



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Gustav Blum papers

1912-1988 [bulk 1915-1953]

*T-Mss 1996-047

Summary

Creator: Blum, Gustav

Title: Gustav Blum papers

Date: 1912-1988 [bulk 1915-1953]

Revision History: Finding aid expanded and revised by Annemarie van Roessel, Billy Rose Theatre Division

Abstract: Gustav Blum (d. 1963) was an American theater director, producer, actor, and teacher. In 1916, he founded the East-West Players, a group that performed one-act plays, including English translations of Yiddish plays. The East-West Players won the Belasco Cup at the first Little Theater Tournament in 1923. Blum also produced and staged Broadway plays and worked as a drama teacher in high schools from 1909 until his retirement in 1958. The Gustav Blum papers (1912-1988, bulk 1915-1953) contain a scrapbook, contracts, scripts, photographs, clippings, correspondence, and other papers documenting Blum's career. The scrapbook dates from 1916 to 1923 and contains clippings and programs of the East-West Players. There are scripts for four plays that Blum produced: *The Shame Woman* (1923), *Gertie* (1926), *My Son* (1924), and *Walk Hard* (1946). The script for *Walk Hard* is a heavily annotated prompt copy; the other scripts have minimal or no annotation. There are also three scripts written or co-written by Blum: *Against the Current*, *Eden*, and *A Sleepless Night*. Contracts date from 1927 to 1946. The collection includes a statement of receipts and disbursements for *Walk Hard* and an estimated budget for *Laughter in the Courtyard*. Photographs consist of images of Blum, an unidentified production photograph, and signed photographs of Bertha Kalich and David Belasco. The collection also contains biographical information, clippings, and copyright records related to Blum's career, dating from 1912 to 1988.

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Language of the Material: English

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Contracts
Correspondence
Photographic prints
Scrapbooks
Scripts

Subjects

Little theater movement
Theater, Yiddish
Theatre -- New York (State) -- New York
Theatrical producers and directors

Names

Belasco, David, 1853-1931
Blum, Gustav
Bussiere, Tadema
Hill, Abram, 1910-1986
Kalich, Bertha, 1874-1939
Stanley, Martha, 1879-
Vollmer, Lula
East-West Players (New York, N.Y.)
White Studio (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

Papers and Photographs

- b. 1 f. 1 Amard, Inc. and San Carlo Grand Opera Co., Inc. contracts 1928
- b. 1 f. 2 Bertha Kalich autograph portrait photograph circa 1921
- b. 1 f. 3 Clippings 1985, 1988, undated
- b. 1 f. 4 Copyright registration cards 1912-1919
- b. 1 f. 5 David Belasco autograph portrait photograph 1915
- b. 1 f. 6 East-West Players scrapbook 1916-1923
- b. 1 f. 7 *Gertie contract* 1927
- b. 1 f. 8 Gustav Blum biographical information 1930, 1944, undated
- b. 1 f. 9 Gustav Blum portrait photographs circa 1930s-1940s
- b. 1 f. 10 *Her First Affaire rights correspondence* 1931
- b. 1 f. 11 *Laughter in the Courtyard estimated budget* undated
- b. 1 f. 12 Production photograph for unidentified show taken by White Studio undated
- b. 1 f. 13 Productions chronology circa 1936
- b. 1 f. 14 *Roger VI contract* 1946
- b. 1 f. 15 *Oktoberfest contract* 1928
- b. 1 f. 16 *That Ferguson Family contracts* 1928
- b. 1 f. 17 *Walk Hard condensed statement of receipts and disbursements* 1946
- b. 1 f. 18 *Walk Hard contracts* 1946

Scripts

- b. 1 f. 19 *Against the Current script by Gustav Blum and L. Hess* undated
- b. 1 f. 20 *Eden script by Gustav Blum* circa 1917
- b. 2 f. 1 *Gertie script by Tadema Bussiere* 1926
- b. 2 f. 2-3 *My Son script by Martha Stanley* 1924
2 copies
- b. 2 f. 4 *The Shame Woman script by Lulu Vollmer* 1923
- b. 2 f. 5 *A Sleepless Night script by Jack Larrio and Gustav Blum* 1919
- b. 2 f. 6 *Walk Hard script by Abram Hill* 1946
Extensive manuscript annotations.