



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Theatre Library Association records

1936-2005

*T-Mss 1997-043

Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2014.

Summary

Creator: Theatre Library Association

Title: Theatre Library Association records

Date: 1936-2005

Size: 13.86 linear feet (33 boxes); 193.2 mb (167 computer files)

Source: Donated by the Theatre Library Association.

Abstract: The Theatre Library Association is a professional organization founded in 1937 for librarians, archivists, curators, and scholars focusing on the performing arts. The Theatre Library Association records contain the administrative records of the organization from 1936 to 2005.

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. The floppy disks, zip disks, and CDs that comprise the electronic records were forensically imaged for preservation.

Creator History

The Theatre Library Association (TLA) is a professional organization for librarians, archivists, and curators, established "to advance the interests of all those involved in collecting and preserving performing arts materials and in utilizing those materials for the purpose of scholarship." TLA was founded in 1937, and its first president was George Freedley, then Curator of the New York Public

Library's Theatre Collection. In 1938, TLA was officially accepted as an affiliate of the American Library Association. TLA is governed by an executive board of directors which meets three times a year.

In 1940, TLA began publishing a newsletter, *Broadside*, three times a year. Since 2006, *Broadside* has been an online publication. In 1974, TLA began publishing a more extensive monograph, *Performing Arts Resources (PAR)*. *PAR* was published annually until 1998, and has been published every few years since then. TLA has also co-hosted many conferences with the American Society for Theatre Research.

TLA annually presents the TLA Book Awards to distinguished works in the field of performing arts scholarship. The George Freedley Memorial Award, which was established in 1968, honors a book on live performance; and the Richard Wall Memorial Award, established in 1973, honors a book on recorded or broadcast performance. TLA also annually gives out a professional award, the Louis Rachow Distinguished Service in Performing Arts Librarianship Award. Since 2011, TLA has awarded the Brooks McNamara Performing Arts Librarian Scholarship to a student enrolled in an MLS or archival training program specializing in performing arts librarianship.

The Theatre Library Association is based in New York City.

Scope and Content Note

The Theatre Library Association (TLA) Records contain the administrative records of the organization, from 1936 to 2005. These records document TLA's history through administrative files, meeting minutes, TLA publications and materials relating to TLA's awards, conferences, and affiliate organizations.

Administrative files illustrate all aspects of running an active professional organization. Correspondence covers such topics as the founding of the Theatre Library Association, the 1937 meeting of the American Library Association, members' attendance at meetings, speakers lecturing to the TLA membership, committee appointments, and activities of various TLA committees. Other administrative files include financial records that document negotiations with contributing writers, editors and vendors regarding publications; galleys of *Broadside*; and transcripts of papers delivered at TLA meetings. Official documents, such as TLA's articles of incorporation, charter, and by-laws can be found in boxes 1 and 9.

The electronic records component of the administrative files contains letters, memos, meeting notes, agendas, and articles for *Broadside*. The bulk of the electronic records in this collection document four issues of *Performing Arts Resources* with electronic versions of all content for the journal, including articles, introductions, covers, titles pages, credit pages, and images; as well as correspondence regarding the publication and content of the journal.

Meeting minutes consist of agendas, minutes, and committee reports from both the executive board meetings and the annual business meeting open to the entire TLA membership. Programs for meetings, lecture programs, and conferences are also included with meeting minutes. Correspondence regarding meetings and meeting minutes can also be found in the administrative files.

The Awards annually presented by TLA are well represented in this collection. The Book Awards are documented with calls for nominations, lists of nominated books, and correspondence from committee co-chairs regarding the submission and selection process. The Distinguished Service Award is documented with ballots and correspondence. Also found here are lists of winners and press releases, as well as invitations to and photographs of the awards ceremony. Additional correspondence

pertaining to the Book Awards can also be found in the administrative files.

Conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by TLA are documented with abstracts and full-texts of papers, questionnaires, and conference programs, packets, agendas, schedules, and attendee lists. Correspondence negotiating speakers, venues, and conference programming can be found here. Materials pertaining to programs, events, and panels from TLA's early days are included with administrative files. The affiliate organizations with which TLA often co-sponsored conferences and events included the American Society for Theatre Research, the International Association of Libraries, Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts (SIBMAS), the American Library Association, the Special Library Association, the Society of American Archivists, and the American Theatre Association. The 1993 Midwest Archives Conference in Chicago is documented with electronic records, including letters, memos, meeting minutes, agendas, and exhibition write-ups.

Arrangement: The Theatre Library Association records are arranged in the following groups: Administrative Files, Meeting Files, Awards, and Conferences.

Key Terms

Subjects

Film criticism
Library science
Library science -- Awards -- 20th century
Library science -- Societies, etc
Performing arts

Container List

Administrative Files 1936-2005

- b. 1 f. 1-5 1936-1938
Contains founding documents.
- b. 2 f. 1-4 1939-1940
- b. 3 f. 1-5 1940-1941
- b. 4 f. 1-6 1941-1944
- b. 5 f. 1-7 1945-1971
- b. 6 f. 1-9 1957-1967
- b. 7 f. 1-5 1968-1984
- b. 8 f. 1-5 1970-1971
- b. 9 f. 1-10 1972-1986
Contains Articles of Incorporation.
- b. 10 f. 1-10 1977-1991
- b. 11 f. 1-11 1970s-1997
- b. 12 f. 1-17 1985-1996
- b. 13 f. 1-5 1992-1993
- b. 14 f. 1-16 1992-1997
1993
er.1 (17 Computer Files (1.43 Megabytes.))
Performing Arts Resources 17/18
1993-1995
er.2 (21 Computer Files (13.95 Megabytes.))
Performing Arts Resources 20
- b. 15 f. 1-17 1995-2003
1995
er.3 (9 Computer Files (925.8 Kilobytes.))
Performing Arts Resources 19
1999
er.4 (45 Computer Files (10.3 Megabytes.))
Performing Arts Resources 21
1999
er.5 (4 Computer Files (69.67 Kilobytes.))
Broadside.
- b. 16 f. 1-16 1999-2004
2000-2001
er.6 (167 Computer Files (630.8 Megabytes.) 45 Computer Files (166.2 Megabytes.))
Performing Arts Resources 22
2001-2004
er.7 (13 Computer Files (312.5 Kilobytes.))
- b. 17 f. 1-14 2002-2005
- Meeting Files 1967-2005
- b. 17 f. 15-19 1967-1972

Meeting Files (cont.)

- b. 18 f. 1-18 1970-1980
- b. 19 f. 1-21 1981-1990
- b. 20 f. 1-20 1990-1994
- b. 21 f. 1-27 1994-2000
- b. 22 f. 1-18 2000-2003
- b. 23 f. 1-9 2003-2005

Awards 1968-2003

- b. 23 f. 10-15 1968-1980
- b. 24 f. 1-10 1977-1985
- b. 25 f. 1-17 1986-1995
- b. 34 f. 1 1993
- b. 26 f. 1-15 1994-2001

Conferences 1969-2003

- b. 27 f. 1-7 1969-1977
- b. 28 f. 1-8 1977-1981
- b. 29 f. 1-5 1981-1983
- b. 30 f. 1-11 1982
- b. 31 f. 1-7 1982-1985
- b. 32 f. 1-11 1987-1995
- 1991-1993
- er.8 (14 computer files (52.23 Kilobytes.))
- Midwest Archives Conference
- b. 33 f. 1-15 1993-2003