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Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Ted Chapin papers on Follies

1967-2014

*T-Mss 2015-001

Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2015.

Summary

Creator: Chapin, Theodore S.

Title: Ted Chapin papers on Follies

Date: 1967-2014

Size: 5.3 linear feet (13 boxes); 80.32 Megabytes (1 computer file)

Source: Donated by Theodore S. Chapin, 2015.

Abstract: Ted Chapin (1950-) is an American arts administrator, director and musical director, who has been at the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization since 1981, serving as president and executive director since 1983. In 1971 he was a production assistant for the original Broadway production of Follies. The Ted Chapin papers on Follies (1967-2014) consist of scripts, scores, original diaries, and other research materials Chapin created or collected on the original production of Follies. The papers contain drafts, correspondence and publicity materials for Ted Chapin's memoir Everything Was Possible: The Birth of the Musical Follies.

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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Creator History

Theodore S. "Ted" Chapin was born in 1950. His father, Schuyler Chapin, served as general manager

of the Metropolitan Opera, cultural affairs commissioner of New York City and dean of the School of the Arts at Columbia University. Ted Chapin began his career as a production or directorial assistant for the original Broadway productions of *Follies*, *The Rothchilds*, and *The Unknown Soldier and His Wife*. He would subsequently work on the original Broadway production of Neil Simon's *The Sunshine Boys*, the television adaptation of *Twigs*, and Neil Cuthbert's *The Soft Touch*. He was musical director for the National Theatre of the Deaf's production of *Four Saints in Three Acts*, and producer of the Musical Theatre Lab.

In 1981, Chapin began his career at the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization, where he is currently president and executive director. He has previously served as chairman of the Board of Trustees for the American Theatre Wing and was chairman of the Advisory Committee for New York City Center's Encores! series from its inception. He serves on the boards of several organizations, including Goodspeed Musicals, New Music USA, and New York City Center. He served as a Tony Awards nominator for two seasons, and is a member of the Tony Administration Committee.

In the late 1990s, Chapin began a project he had been contemplating for years, writing a memoir about his experiences working on the original production of *Follies*. His book, *Everything Was Possible: The Birth of the Musical Follies*, was published by Alfred A. Knopf in 2003, and in paperback by Applause Books in 2005.

The musical *Follies*, which uses the format of a musical revue to tell the story of a reunion of aging showgirls, was written by James Goldman (book) and Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics). The original production was co-directed by Harold Prince and Michael Bennett and choreographed by Michael Bennett. It played on Broadway at the Winter Garden Theatre from March 24, 1971 to July 1, 1972.

Scope and Content Note

The Ted Chapin papers on *Follies* (1967-2014) consist of material Chapin assembled concerning the musical *Follies*. These include research files on both the original (1971) and subsequent productions (1972-2012) and files documenting the writing and publication of his memoir, *Everything Was Possible: The Birth of the Musical Follies*.

The research files contain Chapin's personal diaries and correspondence dating from the time he worked as a production assistant on the original production, drafts of the scripts, copyist sheet music, programs, set plans, copies of reviews, photographs, and sound recordings. The diaries and correspondence provide insight into his thoughts and impressions of the process of putting on *Follies* and the interactions of the prominent theater and film personalities involved. Drafts of the script show its evolution from *The Girls Upstairs* in 1967 to the version that opened on Broadway in 1971. Photographs not only document *Follies* in performance, but also the rehearsals, company meetings, and collaboration sessions. Rare sound recordings include Sondheim performing songs from the score on the first day of rehearsal, a partial recording of the final dress rehearsal before the out of town tryout at Boston's Colonial Theater, and Yvonne deCarlo's final performance of "Can That Boy Foxtrot."

Book Files contain materials collected as research for the book and files generated during its writing. The multiple drafts show Chapin's revision process as he received input from Robert Gottlieb and other Knopf editors. Chapin corresponded with as many members of the original *Follies* creative team and company as he was able to reach, most notably Harold Prince, Stephen Sondheim, Kurt Peterson, and David Edward Byrd. Many of these letters contain facts and stories about *Follies* as well as feedback on drafts of the book and the finished product. There are extensive notes on interviews and conversations

he planned or conducted and revisions to be made to the text based on input from those he interviewed and with whom he corresponded.

Documents and correspondence illustrate the process of securing rights and permissions for photographs, images, and lyrics reproduced in the book. Changes to the paperback edition (published by Applause in 2005) are documented here, as well as the images and copy for the book's cover. Publicity materials include correspondence between Chapin and Knopf staff members and Bert Fink, Chapin's colleague (at that time vice president in charge of Special Event and Public Relations) at the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization discussing promotional events and planning a publicity campaign for the book.

The materials generated in response to Chapin's book consist of letters and reviews. He received many letters in response to the book, from close friends, colleagues, prominent members of the theatre industry, and theatre scholars, as well as from fans, including many who had seen and loved the original *Follies*. He received letters from several members of the original company. Chapin received the 2004 Special Jury Prize for the George Freedley Memorial Award at the Theatre Library Association's Book Awards. This event is documented with correspondence and the awards ceremony program.

Audio and video recordings are unavailable pending digitization.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged in two categories: Follies Research Materials and Book Files.

Key Terms

Occupations

Arts administrators
Biographers

Subjects

Autobiography
Musicals
Musicals -- Production and direction -- New York (State) -- New York
Musicals -- United States -- History and criticism
Theater -- Production and direction

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Correspondence
Photographs
Programs (documents)
Scores
Scripts (documents)
Sound recordings

Names

Bennett, Michael, 1943-1987
Goldman, James
Prince, Harold, 1928-
Sondheim, Stephen

Container List

Follies Research Materials 1967-202

Original Production

- b. 1 f. 1-6 Chapin's Correspondence, Diaries, Notes, and Notebooks 1970-1971
Live Performance Recordings - Boston 1971 March 12, 1971 March 20
origsr.225715
Includes Yvonne deCarlo's final performance of "Can That Boy Foxtrot."

Unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 1 f. 7-15 Photographs 1971
- b. 2 f. 1 Programs 1971-1972
- b. 2 f. 2-7 Publicity Materials 1970-1972
Rehearsal Recording - Final Run Through with Orchestra Before First
Preview in Boston 1971 February 20
origsr.225716
Unavailable pending digitization.
- b. 2 f. 11 Reunion of Original Cast 2003
Scripts and Excerpts
 The Girls Upstairs
 Original title of *Follies*.
- b. 2 f. 8 Circa 1967
- b. 2 f. 9 1967 July, 1967 September 8
Includes copies of contract between David Merrick and Leland Hayward and casting
notes.
- b. 2 f. 10 1968 April
Follies
- b. 3 f. 1 1970 September
- b. 3 f. 2 1970 October
- b. 3 f. 3 1971 January 2
- b. 3 f. 4 Revised Pages from First Day of Rehearsal
- b. 3 f. 5 1971 April 4
- b. 3 f. 6 Lyrics 1971
- b. 13 f. 1-2 Scores
Copyist Copies.

Sondheim Playing the Score at the First Reading - Recording 1971 January 7
origsr.225715
Unavailable pending digitization.
- #### Later Productions
- b. 3 f. 7-8 1972-1985
- b. 4 f. 1-5 1986-2012

Follies Research Materials (cont.)

Later Productions (cont.)

2006 September

origvid.225717

Live Performance Video Recording (Landor Theatre, London).

Unavailable pending digitization.

2012

er.1 (5 computer files, 69.23 Megabytes)

b. 5 f. 1 *General Correspondence Regarding Follies*

Book Files 1971-2014

Drafts

b. 5 f. 2 Introduction, Acknowledgments, and Afterward 2003

b. 5 f. 3-9 Early Draft with Research Materials 1971, circa 2000
Includes originals and copies of Chapin's 1971 notes, diary entries, and other documents.

b. 6 f. 1 First Draft - "Follies Journal"

b. 6 f. 2-3 Draft Sent to Bob Gottlieb 2002 May 28

b. 6 f. 4-5 Draft with Revision Notes 2003 February 25

b. 7 f. 1-2 Draft with Revision Notes 2003 February 25

b. 7 f. 3-4 Draft with Revision Notes 2003 April 9

b. 7 f. 5 Draft Sent to Bobby G 2003 May 2

b. 8 f. 1-3 Drafts with Revision Notes 2003 June

b. 8 f. 4-5 Draft Returned by Knopf on October 1, 2004

b. 9 f. 1 Draft Returned by Knopf on October 1, 2004

b. 9 f. 2 Dust Jacket / Cover 2004-2006

b. 9 f. 3-4 Interviews, Lists of Questions, and Notes on Conversations 2001-2005

b. 9 f. 5-6 Paperback Edition 2004-2006

Photograph Captions, Permissions, and Rights

b. 9 f. 7 2002-2003

b. 10 f. 1-3 2002-2003

b. 13 f. 3 2002-2003

b. 10 f. 4-5 Planning Correspondence, Ideas, and Proposals 1999-2003

b. 10 f. 6-8 Publicity Materials and Correspondence 2002-2007

b. 10 f. 9 Revisions, Comments, and Notes 2003

b. 11 f. 1-4 *Research Material on Follies and Stephen Sondheim in General* 1996-2014

Response to Book

Letters from Friends, Colleagues, and Fans

b. 11 f. 5-6 2003-2004

b. 12 f. 1-3 2003-2011

b. 12 f. 4-6 Reviews and Awards 2003-2014