



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Viveca Lindfors papers**

1945-1990

\*T-Mss 2012-067

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** Lindfors, Viveca, 1920-1995

**Title:** Viveca Lindfors papers

**Date:** 1945-1990

**Size:** 6.72 linear feet (16 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Viveca Lindfors.

**Abstract:** Viveca Lindfors was a Swedish-American theater and film actor. The Viveca Lindfors papers date from 1945 to 1990 and contain scripts, writings, correspondence, programs, promotional material, clippings, and other materials documenting Lindfors' career and personal life. The collection includes material related to her one-woman show, *I Am a Woman*, which toured in the 1970s.

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**Preferred citation:** Viveca Lindfors papers, \*T-Mss 2012-067. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

**Related Materials:**

Rita Fredricks papers, \*T-Mss 2011-260. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

## Creator History

Viveca Lindfors was a Swedish-American theater and film actor. She was born Elsa Viveca Torstendotter Lindfors in 1920 in Uppsala, Sweden. She became a prominent film and stage actor in Sweden before moving to the United States in 1946. She appeared in a number of American movies from the 1940s onward, and made her Broadway debut in the title role in *Anastasia* (1955). Her film roles included Inez in the English-language version of *No Exit* (1962).

Lindfors married and divorced four times. She had three children from her first three marriages. Her children were adopted by her fourth husband, George Tabori, and took his last name.

Tabori and Lindfors collaborated on several theater projects. Lindfors acted in Tabori's *Brecht on Brecht* (1962). In 1966, they co-founded the Berkshire Theatre Festival. The same year, they founded a small theater company, the Strolling Players.

Beginning in 1971, Lindfors performed in a one-woman show, *I Am a Woman*, which she developed in conjunction with Paul Austin. The show was composed of excerpts from writings by and about women, including works by contemporary feminist writers. The show toured in the United States and Sweden. Lindfors' autobiography, *Viveka... Viveca*, was published in Sweden in 1978 and in the United States in 1981.

Lindfors died in 1995 in Uppsala, Sweden, while on tour with another one-woman show, *In Search of Strindberg*.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The *Viveca* Lindfors papers date from 1945 to 1990 and document Lindfors' career and personal life through scripts, correspondence, writings, notes, programs, promotional material, clippings, and other documents. Materials are chiefly in English, but also in Swedish.

The collection contains a large amount of material concerning Lindfors' one-woman show, *I Am a Woman*, which she toured in the 1970s. Material related to *I Am a Woman* includes scripts, performance notes, publicity materials, contracts, financial statements, programs, press clippings, and letters from audience members. Notes and correspondence regarding the publication of the script are also present. Additional records regarding the administration and promotion of *I Am a Woman* can be found in the Rita Fredricks papers (\*T-Mss 2011-260). Fredricks was a producer for *I Am a Woman*; some of her administrative files are with the Lindfors papers.

Materials concerning Lindfors' other performances, lectures, and workshops in the 1970s are mixed with the *I Am a Woman* materials. Her acting career outside of the 1970s is only sparsely documented. Materials from 1945 to the 1960s, and from the 1980s, include programs, clippings, and contracts. The earliest items in the collection are film contracts in Swedish. Files from the 1950s and 1960s also contain notes, diary entries, and transcripts of interviews in which Lindfors discussed her personal and professional life. The collection contains files related to the planning and administration of the Berkshire Theatre Festival (1966). The collection also holds a 1967 letter that George Tabori wrote about the reception of *The Cannibals*.

The collection contains a number of handwritten notes and short typescripts written in the 1970s, which may have been drafts for Lindfors' autobiography or other projects. These writings contain personal recollections regarding her family life and her film and stage roles. They also contain reflections related to *I Am a Woman* and to the themes of womanhood and identity that the show addresses. Personal correspondence is interspersed throughout these notes and writings, including correspondence with Harold Taylor. The collection also contains scripts for theater, film, and television. Scripts in the collection are mostly clean copies, though some have annotations and corrections. Playwrights represented in the scripts include Tabori, Herbert Achternbusch (in German), Paul Austin, Saul Bellow, Helen Duberstein, and Ruth Herschberger.

**Arrangement:** The collection is divided into two categories: Productions and Biographical Material, and Scripts. Scripts are arranged alphabetically by title, with the exception of plays by Helen Duberstein, Ruth Herschberger, Ferenc Karinthy, and George Tabori, which are arranged alphabetically by the playwright's surname.

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

Actresses

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Correspondence

notes

Scripts

### **Subjects**

One-person shows (Performing arts)

### **Names**

Fredricks, Rita

Tabori, George, 1914-2007

Taylor, Harold, 1914-1993

Berkshire Theater Festival

## Container List

### Productions and Biographical Material

b. 1 f. 1-11 1945-1968

b. 2 f. 1-11 1956-1968

b. 11 f. 1-4 1976-1987

b. 3 f. 1-8 Berkshire Theatre Festival

I Am a Woman

b. 3 f. 9-13 1969-1976

b. 5 f. 1-40 1970-1977

b. 4 f. 1-10 1970s

I Am a Woman and Contemporary Projects

b. 6 f. 1-12 1967-1975

b. 7 f. 1-8 1967-1978

Includes Strolling Players files.

b. 8 f. 1-12 1970s

### Writings and Correspondence

b. 9 f. 1-12 1960-1970s

b. 10 f. 1-12 1968-1970s

### Scripts

b. 12 f. 1-9 A - C 1969-1989

b. 13 f. 1-11 C - G 1956-1987

b. 14 f. 1-13 H - M 1968-1980s

b. 15 f. 1-10 P - R 1960-1990

b. 16 f. 1-9 R - T 1960s-1984

b. 11 f. 5-12 T - W 1955-1980s