



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

Guide to the

**Kathleen Collins Scripts collection**

1971-1992

Sc MG 948

Processed by Lauren Stark in October 2019.

## Summary

**Creator:** Collins, Kathleen, 1942-1988

**Title:** Kathleen Collins Scripts collection

**Date:** 1971-1992

**Size:** 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Gift of Seret Scott in 2018.

**Abstract:** Kathleen Collins (1941-1988) was a playwright, filmmaker, director, novelist, short story writer, and professor of film history and production. Seret Scott is an actress who starred in Collins's 1982 film *Losing Ground*; she and Collins frequently collaborated. This collection consists of playscripts and screenplays written by Collins and presumably used by Scott.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Kathleen Collins Scripts collection, Sc MG 948, 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 Lauren Stark in October 2019; some of the scripts were encased in soft covers, which have been removed for preservation purposes.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: one color photograph.

**Related Materials:**

Kathleen Collins papers, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

## Creator History

Seret Scott is an actress and director, known for her starring role in Kathleen Collins's 1982 film, *Losing Ground*. She frequently collaborated with Collins, including in the 1982 production of *The Brothers* at the American Place Theater. She won a 1974 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Performance for *My Sister, My Sister*.

Kathleen Collins (1941-1988) was a playwright, filmmaker, director, novelist, short story writer, and professor of film history and production. Collins was the first African American woman to write, direct, and produce a full-length feature film (*The Cruz Brothers and Miss Malloy*, 1980, which was based on a Henry Roth novel). Her second feature film, *Losing Ground* (1982), which she directed and coproduced, was based on her original screenplay; it received international acclaim. Also a playwright, her 1982 play, *The Brothers*, was named one of the twelve outstanding plays of the season by the Theatre Communications Group. In 1982 and 1983, she was a finalist for the Susan Blackburn International Prize for Playwriting. Although only a small amount of her work was published before her death in 1988, she wrote six playscripts, over fifteen short stories, and five screenplays. Some of this material was published in two posthumous publications, her short story collection, *Whatever Happened to Interracial Love?* (2016), and *Notes from a Black Woman's Diary: Selected Works of Kathleen Collins* (2019).

## Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of Seret Scott's personal copies of Kathleen Collins's playscripts and screenplays, most likely because she acted in some of the productions. The scripts are divided into two series, published and unpublished, and they are all typescripts (many of them are photocopies). In addition, there are two versions of a memorial written by Scott to Collins, ca. 1992.

**Arrangement:** Arranged into two series: (1) Published and (2) Unpublished.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

Actresses, Black  
Authors, Black  
Motion picture plays  
Playwriting

### Names

Collins, Kathleen, 1942-1988  
Scott, Seret

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Scott, Seret. "The Great Kat" ca. 1992

Includes two typescripts which appear to be memorials to Kathleen Collins; one copy has a title while the other copy, which is a photocopy, has handwritten edits.

Published 1982-1984

During her life, only a few works of Collins's were published. Much of Collins's previously unpublished work was published posthumously in two volumes, *Whatever Happened to Interracial Love?* (2016) and *Notes from a Black Woman's Diary* (2019). All of the scripts in this series appear in the latter publication. Seret Scott starred in a 1982 production of *The Brothers*.

Arranged into two subseries: (1) Plays and (2) Screenplays, chronologically within each one.

Plays 1982-1984

- b. 1 f. 2 *The Brothers photocopy* 1982 July

Revised version from July 1982; includes handwritten notes, presumably by Seret Scott, a rehearsal schedule, and set design sketches. The rehearsal schedule is for the Richard Allen Center for Culture and Art (RACCA)'s production.

- b. 1 f. 3 *The Reading typescript (photocopy)* 1984

- b. 1 f. 4 *Summer Diary screenplay typescript (photocopy)* undated

Unpublished 1971-1988

Consists of typescripts of unpublished material by Kathleen Collins; some of the scripts contain handwritten notes, most likely by Seret Scott.

Arranged into two subseries: (1) Plays and (2) Screenplays, chronologically within each one.

Plays 1976-1988

- b. 1 f. 5 *Portrait of Katherine, typescript, music by Michael D. Minard* 1976

Includes handwritten notes, most likely those of Seret Scott.

- b. 1 f. 6 *While Older Men Speak typescript (photocopy)* 1985

- b. 1 f. 7 *Looking for Jane typescript with some handwritten edits (photocopy)* 1988

Screenplays 1971-1986

- b. 1 f. 8 *Women, Sisters and Friends typescript with some handwritten notes* 1971

Notes presumably by Seret Scott.

- b. 1 f. 9 *But Then She's Madame Flor typescript (photocopy)* 1986

Also known as *Madame Flor*.