



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**William Woodman papers**

1914, 1955-1992

\*T-Mss 1996-044

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** Woodman, William, 1932-1995

**Title:** William Woodman papers

**Date:** 1914, 1955-1992

**Size:** 2.2 linear feet (5 boxes, 3 oversized folders)

**Source:** Donated by Robert Falls, 1996.

**Abstract:** William Woodman was a director and stage manager for regional theater productions. The William Woodman papers (1914, 1955-1992) contain annotated scripts and scores and other production materials from shows that Woodman directed. The collection also contains programs, promotional material, clippings, employment contracts, and other materials from the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy, where Woodman worked as an assistant stage manager from 1957 to 1961.

**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:** William Woodman papers, \*T-Mss 1996-044. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2014

## Creator History

William Woodman (1932-1995) was an American director and stage manager. He began his theatrical career as an assistant stage manager for the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy

from 1957 to 1961, and worked on the 1958 tour of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Woodman received an MFA from Columbia University, and he wrote his thesis on the history of the American Shakespeare Festival.

Woodman worked primarily in regional theater, directing productions at the Repertory Theatre of the Loretto-Hilton Center (later Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), Asolo Theatre in Florida, and Syracuse Stage in New York, among others. He was artistic director of the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, where he directed many productions. He also directed for television.

Woodman died in New York City.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The William Woodman papers document Woodman's career from 1957 to 1992. The bulk of the collection consists of Woodman's director files, containing annotated scripts and scores and other production materials from shows that Woodman directed. The collection also contains materials related to the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy (ASFTA).

ASFTA files date primarily from 1957 to 1961, at which time Woodman was working with ASFTA as an assistant stage manager. ASFTA materials include photographs, programs, promotional material, clippings, letters and notes from colleagues, Woodman's contracts, contact lists, rehearsal schedules, scene breakdowns, and ground plans. The photographs are mostly promotional, and include images of actors such as Katharine Hepburn and Earle Hyman. Programs date from 1955 to 1960. Several photographs from a 1914 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are also present. The files also include a copy of Woodman's MFA thesis, *The Third Stratford: A History of the American Shakespeare Festival, 1950-1958*.

Director files contain Woodman's annotated scripts and scores for plays and operas. The annotations include sound and light cues, blocking diagrams, and stage directions. Scripts and scores are sometimes accompanied by other production materials such as director's notes, cast and crew lists, rehearsal and performance schedules, photographs, and copies of costume designs, set designs, and ground plans. A small number of clippings and promotional materials are also present. All of the materials are from theater productions, with the exception of a script and related materials for a 1982 television production of *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

The collection also contains scripts for two productions that Woodman did not direct: *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, with handwritten alterations to the text, and *You Never Know*, as adapted by Paul Lazarus.

Woodman was an assistant stage manager for "A Little Birthday Party for Around the World in 80 Days," a 1957 event hosted by producer Michael Todd. Papers for the event consist of clippings, a cast list, a program, and an instruction sheet for extras.

The collection also contains one to two production photographs from each of the following: *Capriccio* (1968), *Dear Daddy* (1981), *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1989), and from various Goodman Theatre productions between 1973 and 1978.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged in four categories: American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy, Director Files, Other Productions, and Photographs.

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

Directors

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scripts

Theater programs

### **Subjects**

Theater -- Production and direction

### **Names**

American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy

## Container List

### American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy

- b. 1 f. 1-10 1914, 1955-1962, 1976  
Includes promotional photographs of Earle Hyman and others.
- b. 5 f. 1 Much Ado About Nothing--Photograph of Katharine Hepburn 1958
  - o. 1 Much Ado About Nothing--Poster 1958  
LPA C12 Dwr #25
- b. 2 f. 1 The Third Stratford: A History of the American Shakespeare Festival, 1950-1958 1959

### Director Files

- b. 2 f. 2 Becket 1966  
Front Street Theatre in Memphis
- b. 2 f. 3 La Dafne 1973  
Caramoor Festival and Festival dei Due Mondi
- b. 2 f. 4 Design for Living 1976  
Goodman Theatre
- b. 2 f. 5 The Gigli Concert 1991-1992  
University of Chicago Court Theatre
  - o. 2 The Gigli Concert--Ground Plan 1991  
LPA C12 Dwr #25
- b. 2 f. 6 King Lear circa 1975  
Cutting by Richard Matthews
- b. 2 f. 7 The Lighthouse 1990  
Chicago Opera Theater
- b. 3 f. 1-3 Long Day's Journey Into Night 1982, 1988  
Syracuse Stage and television
  - o. 3 Long Day's Journey Into Night--Ground Plans and Set Design 1988  
Television.  
  
LPA C12 Dwr #25
- b. 2 f. 8 Man and Superman 1980  
Asolo Theater
- b. 3 f. 4 Marat/Sade 1972  
Repertory Theatre of St. Louis
- b. 3 f. 5 Misalliance 1960s  
Front Street Theatre in Memphis
- b. 3 f. 6 Othello 1969-1970  
Repertory Theatre of St. Louis

Director Files (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 7 **Richard III** 1977  
Goodman Theatre
- b. 3 f. 8 **Saint Joan** 1989  
Repertory Theatre of St. Louis
- b. 4 f. 1 **Twelfth Night** undated
- b. 4 f. 2 **Twentieth Century** 1973  
Goodman Theatre

Other Productions

- b. 4 f. 3 "A Little Birthday Party for Around the World in 80 Days" 1957
- b. 4 f. 4 'Tis Pity She's a Whore circa 1975
- b. 4 f. 5 You Never Know 1983
- b. 4 f. 6 Photographs 1968, 1981, 1989
- b. 5 f. 2-8 Photographs--Goodman Theatre 1973-1978  
The Freedom of the City, Henry IV, Much Ado About Nothing, The Sea, The Tooth of Crime, and Working.