



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Jerome Mayer papers

1933-1963

*T-Mss 2003-028

Summary

Creator: Mayer, Je_ro_me

Title: Jerome Mayer papers

Date: 1933-1963

Size: (1 portfolio)

Abstract: Jerome "Jerry" Mayer (1910?-1965) was a director, producer, playwright and stage manager, who, though born in Kansas City and based primarily in New York, also served as Managing Director of the Honolulu Community Theatre of Honolulu, Hawaii, from 1956 to 1959. Born into a wealthy family, Mayer was just out of Yale when he first worked on Broadway, as assistant stage manager for the Alfred Lunt-Lynn Fontanne production of ELIZABETH THE QUEEN (1930). In 1933 he took part in a Theatre Festival Tour of the Soviet Union conducted by Harold Clurman. By his mid 20s Mayer was producing such Broadway plays as NOAH (1935) and GOOD HUNTING (1938), the latter of which he also directed. He wrote a play, GOODBYE IN THE NIGHT (1940), which was produced and directed by George Abbott but ran for only eight performances. In later years Mayer worked in Puerto Rico and Australia as well as Hawaii. At the Honolulu Community Theatre Mayer staged eighteen plays and musicals, but he returned to New York in 1960, and directed several plays for the Westchester Arts Festival, Chappaqua, N.Y., between 1961 and 1964. On February 23, 1965, Jerome Mayer was struck by a hit-and-run driver in Manhattan and died without regaining consciousness on March 4, at the age of 55. The Jerome Mayer papers consist mostly of correspondence pertaining to theatrical activities in Honolulu, Hawaii, especially the East-West Center of Hawaii University. In his later years, after he had returned to New York from Hawaii, director-producer Mayer attempted to raise funds to start a new theater troupe in Honolulu. The majority of the collection pertains to these efforts, which appear to have been unsuccessful. Also in the collection is a detailed itinerary of the Theatre Festival Tour of Soviet Russia, May 18 to July 7, 1933, conducted by Harold Clurman under the auspices of The Open Road, Inc. Mayer was present on this tour, and saved a Russian hotel bill as well as two postcards to friends written during the trip. There is also paperwork pertaining to NOAH, Mayer's first Broadway production.

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>

Preferred citation: Jerome Mayer papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

Creator History

Jerome "Jerry" Mayer (1910?-1965) was a director, producer, playwright and stage manager, who, though born in Kansas City and based primarily in New York, also served as Managing Director of the Honolulu Community Theatre of Honolulu, Hawaii, from 1956 to 1959. Born into a wealthy family, Mayer was just out of Yale when he first worked on Broadway, as assistant stage manager for the Alfred Lunt-Lynn Fontanne production of ELIZABETH THE QUEEN (1930). In 1933 he took part in a Theatre Festival Tour of the Soviet Union conducted by Harold Clurman. By his mid 20s Mayer was producing such Broadway plays as NOAH (1935) and GOOD HUNTING (1938), the latter of which he also directed. He wrote a play, GOODBYE IN THE NIGHT (1940), which was produced and directed by George Abbott but ran for only eight performances. In later years Mayer worked in Puerto Rico and Australia as well as Hawaii. At the Honolulu Community Theatre Mayer staged eighteen plays and musicals, but he returned to New York in 1960, and directed several plays for the Westchester Arts Festival, Chappaqua, N.Y., between 1961 and 1964. On February 23, 1965, Jerome Mayer was struck by a hit-and-run driver in Manhattan and died without regaining consciousness on March 4, at the age of 55.

Scope and Content Note

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Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Correspondence

Subjects

Theater -- Hawaii -- Honolulu

Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Theatrical producers and directors -- New York (State) -- New York

Names

Mayer, Je_ro_me