



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Mary K. Frank papers**

1948-1987

\*T-Mss 1999-010

Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** Frank, Mary K.

**Title:** Mary K. Frank papers

**Date:** 1948-1987

**Size:** 12.85 linear feet (31 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by Valerie and Tom Wolzien, 1999.

**Abstract:** Mary Frank (circa 1911-1988) was an American theatrical producer, investor, and the president of the New Dramatists Committee. The Mary Frank papers contain production files from plays produced or invested in by Frank; submitted scripts; reports on plays and books seen and read; and administrative records of the New Dramatists Committee.

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**Preferred citation:** Mary K. Frank papers, \*T-Mss 1999-010. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

**Processing note:** Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2014

## Creator History

Mary K. Frank produced such Broadway plays as Robert Anderson's *Tea and Sympathy* (1953), Samuel Taylor's *Sabrina Fair* (1953), Alan Paton's *Too Late the Phalarope* (1956) and *Sponono* (1964), Beverly Cross's *One More River* (1960), and Patrick Meyers's *K2* (1983). From the late 1940s on, she was a regular investor in theatrical productions. From 1960 to 1969 Frank was the president of the New Dramatists Committee (later known as New Dramatists), a group supporting new playwrights.

Mary Frank was married to William Frank, with whom she had one daughter, Maud E. Frank. She died on November 20, 1988, in Grand View-on-Hudson, New York.

New Dramatists was established in 1949, by Michaela O'Harra and a group of prominent New York

theatre figures including Maxwell Anderson, Russel Crouse, John Golden, Oscar Hammerstein II, Moss Hart, Howard Lindsay, Elmer Rice, Richard Rodgers, Robert E. Sherwood, and John Wharton. New Dramatists awards seven-year fellowships to playwrights, giving them a venue to develop scripts through readings and workshops in a supportive, creative environment of other playwrights, directors, stage managers, and actors.

## Scope and Content Note

The Mary Frank Papers document the career of twentieth-century American theatrical producer and president of the New Dramatists, Mary Frank. Files pertaining to Frank's producing career, and her even more extensive experience as a frequent investor in theatrical productions, provide insight into the process of lining up backers and theatres, as well as hiring writers, actors, directors, designers, stage managers, and other production staff. The day-to-day business of running a major arts organization in its formative early years is well documented by Frank's New Dramatists records.

Materials collected or created by Mary Frank as a theatrical producer include production files containing agreements, contracts, scripts, programs, photographs, business correspondence, financial projections, budgets, and royalty statements from plays she produced, including *Tea and Sympathy*, *Sabrina Fair*, *Too Late the Phalarope*, *One More River*, *Sponono*, and *K2*. There are materials from *I and Albert*, a 1975 musical Frank produced in London, the off-Broadway musical *Bodo* (1983), and from other unproduced plays and musicals, including *Madeline*, *Maggie & Jiggs*, and *On Borrowed Time*. There are also files on productions in which Frank played a less active role, sometimes that of investor. These files contain letters, programs, and publicity materials. There are many scripts for plays and musicals Frank produced or invested in, as well as for plays submitted to Frank for consideration for production or investment. There are other office files on production companies, individuals, and unidentified projects, which contain resumes, agreements, correspondence, clippings, and photographs. Frank office files contain written reports on plays seen and read and books read and reviewed during the 1950s and 1960s. These reports appear to have been made in order to follow theatre trends and to assess new books for their adaptability as stage pieces.

Frank's role as president of New Dramatists from 1960 to 1969 is documented with administrative files. New Dramatists administrative files consist mainly of professional correspondence between Frank and other New Dramatists administrators and playwrights, directors, actors, investors, agents, publicists, and journalists. Administrative files also contain publicity materials, meeting minutes, applications, financial statements, fund-raising reports, and speeches.

**Arrangement:** This collection is divided into two groups of materials: Office Files and New Dramatists Administrative Records.

## Key Terms

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Correspondence  
Financial records  
Photographs  
Scripts

### Subjects

Musicals -- Production and direction  
Theater -- 20th century -- History and criticism  
Theater -- Production and direction  
Theater -- Production and direction -- New York (State) -- New York  
Theater management

**Occupations**

Theatrical managers  
Theatrical producers and directors

**Names**

New Dramatists, Inc.

## Container List

### Office Files 1948-1987

#### Production Files 1949-1987

- b. 1 f. 1-2 *All Summer Long* 1954-1957
- b. 1 f. 3 *Almanac* 1953-1955
- b. 1 f. 4-7 *America, With Love* 1954-1955
- b. 2 f. 1 *The Barrier* 1950-1951
- b. 2 f. 2 *The Beastly Beatitudes of Balthazar B* 1981-1982
- b. 2 f. 3 *Bell, Book and Candle* 1953-1966
- b. 2 f. 4 *Ben Franklin in Paris* 1976
- b. 2 f. 5-8 *Bobo* 1983-1984  
See also: Three Play Project.
- b. 3 f. 1-3 *Bobo* 1983-1986  
See also: Three Play Project.
- b. 3 f. 4 *Bunny Lake is Missing* 1957
- b. 4 f. 1 *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* 1955-1962
- b. 4 f. 2 *Child of the Morning* 1957
- b. 4 f. 3 *A Clear View of an Irish Mist* 1959-1960
- b. 4 f. 4 *The Closing Door* 1950
- b. 4 f. 5 *Clytemnestra: A Desecration* 1982
- b. 4 f. 6 *Collector's Item* 1950-1951
- b. 4 f. 7 *The Consul* 1950
- b. 5 f. 1 *Convicts* 1979
- b. 5 f. 2 *Courtship* 1985
- b. 5 f. 3 *Cousins* undated
- b. 5 f. 4 *Crazy Horse* 1977-1978
- b. 5 f. 5 *Cycle* 1985
- b. 5 f. 6 *The Death of Papa* undated
- b. 5 f. 7 *The Deep Blue Sea* 1952-1956
- b. 5 f. 8 *The Devil's Disciple* 1950
- b. 6 f. 1 *Dodsworth* 1972
- b. 6 f. 2 *The Golden State* 1950-1951
- b. 6 f. 3 *The Grand Tour* 1951-1953
- b. 6 f. 4 *Great Gottschalk!* 1983
- b. 6 f. 5 *The Gypsies Wore High Heels* 1952-1954
- b. 6 f. 6-7 *The Habitation of Dragons* 1961-1963  
See also: Three Play Project.
- b. 7 f. 1-4 *The Habitation of Dragons* 1961-1963  
See also: Three Play Project.
- b. 8 f. 1 *Happy as Larry* 1950
- b. 8 f. 2 *Hazel Flagg* 1953-1959

Office Files (cont.)

Production Files (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 3      *Helen of Troy* 1953
- b. 8 f. 4-9    *I and Albert* 1973
- b. 8 f. 10     *If* 1982
- b. 9 f. 1       *The Innocents* 1949-1957
- b. 9 f. 2-4     *K2* 1977-1987
- b. 10 f. 1-3    *K2* 1977-1987
- b. 10 f. 4      *The Kids* undated
- b. 10 f. 5-6    *The Last Journey* 1959
- b. 10 f. 7-8    *Lily Dale* undated
- b. 11 f. 1-3    *Lily Henry* 1949-1952
- b. 11 f. 4      *Lorenzo* 1962-1964
- b. 12 f. 1-2    *Madeline* 1961-1964
- b. 12 f. 3-4    *Maggie and Jiggs* 1982-1983
- b. 12 f. 5      *A Man About Town* 1983
- b. 12 f. 6      *Marco Polo* 1957
- b. 12 f. 7      *Marriage on High Heels* 1949
- b. 12 f. 8      *The Medium* 1952
- b. 12 f. 9      *Mines of Sulphur* undated
- b. 13 f. 1      *Miss Liberty* 1950
- b. 13 f. 2      *Mkhumbane* undated
- b. 13 f. 3      *Music Circus of America* 1949-1953
- b. 13 f. 4      *Nell* 1975
- b. 13 f. 5      *New Faces* 1976
- b. 13 f. 6      *Nineteen Eighteen* 1983
- b. 13 f. 7-10   *On Borrowed Time* 1978-1986  
See also: Three Play Project.
- b. 14 f. 1-3    *One More River* 1959-1960
- b. 14 f. 4      *Out West of Eighth* 1951-1952
- b. 14 f. 5      *Pa* 1956-1957
- b. 14 f. 6      *Passage to India* undated
- b. 14 f. 7      *Les Petites Filles de Courbelles* undated
- b. 14 f. 8-9    A Play by Robert Paul Smith undated
- b. 15 f. 1      *The Poacher* 1986-1987
- b. 15 f. 2-3    *The Rainmaker* 1954-1963
- b. 15 f. 4      *The Real Stuff* undated
- b. 15 f. 5      *Regina* 1949
- b. 15 f. 6      *Rocket Summer* 1958
- b. 15 f. 7      *Roots in a Parched Garden* undated
- b. 16 f. 1-2    *Sabrina Fair* 1953-1967
- b. 16 f. 3      *Sam Saved from Success* 1970
- b. 16 f. 4      *Seagulls of 1933* 1975-1976

Office Files (cont.)

Production Files (cont.)

- b. 16 f. 5 *Seagulls Over Sorento* 1952
- b. 16 f. 6 *Season in the Sun* 1949-1950
- b. 16 f. 7 *The Shrike* 1951-1954
- b. 17 f. 1 *Silent Night, Lonely Night* 1959-1961
- b. 17 f. 2 *Small War on Murray Hill* 1957
- b. 17 f. 3-6 *Sponono* 1963-1973
- b. 18 f. 1-3 *Sponono* 1963-1973
- b. 18 f. 4-5 *Stars in a Person's Backyard* undated
- b. 19 f. 1 *Strip the Willow* undated
- b. 19 f. 2 *Take a Giant Step* 1953
- b. 19 f. 3-5 *Tea and Sympathy* 1953-1963
- b. 20 f. 1-2 *Tea and Sympathy* 1953-1963
- b. 20 f. 3 *Teddy and Alice* 1983
- b. 20 f. 4 *Terra Nova* undated
- b. 20 f. 5 Three Play Project 1986  
The three plays in this project were *Bodo*, *The Habitation of Dragons*, and *On Borrowed Time*. Also see production files for those plays.
- b. 20 f. 6 *Tomorrow's Monday* 1985
- b. 20 f. 7-9 *Too Late the Phalarope* 1956-1963
- b. 31 f. 1 *Too Late the Phalarope* undated
- b. 21 f. 1 *The Trial of Mr. Pickwick* 1952-1953
- b. 21 f. 2 *Up at the Villa* undated
- b. 21 f. 3 *Valentine's Day* 1985
- b. 21 f. 4 *The Veldt* undated
- b. 21 f. 5 *White Africa* 1959
- b. 21 f. 6-7 *The Widow Claire* undated
- b. 21 f. 8 *The Woman in My Life* 1959

Other Office Files 1948-1985

- b. 22 f. 1-12 1948-1979
- b. 23 f. 1-8 1981-1985
- b. 23 f. 9 Books Read and Reviewed 1957
- Plays Read or Seen and Reviewed 1950-1960
- b. 23 f. 10-11 A-Z 1950-1952
- b. 24 f. 1-4 A-D 1952-1959
- b. 25 f. 1-2 Q-Z 1951-1960

New Dramatists Administrative Records 1950s-1980s

- b. 25 f. 3-4 1950s
- b. 26 f. 1-5 1960s
- b. 27 f. 1-7 1960s
- b. 28 f. 1-11 1960s
- b. 29 f. 1-4 1970s
- b. 30 f. 1-7 1970s-1980s