



The New York Public Library
Music Division

Guide to the

Metropolitan Opera radio scripts

1933-1974

JPB 14-11

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2014

Summary

Creator: Metropolitan Opera House (Organization : Philadelphia, Pa.)

Title: Metropolitan Opera radio scripts

Date: 1933-1974

Size: .63 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Unknown, circa 1976.

Abstract: The Metropolitan Opera has been one of the world's premiere opera companies for well over a century. Its series of live Saturday matinee radio broadcasts began in 1931, featuring host Milton Cross. The Metropolitan Opera radio scripts date from 1933 to 1974, and hold Milton Cross's writings and correspondence in addition to scripts.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

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Preferred citation: Metropolitan Opera radio scripts, JPB 14-11. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

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Creator History

The Metropolitan Opera has been one of the world's premiere opera companies for well over a century. Its series of live network radio broadcasts of Saturday matinee performances began in 1931 on NBC, and over time moved to the ABC and CBS networks before the company founded its own Metropolitan Opera Radio Network in 1960. NBC announcer Milton Cross served as host of the program from the

beginning of the network broadcasts until his death in 1975.

Scope and Content Note

The Metropolitan Opera radio scripts, dating from 1933 to 1974, contain scripts used in the Met's Saturday matinee broadcasts. They feature host Milton Cross summarizing opera plots and biographical information on Met vocalists, as well as interviewing guest singers, conductors, and opera experts.

Most of the scripts are arranged in folders devoted to a single opera, some with multiple scripts from different dates. A general folder holds scripts devoted to profiles of Bidu Sayão, Risë Stevens, and Enrico Caruso. It also has two intermission scripts, one featuring host Geraldine Farrar interviewing Lucrezia Bori, the other a group discussion of bel canto singing with Norman Dello Joio and Robert Merrill.

Milton Cross's files contain scripts, hand-written notes and script drafts; press releases and publicity packets; and correspondence from artist managers, publicity agents, and radio producers. Also present in the Cross files are notes on the history of the Met broadcasts, press releases or correspondence regarding non-Met performances, and typed essays or speeches on broadcast announcing and opera on the radio.

Arrangement: The collection is in three divisions: General, Milton Cross, and scripts arranged by opera title.

Key Terms

Occupations

Announcers
Musicians
Opera singers

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Notes
Press releases
Radio scripts
Speeches (documents)

Geographic Names

New York (N.Y.)

Subjects

Opera -- 20th century
Radio announcing

Names

Bori, Lucrezia, 1887-1960
Cross, Milton, 1897-1975

Dello Joio, Norman, 1913-2008
Farrar, Geraldine, 1882-1967
Merrill, Bob

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 General 1935-1960
- b. 1 f. 2-4 Cross, Milton 1933-1974
- Operas
- b. 1 f. 5 *Don Pasquale*
- b. 1 f. 6 *La Fille du Régiment*
- b. 1 f. 7 *Hansel and Gretel* 1938
- b. 1 f. 8 *Lohengrin* 1940
- b. 1 f. 9 *Lucia di Lammermoor* 1940
- b. 1 f. 10 *The Magic Flute* 1942
- b. 1 f. 11 *Manon* 1939
- b. 2 f. 1 *Rigoletto* 1935-1940
- b. 2 f. 2 *Der Rosenklavier* 1938
- b. 2 f. 3 *Tannhauser*
- b. 2 f. 4 *La Traviata* 1934, 1939
- b. 2 f. 5 *Tristan und Isolde*
- b. 2 f. 6 *Il Trovatore* 1939