



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**En Garde Arts records**

1980-1999

\*T-Mss 1999-011

Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2014

## Summary

**Creator:** En Garde Arts

**Title:** En Garde Arts records

**Date:** 1980-1999

**Size:** 22.05 linear feet (53 boxes)

**Source:** This collection was donated in 1999 and 2000.

**Abstract:** En Garde Arts (1985-1998) was a non-profit New York theatre company founded by Anne Hamburger, who also served as its artistic director. En Garde Arts was known for site-specific projects, produced in unconventional venues around New York City. The En Garde Arts records document the company's activities with production materials, administrative files, and financial records. Administrative files contain files on development activities and grants, special events, and performance sites. The commercial side of EGA is documented with financial records containing reports and ledgers.

**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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**Processing note:** Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2014

## Creator History

En Garde Arts (1985-1998) was a non-profit New York theatre company founded by Anne Hamburger, who also served as its artistic director. En Garde Arts (EGA) was known for site-specific projects,

produced in unconventional venues around New York City. Often the plays or adaptations were commissioned by EGA to suit a particular performance space or site. Some of these venues included Central Park; a pier; a ballroom; the roof of a school; a hotel room; a construction site; abandoned theatres, showrooms, and warehouses; and often the streets of New York itself.

EGA's first production was *The Ritual Project* (1985). This was followed by *Terminal Bar* (1986); *Naked Chambers* (1987); *3 Pieces for a Warehouse* (1988); *At the Chelsea* (1989); *Plays in the Park* (1989); *Krapp's Last Tape* (1989); *Crowbar* (1990); *Father Was a Peculiar Man* (1990); *Another Person is a Foreign Country* (1991); *Occasional Grace* (1991); *Vanquished by Voodoo* (1992); *Strange Feet* (1993); *Orestes* (1993); *Marathon Dancing* (1994); *Stonewall: Night Variations* (1994); *J. P. Morgan Saves the Nation* (1995); *The Trojan Women: A Love Story* (1996); *The Waste Land* (1996); *Sweet Thereisenstradt* (1997); *Mystery School* (1998); and *The Secret History of the Lower East Side* (1998).

Prominent actors, playwrights, composers, designers, and directors who worked (sometimes in multiple capacities) on pieces produced by EGA included Anne Bogart, Tyne Daly, Marie Irene Fornes, Doug Hughes, Charles M. Lee, Tina Landau, Jonathan Larson, Jefferson Mays, Bill Rauch, Paul Selig, Marin Mazzie, Fiona Shaw, and Mac Wellman. En Garde Arts earned a total of six Obie Awards, two Drama Desk Awards, and one Outer Critics Circle Award.

Anne Hamburger is a graduate of Yale University and has also served as Executive Vice President of Creative Entertainment at the Walt Disney Company and as Artistic Director at La Jolla Playhouse. She has been the president of En Garde Productions since 2009.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The En Garde Arts (EGA) records are arranged in three sections: productions, administrative files, and financial records. The productions section covers the major productions from 1985 to 1998 with correspondence, contracts, scripts, programs, photographs, and publicity materials. Administrative files contain files on development activities and grants, special events, and performance sites. The commercial side of EGA is documented with financial records containing reports and ledgers.

Production Files document the process of putting on productions at unconventional venues. Production materials held in the EGA records consist of street permits and contracts with the creative team, performers, security staff, and crew. Also included are casting notes; rehearsal schedules; receipts for props, costumes, and rental vans; programs; blueprints of performance venues; contact sheets; press releases; and documents outlining fundraising strategies, including benefits and galas. Correspondence generally pertains to rehearsals, performances, rights for music used in productions, contracts, permits, and performance sites. Production files are arranged in alphabetical order by title.

There are also performance photographs, press and publicity materials, and programs from EGA's major productions. Photographs, Scripts and Press Files are separated and arranged in alphabetical order by production title. The same productions are covered as those listed in Production Files.

Administrative Files document the logistics of running an arts organization in New York City with files pertaining to grants, special events, and performance sites. Files pertaining to grants illustrate fully the challenges of trying to finance a not-for-profit theatre company. There are files on the many organizations and foundations from which EGA received funding. The New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts are the most extensively represented. Grant files consist of budgets and drafts of grant proposals, as well as correspondence regarding grant applications and awards.

Special events and projects represented in administrative files often concern benefits and galas designed to generate publicity and to raise money for En Garde Arts. Other special projects include the Prague workshop and the Victory Theatre Project. In 1995, EGA engaged in a cross-cultural collaboration with the Archa Theatre in Prague to produce a theatrical piece based on the diaries of artists imprisoned at Theresienstadt concentration camp during World War II. En Garde Arts also reopened New York's historic Victory Theatre (Victory Theatre Project) on 42nd Street, which had been disused for many years. Special Projects and Events also contain files which EGA's founder Anne Hamburger kept on individuals, conferences, and domestic and international theatre companies and festivals that were doing similar productions or working with EGA. These individuals and companies were often involved with EGA's special projects. Materials documenting special events and projects generally include correspondence, press releases, event scripts, notes, donation solicitations, event invitations, outlines, contracts, programs, photographs, and schedules. There are also promotional materials from event planning and publicity firms.

Files on prospective venues and events document the process of selecting, vetting and negotiating with different performance venues, a process that was essential to a site-specific production company like EGA. Some sites represented include hotels, theatres, opera houses, historic sites, museums, hospitals, banks, nightclubs, jails, studios, and public street locations. These files consist of correspondence, contracts, agreements, floor plans, photographs, and notes, and are arranged by location. Other administrative files consist of board meeting minutes and official documentation of En Garde Arts, such as by-laws.

The Financial Records of the EGA provide valuable insight into the management of a production company. The finances for individual productions are documented with house managers' reports, reports on ticket sales, and box office grosses. The broader finances of the company as a whole are documented with ledgers, payroll documents, investment account reports, quarterly reports, and yearly reports. Financial records are arranged in chronological order. Documents pertaining to a particular production can be found with the files for the year it premiered.

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged in three sections: Productions, Administrative Files, and Financial Records.

## **Key Terms**

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Ledgers  
Photographs  
Programs (documents)  
Scripts

### **Subjects**

Off-Broadway theater -- New York (State)  
Site-specific theater  
Street theater -- United States -- History -- 20th century  
Theater -- Production and direction -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Names**

Hamburger, Anne

## Container List

### Productions 1985-1998

#### Production Files 1985-1998

- b. 1 f. 1-5     *Another Person is a Foreign Country* 1991
- b. 1 f. 6-18     *At the Chelsea* 1986-1989  
*Bad Penny*  
1990-1993
- b. 1 f. 19-20     1990-1993
- b. 2 f. 1-4     1990-1993
- b. 2 f. 5-11     *Cacodemon King* 1992-1994  
*Crowbar*  
See also Victory Theatre Project, Administrative Files.
- b. 2 f. 12-15     1989-1991
- b. 3 f. 1-12     1989-1991
- b. 4 f. 1-8     *Father Was a Peculiar Man* 1989-1990
- b. 4 f. 9-19     *Fun House* 1992-1993
- b. 4 f. 20-21     *Grand Central Station* 1993
- b. 5 f. 1-4     *Infrared* 1997  
*J. P. Morgan Saves the Nation*  
1994-1995
- b. 5 f. 5-19     1994-1995
- b. 10 f. 6-8     1994-1995
- b. 6 f. 1-2     *Krapp's Last Tape* 1989
- b. 8 f. 5-6     *Little West 12th Street* 1990
- b. 6 f. 3-18     *Marathon Dancing* 1992-1994
- b. 7 f. 1-13     *Mystery School* 1997-1998
- b. 7 f. 14-20     *Naked Chambers* 1987
- b. 8 f. 1-4     *Occasional Grace* 1990-1991
- b. 8 f. 7-8     *The Odyssey* 1996  
*Orestes*  
1992-1993
- b. 8 f. 9-11     1992-1993
- b. 9 f. 1-15     1992-1993
- b. 10 f. 1-5     1992-1993
- b. 11 f. 1-11     *Plays in the Park* 1986-1989
- b. 11 f. 12-13     *Polaroid Stories* 1997
- b. 11 f. 14-16     *Ritual Project* 1985-1986  
*The Secret History of the Lower East Side*  
1997-1998
- b. 11 f. 17-19     1997-1998
- b. 12 f. 1-10     1997-1998  
*Stonewall: Night Variations*  
1993-1994
- b. 12 f. 11-23     1993-1994
- b. 13 f. 1-3     1993-1994

Productions (cont.)

Production Files (cont.)

- b. 13 f. 4-14 *Strange Feet* 1993
- b. 14 f. 1-4 *Terminal Bar* 1986
- b. 14 f. 5-9 *Three Pieces for a Warehouse* 1988  
*The Trojan Women*
- b. 14 f. 10-11 1996
- b. 15 f. 1-15 1996
- b. 16 f. 1-11 1996  
*Vanquished by Voodoo*
- b. 16 f. 12-19 1991-1992
- b. 17 f. 1-8 1991-1992
- b. 17 f. 9-21 *The Wasteland* 1996
- Photographs and Scripts 1985-1998
- b. 18 f. 1-18 *Another Person is a Foreign Country - Krapp's Last Tape*
- b. 19 f. 1-18 *Marathon Dancing - The Secret History of the Lower East Side*
- b. 20 f. 1-17 *The Secret History of the Lower East Side - The Wasteland*
- Press Files 1985-1998
- b. 21 f. 1-18 *Another Person is a Foreign Country - Ritual Project*
- b. 22 f. 1-12 *The Secret History of the Lower East Side - The Wasteland*
- b. 23 f. 1-7 *The Wasteland*
- b. 23 f. 8 En Garde Arts
- Administrative Files 1980-1999
- Grants 1980-1999
- b. 24 f. 1-16 ABC - CBS 1993-1999
- b. 25 f. 1-18 Chase Chemical - Department of Cultural Affairs 1992-1998
- b. 26 f. 1-20 Department of Cultural Affairs - The Heathcote Foundation 1988-1998
- b. 27 f. 1-16 Heyward Memorial Fund - Joyce Mertz Gilmore Foundation 1992-1998
- b. 28 f. 1-19 Meet the Composers - National Endowment for the Arts 1988-1999
- b. 29 f. 1-23 National Endowment for the Arts - New York State Council on the Arts  
1988-1999
- b. 30 f. 1-13 New York State Council on the Arts - The Philanthropic Collaborative 1987-  
1996
- b. 31 f. 1-14 Philip Morris - The Shubert Foundation 1987-1998
- b. 32 f. 1-12 Steinberg, Harold and Mimi - Wallace, Lila 1992-1998
- b. 32 f. 13-19 Various 1980-1986
- Special Events 1985-1998
- Galas, Benefits and Special Events
- b. 32 f. 20-24 1985-1986
- b. 33 f. 1-14 1987-1990
- b. 34 f. 1-8 1990-1992
- b. 35 f. 1-22 1992-1993
- b. 36 f. 1-34 1993-1994
- b. 37 f. 1-13 1994-1996

Administrative Files (cont.)

Special Events (cont.)

Galas, Benefits and Special Events (cont.)

- b. 38 f. 1-14      1996-1998
- b. 38 f. 15-22      Undated
- b. 39 f. 1-16      Prague Workshop 1995-1997  
*Sweet Theresienstadt* at the Archa Theatre.
  
- b. 40 f. 1-8      The Victory Theatre Project 1989-1990  
See also *Crowbar*, Production Files.

Prospective Venues and Events 1991-1998

- b. 40 f. 9-15      55 Wall Street - Block Hall 1991-1996
- b. 41 f. 1-29      Brooklyn Hospital - The Lighthouse Inc 1994-1997
- b. 42 f. 1-29      Lower East Side Tenement Museum - System Nightclub 1995-1998
- b. 43 f. 1-12      Times Square - XS NY 1994-1998

Other Administrative Files 1985-1998

- b. 43 f. 13-25      1985-1994
- b. 44 f. 1-22      1995-1998

Financial Records 1989-1998

- b. 45 f. 1-14      1989-1993
- b. 46 f. 1-5      1992-1993
- b. 47 f. 1-9      1993-1994
- b. 48 f. 1-12      1994-1995
- b. 49 f. 1-17      1995-1996
- b. 50 f. 1-7      1996-1997
- b. 51 f. 1-14      1997-1998
- b. 52 f. 1-9      1998
- b. 53 f. 1-2      1998