



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Gustav Blum papers**

1912-1988 [bulk 1915-1953]

\*T-Mss 1996-047

## Summary

**Creator:** Blum, Gustav

**Title:** Gustav Blum papers

**Date:** 1912-1988 [bulk 1915-1953]

**Size:** .63 linear feet (2 boxes)

**Abstract:** Gustav Blum (d. 1963) was an American theater director, producer, actor, and teacher. In 1916, he founded the East-West Players, a group that performed one-act plays, including English translations of Yiddish plays. The East-West Players won the Belasco Cup at the first Little Theater Tournament in 1923. Blum also produced and staged Broadway plays, and worked as a drama teacher in high schools from 1909 until his retirement in 1958. The Gustav Blum papers (1912-1988, bulk 1915-1953) contain a scrapbook, contracts, scripts, photographs, clippings, and other papers documenting Blum's career. The scrapbook dates from 1916 to 1923 and contains clippings and programs of the East-West Players. There are scripts for four plays that Blum produced: *The Shame Woman* (1923), *Gertie* (1926), *My Son* (1924), and *Walk Hard* (1946). The script for *Walk Hard* is a heavily annotated prompt copy; the other scripts have minimal or no annotation. There are also three scripts written or co-written by Blum: *Against the Current*, *Eden*, and *A Sleepless Night*. Contracts date from 1927 to 1946. The collection includes a statement of receipts and disbursements for *Walk Hard* and an estimated budget for *Laughter in the Courtyard*. Photographs consist of images of Blum, an unidentified production photograph, and signed photographs of Bertha Kalich and David Belasco. The collection also contains biographical information, clippings, and copyright records related to Blum's career, dating from 1912 to 1988.

**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>

**Physical Location:** \*T-Mss 1996-047

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**Preferred citation:** Gustav Blum papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

## **Key Terms**

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Contracts  
Scrapbooks  
Scripts (documents)

### **Subjects**

Little theater movement  
Theater -- Production and direction  
Theater, Yiddish -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Occupations**

Theatrical producers and directors