



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Ron Vawter papers**

1963-1994

\*T-Mss 1995-010

Processed by Mark C. Maniak.

## Summary

**Creator:** Vawter, Ron

**Title:** Ron Vawter papers

**Date:** 1963-1994

**Size:** 10.18 linear feet (10 boxes + 1 oversized folder)

**Source:** The Ron Vawter Papers were donated to the Billy Rose Theatre Division by Gregory F. Mehrten in 1995.

**Abstract:** The Ron Vawter Papers document the life and career of the actor Ron Vawter (1948-1994), reflecting his career in motion pictures, television and the theater, especially his work with The Wooster Group. The papers include production materials, scripts, photographs, slides, publicity material, personal papers and correspondence. The papers span the period of 1963-1994, with bulk dates being 1981-1994.

### Conditions Governing Access:

Photocopying prohibited.

**Conditions Governing Use:** For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

**Preferred citation:** Ron Vawter Papers, \*T-Mss 1995-010, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Mark C. Maniak; Machine-readable finding aid created by Mark C. Maniak.

### Separated Materials:

Audiovisual materials separated from archival collections are cataloged individually and can be found in

the Library catalog. Search CATNYP, The New York Public Library catalog.

The bulk of the material separated from the Ron Vawter Papers consists of a number of videotapes and films that were separated out to the Theatre on Film and Tape (TOFT) division of the Billy Rose Theatre Division. This includes about forty-two tapes and ten films, in both 8mm and 16mm formats. The range of material covered in the tapes and films includes show tapes and interviews. In addition to the videotapes and films, seventy-six audio cassette tapes were separated out to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archive of Recorded Sound. These tapes represent a large range of materials including research material, production tapes and performance tapes. Please consult the respective division for more information.

A few posters have also been separated out. A poster for the tenth anniversary of the Stephen Petronio Dance Company was given to the Dance Division; a poster for the motion picture *The Loveless*, featuring Willem Dafoe, has been put into the general poster collection of the Billy Rose Theatre Division and a Keith Haring *Ignorance = Fear Silence = Death Fight AIDS ACT UP* poster from 1989 has been sent to the Manuscripts Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences Library.

## Creator History

Ron Vawter was a seminal figure in the experimental theater scene in New York City from the 1970s to his death, from complications due to AIDS, in 1994. He was a major contributor, first as an administrator, then as an actor and writer, with The Wooster Group, one of the premier experimental theater companies in the United States. His route to an acting career, however, was a circuitous one.

He was born in 1948 in Latham, NY and grew up in Albany, where he graduated from Siena College in 1971. Mr. Vawter was raised in a military family: his father was a colonel in the Green Berets and his mother was a WAVE in World War II. His first name comes from a military acronym that his mother would teletype to navy pilots, RON or "Remain Over-Night". At the age of 17 he was given enlistment papers as a birthday present and joined the Special Forces, or Green Berets. He seemed destined to continue the military tradition in his family, but he soon became disaffected with the Green Berets and decided to become a chaplain in the Special Forces and spent four years training in a seminary, aspiring to become a Franciscan. He soon became dissatisfied, however, with the irreconcilable differences in the interpretation of Christianity that St. Francis lived by and the interpretation that the Catholic Church lived by and left the seminary.

In 1972 he was assigned as a recruiting officer to the recruiting center at Centre Street in New York City. Mr. Vawter was living in Soho at the time and his way home often took him past a former auto garage that had been converted into a performance space. The space had been renamed the Performing Garage and it was home to the Performance Group. The Performance Group was founded in 1967 by Richard Schechner, who remained the director of the company throughout its existence. It was a ground-breaking experimental theater group, whose members included Elizabeth LeCompte, Spalding Gray and Joan McIntosh, that flourished from the late 1960s into the mid 1970s. Its innovative productions included *Dionysus in 69*, *Commune* and *Mother Courage and her Children*. Mr. Vawter eventually became intrigued by the sounds emanating from the former garage and started attending the production (*The Tooth of Crime* by Sam Shepard), seeing it 30-40 times over the course of a few months. Soon afterwards, at the invitation of the company, he started working for them. He first worked as an administrator, but as the company's focus and techniques changed he gradually worked his way into becoming a performer.

In the mid 1970s Richard Schechner was slowly forced out of the Performance Group and Elizabeth LeCompte and Spalding Gray, along with a core of actors, transformed themselves into The Wooster Group, with LeCompte becoming the director. The first pieces produced by the Group became known as the trilogy *Three Places in Rhode Island: Sakonnet Point, Rumstick Road, Nayatt School and Point Judith (An Epilog)*. These were autobiographical pieces centered around the life of Spalding Gray which Miss LeCompte presented in a highly theatrical manner that challenged the audience. They were very focused, brash, loud and yet also deeply evocative and highly provocative productions. Along with material by Mr. Gray, Miss LeCompte wove into the productions deconstructed texts of well-known classic plays, often speeding the text up or breaking its linear quality until they resembled more of a ritual than a "well-produced play". The aesthetic of the group also began to reflect more of an emphasis on non-performers, with the performers not so much acting as revealing. Mr. Vawter's lack of experience came into play here as he worked his way up to becoming a defining figure with the group. Along with Mr. Vawter and Miss LeCompte, the core members included Jim Clayburgh, Willem Dafoe, Peyton Smith and Kate Valk (Mr. Gray left in the mid 1980s to pursue a solo career as a writer and monologist). At the same time that he was leaving his military and seminary life behind and entering the spiritual world of the theater he also became openly gay. These changes would later figure in his work.

In the 1980s The Wooster Group produced a number of landmark productions that defined its approach as well as generating a fair amount of controversy. Mr. Vawter made his mark in each of these productions including *Route 1 & 9; LSD (Just the High Points); North Atlantic*, by Jim Strahs and *Frank Dell's the Temptation of Saint Anthony*. In addition to his work with The Wooster Group, Mr. Vawter made an impression working with other directors such as Richard Schechner in his production of Jean Genet's *The Balcony*. He was known for his honesty, willingness to take risks, intensity and complete commitment to the work at hand. As the company's work progressed throughout the 1980s, Mr. Vawter became a kind of spiritual father to many in the downtown scene in New York, owing to his deep sense of spirituality and engrossing performances within the Group and in outside productions. He was given an OBIE Award in 1985 for "Sustained Achievement in Acting", the Prof. Joseph A. Buff Award for Career Achievement from Siena College in 1986 and a New York "Bessie" Award for Acting in 1988.

In 1986, he suffered a brain seizure and was near death as he slipped into a coma. In an effort "to bring him back", members of the group read to him texts of pieces that he had performed in. Mr. Vawter eventually recovered and the episode reinforced his sense that the theater was his calling, but in 1989 he was diagnosed as HIV-positive, which eventually developed into AIDS. As a person with AIDS, Mr. Vawter initially tried to keep his illness a secret, out of fear of not getting work in television and films, but when Jonathan Demme cast him in the motion picture *Philadelphia*, the first Hollywood film to deal with the AIDS crisis, he openly admitted his illness.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s Mr. Vawter, partly out of concern to be able to pay for his treatments, sought out and landed roles in motion pictures and television. Some of these roles included the Therapist in *Sex, Lies and Videotape*, Jamie Latrobe in *Fat Man and Little Boy*, FBI Special Agent Paul Krendler in *Silence of the Lambs* and Bob Seidman in *Philadelphia*. He also made appearances on the television program *Miami Vice* and appeared in ads for IBM. In 1992 and 1993 he appeared in his one-man show *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* with a script by Gary Indiana and Jack Smith, directed by Greg Mehrten. Many consider this production to be his best work, one that was colored by his illness.

In a 1993 interview Mr. Vawter, although quite ill at the time and no longer able to tour with The Wooster Group, admitted that he had work booked up through 1995. In 1994 he was appearing in a production based on the Greek myth of Philoctetes, conceived by Jan Ritsema, using texts from André Gide, Heiner Müller and John Jesurun. The work, entitled *Philoctetes - Variations*, deals with a man rejected by others because of a diseased wound. In the midst of performing the play in the Netherlands, Mr.

Vawter had to be hospitalized and wishing to return to New York, he was flown out of the country. In mid-flight, he died of a heart attack on April 16, 1994 at the age of 45.

## Scope and Content Note

The Ron Vawter Papers primarily reflect Mr. Vawter's work as an actor with The Wooster Group and other productions, both on the stage and on the screen. There are very few personal papers. There is, however, a rich amount of production material, especially for his one-man show, *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* and a number of Wooster Group productions. This material includes scripts, publicity material, research material, photographs, tech notes, a light plot, programs and clippings. The majority of the production material covers the production *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith*. Material from this show includes a number of technical papers such as prop notes, hook-up sheets, sound cue sheets, lighting cue sheets, a lighting concept sheet, general tech sheets, miscellaneous lighting notes and slides. The Wooster Group material features mostly scripts, some with acting and blocking notes written by Mr. Vawter. The scripts include ones written for The Wooster Group, such as *North Atlantic* by Jim Strahs and *Miss Universal Happiness* and *Symphony of Rats* by Richard Foreman as well as original material. There are also programs, publicity material, production photographs, some related material (a doctoral dissertation on *Frank Dell's The Temptation of St. Anthony*) and clippings that document the work of The Wooster Group. A few miscellaneous items have also been included in the Productions Series.

The personal papers and correspondence are minimal, with two of the six letters being notes of sympathy to Greg Mehrten, Mr. Vawter's partner. Series IV, Scripts, reflect projects that were either proposed to Mr. Vawter and never completed or have no further evidence of being produced, such as programs, publicity material, etc. Series V, Ephemera, contains material not related to any of his productions that Mr. Vawter either collected or was given to him, or to Greg Mehrten. Series VI and VII, Photographs and Slides, respectively, contain items either not related to any productions or are unidentified. These include photographs of individuals and slides of a somewhat abstract nature. Any production related photographs have been incorporated into the appropriate production.

**Arrangement:** The collection is organized into eight series and six sub-series. They are: Series I - Personal Papers Series II - Correspondence Series III - Productions Sub-series 1: Other Productions Sub-series 2: The Wooster Group Sub-series 3: Miscellaneous Production Materials Series IV - Scripts Series V - Ephemera Series VI - Photographs Series VII - Slides Series VIII - Oversized Materials Sub-series 1 - Oversized Photographs Sub-series 2 - Posters Sub-series 3 - Light Plots

## Key Terms

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings  
Interviews  
Papers  
Photographs  
Scripts

### Subjects

Experimental theater -- New York (State) -- New York  
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

### Names

Vawter, Ron  
Cohn, Roy M.  
San Giacomo, Laura, 1962-  
San Giacomo, Laura, 1962-  
Schechner, Richard, 1934-  
Smith, Jack, 1932-1989  
Performance Group  
Wooster Group

## Container List

### Series I: Personal Papers 1980-1994 (9 folders)

The personal papers consist of a resume from the early 1990s, a program from a 1986 Siena College reunion, (where Mr. Vawter was honored with an award), transcripts from two interviews including one of Laura San Giacomo conducted by Mr. Vawter, one of an interview with Mr. Vawter and Frank Verduyssen, a published interview of Mr. Vawter (conducted by Richard Schechner) and clippings, including obituaries.

By type.

- b. 1 f. 1 **Resume** ca. 1992 (1 folder)  
Two copies of a professional resume put out by the Writers and Artists Agency.
- b. 1 f. 2 **"Ron Vawter: for the record" an interview by Richard Schechner** 1993 (1 folder)  
An interview, conducted by Richard Schechner, published in *TDR* 37:3 (T 139) Fall 1993.  
Folder contains full issue.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Ron Vawter (The Wooster Group) and Frank Verduyssen (Stan): A dialogue on acting** (1 folder)  
Undated transcript of an interview with Ron Vawter and Frank Verduyssen.
- b. 1 f. 4 **Interview with Laura San Giacomo** 1990 Aug. 20 (1 folder)  
Hand-written transcript of an interview of the actress Laura San Giacomo, conducted by Ron Vawter.
- b. 1 f. 5 **Siena College Reunion** 1986 June 6-8 (1 folder)  
Program from the Siena College Reunion of 1986.
- b. 1 f. 6 **Press release: obituary** 1994 Apr. 18 (1 folder)  
Facsimile copy of a press release from the Writers and Artists Agency announcing the death of Ron Vawter.
- b. 1 f. 7 **Clippings: obituaries** 1994 Apr. 18 (1 folder)  
Clippings of obituaries, from Dutch newspapers, with English translations.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Clippings** 1980-1989 (1 folder)  
Clippings on the life and career of Ron Vawter.
- b. 1 f. 9 **Clippings** 1990-1999 (1 folder)  
Clippings on the life and career of Ron Vawter.

### Series II: Correspondence 1986- 1994 (1 folder)

This series consists of three postcards and six letters, including letters of condolence to Greg Mehrten.

Chronological.

- b. 1 f. 10 **General Correspondence, A-Z** 1986-1994 (1 folder)  
Correspondence, both of a personal and business nature, mostly from 1994.

### Series III: Productions 1967-1994 (1.89 linear feet (5 boxes + 9 folders))

The bulk of the Ron Vawter Papers are contained in this series. Materials include scripts, programs, publicity materials, tech sheets, production photographs, research material, a director's notebook, cue sheets, prop list, hook-up sheets, correspondence and clippings. Since Mr. Vawter occasionally performed outside The Wooster Group while he was a member, there is some overlap in the years covered.

Alphabetical, by title and chronological.

Sub-series 1: Other Productions  
Sub-series 2: The Wooster Group  
Sub-series 3: Miscellaneous Production Materials

Series III: Productions (cont.)

Sub-series 1- Other Productions 1967-1994 (1.26 linear feet (4 boxes + 4 folders))

This sub-series covers productions that were not produced by The Wooster Group. This includes Mr. Vawter's film and video work, as well as his solo show *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith*. Material from this one-man piece takes up one-and-a-half boxes in this sub-series and is by far close to being the most complete production in the collection. There is also material, mostly scripts and texts, from his last work, *Philoktetes-Variations* and a program from a production of *Mr. Roberts* that he performed in while in the Special Forces.

Alphabetical.

*The confessions of a dope fiend by Jeffrey M. Jones*

- b. 1 f. 11 Script (1 folder)

Includes re-writes and miscellaneous notes.

- b. 1 f. 12 Contact sheet (1 folder)

- b. 1 f. 13 Programs (1 folder)

Directed by: Matthew Maguire, Cast: Michael Harres and Ron Vawter, Sets and Lights: Jim Clayburgh.

*Dark victory project*

- b. 2 f. 1-2 Draft of script ca. 1993 Dec.-1994 Feb (2 folders)

Drafts of a script (final scene) from either December 1993 or February 1994.

- b. 2 f. 3 *Transcript of final scenes from the motion picture Dark Victory* 1993 Dec. 22 (1 folder)

- b. 2 f. 4 *Partial transcript from the motion picture The Night of the Iguana* 1993 Dec. 23 (1 folder)

- b. 2 f. 5 *Transcript of scenes from the motion picture Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* 1993 Dec. 23 (1 folder)

- b. 2 f. 6 Research (1 folder)

Unidentified articles on the author Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837).

*Dionysus in '90: rehearsal for the destruction of Atlantis concept by Rob Malasch*

- b. 2 f. 7 Script (1 folder)

Undated, with illustrations; notes and production information in Dutch, text in English and Dutch. Also includes an introduction by Laurie Andersen.

- b. 2 f. 8 Production photograph (1 folder)

- b. 2 f. 9 Publicity material 1990 May (1 folder)

A flyer for a production in the Netherlands.

- b. 2 f. 10 *Insanity on trial by Richard Foreman* (1 folder)

Undated production still.

*Lear adapted by Mabou Mines from William Shakespeare's King Lear*  
*Lear adapted by Mabou Mines from William Shakespeare's King Lear*

- b. 2 f. 11 Script (1 folder)

Undated, features Act I: scenes i, ii and iv only. First page of scene i is torn.

- b. 2 f. 12 *"Mabou Mines Lear: A Narrative of Collective Authorship" by Iris Smith* 1993 Oct. (1 folder)

Photocopy of a journal article from *Theatre Journal* 45:3 (October 1993).

*Made in Hollywood (Videotape) by Bruce and Norman Yonemoto*

- b. 2 f. 13 Souvenir program 1990 Oct. 20 (1 folder)

Showing at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art.

Series III: Productions (cont.)

Sub-series 1- Other Productions (cont.)

Made in Hollywood (Videotape) by Bruce and Norman Yonemoto (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 14      **Photograph** (1 folder)  
Undated snapshot of Ron Vawter on location.
- b. 2 f. 15      **Mr. Roberts by Thomas Heggen and Joshua Logan** ca. 1967 (1 folder)  
Program for a production presented by the Fort Bragg Playhouse.  
**Philadelphia (Motion picture)**
- b. 2 f. 16      **People like us (Screenplay) by Ron Nyswaner** 1992 July (1 folder)  
Clean screenplay under working title for the motion picture *Philadelphia*.
- b. 2 f. 17      **Clippings** 1993 Dec.-1994 Jan (1 folder)  
Includes articles on Tom Hanks, Jonathan Demme and A.I.D.S (Disease)--Drama.  
**Philoktetes-variations**
- b. 2 f. 18-21    **Philoctète ou le traité des trois morales by André Gide** (4 folders)  
Four undated scripts, all but one in French, some with notes, including film and video production notes. The English translation is by Jack Mathews.
- b. 2 f. 22-23    **Philoktet by Heiner Müller** (2 folders)  
Two undated clean scripts, one in German, one in English. The English translation is by Oscar Mandel.
- b. 2 f. 24      **Script** (1 folder)  
Unidentified and undated, in German and English, with notes.
- b. 2 f. 25-27    **Philoktetes by John Jesurun** 1993 (3 folders)  
Script, broken down by scenes (with notes).
- b. 2 f. 28      **Director's notes** (1 folder)
- b. 2 f. 29      **"Marginal Notes"** (1 folder)  
Undated manuscript of an article. No author is listed.
- b. 3 f. 1      **Journal article and published script** 1994 (1 folder)  
*"Halfway to the Grave"* by Rudi Laermans and *Philoktetes* by John Jesurun in: *Theater (Yale)*25:2 (1994).
- b. 3 f. 2      **Publicity material** (1 folder)  
Small flyer, listing production credits.
- b. 3 f. 3-4      **Research materials** (2 folders)  
Photocopies of articles, a type-written letter by Heiner Müller (in English) and an incomplete interview with Müller, also in English. All are undated. Contents: *"Towards Greek Tragedy"*, by Brian Vickers; *"Greek Tragedy"*, by H. D. F. Kitto; *"Letter to Mitko Gotscheff"*, by Heiner Müller.
- b. 3 f. 5      **Only Heroes Recover [:] Ten days in the life of a sick image of the world [,:] a personal and political programme by Jan Ritsema** 1992 Dec. 8-19 (1 folder)  
Text for what appears to be a one-man show by Jan Ritsema, with excerpts from various *Philoktetes* texts in English, German and French.
- b. 3 f. 6      **Clippings** 1994 Mar. 8 (1 folder)  
Clipping of a review, in French, with an annotation.
- Pretty boy by Greg Mehrten**
- b. 3 f. 7      **Script** 1984 (1 folder)  
With markings and notes.
- b. 3 f. 8      **Clean script** 1984 June 18 (1 folder)  
This script is labeled "Final Version".
- b. 3 f. 9      **Production snapshot** 1984 (1 folder)
- b. 3 f. 10      **Program** (1 folder)  
Undated, for a production at The Performing Garage, presented by Mabou Mines and directed by Greg Mehrten.
- b. 3 f. 11      **Clippings** 1984 (1 folder)

Series III: Productions (cont.)  
Sub-series 1- Other Productions (cont.)

*Queer and alone adapted by Ron Vawter and Marianne Weems*

- b. 3 f. 12 "Performance text" 1993 Sept. 5 (1 folder)  
With notes and corrections; adapted from the novel by James Strahs.
- b. 3 f. 13 Undated flyer (1 folder)
- b. 3 f. 14 Program 1993 Oct. 21-24, 28-30; Nov. 4-7 (1 folder)  
For a performance at The Kitchen.

*Roy Cohn/Jack Smith by Gary Indiana and Jack Smith*

- b. 4 f. 1 Script 1992 (1 folder)  
With notes and corrections.
- b. 4 f. 2 Script 1993 (1 folder)  
For *Roy Cohn* section, by Gary Indiana, along with a script of *Introductory Remarks*, with cues indicated.
- b. 4 f. 3-8 Undated scripts (6 folders)  
Various scripts of the *Jack Smith* monologue, by Jack Smith, with numerous cues indicated. Includes incomplete scripts and one fragment.
- b. 4 f. 9 Undated script (1 folder)  
*Introductory Remarks* with corrections and markings.
- b. 4 f. 10 Script 1993 Nov. 1 (1 folder)  
Two copies, one undated, of Jonathan Demme's *Presentation*.
- b. 4 f. 11 Script ca. 1993 Nov. 11 (1 folder)  
Two copies of a revised script for Ron Vawter's "*Introduction (no Demme)*".
- b. 4 f. 12 Director's notebook (1 folder)
- b. 4 f. 13 Date book 1993 Apr. 19-25 (1 folder)  
Photocopy of an entry from a date book.
- b. 4 f. 14 Music notes 1993 Oct. 14 (1 folder)  
Notes for the theatrical production and the film version.
- b. 4 f. 15-16 Hook-up sheets 1992 Mar. 15 (2 folders)  
For productions at the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Los Angeles Theatre Center (undated), both in Los Angeles.
- b. 4 f. 17 Cue sheets 1992 Aug. (1 folder)  
Lighting cues for an unidentified Los Angeles production.
- b. 4 f. 18 Concept sheet and notes 1992 Sept. (1 folder)  
Notes on cues and lighting design concept.
- b. 4 f. 19 Miscellaneous lighting notes (1 folder)
- b. 4 f. 20 Cue sheets 1992 Aug. (1 folder)  
Sound cues (one sheet is undated).
- b. 4 f. 21 Set-up list 1992 June 7 (1 folder)  
Prop set-up list and diagram for the *Jack Smith* monologue.
- b. 4 f. 22 Prop plan 1993 (1 folder)  
One sheet with tablecloth measurements.
- b. 4 f. 23 Tech sheets 1992 Oct.-1993 Jan (1 folder)  
Technical information for the production at The Kitchen (New York City). Includes hook-up sheets, groundplans, elevation and inventory.
- b. 4 f. 24 Tech sheets ca. 1992 (1 folder)  
Various tech sheets, including lighting cue sheets (for production at The Performing Garage), thumbnail light plots and a packing list.
- b. 4 f. 25 Miscellaneous tech and blocking notes (1 folder)  
All undated.

Series III: Productions (cont.)

Sub-series 1- Other Productions (cont.)

Roy Cohn/Jack Smith by Gary Indiana and Jack Smith (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 26 *"Don't mess with Roy Cohn" by Ken Auletta* 1978 Dec. 5 (1 folder)  
Journal article on Roy Cohn from *Esquire*, December 5, 1978.
- b. 4 f. 27 **Research** 1979 Dec. 30, 1986 Mar. 30 (1 folder)  
Two transcripts from the CBS television program, *60 Minutes*.
- b. 4 f. 28 **Research** ca. 1990 (1 folder)  
Miscellaneous research on Jack Smith.
- b. 4 f. 29 **Undated manuscript** (1 folder)  
Chapter on Jack Smith from a dissertation by Uzi Parnes(?).
- b. 5 f. 1 **Production photograph** (1 folder)  
Photocopy of a an undated photograph.
- b. 5 f. 2 **Production photographs** (1 folder)  
Undated photographs, by Bob Van Dantzig, from a production in The Netherlands.
- b. 5 f. 3 **Publicity stills and contact sheets** (1 folder)  
Photographs by Gary Gorman, undated.
- b. 5 f. 4 **Undated miscellaneous photographs** (1 folder)  
Includes photographs of the actress Maria Montez.
- b. 5 f. 5-6 **Slides** (2 folders)  
Although undated and unidentified, they appear to have been used in the production.
- b. 5 f. 7 **Publicity materials** 1992 (1 folder)
- b. 5 f. 8 **Programs** 1992-1993 (1 folder)  
From productions in New York City (The Kitchen, The Performing Garage), Ohio (Wexner Center for the Arts) and The Netherlands (Kaaitheater).
- b. 5 f. 9 **Film notes by Marianne Weems** 1994 Jan. 31 (1 folder)  
Notes on the film version of the piece.
- b. 5 f. 10 **Performance notes by Maryette Charlton** 1992 May 31-June 7 (1 folder)  
From a member of the on-stage "audience". Also includes a contact sheet
- b. 5 f. 11 *Jack Smith Revisited* 1990 Nov. 3 (1 folder)  
Program, for a production featuring *Blonde Cobra* (short), by Ken Jacobs and *Death of a Penguin* with Ron Vawter and Clay Shirkey presented at the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, Minn.).
- b. 5 f. 12 *The Roy Cohn Project by Mark Rappaport* (1 folder)  
Undated proposal for a video performance piece.
- b. 5 f. 13 **General correspondence** 1993 (1 folder)
- b. 5 f. 14 **Clippings** 1992-1993 (1 folder)
- b. 6 f. 1 *Sex, lies and videotape (Screenplay) by Steven Soderbergh* 1988 Feb. 21 (1 folder)  
Clean copy of a second draft.

Sub-series 2 - The Wooster Group 1978-1993 (.42 linear feet (1 box + 6 folders)

This sub-series contains material related to productions Mr. Vawter performed with The Wooster Group. This includes pieces that were written by Jim Strahs: *North Atlantic* and the two productions that were a collaboration with Richard Foreman: *Miss Universal Happiness* and *Symphony of Rats*. Both of those pieces were written and directed by Mr. Foreman. Materials include scripts, contact sheet, a rehearsal schedule, press packet, publicity material, programs, production photographs, a doctoral dissertation (in Dutch), some correspondence and clippings.

Alphabetical.

- b. 6 f. 2 *Brace up! adapted by The Wooster Group* 1993 (1 folder)  
Program, for the London International Festival of Theatre production. Adapted from Anton Chekov's *Three Sisters*, translated by Paul Schmidt and directed by Elizabeth LeCompte.

Series III: Productions (cont.)

Sub-series 2 - The Wooster Group (cont.)

*Fish story: today I must sincerely congratulate you adapted by The Wooster Group*

Adapted from Anton Chekov's *Three Sisters*, translated by Paul Schmidt.

b. 6 f. 3 Clippings 1994 Nov. 22 (1 folder)

b. 6 f. 4 Program (1 folder)  
Undated, with annotations.

*Frank Dell's the temptation of St. Anthony adapted by The Wooster Group*

Adaptation of Gustave Flaubert's *The Temptation of St. Anthony*.

b. 6 f. 5 *Channel j audio dub from D. C.* (1 folder)  
Undated script.

b. 6 f. 6 *Frank Dell's the temptation of St. Anthony: de verzoeking van de dramaturgie van de toeschouwer by Richard Haasen* 1989 Oct. 24 (1 folder)  
Doctoral dissertation, in Dutch.

b. 6 f. 7 Publicity material 1993 (1 folder)  
One flyer.

b. 6 f. 8 *L.S.D.* 1984 (1 folder)  
Press packet, from the Boston Shakespeare Company.

b. 6 f. 9 *Miss universal happiness by Richard Foreman* (1 folder)  
Undated script, with notes.

b. 6 f. 10 *Nayatt school* (1 folder)  
Undated production photograph.

*North Atlantic by Jim Strahs*

b. 6 f. 11-12 Undated scripts (2 folders)  
With notes and corrections. One script is labeled "Ron".

b. 6 f. 13 Script-scenes (1 folder)  
Unidentified and undated scenes that appear to be pages from a *North Atlantic* script.

b. 6 f. 14 Publicity material 1983 (1 folder)  
A brochure and two postcards.

b. 6 f. 15 Production photograph (1 folder)  
Undated, featuring Michael Stumm, Willem Dafoe and Ron Vawter.

b. 6 f. 16 *Point Judith* (1 folder)  
Undated production photograph, featuring Ron Vawter.

b. 6 f. 17 The road to immortality (part two) 1986 (1 folder)  
Two programs: a festival program from the Adelaide Festival and one from the individual production.

Route 1 9

b. 6 f. 18 Script 1982 (1 folder)  
Photocopy of published script, with illustrations and diagrams. Published in *Benzene* Nos. 5/6 (Spring/Summer 1982).

b. 6 f. 19 Undated script (1 folder)  
Part I, aka the "Clifton Fadiman section", with blocking and acting notes.

b. 6 f. 20 Clipping 1987 Jan. 27 (1 folder)

*Symphony of rats by Richard Foreman*

b. 6 f. 21-22 Undated scripts (2 folders)  
With blocking, text and acting notes.

b. 6 f. 23 Rehearsal schedule ca. 1987/88 Dec. 1-Jan. 17 (1 folder)

b. 6 f. 24 Undated contact sheet (1 folder)

Series III: Productions (cont.)

Sub-series 2 - The Wooster Group (cont.)

Symphony of rats by Richard Foreman (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 25      **Production photographs 1987** (1 folder)  
Photographs feature Ron Vawter and Kate Valk.

**General production items**

- b. 7 f. 1      **Contact sheet 1991-1992** (1 folder)  
General contact sheet for 1991-1992 season.
- b. 7 f. 2      **General correspondence, A-Z 1987 Nov. 11** (1 folder)  
One business letter.
- b. 7 f. 3      **Publicity materials ca. 1980-1989** (1 folder)  
  
Brochures and a postcard.
- b. 7 f. 4      ***Cahiers de théâtre jeu* 1991 Dec.** (1 folder)  
Two feature articles on The Wooster Group in French-Canadian journal. Folder contains entire issue with inscription to Ron Vawter from the author of one of the articles. Contents: "*le wooster group, à rebours et à l'envers*", by Johanna Mercer. "*tchekov revisité: «brace up!»*", by Isabelle Villeneuve, in *Cahiers de théâtre jeu* No. 61 (December 1991), pp. 73-88.
- b. 7 f. 5      **Clippings 1980-1989** (1 folder)
- b. 7 f. 6      **Clippings** (1 folder)  
Clippings, undated.

**Sub-series 3 - Miscellaneous Production Materials 1967-1991** (4 folders)

Material in this sub-series includes a contract, a casting sheet and two published articles representing miscellaneous research for unidentified projects.

Chronological.

- b. 7 f. 7      ***"On a new type of play" by Stanislaw Ignancy Witkiewicz* 1967** (1 folder)  
Photocopy of an article from the journal *Drama Survey*. The article was originally published in 1920. Translated by C. S. Durer and Daniel C. Gerould.
- b. 7 f. 8      ***Sadness at leaving by Erje Ayden* 1972** (1 folder)  
Photocopy of a published novel, with a cover sheet.
- b. 7 f. 9      **Contract 1991 April 15** (1 folder)
- b. 7 f. 10     ***The garden by Martha Swetzoff* 1994 Apr. 11** (1 folder)  
Poems, letters and clippings for a proposed film on the author's father.
- b. 7 f. 11     **Casting sheet Oct. 22** (1 folder)  
Casting sheet for project entitled *Cookie*, directed by Susan Seidelman.

**Series IV - Scripts 1989-1993** (10 folders)

This series consists of all scripts that were either given to Mr. Vawter for possible consideration or contain no further evidence that they were ever produced. Many of the scripts are undated, one is an unidentified script by Jeff Weiss; some contain notes or cover letters addressed to Mr. Vawter.

Alphabetical, by author.

- b. 7 f. 12     ***Dog opera by Constance Congdon* 1993 Oct. 26** (1 folder)  
Clean script, with note.
- b. 7 f. 13     ***Losing father's body by Constance Congdon* 1992 May 25** (1 folder)  
Clean script.
- b. 7 f. 14     **Life of the bees (I've göt der shakes) by Richard Foreman** (1 folder)  
Undated script with notes and markings.

Series IV - Scripts (cont.)

- b. 7 f. 15 *Op/ra: an isomorphic representation of the gradual dismembering from within of western art in which a new unity that of consciousness itself emerges by Richard Foreman* (1 folder)  
Undated script with notes and markings.
- b. 7 f. 16 *Some day morning (Screenplay) by Gea Kalthegener* 1993 May 3 (1 folder)  
Clean script, with note on title page.
- b. 7 f. 17 *For Ron by Greg Mehrten* 1989 Feb. 14 (1 folder)  
Hand-written script on single sheet of paper.
- b. 7 f. 18 *Color of a brisk and leaping day (a fateful year in the life of John Atkinson, railroad man) (Screenplay) by Christopher Münch* 1992 Dec.-1993 Aug. 16 (1 folder)  
Shooting script, revised, with a cover letter and reference material.
- b. 8 f. 1 *Phaedra by Jean Racine* (1 folder)  
Undated photocopy of a published script, translated by Robert Lowell.
- b. 8 f. 2 *Unidentified script by Jeff Weiss* (1 folder)  
Scenes from an undated, unidentified script that could be *That's how the rent gets paid*, by Jeff Weiss.

Series V - Ephemera 1963-1994 (7 folders)

Material in this series includes programs from a 1963 production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, the 1992 OBIE Awards, and *Airport Music* (1994). Also included is an agenda paper for a Dance/USA National Roundtable, a book proposal for *The Brad Davis Story*, a film program for a memorial service, interviews with the filmmaker Daniel Schmid as well as a filmography, a fragment of a poem by an unknown author and a published poem by Stefan Brecht.

Chronological.

- b. 8 f. 3 **Programs** 1963-1994 (1 folder)  
Programs from various productions, including: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, by Edward Albee; *1992 Village VOICE OBIE Awards*; *Airport Music*, by Jessica Hagedorn and Han Ong.
- b. 8 f. 4 **Dance/USA roundtable** 1986 Jan. 16-18 (1 folder)  
Concept paper and agenda for conference.
- b. 8 f. 5 *The ritual of desire by Rudolph Jula* 1991 (1 folder)  
Interviews with filmmaker Daniel Schmid and summaries of his films and a filmography. Included is a handwritten note from Schmid, written on the cover. Contents: *Tonight or Never* (Motion picture), *La Paloma* (Motion picture), *Shadow of Angels* (Motion picture), *Violanta* (Motion picture), *Hécate* (Motion picture), *Il Bascio di Tosca* (Motion picture), *Jenatsch* (Motion picture).
- b. 8 f. 6 *The silence is broken: the Brad Davis story by Susan Bluestein Davis with Mignon McCarthy* ca. 1992 (1 folder)  
Proposal for book, with photocopy of handwritten notes by Brad Davis.
- b. 8 f. 7 **Memorial film program** 1994 June (1 folder)  
List of film and video clips shown at memorial service at University of California, Berkeley.
- b. 8 f. 8 *Fragments of a poem entitled blue* (1 folder)  
Undated photocopy of a published poem.
- b. 8 f. 9 *8th Avenue, by Stefan Brecht* (1 folder)  
Undated, published poem.

## Series VI - Photographs 1985-1994 (10 folders)

This series includes photographs of individuals, mostly from The Wooster Group, as well as photographs of Mr. Vawter, including an 8 x 10 head-shot by Richard Avedon. There are also a few photos of paintings of Mr. Vawter. Several photographs are undated. All oversized photos are a sub-series of Series VIII - Oversized Materials.

Chronological.

- b. 8 f. 10 **Kate Valk 1985** (1 folder)  
Photograph by Gary Green.
- Ron Vawter**
- b. 8 f. 11 **Portrait 1985** (1 folder)  
Photograph by Gary Green.
- b. 8 f. 12 **Headshot ca. 1989** (1 folder)  
Headshot, with resume.
- b. 8 f. 13 **Headshot 1992** (1 folder)  
Headshot, by Richard Avedon.
- b. 8 f. 14 **Painting 1994 Mar. 10** (1 folder)  
Photograph of painting, by Frank Berbée, with note.
- b. 8 f. 15 **Contact sheets** (1 folder)  
Undated contact sheets.
- b. 8 f. 16 **Ron Vawter and Steve Borst** (1 folder)  
Undated photograph, with Vawter and Borst listed as "co-directors" of National Gay Theatre.
- b. 8 f. 17 **Ron Vawter and Peyton Smith** (1 folder)  
Undated photograph.
- b. 8 f. 18 **Elizabeth LeCompte** (1 folder)  
Undated photograph.
- b. 8 f. 19 **L. A. Eyeworks Gallery Opening** (1 folder)  
Undated snapshot.

## Series VII - Slides (2 folders)

The slides in this series are all unidentified, and undated . One folder contains images of the same object from various angles and in varying shades of light and darkness, which may be related to *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith*. There are also images of buildings and architectural features taken in what appears to be a European city, possibly Amsterdam, where *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* was produced.

By subject.

- b. 8 f. 20 **Unidentified images of single object** (1 folder)  
Undated and unidentified slides of one object.
- b. 8 f. 21 **Unidentified city scapes** (1 folder)  
Undated and unidentified slides of city images.

**Series VIII - Oversized Materials 1989-1994 (4.54 linear feet (2 oversize boxes + 1 oversize folder)**

Besides the photographs, material in this series includes two posters and two copies of light plots for *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* designed by Clay Shirky. The light plots are shelved separately in the Rose Building map cases. Please consult a librarian for access; advance notice will be required.

By subject.

Sub-series 1 - Oversized Photographs

Sub-series 2 - Posters

Sub-series 3 - Light Plots

**Sub-series 1 - Oversized Photographs 1992-1994 (1 box)**

Material in this sub-series includes a headshot by Richard Avedon, a publicity still from the motion picture *Philadelphia*, a photograph of a painting of Jack Smith, a portrait for an *Entertainment Weekly* spread and photographs of paintings done by Frank Berbée.

- b. 9 f. 1 **Jack Smith (portrait)** (1 folder)  
Undated photograph of portrait of Jack Smith.
- b. 9 f. 2 **Ron Vawter** (1 folder)  
Undated photograph by Raphael Fuchs, for *Entertainment Weekly*.
- b. 9 f. 3 ***Philadelphia (Motion picture)*** 1992 (1 folder)  
Publicity still by Ken Regan.
- b. 9 f. 4 **Ron Vawter (headshot)** (1 folder)  
Undated headshot by Richard Avedon (includes negative and a receipt).
- b. 9 f. 5 **Photographs of paintings, by Frank Berbée** 1994 Apr. 10 (1 folder)  
Three photographs of paintings by Frank Berbée, with a hand-written note.

**Sub-series 2 - Posters (1 oversized box)**

Material in this sub-series consists of two posters: one for *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* and one for *Free Fall*, a documentary on Ron Vawter, directed by Gea Kalthegener.

- b. 10 f. 1 ***Free Fall (Motion picture) directed by Gea Kalthegener*** (1 folder)  
Undated poster for a documentary on Ron Vawter.
- b. 10 f. 2 ***Roy Cohn/Jack Smith by Gary Indiana and Jack Smith*** (1 folder)  
Undated poster.

**Sub-series 3 - Light Plots 1993 Oct. 7 (1 oversized folder)**

This sub-series contains 2 blueprints of a light plot for *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith*, designed by Clay Shirky.

- b. 11 ***Roy Cohn/Jack Smith by Gary Indiana and Jack Smith*** 1993 Oct. 7 (1 folder)  
Two copies of a light plot, by Clay Shirky, for a performance at The Kitchen (New York, NY), with focus and color notes.