charleston Harbor: A True Civil War Adventure With Historical Note* 2015
By Scott Winfield Sublett. File includes a letter of solicitation from the playwright.
- b. 2 f. 1-5 *La Chefa* 1982
By Tato Laviera. File includes lighting design and production manager's files.
- b. 2 f. 6 *Child of the Son* 1981
By Damien Leake.
- b. 2 f. 7-8 *Christopher Columbus* 1998
By Nikos Kazantzakis.
- b. 2 f. 9-14 *The Conjure Man Dies. A Mystery Tale of Dark Harlem* 2001
By Rudolph Fisher. The files are extensive and include blueprint for lighting, contact sheet, memos, notes, playbill, and publicity.
- b. 3 f. 1 *The Conjure Man Dies. A Mystery Tale of Dark Harlem* 2001
- b. 3 f. 2 *Crazy Horse. A Play in Three Acts* 1977
By Louis Peterson.
- b. 3 f. 3 *Daddy or The Prince of Darkness* 1977
By Ed Bullins.
- b. 3 f. 4 *The Dance on Widow's Row* 2000
By Samm-Art Williams.
- b. 3 f. 5 *Defending the Light* 2000
By Ron Milner. Adapted from the novel by Earl Conrad.
- b. 3 f. 6 *The Divine Comedy*
By Owen Dodson.
- b. 3 f. 7 *Do Lord Remember Me* 1997
- b. 4 f. 1-5 *Dreams Deferred* 1982
By Laurence Holder. File includes the cast photographs.
- b. 4 f. 6 *Every Day a Visitor* 2013
By Richard Abrons. Directed by Woodie King, Jr., performances at the Harold Clurman Theatre.
- b. 4 f. 7 *Finita La Commedia*
By Jay Broad.

- b. 4 f. 8-12 *From the Mississippi Delta* 1987
By Endasha Ida Mae Holland. File includes lighting plan, schedule, and two scripts, one marked.
- b. 5 f. 1-2 *Grand Encounter* 2012
By Peter Philip Bernard. The file includes a letter of solicitation from the playwright.
- b. 5 f. 3 *Hubert Harrison* 2015
By David Edgecombe.
- b. 5 f. 4-6 *I Have a Dream* 1985
Adapted from King's writings by Josh Greenfield. The file also includes an annotated script and sheet music.
- b. 5 f. 7-8 *In My Many Names and Days* 1971
By Charles Fuller.
- b. 6 f. 1 *Last Dance for Sybil* 2001
By Ossie Davis.
- b. 6 f. 2-5 *The Last Street Play* 1997
By Richard Wesley.
- b. 6 f. 6 *Liberty Call* 1974
By Buriel Clay I.
- b. 6 f. 7-8 *Look Away* 2015
By Thomas Ford. File holds a letter of introduction from the playwright, playbill, performance draft script and reviews.
- b. 6 f. 9 *Looking For Ronnie Savoy* 2003, 2005
By Ron Milner.

Lost in Language and Sound: a Choreoessay Envisioned by Ifa Bayeza
By Ntozake Shange.
- b. 6 f. 10 2015
The file contains a copy of the script.
- v. 1 2015
The script was cut and glued into a volume possibly used for rehearsal.
- b. 6 f. 11 *Louis* 1981
Production about Louis Armstrong. Book and lyrics by Don Evans.
- b. 6 f. 12-13 *The Matador of 1st and 1st* 1994
By Oliver Lake.
- b. 6 f. 14 *The Meeting* 1983
By Jeff Stetson. Revised script.
- b. 7 f. 1-4 *Mr. Universe* 1988
By Jim Grimsley.
- b. 7 f. 5 *Most Unlikely* 2013
By Vikki Richardson. Four chapters for a proposed novel.
- b. 7 f. 6-8 *My One Good Nerve* 1998
By Ruby Dee.
- er. 2 *My One Good Nerve* 1998
(275.2 Megabytes (22 computer files))
- b. 7 f. 9 *N* 2014
By David Alex. The file includes a letter from the playwright.
- b. 7 f. 10 *Nelson & Simone* 2000
By John Susman.
- b. 7 f. 11 *Newspaper on Trial* 2013
By Arthur Kraft. The file includes a letter from the playwright.

- b. 7 f. 12 *The Pool Room* 1996
By Carlyle Brown. Charles S. Dutton played the lead role.
- b. 8 f. 1-3 *Portrait of Jennie* 1982
Adapted from original play by Enid Futterman and Dennis Rosa.
- b. 8 f. 4 *A Recent Killing. A Play in Three Acts* 1973
By LeRoi Jones.
- b. 8 f. 5 *Rollin' Urban Transition* 2002
By Ron Milner.
- b. 8 f. 6 *Run Children Run* 1971
By Robert Elston and Harvey Keith.
- b. 8 f. 7 *Run'ers* 1986
By Ivey McCray.
- b. 9 f. 1 *Seasons Reasons: Just a Natural Change* 1980
A Folk-Opera in Two Acts. By Ron Milner and Charles Mason.
- b. 9 f. 2 *The Second Hurricane* 1985
By Aaron Copland and Edwin Denby.
- b. 9 f. 3 *Selma* 1982
Revised version. A musical stage play. Depicting the Civil Rights struggle. By Tommy Z. Butler.
- b. 9 f. 4 *Shades of Brown* 1983
By Michael Picardie.
- b. 9 f. 5 *Shango Diaspora* 1982
By Angela Jackson. Playbill and photographs only.
- b. 9 f. 6 *Shining Star* 1998
A one-woman play about Rose McClendon, Harlem's Gift to Broadway. By Miss Vinie Burrows.
- b. 9 f. 7 *Single Black Female* 2006
Revised version. By Lisa B. Thompson.
- b. 9 f. 8-9 *The Sovereign State of Boogedy Boogedy* 1976, 1998
By Lonnie Carter The file includes the script for the 25th anniversary production.
- b. 9 f. 10 *Splendid Mummer* 1988
A Fictional Mono drama Based Upon the Life of Ira Frederick Aldridg. By Lonnie Elder, III. Charles S. Dutton starred in the production. There are two scripts, one of the scripts was designated "third draft."
- b. 9 f. 11 *The Stuttering Preacher* 2005
By David Paladino.
- b. 9 f. 12 *Suspenders* 1980
By Umar Bin Hassan.
- b. 10 f. 1 *That Unique Man. Darrow* 1987
Drama about Clarence Darrow. By Leo Ferstenberg.
- b. 10 f. 2-5 *A Thrill a Moment* 1989
Based on William Stevenson song book. The file includes advertisement, photographs and playbill.
- b. 10 f. 6 *Time Out of Time* 1982
By Clifford Mason.
- b. 10 f. 7 *The Trial Of Dr. Beck* 1981
A Play in Three Acts. By Hughes Allison.
- b. 10 f. 8-11 *The Trial of One Short-Sighted Blackwoman vs. Mammy Louise and Safreeta Mae* 1999
By Marcia L. Leslie. The file includes the production manager's script, a second script, lighting design plan and playbill.

- er. 1 *The Trial of One Short-Sighted Blackwoman vs. Mammy Louise and Safreeta Mae* 1999
(19 computer files (1061 Kilobytes))
- b. 11 f. 1 *The Trial of William Freeman* 1988
By Ron Milner. Based on the novel by Earl Conrad.
- b. 11 f. 2 *Trinity* 1987
By Edgar White. Playbill and review only.
- b. 11 f. 3 *Unlisted. A Black Comedy* 2014
By Lyle Kessler.
- b. 11 f. 4 *Urban Transitions: Loose Blossoms* 2002
By Ron Milner.
- b. 11 f. 5 *Viv Wants It All*
By Holly Harper.
- b. 11 f. 6-8 *Waitin' 2 End Hell* 1996
By William A. Parker. The file includes two playbills from different productions.
- b. 11 f. 9 *Waiting* 1990
By Stellen Lubin.
- b. 11 f. 10 *Wartime Encounter*
By Jay Broad.
- b. 11 f. 11 *What Goes Around* 1983, 1988
By Will Harris.
- b. 11 f. 12 *What If I Had Turned Up Heads* 1991
By J.E. Gaines.
- b. 12 f. 1 *When the Chickens Come Home to Roost and Zora* 1980
By Laurence Holder.
- b. 12 f. 2-3 *When We Walked* 2008
By D.A.G. Burgos.
- b. 12 f. 4 *Williams and Walker* 1987
By Vincent D. Smith. File holds script.
- b. 13 f. 1-5 *Williams and Walker* 1987
Musical Scores.
- b. 12 f. 6 *Women Who Killed*
By China Clark.
- er. 3 *Woodie King Jr.* 2014
(347.9 Megabytes (40 computer files))
- b. 12 f. 7-9 *Zion* 1991
By Beverly Trader.