



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Joshua Ellis papers

1975-1990 [bulk 1981-1990]

*T-Mss 1991-011

Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2013

Summary

Creator: Ellis, Joshua

Title: Joshua Ellis papers

Date: 1975-1990 [bulk 1981-1990]

Size: 11.59 linear feet (28 boxes)

Source: Donated by Joshua Ellis, 1991.

Abstract: Joshua Ellis was a theatrical press representative active from the 1970s until the early 2000s. He represented over 60 Broadway shows as well as Off-Broadway and touring productions. The Joshua Ellis papers hold clippings, press releases, publicity photographs, theater programs, and other publicity materials for productions, theater companies, and individuals whom Ellis represented between 1981 and 1990.

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>

Conditions Governing Access:

Inquiries regarding audio/visual materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Conditions Governing Use: The author/creator retains copyright of materials. For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Theatre Division at theatrediv@nypl.org.

Preferred citation: Joshua Ellis papers, *T-Mss 1991-011. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Kit Fluker, 2013 Loose materials were placed in folders.

Creator History

Joshua Ellis was a theatrical press representative for over 60 Broadway shows as well as Off-Broadway and touring productions. He began his career in the 1970s, joining the public relations firm Solters & Roskin (later Solters/Roskin/Friedman). In 1987, he established his own press agency, the Joshua Ellis Office. He represented such productions as *Big River* (1985), *Into the Woods* (1987), *Lend Me a Tenor* (1989), and revivals of *The King and I* starring Yul Brynner (1983) and Rudolf Nureyev (1989). He moved to California in the 1990s, where he continued to work in public relations. In the 2000s, he returned to New York City. He is now an interfaith minister.

Scope and Content Note

The Joshua Ellis papers date from 1981 to 1990, with some material from 1975. The papers consist of clippings and promotional materials for productions, theater companies, and individuals whom Ellis represented through Solters/Roskin/Friedman and through his own press agency.

Reviews and articles, press releases, publicity photographs, and theater programs make up the bulk of the collection. Reviews and articles consist of newspaper and magazine clippings; transcripts of reviews and press coverage from radio and television are also present. Clippings sometimes have highlighting, annotation, or other markings. Photographs consist of prints and slides; the majority of photographs are cast member headshots, scenes from productions, and publicity shots of actors in costume. The collection includes some drafts and preparatory materials for print advertisements, articles, and souvenir programs. The papers also hold memoranda concerning press schedules, press coverage, and expenses.

The best-represented productions in the collection are *Big River*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, and *The King and I* with Rudolf Nureyev. Other productions in the collection include *Blame It on the Movies*, *The Cemetery Club*, *Into the Woods*, *Lend Me a Tenor*, Aaron Sorkin's *Making Movies*, *Orpheus Descending*, *Shenandoah*, and *Truly Blessed: A Musical Celebration of Mahalia Jackson*. *Shenandoah* materials include photographs from the 1975 production in addition to material from the 1989 revival that Ellis represented. Scripts are present for *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Cemetery Club*, and *Truly Blessed*, and sheet music is present for *Into the Woods*. There is one folder of material from the 1981 national tour of *Peter Pan*, consisting of proposed advertising budgets and promotional schedules.

Ellis's clients included producers Ed Mirvish and David Mirvish. The collection holds photographs of the two, programs from their productions, and articles and press releases about them and about two theaters they owned, the Royal Alexandra in Toronto and the Old Vic in London. There is a small amount of material related to the Non-Traditional Casting Project, consisting of press releases, clippings, schedules, and notes for a 1990 conference, and published transcripts from a 1986 conference. The collection also holds files regarding several theater companies that Ellis represented.

A small number of audio and video recordings are present in the collection. Recordings consist of promotional material and press coverage. Inquiries regarding audio/visual materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatrediv@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged alphabetically by production title or client name. Clippings for

The King and I with Yul Brynner are grouped with the Royal Shakespeare Company clippings, and can be found under the latter file heading.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Clippings (information artifacts)

Occupations
Press agents

Container List

Big River

- b. 1 f. 1-11 1984-1985
- b. 7 f. 1-10 1984-1987
- b. 8 f. 1-8 1985-1986
- b. 28 f. 1-4 1985-1986
- b. 2 f. 1-11 1985-1987
- b. 3 f. 1-7 1985-1987
- b. 5 f. 1-8 1985-1987
- b. 6 f. 1-7 1985-1987
- b. 4 f. 1-7 1985-1988
- b. 22 f. 1-3 Blame It on the Movies 1988-1989
- b. 21 f. 3-7 Blame It on the Movies 1989
- b. 25 f. 1-8 The Cemetery Club 1987-1990
- b. 26 f. 1-4 The Cemetery Club 1989-1990
- b. 12 f. 8 English Shakespeare Company 1988-1989
Slides only.

Into the Woods

- b. 22 f. 4-6 1987-1989
- b. 23 f. 1-9 1987-1989
- b. 28 f. 6 1989

The King and I

With Rudolf Nureyev.

- b. 16 f. 1-7 1989
- b. 14 f. 4-10 1989-1990
- b. 15 f. 1-8 1989-1990
- b. 12 f. 10 Laughing Matters 1989
Slides only.
- b. 20 f. 2-9 Lend Me a Tenor 1989
- b. 21 f. 1-2 Lend Me a Tenor 1989
- b. 24 f. 1-14 Making Movies 1989-1990

Meet Me in St. Louis

- b. 28 f. 5 1988
- b. 10 f. 1-10 1988-1989
- b. 12 f. 1-4 1988-1989
- b. 8 f. 9-10 1989
- b. 9 f. 1-8 1989-1990
- b. 11 f. 1-8 1989-1990

Ed and David Mirvish

- b. 12 f. 12 1987-1988
- b. 13 f. 1-8 1987-1990

Ed and David Mirvish (cont.)

- b. 14 f. 1-3 1987-1990
- b. 12 f. 11 New Musicals' Kiss of the Spider Woman 1990
- b. 12 f. 5-7 Non-Traditional Casting Project 1988, 1990
 - b. 12 f. 9 Once on This Island 1990
- b. 26 f. 5-11 Orpheus Descending 1988-1989
- b. 27 f. 1-10 Orpheus Descending 1988-1990
 - b. 24 f. 15 Peter Pan 1981
Previously assigned call number MWEZ + n.c. 27,813.
- b. 18 f. 1-8 Royal Shakespeare Company and The King and I 1983-1985
- b. 19 f. 1-2 Royal Shakespeare Company and The King and I 1984-1985
- b. 17 f. 1-8 Shenandoah 1975, 1989
- b. 19 f. 3-11 Truly Blessed 1990
 - b. 20 f. 1 Truly Blessed 1990