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Guide to the

John Marriott papers

1933-1977

Sc MG 149

Summary

Creator: Marriott, John, 1893-1977

Title: John Marriott papers

Date: 1933-1977

Size: 3 linear feet

Abstract: The John Marriott Papers reflect Marriott's acting career in theater, movies and television commercials. The Personal Papers series, 1940-1977, consists of biographical information, news clippings, obituaries, personal correspondence from friends, and certificates.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: John Marriott papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Creator History

John Marriott was an African-American actor whose theater, film and television credits extended over fifty years. He began his career in 1922 as a member of the celebrated Karamu Players of Cleveland, an association he maintained for twelve years. He appeared in Off Broadway theater "The Respectful Prostitute" in 1948 and many Broadway productions, most notably "The Iceman Cometh" in 1946, "The Green Pastures," "The Little Foxes," "The Miracle Worker," "The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui," "Mulatto," "No Way Out," and "You Can't Take It With You," among others. He also appeared in a number of productions at the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C.

Marriott's film performances include "The Little Foxes," "The Joe Louis Story," "The Court-Martial of Billy Mitchell," "The Spirit of St. Louis," and "Dog Day Afternoon." He was also in a number of television shows such as "That Was The Week That Was," "The Patty Duke Show," Hallmark Hall of Fame, and Kraft Theater as well as several soap operas.

Scope and Content Note

The John Marriott Papers reflect Marriott's acting career in theater, movies and television commercials. The Personal Papers series, 1940-1977, consists of biographical information, news clippings, obituaries, personal correspondence from friends, and certificates. The bulk of the collection forms the series Acting Career, 1933-1976. There is professional correspondence containing letters from theatrical people informing Marriott of roles in plays, enclosing scripts that he should read, and other related issues (1933-1976). There are numerous reviews and other articles about his many performances. Marriott's roles with the Arena Stage are documented but only a few items represent his long affiliation with the Karamu Theater. Most of the series consists of play scripts for productions in which Marriott acted, including Broadway shows. Several were written by black playwrights such as Edward Branch, Philip Hayes Dean, Shirley Graham Du Bois, Steve Gordon, Langston Hughes and Lofton Mitchell. Other material in this series includes screenplays, scripts for radio, television commercials and announcements that Marriott performed, and an article entitled "Keep It Small" that he wrote in 1954 for inclusion in a book "How to Act for Television" by William I. Kaufman.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American actors
African American dramatists
African American entertainers
African Americans in radio broadcasting
African Americans in television broadcasting
African Americans in the motion picture industry
African Americans in the performing arts
American drama -- African American authors

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Radio scripts
Screenplays
Scripts
Theater programs

Names

Marriott, John, 1893-1977
Dean, Phillip Hayes
Du Bois, Shirley Graham, 1896-1977
Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967
Mitchell, Lofton