



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Virginia Girvin collection

1891-1975

Sc MG 639

Processed by P. Williams, August 1998, and Miranda-Tarisa Mims, May 05/2013.

Summary

Creator: Girvin, Virginia

Title: Virginia Girvin collection

Date: 1891-1975

Size: 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Purchase from Rosalie P. Jeter, February 1998.

Abstract: Virginia Girvin was an actor, print ad-model, real estate agent, and community activist. As an actor, Girvin worked in multiple mediums such as stage, film, and radio. Her roles were mainly as a domestic, nurse, chorus member, or crowd member. A lifetime member of the Negro Actors Guild, the high point of Girvin's involvement with the organization was in 1970 when she served as its Vice President. Between acting roles and after she could no longer secure that type of work, Girvin was employed as a secretary and a real estate agent. She worked with Donbar Enterprises-Sundale, a real estate development corporation based in Westbury, Long Island, that developed a number of integrated communities throughout the Northeast in the 1960s. The Virginia Girvin papers are comprised of biographical information, drafts of her memoirs, letters primarily acknowledging her volunteer efforts, and one letter from Orson Welles offering his advice on her acting career. There are also playbills (1930s-1950s) from productions in which Girvin appeared; Negro Actors Guild yearbooks and souvenir journals; reviews; book jackets and magazine articles, including *Native Son* by Richard Wright; romance magazines, for which she modeled (1942-1953); and a file on Donbar Enterprises (1961).

Access: Some collections held by the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture 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. To request access to materials in the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, please visit: http://archives.nypl.org/divisions/scm/request_access

Preferred citation: [Item], Virginia Girvin collection, Sc MG 639, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by P. Williams, August 1998, and Miranda-Tarisa Mims, May 05/2013.

Related Materials:

Fredi Washington Papers, Sc Micro R-5002, General Research and Reference Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Negro Actors Guild of America records, Sc MG 259, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Creator History

Virginia Girvin was an actor, print ad-model, real estate agent, and community activist. As an actor, Girvin worked in multiple mediums such as stage, film, and radio. Her roles were mainly as a domestic, nurse, chorus member, or crowd member. A lifetime member of the Negro Actors Guild, the high point of Girvin's involvement with the organization was in 1970 when she served as its Vice President. Between acting roles and after she could no longer secure that type of work, Girvin was employed as a secretary and a real estate agent. She worked with Donbar Enterprises-Sundale, a real estate development corporation based in Westbury, Long Island, that developed a number of integrated communities throughout the Northeast in the 1960s.

Scope and Content Note

The Virginia Girvin papers are comprised of biographical information, drafts of her memoirs, letters primarily acknowledging her volunteer efforts, and one letter from Orson Welles offering his advice on her acting career. There are also playbills (1930s-1950s) from productions in which Girvin appeared; Negro Actors Guild yearbooks and souvenir journals; reviews; book jackets and magazine articles, including *Native Son* by Richard Wright; romance magazines, for which she modeled (1942-1953); and a file on Donbar Enterprises (1961).

Key Terms

Subjects

African American actresses
African American models
Community development, Urban -- New York (State) -- New York
Women in community organization -- New York (State) -- New York
Women volunteers in social service -- United States

Names

Girvin, Virginia
Welles, Orson, 1915-1985
Negro Actors Guild of America

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical information
- b. 1 f. 2 Memoirs
- b. 1 f. 3 Certificates
- b. 1 f. 4 Moore, Alfonso 1891-1974
- b. 1 f. 5 Correspondence 1943-1967
- b. 1 f. 6-7 Playbills 1930s-1960s
- b. 1 f. 8-9 Negro Actors Guild of America 1960-1970s
- b. 1 f. 10 Organizations 1943-1963
- b. 1 f. 11 Donbar Enterprises 1961
- Printed matter
- b. 1 f. 12 Articles
- b. 1 f. 13-14 Advertisements 1942-1963