

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

Eastman Design Collection
ca. 1920-1956 and undated

***T-VIM 2010-051**

Summary

Title: Eastman Design Collection, ca. 1920-1956 and undated

Size: 8 linear feet (5 boxes)

Preferred citation: Eastman Design Collection, *T-VIM 2010-051, The Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Biographical note

Irving (Abrasha) and Nikki (Nathaniel) Eastman, twin brothers, were born in Odessa, Russia and came to the United States at the age of 17 in 1910. Having studied art in Russia and in America, they opened a workshop, Russian Arts and Crafts Studios (later called Eastman Studios), in 1920. They employed up to 200 artists designing and executing sets and costumes for numerous productions over several decades. Nikki Eastman also designed model homes. He died of cancer in New York City in 1953 at the age of sixty.

Scope and content note

Most of the more than 200 original color set and costume designs are color. The designs are primarily for sets, but there are a number of costume and backdrop designs for theater, film, television, vaudeville, and nightclub productions. There are also a number of designs for concert pianists; of note are 4 set designs for *Princess Waletka*, a vaudeville mind reading act. There are ca. 51 set and costume designs for the musical, *Take It Easy* (previously titled *Off Limits*), book by Jean King; music by Phil Ellis; lyrics by Jane Mack, 1952-1953, and 4 set designs for the *Ziegfeld Follies*, 1925 and undated. Several designs appear to be for residential projects. There are also a number of blueprints and technical drawings.

Container list

Box	Fol	
1	1	<i>Autumn Wind (Windy Autumn?)</i> , undated
1	2	Backdrop for Covered Wagon, undated 8 designs: Backdrop for Covered Wagon; Beach Scene; 2 designs for Blue Bird - 1 is for a curtain for Yasha Youshni's (i.e., Youzhny) Cabaret; Irene Bordoni; Burlesque - 3 designs.
1	3	Carnegie Theatre- <i>The Cask of Amontillado</i> (Motion picture), undated 16 designs: 5 set designs for Carnegie Theatre presentation; 4 costume designs and 8 set designs for <i>The Cask of Amontillado</i> ("Dynamic Films, Inc." is printed on 1 design).
1	4	Children's Play and Chinese Magician, undated 2 set designs.
1	5	Colony Theatre Presentations, 1925-1930 and undated 11 set designs, including stage background for an Easter presentation (1930), <i>Romeo and Giulietta</i> , design for a "motion picture presentation," and exterior of a military academy.
1	6	Concert Pianists; Cowboy; Criterion Theatre; Sketch for a Curtain, undated 7 designs: 4 for concert pianists; 1 set design with "Cowboy" written on verso; 1 sketch for a curtain; 1 for Criterion Theatre ("Changing colors without changing scenery").
1	7	<i>Dallas and Chickens</i> , undated (3 designs: 1 set design for <i>Dallas and Chickens</i> ; 2 set designs for <i>Desert Sands</i> ; 11 blueprints and contents page for <i>A Doll's House</i> .)
4	1	<i>The Doctor in Spite of Himself</i> , 1953 6 designs; 5 scenic; 1 costume.
4	2	<i>Earl Carroll Vanities</i> , ca. 1920s-1930s 11 designs, mostly scenic.
1	8	Electrosymphonic Piano; Entrance Door; Kitchen Layout for Franco-American; Daniel Frohman Show, undated 5 designs: "1st Rough Sketch" for New Electrosymphonic Piano by Nikki Eastman; "Entrance door" and Gesse (sp.?) - 2 designs on 1 sheet; "For a Daniel Frohman Show."
1	9	Front Curtain, undated
1	10	G.E. Radio Line, undated 7 designs and 1 floor plan for G.E. Radio Line; In a Girls' College; Goldwyn Production; Green Farm; Heart Show, undated.
1	11	Michio Ito, undated 10 items: 2 set designs for Michio Ito, undated; 1 drawing of set design for "Leo's Room," undated; 1 set design and 1 technical plan for "Lindbergh Crossing the Ocean," 1925; 1 design for "The Little Club (New York) - 44th St. - now Theatre Cantine," ca. 1940s; 1 set design for Little Old New York, 1920; 2 set designs and 1 front curtain design for <i>The Life of a Man</i> [i.e., <i>The Life of Man</i>] by Leonid Andreyev, undated.
4	3	Magician Act, undated 3 set designs; 1 is fragile; The Phantom of the Opera set design is broken into 2 pieces.
2	1	<i>Man Most Likely to Succeed</i> [i.e., <i>Most Likely to Succeed</i>] (Television), undated 6 set designs: 2 designs for <i>Man Most Likely to Succeed</i> [i.e., <i>Most Likely to Succeed</i>] (Television), undated; 1 design for Music Box (Revue), undated; 1 design for Music Stage - Chinese Restaurant, undated; 1 design for Mystery Play - <i>The Murderer</i> , ca. 1930; 1 design for <i>Idea for A Night in Seville</i> (Motion picture), undated.
2	2	Play Craft Productions, undated 9 set designs: 3 set designs for Play Craft Production; 1 "Box Set" design for Play Craft Production designed by Russian Arts and Crafts Studio; 4 set designs for Princess Waletka (Mind Reading Act - Vaudeville); 1 set design for Quatro Celinos (sp.?) (Spanish Dancers).

2	3	Russian Ballet for Mr. Fokine, undated 3 set designs.
4	4	<i>Singing in the Dark</i> (Motion picture), 1956 13 set designs; 1 elevation.
4	5	<i>Take It Easy</i> (Previous Title <i>Off Limits</i>), 1952-1953 Costume Designs and Sketches ca. 51 costume designs and sketches.
4	6	Set Designs, Blueprints, etc. 14 mounted set designs (plus 1 board missing design), 1 unmounted set design, 1 color chart, 19 technical drawings and elevations, 8 blueprints, and 1 photostat.
2	4	Tapestry Designs, undated 5 designs: 2 tapestry designs (stage backdrops); 1 set design for <i>The Tent</i> (undated); 1 set design for an unidentified "TV" production (undated); 1 set design for <i>The Twelve- Pound Look</i> by J.M. Barrie (undated).
2	5	Universal Pictures Corp. Pres, undated
4	5	Uptown Theatre - Philadelphia, undated 1 design - unidentified, possibly interior.
2	6-8	Vaudeville Set Designs, 1920 and undated 27 designs; includes 2 backdrop curtain designs; "The Old South" is written on the verso of 1 design that is very similar to a design marked "Vaudeville;" it is unclear if "The Old South" is a show title.
2	9	Wally Productions; [<i>The Wizard of</i>] <i>Oz</i> - Maurice Schwartz [Yiddish Art] Theatre, undated 3 set designs: Wally Productions, Inc.; [<i>The Wizard of</i>] <i>Oz</i> ; scene design for Maurice Schwartz - Jewish [Yiddish Art] Theatre.
4	8	Whiteman, Paul (with Jose Limon) - Front for Palais Royal, undated Ink and pencil on board; sketch on verso.
2	10	<i>The World We Live In</i> , 1922 2 set designs; "for Wm. Brady" written on verso.
2	11	<i>Ziegfeld Follies</i> , 1920 and undated 4 designs.
3	1	Unidentified, ca. 1922-1953 and undated Detail Drawings, undated 4 drawings of details, possibly of Greek ship and figures.
3	2	Set Designs, ca. 1922 and undated 5 designs: 1 design (Expressionistic interior) is marked "Draw'g #9, Scene 39;" 1 has "about 1922" written on verso; 1 has "about 1922 under the influence of Dr. Caligari film" written on verso.
3	3	Set Designs, undated 6 designs.
3	4-5	Set Designs and Sketch, undated 13 set designs and 1 sketch, possibly for <i>Take It Easy</i> (Previous Title <i>Off Limits</i> (1952- 1953).
3	6	Set Designs, undated 6 set designs.
3	7	Designs (Residential?), undated 3 designs: Possibly for residences; 1 design is for a "Book Case [sic] - Aquarium - Television - Radio - Recorder - Brakefront [sic]."
5	1	Set Designs, 1925 and undated 10 designs.
5	2-3	Set Designs, undated 17 designs.

5	4-5	Set Designs, ca. 1953? and undated 15 designs; Box 5 Folder 5 contains original set design and negative photostat of design.
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