The New York Public Library New York Public Library for the Performing Arts Billy Rose Theatre Division

G. Maillard Kesslère Photographs
1925-1952
*T-Vim 1952-001

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Summary

Main entry: Kesslère, G. Maillard, (George Maillard)

Title: G. Maillard Kesslère photographs, 1925-1952 (bulk 1925-1946)

Size: 38 linear feet (44 boxes)

Source: Donated by G. Maillard Kesslère, April 5, 1952.

Abstract: The collection documents the career of G. Maillard Kesslère as a

portrait photographer and portrait artist of major personalities in the entertainment field, circa 1925-1952. The collection also includes biographies of actors and theater professionals compiled from1951-1952, who were possibly portrait subjects of G. Maillard Kesslère, but whose portraits are not, by and large, contained in this collection.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Advance notice may be required.

Copyright Library policy on photocopying will apply. For permission to publish,

information: contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

Preferred citation: G. Maillard Kesslère Photographs, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The

New York Public Library.

Special formats Drawings, Photographs, Photomechanical prints.

Provenance note

The G. Maillard Kesslère Photographs were donated in 1952 by G. Maillard Kesslère to the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library.

Biographical note

George Maillard Kesslère (b. 1894) was an artist and photographer of many famous personalities. Following his training as an artist, Kesslère ran a studio in Syracuse, N.Y., where he made portrait paintings and photographs. In 1921, he moved to New York City to pursue a position as art editor for the magazine *The Debutante*. In New York, his paintings and pastels of thinly draped, female nudes, captured in motion, gained the attention of theatrical producer Earl Carroll. He hired Kesslère as a photographer in 1928, and published his paintings and photos in programs for his Vanites series of musicals. In the early 1920s, Kesslère set up a photography studio in Manhattan, where he made portraits of thousands of well-known figures. His subjects included people involved in almost every aspect of the entertainment arts. In 1935, Kesslère exhibited 500 of his photographs, paintings and drawings in the Patricia Lounge of the Loew's Ziegfeld theater, located on Sixth Avenue in Manhattan. Kesslère also collaborated on various book projects, including the 1940 Women of Achievement; Biographies and Portraits of Outstanding American Women. In 1947, an exhibition of Kesslère's work entitled "Stars of Yesterday and Today," sponsored by the Theatre Library Association, toured the United States. In 1952, Kesslère donated a collection of his portraits of major entertainment and performing arts personalities, amassed mostly from 1925-1946, to the Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library. The artist and photographer died in Cresskill, N.J. in 1979 at the age of 84.

Scope and content note

The G. Maillard Kesslère Photographs collection consists of a series of portrait photographs, drawings, and reproductions of drawings of individuals involved in the entertainment arts. These portraits were created by Kesslère from 1925 through 1952, with the bulk of them amassed from 1925 to about 1946. Among Kesslère's subjects are actors, dancers, singers, musicians, composers, conductors, critics, writers, directors, producers, and designers for the theater, dance, ballet, opera, radio, and television. Well over half the subjects in this group are identified, and many of them are well-known personalities.

The collection contains a series of black and white photos of largely unidentified male and female subjects, created 1925-1952, who were likely active in society, business, or the performing arts.

The collection also contains biographies of theatre and entertainment professionals, compiled from 1951-1952, and submitted to the New York Public Library as part of the G. Maillard Kesslère collection of photographs. With a few exceptions, portraits of these biographical subjects are not present in this collection.

Arrangement note

The G. Maillard Kesslère Photographs are organized in the following series:

- I. Portraits of performing arts personalities, 1925-1952
- II. Unidentified portraits, 1925-1952
- III. Biographies, 1951-1952

Series descriptions and container list

I. Portraits of performing arts personalities, 1925-1952

39 boxes. Item is a photograph unless otherwise noted.

The largest group in the collection, this series contains approximately 858 portraits in half-length, bust, or head only, formats. Included are approximately 589 black and white photographs, approximately 30 original pastel or charcoal drawings, and some 239 black and white photomechanical reproductions of original drawings. Most of these photographs, reproductions, and drawings measure at least 9 $1/2 \times 12$ in., 10×13 in., and $10 \times 1/2 \times 13$ in. respectively. Most of the images are mounted on board to approximately $11 \times 1/2 \times 15$ in.

Depicted in this series are individuals involved in almost every aspect of the entertainment and performing arts. These include theater critics, composers, directors, producers, opera singers, writers, designers and actors and actresses for the stage, film, radio and television. Well over half of the subjects--some 520--are identified, and many of these are well-known personalities. Among the notable personalities photographed or drawn by Kesslère are: Brooks Atkinson, Fred Astaire, Tallulah Bankhead, Clark Gable, Carol Channing, Russell Crouse, Alfred Drake, Wilbur Evans, Frank Fay, Andre Kostenlanetz, Anita Loos, Queena Mario, Lauritz Melchior, Adolph Menjou, Patrice Munsel, Jarmila Novotná, Sono Osato, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Will Rogers, Babe Ruth, Tito Schipa, Phil Silvers, Simone Simon, Kate Smith, K. T. Stevens, Julia Sze, Arturo Toscanini, Virgil Thomson, Clifton Webb, Mae West, and Paul Whiteman. The series also includes a self portrait of G. Maillard Kesslère.

<u>Box</u> 1	Fol 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8-10 11 12-13 14 15 16-17 18 19 20	Abarbanel, Lina. Abbott, George. (Reproduction of drawing) Abel, Walter. Albright, Lola. (Reproduction of drawing) Allen, Fred. (Reproduction of drawing) Andrews Sisters. Arden, Eve. Armstrong, Louis. Ash, Rex. Astaire, Fred. Astaire, Fred. (Reproduction of drawing) Atkinson, Brooks. Atwater, Edith. Atwater, Edith. (Reproduction of drawing) Avedon, Doe. Ayers, Lemuel.
2	1 2-3 4-5 6 7 8 9-11 12 13	Bagley, Ed. [Bainter, Fay?] Baker, Phil. Bankhead, Tallulah. Banks, Leslie. Barrett, Elizabeth P. Barrymore, Diana. Barthelmess, Richard. Bartholomew, Freddie. Beals, Ralph A.

Box 2	Fol 15 16-17 18 19 20 21-22 23-24 25-26	Beck, Martin. Beck, Martin, Mrs. (Louise Beck) Bell, Marion. (Reproduction of drawing) Bellamy, Ralph. (Reproduction of drawing) Benie, Ben. Benny, Jack. Berle, Milton. Berlin, Irving.
3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8-9 10 11 12 13-14 15 16-17 18 19 20-22 23 24 25	Berstein, Aline. Bittner, Jack. Blair, Janet. (Reproduction of drawing) Bodansky, Arthur. Boland, Mary. Bolger, Ray. Bond, Sheila. Bordoni, Irene. Bosler, Virginia. Bosler, Virginia [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Bourdon, Rosario. Bowes, Edward, Major. (Reproduction of drawing) Brando, Jocelyn. Brice, Fanny. Briggs, Don. Brotherson, Eric. Brynner, Yul. Brynner, Yul (Reproduction of drawing) Burns, George and Allen, Gracie. Byrd, Richard E.
4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Calhern, Louis. (Reproduction of drawing) Cantor, Eddie. (Drawing) Cantor, Eddie. (Reproduction of drawing) Carlisle, Kitty. Carroll, Leo G. (Reproduction of drawing) Cassini, Oleg. Cassini, Oleg. (Reproduction of drawing) Castillo, Antonio. Chaliapin, Feodor. (Drawing) Chaliapin, Feodor. (Reproduction of drawing) Channing, Carol. Chapman, John. Ching, Win. Christi, Vilo. Christians, Mady. Christians, Mady (Reproduction of drawing) Circker [?], Mitchell. Cisney, Marcella. Claire, Dorothy. Claire, Ina. Claire, Ina. (Reproduction of drawing)
5	1 2 3 4	Clark, Bobby [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) [clown.] Cobb, Buff and Wallace, Mike. Coca, Imogene.

<u>Box</u> 5	Fol 5 6 7 8 9-10 11 12 13 14 15-16 17-18 19	Cohan, George. (Drawing) Colman, Ronald. Connolly, Walter. Cook, Donald. (Reproduction of drawing) Cooper, Anthony Kemble. Cooper, Melville. (Reproduction of drawing) Crane, Betty Mae and Crane, Beverly (Crane Twins). Cromwell, John. Cronyn, Hume. (Reproduction of drawing) Crosman, Henrietta. Crouse, Russell. Crouse, Russell. (Reproduction of drawing)
6	1 2-3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12-14 15 16 17-19 20 21 22 23	Damrosch, Walter. Dana, Leora. Davis, Owen. De Mille, Agnes. Derwent, Clarence. De Wilde, Brandon. Dickey, Annamary [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Dixon, Harlon. Douglas, Paul [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Dowling, Eddie. (Reproduction of drawing) Downey, Morton. Downey, Morton. (Reproduction of drawing) Dragonette, Jessica. Drake, Alfred. (Reproduction of drawing) Draper, Paul. (Reproduction of drawing) Dudley, Bide. (Reproduction of drawing) Dunne, Irene. Durante, Jimmy. (Drawing)
7	1 2 3 4-5 6-7 8 9-10 11 12 13 14 15-16 17 18 19-20 21 22-23 24	Eagles, Jeanne. Edwards, Joan. (Reproduction of drawing) [Ellen, Vera?] (Reproduction of drawing) Elsom, Isobel. Evans, Maurice. Evans, Maurice [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Evans, Wilbur. Evans, Wilbur. (Reproduction of drawing) Evelyn, Judith. Fassett, Jay. Fay, Frank [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Ferrer, José. (Reproduction of drawing) Ffolkes, David. Field, Virginia. Fields, Dorothy. Fields, Dorothy. (Reproduction of drawing) Fields, Herbert. Fields, Herbert. (Reproduction of drawing)
8	1 2-3 4 5 6-7	Flagg, J. M. Fonda, Henry [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Fowler, Addison and Tamara, Florenz (Fowler and Tamara). [Fontanne, Lynn?] (Reproduction of drawing) Ford, Wallace.

<u>Box</u> 8	Fol 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	Forsythe, John. Forsythe, John. (Reproduction of drawing) Fay, Frank. Francis, Arlene. Franz, Arthur. (Reproduction of drawing) Freedley, George. Fryer, Robert. Gable, Clark. Galli, Curci, Amelita. [Garbo, Greta?] (Reproduction of drawing) Garden, Mary. Garland, Robert.
9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10-11 12 13 14-15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	Garrett, Betty. Gaxton, William. Geddes, Norman Bel. [George, Gladys?] Gershwin, George. Gielgud, John. Gilmore, Virginia. (Reproduction of drawing) Gish, Dorothy. Gish, Dorothy and Gish, Lillian. Gish, Lillian. Gollner, Nana. Goodson, Mark and Todman, Bill. Gordon, Max. Gordon, Max [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Gordon, Ruth. (Reproduction of drawing) Gosden, Freeman and Correll, Charles (Amos 'n' Andy). Grazia, Walter. (Reproduction of drawing) Green, Abel. [Green, Harry?] (Drawing) Green, Harry. (Reproduction of drawing) Greenstreet, Sidney. Griffies, Ethel. Guiness, Alec. Guizar, Tito. Gwenn, Edmund. Gwenn, Edmund. (Reproduction of drawing)
10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13-14 15-16 17	Hammerstein, Oscar. Hardie, Russell. Harrigan, Nedda. Harrigan, William. (Reproduction of drawing) Harris, Julie. (Reproduction of drawing) Harris, Viola. Hartman, Grace. Hartman, Grace and Hartman, Paul. Hawkins, William. Haydon, Julie? (Reproduction of drawing) Hayes, Helen. Hayes, Helen. (Reproduction of drawing) Hayward, Leland. Hayward, Leland. (Reproduction of drawing) Heckert, Eileen. Heckert, Eileen. (Reproduction of drawing)

Box 10	Fol 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27	Heifetz, Jascha. Helburn, Theresa. Helburn, Theresa [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Heming, Violet. Heming, Violet. (Reproduction of drawing) Heydt, Louis Jean. (Reproduction of drawing) Hill, Edwin C. Hillard, Harriet. Hoffman, Ferdi. (Reproduction of drawing)
11	1 2 3 4-5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19-20 21 22	Holland, Nina. Holliday, Judy. Holliday, Judy. (Reproduction of drawing) Holm, Celeste. Holman, Libby [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Hopkins, Arthur. Hopkins, Arthur. (Reproduction of drawing) Horton, Louisa. Horton, Louisa. (Reproduction of drawing) Howard, Leslie. Hughes, Mildred. Hull, Henry. Hull, Henry. (Reproduction of drawing) Hunt, Marsha. Hunt, Marsha. (Reproduction of drawing) Hunt, Martita. Hunter, Kim. (Reproduction of drawing) Huston, Walter. Hutchinson, Ernest. Hutchison, Muriel.
12	1-2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18-19 20 21-22 23 24 25 26	Jackson, Anne. Jeffreys, Ann. (Reproduction of drawing) Jepson, Helen. Jeritza, Maria. (Drawing) Jessel, George. Jolson, Al. (Drawing) Jonay, Roberta. (Reproduction of drawing) Jorden, Freeman. Joy, Nicholas. Kane, Helen? Karlweis, Oscar. Kazan, Elia. (Reproduction of drawing) Keeler, Jane. Kelly, Gene. (Reproduction of drawing) Kelly, Paul. Kennedy, Edgar. Kesslere, G. Maillard. (Reproduction of drawing) Kilgallen, Dorothy. King, Dennis. (Reproduction of drawing) Kingsley, Sidney. Kipnis, Alexander. Kirk, Lisa [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing)
13	1-2	Kostelanetz, Andre.

Box 13	Fol 3 4 5 6-7 8 9 10 11-12 13 14 15-16 17 18 19 20 21-22	Kruger, Otto [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Kuluva, Will. Lahr, Bert. Landi, Elissa. (Reproduction of drawing) Landis, Jessie Royce. Langner, Lawrence [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Laughton, Charles. (Reproduction of drawing) Laurence, Paula. Lawrence, Gertrude. Lederer, Francis. Lee, Gypsy Rose. (Reproduction of drawing) Lemmon, Jack. Leslie, Bethel. Lillie, Beatrice. Lindsay, Howard.
14	1 2 3 4 5 6 7-8 9 10 11 12-13 14-15 16 17 18 19-20 21 22 23-25	Littau, Joseph. Logan, Joshua. Lombardo, Guy. Loos, Anita. Loring, Kay. Lorring, Joan. (Reproduction of drawing) Luce, Claire. Luce, Claire. (Reproduction of drawing) Lytell, Bert. MacDonald, Jeanette. Mantle, Burns. Mario, Queena. Markova, Alicia. Marlowe, Hugh. Marlowe, Hugh. (Reproduction of drawing) Marriott, John. Marshalov, Boris. Martin, Mary. Martinelli, Giovanni.
15	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	Martini, Nino. Massey, Raymond. Mata, Ruth and Hari, Eugene (Mata and Hari). (Reproduction of drawing) Mata, Ruth and Hari, Eugene (Mata and Hari)[?] Matthews, Carmen. Mayfair, Mitzi. McCrary, Tex and McCrary Jinx (Jinx Falkenberg). McCrary, Tex and McCrary, Jinx (Jinx Falkenberg). (Reproduction of drawing) McDevitt, Ruth. McDonald, Kyle. McDonald, Kyle. (Reproduction of drawing) McNellis, Maggi. (Reproduction of drawing) Melchior, Lauritz. Menjou, Adolph. Miller, Gilbert. Mills Brothers. (Reproduction of drawing) Mitchell, Millard. Moore, Garry. Morgan, Ralph.

<u>Box</u> 15	Fol 20 21-22 23-25 26-27	Mundy, Meg. (Reproduction of drawing) Muni, Paul. Munsel, Patrice. Myerberg, Michael.
16	1 2 3 4-5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14-16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24-25	Nelson, Ozzie. Nichols, George, designer. Novotná, Jarmila. Novotná, Jarmila. (Reproduction of drawing) Nype, Russell. Oakland, Simon. Ober, Philip. Oenslager, Donald. Olsen, John Sigvard and Johnson, Harold Ogden (Olsen and Johnson). (Reproduction of drawing) Osato, Sono. (Reproduction of a drawing) Palmer, Byron. Pancho. Parker, Frank. Pearl, Jack. Pearl, Jack. (Reproduction of drawing) Pemberton, Brock [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Peterson, Dorothy. Phelps, William Lyon. Phillips, Margaret. (Reproduction of drawing) Pianist. Pinza, Ezio.
17	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10-11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23-24	Pons, Lily. Post, Guy Bates. Powell, William. Price, Vincent. Prince, William. Pryor, Arthur, Jr. Pryor, Roger. Quinn, Anthony. (Reproduction of drawing) Rachmaninoff, Sergei. (Drawing) Rachmaninoff, Sergei. (Reproduction of drawing) [Rafferty, Frances?] (Reproduction of drawing) Rainer, Luise. (Reproduction of drawing) Rains, Claude. (Reproduction of drawing) Raitt, John. Rand, Sally. Rice, Vernon. Rich, Irene. Richman, Harry. (Drawing) Robson, May. (Reproduction of drawing) Rodgers, Richard. Rodgers, Richard and Hammerstein, Oscar. Rogers, Mary.
18	1 2 3 4 5	Rogers, Will. (Drawing) Ross, Lanny. Rothafel, Samuel Lionel. Royle, Selena. Rubinoff, David.

<u>Box</u> 18	Fol 6 7 8 9 10-12 13-14 15-16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23-24 25	Ruth, Babe. Sanderson, Julia and Crumit, Frank. Sardi, Vincent, Jr. [Sayers, Jo Ann?] Schildkraut, Joseph. Schipa, Tito. Schlee, Valentina Sanina (Valentina). Schwartz, Arthur and Dietz, Howard. Scott, Zachary. (Reproduction of drawing) Selznick, David O. Selznick, Irene. [Sheldon, Herb?] Shipley, Joseph T. Shore, Dinah. (Reproduction of drawing)
19	1 2 3 4 5-7 8 9-10 11 12 13-14 15 16 17-18 19-20 21-23 24 25	Shubert, Marcelle Lu. Sidney, Sylvia. Silvers, Phil. (Reproduction of drawing) Simon, Simone. Sincere, Jean. Skinner, Cornelia Otis. Small, Mary. Smith, Al. (Drawing) Smith, Kate. Sobel, Bernard. Sokoloff, Vladimir. Spewack, Samuel and Spewack, Bella. Stapleton, Maureen. Steber, Eleanor. Stevens, K. T. Stoddard, Haila Stickney, Dorothy.
20	1 2 3-4 5 6-7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	Swayze, John Cameron. Sze, Julia. (Reproduction of drawing) Tabbert, William. Tandy, Jessica. Tandy, Jessica. (Reproduction of drawing) Taylor, Deems. Teasdale, Verree. Tennyson, Jean. Thomas, Ann. (Reproduction of drawing) Thomas, John Charles. Thomas, Lowell. Thomson, Virgil. Tibbett, Lawrence. (Drawing.) Tobin, Genevieve. (Reproduction of drawing) Tombes, Andrew. Toscanini, Arturo. (Drawing) Toscanini, Arturo. (Reproduction of drawing) Tracy, Lee. (Reproduction of drawing) Trini, Anthony. Tucker, Richard. Vallée, Rudy. Varden, Evelyn. (Reproduction of drawing)

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	W. H. M. (5)
20	25	Walker, Nancy. (Reproduction of drawing)
21	1-2 3 4 5 6	Wanamaker, Sam. Waring, Fred. Waring, Fred. (Reproduction of drawing) Warren, George. Waters, Ethel. (Drawing)
21	7-8	Waters, Ethel. (Reproduction of drawing)
21	9 10 11 12 13-15 16 17 18 19-20 21	Watkins, Linda. Watts, Richard, Jr. Wayne, David. Webb, Clifton. (Reproduction of drawing) West, Mae. West, Mae. (Reproduction of drawing) Westman, Nydia. Weston, Ruth. (Reproduction of drawing) Whalen, Michael. White, Miles. White, Ruth.
22	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9-10 11 12-13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	Whiteman, Paul. (Drawing) Whiteman, Paul. (Reproduction of drawing) Wildberg, John. Willard, Catharine. Williams, John. Wilson, Dooley. (Reproduction of drawing) Wilson, Elizabeth. Winninger, Charles. Winwood, Estelle. Wood, Peggy. Wood, Peggy [two items]. (Reproduction of drawing) Woollcott, Alexander. Woollcott, Alexander. (Drawing) Woollcott, Alexander. (Reproduction of drawing) Woolley, Monty. (Reproduction of drawing) Wragge, Betty. Wray, Fay. Wyatt, Jane. Wynn, Ed. Wynn, Ed. (Reproduction of drawing) Yurka, Blanche. (Reproduction of drawing) Zorina, Vera. (Reproduction of drawing)
23	1-20	Unidentified 20 portraits
24	1-20	20 portraits
25	1-17	17 portraits
26	1-20	20 portraits
27	1-20	20 portraits
28	1-20	20 portraits
29	1-20	20 portraits

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
30	1-19	19 portraits
31	1-20	20 portraits
32	1-20	20 portraits
33	1-20	20 portraits
34	1-19	19 portraits
35	1-24	24 portraits
36	1-13	13 portraits (Drawing, photos& reproduction of drawing)
37	1-20	20 portraits (Reproduction of drawing)
38	1-20	20 portraits (Reproduction of drawing)
39	1-26	26 portraits (Reproduction of drawing)

II. Unidentified portraits, 1925-1952

2 boxes.

This series contains approximately 277 8 x 10 in., black and white photographic portraits and two black and white reproductions of drawings. The series is divided into two groups: male subjects and female subjects. By and large, the subjects are not identified. It appears likely however, given Kesslère's choice of subjects during his career, that they were individuals prominent in society, or involved in business or the performing arts. A few of the subjects in this series are also represented in Series I.

Box Fol
40
167 portraits of female subjects
41
112 portraits of male subjects

III. Biographies, 1951-1952

3 boxes.

This series contains biographies of theatre professionals compiled 1951-1952, and submitted to the New York Public Library as part of the G. Maillard Kesslère collection of photographs. While the subjects of these biographies may have been portrait subjects of Kesslère, their portraits are not, by and large, represented in this collection.

<u>Box</u> 42	<u>Fol</u> 1-12	Abbott, George-Hosley, Patricia
43	1-12	Houston, Grace-Steele, Dorothy
44	1-3	Sullivan, Ed-Zarin, Michael