



The New York Public Library Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Del Hughes prompt books

1943-1968

*T-Mss 1987-013

Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013

Summary

Creator: Hughes, Del, 1909-1985

Title: Del Hughes prompt books

Date: 1943-1968

Size: 2.94 linear feet (7 boxes)

Source: Donated by Paul Newman, 1987.

Abstract: Del Hughes (1909-1985) was an American theater performer, stage manager, and television director. The Del Hughes prompt books date from 1943 to 1968 and represent twenty-four Broadway productions shown at various New York City theaters. The material in this collection documents the performance and technical elements involved in Broadway theater production.

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Preferred citation: Del Hughes prompt books, *T-Mss 1987-013. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013 The scripts were removed from binders and placed into folders. Material in oversized manila envelopes was transferred to folders with the original labels.

Creator History

Del Hughes (1909-1985) was an American theater performer, stage manager, and television director. Hughes made his Broadway debut in 1941 as a replacement stage manager and performer in the original play *Tobacco Road* at the Forrest Theater in New York City. Prior to establishing his career as a stage manager, Hughes performed in several Broadway productions, including *Vickie* (1942), *Yours, A. Lincoln* (1942), and *Open House* (1947).

Hughes managed dozens of Broadway productions, including the premiere of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* in 1949 at the Morosco Theater, as well as works by Lillian Hellman and Graham Greene. In

the late 1960s and early 1970s, Hughes directed episodes of the television dramas *One Life to Live* and *All My Children*.

In 1970, Del Hughes was nominated for an Emmy Award in the category of Outstanding Direction for a Daytime Drama Series for his work on *All My Children*. He received further recognition of his work in stage management through the creation of the Del Hughes Award for Lifetime Achievement and Excellence in the Art of Stage Management by the Stage Manager's Association.

Scope and Content Note

The collection holds prompt books that were used by Hughes during his career as stage manager for twenty four Broadway productions between 1943 and 1968. The material documents the performance and technical elements involved in Broadway theater production.

Each prompt book documents the evolution of an individual Broadway production from its inception to performance. Scripts, costume and prop plots, and scenic design plans make up the bulk of the material. The majority of the scripts are annotated with blocking notes and dialogue changes. In some instances there are multiple versions of scripts for a given production, including the master as well as earlier drafts, rewrites, and omitted scenes. Set design and scenic plans are generally hand drawn, and some diazotype prints are present. Costume, prop, and lighting plots are generally typewritten and attached to the scripts. Timing notes, schedules, playbills, notes on cast members, and photographs of productions are limited. One 3 inch Emitape with sound effects for *The Complaisant Lover* dated January 9, 1961 is included. Inquiries regarding audio recordings in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio recordings will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

The amount of material in each prompt book varies by production. *Enter Laughing* (1963), *That Summer-That Fall* (1967), *The Investigation* (1966), *Peterpat* (1965), *The Price* (1968), and *The Complaisant Lover* (1961) are the most well represented productions in this collection, while the files for *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1963) and *The Autumn Garden* (1951) contain only notes and clippings. Productions were written and produced by a number of individuals, including Arthur Miller, Lillian Hellman, Graham Greene, and Kermit Bloomgarden.

Arrangement: Material is arranged alphabetically by title of production.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Promptbooks
Scripts

Occupations

Stage managers

Subjects

Theater -- New York (State) -- New York
Theater -- Production and direction
Theater -- United States

Names

Bloomgarden, Kermit

Miller, Arthur, 1915-2005

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 *The Autumn Garden* 1951
- b. 1 f. 2 *The Children's Hour* 1952
- b. 1 f. 3 *Command Decision* 1946
- b. 1 f. 4-6 *The Complaisant Lover* 1961
- b. 1 f. 7 *The Crucible* 1953
- b. 2 f. 1 *The Crucible* 1953
- b. 2 f. 2 *Dark Eyes* 1943
- b. 2 f. 3-9 *Enter Laughing* 1963
- b. 3 f. 1 *Enter Laughing* 1963
- b. 3 f. 2-5 *The Investigation* 1966
- b. 3 f. 6 *Legend of Sarah* 1950
- b. 4 f. 1 *The Man* 1950
- b. 4 f. 2 *Montserrat* 1949
- b. 4 f. 3 *One Bright Day* 1952
- b. 4 f. 4 *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* 1963
- b. 4 f. 5 *The Perfect Setup* 1962
- b. 4 f. 6-8 *Peterpat* 1965
- b. 5 f. 1 *Peterpat* 1965
- b. 5 f. 2-3 *The Porcelain Year* 1965
- b. 5 f. 4-6 *The Price* 1967-1968
- b. 6 f. 1-2 *The Price* 1967-1968
- b. 6 f. 3 *The Shrike* 1952
- b. 6 f. 4-5 *A Taste of Honey* 1960
- b. 6 f. 6 *That Summer-That Fall* 1967
- b. 7 f. 1-6 *That Summer-That Fall* 1967
- b. 7 f. 7-8 *Traveller Without Luggage* 1964
- b. 7 f. 9 *Wedding Breakfast* 1954
- b. 7 f. 10 *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang (A Certain Joy)* 1963
- b. 7 f. 11 *The World's Full of Girls* 1943