



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Raymond Sovey papers

1923-1960

*T-Vim 2012-084

Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2015

Summary

Creator: Sovey, Raymond, -1966

Title: Raymond Sovey papers

Date: 1923-1960

Size: 4.4 linear feet (12 boxes)

Source: Donated by the Bernard Brandt Organization, 1985

Abstract: Raymond Sovey (1894-1966) was a costume, scenic, and lighting designer for many Broadway productions. The Raymond Sovey papers hold costume and set designs, scripts, correspondence, and photographs documenting his work in the theater.

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: Raymond Sovey papers, *T-Vim 2012-084. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

Processing note: Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2015

Creator History

Raymond Sovey (1894-1966) was a costume, scenic, and lighting designer for many Broadway productions. Sovey studied art at Columbia University. In 1923 he made his debut as a scenic designer for the Theatre Guild's production of *St. Joan*. Sovey was especially prolific during the 1930s, working on shows such as *Twelfth Night* (1930) and *The Damask Cheek* (1942). He also designed the Inland Ice Tray Exhibit in the General Motors Building at the 1939 New York World's Fair. He continued to design for the theatre until 1961. He died in 1966 after retiring to Columbus, Ohio.

Scope and Content Note

The Raymond Sovey papers hold costume and set designs, scripts, correspondence, and photographs documenting his work as a theatrical designer. Scripts are annotated with varying levels of detail and sometimes contain notes on costume ideas, prop lists, and rough set sketches in the margins.

The designs are examples of Sovey's work as both a scenic and costume designer. Various stages of the design process are present, and files may hold rough pencil sketches, full watercolor realizations, and fabric swatches. There are also blueprints from the Inland Ice Tray Exhibit. Many of the designs are not identified by production or performer.

Correspondence primarily documents his work on the Inland Ice Tray Exhibit, though there are some personal notes and holiday cards from friends and colleagues.

Photographs are of Sovey's design work in the theater, and consist of full stage shots for set reference and costume shots of actors. There is a set of reference photographs depicting various scenes such as cruise ships, European villages, and the New York City skyline which Sovey used to create sets.

Arrangement: Alphabetical by file type.

Key Terms

Subjects

Costume design
Costume designers
Set designers
Theater -- United States

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-3 Correspondence 1938-1949
 - Designs 1925-1960
 - Costume Designs
 - b. 11 f. 1 *The Damask Cheek* 1942
 - b. 11 f. 2 *Flame of Love*
 - b. 11 f. 3 *The Mikado* 1927
 - b. 9 f. 1 *The Second Little Show* 1930
 - b. 11 f. 4 *The Third Little Show* 1931
 - b. 11 f. 5 *Twelfth Night* 1930
 - b. 9 f. 2 Unidentified Designs 1925-1960
 - b. 12 f. 1-6 Unidentified Designs 1925-1960
 - Scenic Designs
 - b. 12 f. 7 *Blood Upon the Snow*
 - b. 9 f. 3 Inland Ice Tray Exhibit, 1939 New York World's Fair 1939
 - b. 12 f. 8 *Vagabond King* 1937
 - b. 9 f. 4-5 Unidentified Designs
- Photographs
- Design
- b. 9 f. 6 *Kid Boots*
 - b. 9 f. 7 *Rio Rita*
 - b. 9 f. 8 *Vagabond King* 1943
 - b. 9 f. 9 *Yes My Darling Daughter* 1937
- b. 10 f. 1-7 Unidentified Productions
 - b. 10 f. 8-10 Reference
 - b. 12 f. 9 Reference
- Scripts
- b. 1 f. 4 *Antigone*
 - b. 1 f. 5 *Bad Angel*
 - b. 1 f. 6 *Boudoir*
 - b. 1 f. 7 *The Chalk Garden*
 - b. 1 f. 8 *The Clover Ring*
 - b. 2 f. 1 *Come Be My Love*
 - b. 2 f. 2 *Cousin Theresa*
 - b. 2 f. 3 *Crime Without Passion*
 - b. 2 f. 4 *Drums of Peace*
 - b. 2 f. 5 *Edward My Son*
 - b. 2 f. 6 *Errand for Bernice*
 - b. 2 f. 7 *Forever is Now*
 - b. 3 f. 1 *The Green Bay Tree*

Scripts (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 2 *Harvest of Years*
- b. 3 f. 3 *Heaven Can Wait*
- b. 3 f. 4 *If I Were You*
- b. 3 f. 5 *In My Father's House*
- b. 3 f. 6 *L'Invitation au Chateau*
- b. 4 f. 1 *Judy O'Connor*
- b. 4 f. 2 *Jupiter Laughs*
- b. 4 f. 3 *Knights of Song*
- b. 4 f. 4 *Ladies in Retirement*
- b. 4 f. 5 *Last Sunday*
- b. 4 f. 6 *Laughing Water*
- b. 4 f. 7 *A Letter for the Bottle*
- b. 4 f. 8 *Letters to Lucerne*
Third act only.

- b. 4 f. 9 *Lower North*
- b. 5 f. 1 *Mother's Day*
- b. 5 f. 2 *No Man is an Island*
- b. 5 f. 3 *One Bright Day*
- b. 5 f. 4 *The Painted Days*
- b. 5 f. 5 *Parlor Story*
- b. 5 f. 6 *People Like Us*
- b. 5 f. 7 *The Petrified Forest*
- b. 5 f. 8 *A Place of Our Own*
- b. 6 f. 1 *Plans for Tomorrow*
- b. 6 f. 2 *Rhyme Without Reason*
- b. 6 f. 3 *The Rich Full Life*
- b. 6 f. 4 *Ridin' on His Pony*
- b. 6 f. 5 *Ring Around Elizabeth*
- b. 6 f. 6 *Romancero*
- b. 6 f. 7 *A Royal Affair*
- b. 6 f. 8 *The Ryan Girl*
- b. 7 f. 1 *She Sits Smiling*
- b. 7 f. 2 *Song Before Breakfast*
- b. 7 f. 3 *Star Spangled Widow*
- b. 7 f. 4 *Suds In Your Eye*
- b. 7 f. 5 *This, Too, Shall Pass*
- b. 7 f. 6-7 *The Vagabond King*
- b. 8 f. 1 *The Web and the Rock*
- b. 8 f. 2 *The Wizard of Oz*
- b. 8 f. 3 *The Woman Brown*
- b. 8 f. 4-7 Unidentified Scripts