



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

James Hart Stearns designs

1966-1968

*T-Vim 1998-041

Processed by Kristy Davis.

Summary

Creator: Stearns, James Hart

Title: James Hart Stearns designs

Date: 1966-1968

Size: 3 linear feet (3 boxes, 104 items)

Source: The collection was donated to the library as a gift in 1998 by Nancy G. Toepfer.

Abstract: Costume sketches and 1 box with a maquette by James Hart Stearns.

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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Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Kristy Davis; Machine-readable finding aid created by Kristy Davis.

Creator History

Born in Wichita, Kansas, costume and scene designer, James Hart Stearns first studied painting at Wichita University, then continued studying at the Museum of Fine Arts School in Boston,

Massachusetts. After completing his Masters of Art in Drama at Stanford University in California, he spent a year there as the Artist-In-Residence. Stearns first became associated with the San Francisco Actor's Workshop in 1956 when he designed the sets for the play, *The Plough and the Stars*. Also, during this time he was the Display Director at Gump's, San Francisco's leading department store. However, in 1963, he quit his job at Gump's to become the resident designer of the San Francisco Actor's Workshop where he would remain for the next 13 years. Stearns designed costumes and sets for the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center at the Vivian Beaumont from 1965-1969. During the inaugural season of the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center, he designed the costumes and sets for such plays as, *Danton's Death*, *The Country Wife*, *The Alchemist*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *The East Wind*, *Galileo*, and *Yerma*. Additionally, Stearns designed the costumes and sets for *The Birds*, *The Firebugs*, *Halfway Up the Tree*, *The Night of the Iguana*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Uncle Vanya*. In addition, he designed the costumes and sets for the Stratford Festival and for Broadway productions.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains costume sketches and a maquette primarily from James Hart Stearns tenure at the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center. The material spans the years 1966-1968, but also includes some undated drawings.

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Key Terms

Subjects

Costume design
Theater -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Costume design drawings

Names

Stearns, James Hart
Brecht, Bertolt, 1898-1956
Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 *The Alchemist* 1966 (6 costume sketches)
- b. 1 f. 2 *La Boheme* n.d. (1 costume sketch)
- b. 1 f. 3 *Caucasian Chalk Circle* 1966 (17 female costume sketches)
- b. 1 f. 4 *Caucasian Chalk Circle* 1966 (13 female costume sketches)
- b. 1 f. 5 *Caucasian Chalk Circle* 1966 (36 male costume sketches)
- b. 2 f. 1 *Cyrano de Bergerac* 1968 (8 costume sketches)
- b. 2 f. 2 *Eaves Costume Company* (5 period costume sketches)
- b. 2 f. 3 *The Marriage of Figaro* n.d. (1 costume sketch)
- b. 2 f. 4 *Othello* n.d. (1 costume sketch)
- b. 2 f. 5 *Quality Street* (13 costume sketches)
- b. 2 f. 6 *Yerma* 1966 (5 costume sketches)
- b. 3 *Tiger at the Gates* 1968 (1 maquette)