



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Lee Simonson Photographs**

1871-1937 [bulk 1915-1937]

\*T-Vim1942-002

Compiled by C. Dee, 2015.

## Summary

**Creator:** Simonson, Lee, 1888-1967

**Title:** Lee Simonson Photographs

**Date:** 1871-1937 [bulk 1915-1937]

**Size:** 3.25 linear feet (13 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Lee Simonson, 1942.

**Abstract:** The Lee Simonson Photographs consist of over 340 black and white photographs of his theater sets, costumes and research materials, spanning from 1871-1937 (bulk dates 1915-1937).

**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:** Lee Simonson Photographs, \*T-Mss 1942-002. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by C. Dee, 2015.

## Creator History

Lee Simonson (1888-1967) was a noted set and costume designer for numerous Broadway shows, as well as for the Washington Square Players, early in his career. A founding member of the Theatre Guild, he also wrote several books on design, including *The Stage is Set* (Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1932).

Notable productions include *As You Like It* (1923), *Don Juan* (1921), *The Faithful* (1919), *Heartbreak House* (1920), *Marco Millions* (1928), *Martinique* (1920), and *Peer Gynt* (1923).

## Scope and Content Note

The Lee Simonson Photographs consist of over 340 black and white photographs of his theater sets, costumes and research materials, spanning from 1871-1937 (bulk dates 1915-1937).

Among the productions designed by Simonson that are well-represented in the collection are *As You Like It* (1923), *Don Juan* (1921), *The Faithful* (1919), *Heartbreak House* (1920), *Marco Millions* (1928), *Martinique* (1920), and *Peer Gynt* (1923).

The photographs are by Francis Bruguière, Vandamm, White Studio, and Ira D. Schwartz. Some mounts are signed.

A number of the photographs in the research materials were used in one of Simonson's books, *The Stage Is Set* (Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1932) and include photographs of set designs and illustrations by other designers such as Adolphe Appia, Edward Gordon Craig, Robert Edmond Jones, and others spanning several centuries. There are also several photographs of theatres, New York City's Garrick Theatre and Guild Theatre; topics related to scenic design also in the collection include lighting and perspective. Several of the research photographs are by Peter A. Juley & Son and one by John Wallace Gillies, Inc.

Additional research materials include a few late 19th century publications, mostly in German.

**Arrangement:** The collection is organized into two topics: Lee Simonson Photographs and Research Materials, then alphabetically.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

Costume design  
Theaters -- Stage setting and scenery

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographs  
Serials

### Names

Bruguière, Francis Joseph  
Schwartz, Ira D.  
Peter A. Juley & Son  
Vandamm  
White Studio -- (New York, N.Y.)

## Container List

### Lee Simonson Photographs

- b. 1 f. 1 *(The) Adding Machine* 1923  
Includes 7 photographs by Francis Bruguière; some mounts signed.
- b. 1 f. 2-3 *As You Like It* 1923  
Includes 12 photographs by Francis Bruguière; mounts signed.
- b. 1 f. 4-5 *Back to Methuselah* 1922  
Includes 8 photographs by Francis Bruguière; some mounts signed.
- b. 2 f. 1 *(The) Camel Through the Needle's Eye* 1929  
Includes 5 photographs by Vandamm on 4 mounts.
- b. 2 f. 2 *(The) Cat Bird* 1920  
Includes 3 photographs: 2 by Francis Bruguière; 1 photograph and 1 mount signed.
- b. 2 f. 3 *(The) Dance of Death* 1920  
Includes 2 photographs: 1 by Francis Bruguière; 1 mount signed.
- b. 2 f. 4-6 *Don Juan* 1921  
Includes 15 photographs: some by Francis Bruguière; some mounts signed; 2 photographs by Ira D. Schwartz.
- b. 2 f. 7 *Dynamo* 1929  
Includes 2 photographs by Vandamm; 1 mount signed.
- b. 3 f. 1 *(The) Failures* 1919  
Includes 2 photographs.
- b. 3 f. 2-4 *(The) Faithful* 1919  
Includes 14 photographs on 13 mounts; 1 mount and some photographs signed by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 3 f. 5-6 *Faust* 1928  
Includes 8 photographs by Vandamm; some mounts signed.
- b. 4 f. 1-2 *From Morn to Midnight* 1922  
Includes 11 photographs by Francis Bruguière; mounts signed.
- b. 4 f. 3 *Goat Song* 1926
- b. 4 f. 3 *He Who Gets Slapped* 1922  
Includes 2 photographs.
- b. 4 f. 4-6 *Heartbreak House* 1920  
Includes 12 photographs by Francis Bruguière and Ira D. Schwartz; some mounts signed. Also includes 1 mount signed by Bruguière without photograph.
- b. 4 f. 7 *Hotel Universe* 1930  
Includes 1 photograph by Vandamm.

Lee Simonson Photographs (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 1 *Iphigenia in Tauris* 1917  
Includes 2 photographs.
- b. 5 f. 2 *Jane Clegg* 1920
- b. 5 f. 3 *Juarez and Maximilian* 1926  
Includes 8 photographs on 4 mounts.
- b. 5 f. 4-5 *Liliom* 1921  
Includes 9 photographs; some by Francis Bruguière; some mounts signed.
- b. 5 f. 6 *(The) Lucky One* 1922  
Includes 4 photographs; 1 mount signed by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 6 f. 1 *(The) Magical City* 1916
- b. 6 f. 1 *Man and the Masses* 1924
- b. 6 f. 2-3 *Marco Millions* 1928  
Includes 11 photographs by Vandamm; most are signed.
- b. 6 f. 4-5 *Martinique* 1920  
Includes 12 photographs; 8 signed by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 6 f. 6 *(The) Masque of Kings* 1937  
Includes 2 photographs.
- b. 7 f. 1-2 *Miracle at Verdun* 1931  
Includes 9 photographs by Vandamm; 10 mounts signed.
- b. 7 f. 3 *(A) Miracle of St. Anthony* 1915  
Includes 2 photographs by White Studio.
- b. 7 f. 3 *Molière* 1919  
Includes 1 photograph by White Studio.
- b. 7 f. 4 *Overtones* 1915  
Includes 1 photograph by White Studio.
- b. 8 f. 1-3 *Peer Gynt* 1923  
Includes 16 photographs; 15 with mounts signed by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 8 f. 4-5 *Pierre Patelin* 1916  
Includes 7 photographs; "White Studio" visible in 6.
- b. 8 f. 6 *(The) Power of Darkness* 1920  
Includes 7 photographs on 6 mounts; 2 signed by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 9 f. 1 *(The) Red Cloak* 1916  
Includes 4 photographs; "White Studio" visible in 1 photograph.
- b. 9 f. 2-3 *(The) Rise of Silas Lapham* 1919  
Includes 7 photographs; 5 signed by Francis Bruguière; 2 with notes on verso that photograph is by Francis Bruguière (mount torn on upper right of 1 photograph).

Lee Simonson Photographs (cont.)

- b. 9 f. 4 *(The) Road to Rome* 1927  
Includes 1 photograph by White Studio.
- b. 9 f. 5 *Roar China* 1930  
Includes 7 photographs by Vandamm on 5 mounts; 2 mounts are signed.
- b. 9 f. 6-7 *R.U.R.* 1922  
Includes 7 photographs.
- b. 10 f. 1 *(The) Sea Gull* 1916  
Includes 2 photographs by White Studio.
- b. 10 f. 2-4 *(The) Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* 1935  
Includes 13 photographs by Vandamm.
- b. 10 f. 5 *(The) Sisters of Susannah* 1916
- b. 10 f. 6 *(The) Tidings Brought to Mary* 1922  
Includes 5 photographs by Francis Bruguière.
- b. 10 f. 7 *(The) Treasure* 1920  
Includes 5 photographs by Francis Bruguière; mountings signed.
- b. 10 f. 8 *Volpone* 1928  
Includes 5 photographs by Vandamm.

Research Material

- b. 11 f. 1 *Androcles and the Lion - Set Design by Miguel Covarrubias* 1925
- b. 11 f. 1 *(The) Bonds of Interest - Set and Costume Designs by Rollo Peters* 1919
- b. 11 f. 2 *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme - After Le Pautre* circa 1932  
Includes 2 photographs on 1 mount.
- b. 11 f. 2 *(The) Brothers Karamazov* 1927
- b. 11 f. 3 *Bushido* 1916
- b. 11 f. 3 *Drama : Types : Mystery Plays* circa 1932  
Includes photograph of illustration of *The Martyrdom of St. Apollonia* - Jean Fouquet (1420-1477), designer.
- b. 11 f. 4 *Festivals : Italy : Florence : 1589* circa 1932
- b. 11 f. 5 *Fiasco [also Fiesko] - George, Duke of Saxe Meiningen, Designer* circa 1932  
Includes 4 photographs on 2 mounts.
- b. 11 f. 6 *La Finta Pazza - Giacomo Torelli, Designer - 1645* circa 1932
- b. 11 f. 6 *Il Gelone - Giovanale Boetto, Designer - 1656* circa 1932  
Includes 4 photographs on 1 mount.
- b. 11 f. 6 *(The) Guardsman* 1924
- b. 11 f. 7 *(The) Hairy Ape - Cleon Throckmorton, Designer - 1922* circa 1932
- b. 11 f. 7 *Hamlet - Act I, Scene 2 - Robert Edmond Jones, Designer - 1923* circa 1932
- b. 11 f. 7 *John Ferguson - Rollo Peters, Designer* 1919

Research Material (cont.)

- b. 11 f. 8-10 *King Richard III - Robert Edmond Jones, Designer* 1920  
Includes 20 photographs on 10 mounts with some photographs of the "Bloody Tower" and Robert Edmond Jones' set design drawings and model.
- b. 12 f. 1 Lawson, Robert - Set Design - Washington Square Players circa 1916  
Includes 1 photograph by White Studio of unidentified production; *Ferdinand the Bull* on mat, probably erroneous title.
- Lighting : Stage
- b. 12 f. 1 *Spotlights in Use During the Rehearsals of Roar China* 1930  
Includes 1 Vandamm photograph.
- b. 12 f. 1 From Nicola Sabbattini - 1638 circa 1932
- b. 12 f. 1 *Little Eyolf - Adolphe Appia, Designer* 1924
- b. 12 f. 2 *Macbeth - Set Models by Lee Simonson and Drawings by Edward Gordon Craig* 1908-circa 1932  
Includes 4 photographs on 2 mounts; 1 photograph of Craig's drawing is by Peter A. Juley & Son; 2 photographs of Simonson's model are by Vandamm.
- b. 12 f. 3 *Malvaloca - Woodman Thompson, Designer* 1922  
Includes 4 photographs on 2 mounts.
- b. 12 f. 4 *(The) Man Who Married a Dumb Wife - Robert Edmond Jones, Designer* 1915  
Includes 1 White Studio photograph; torn on bottom.

Miscellaneous

Includes mostly German language publications, with a few in English; illustrations.

- b. 12 f. 5 *Aida; Balls; Carnival; Dance* 1878
- b. 12 f. 6 Festivals : Germany 1878
- b. 12 f. 7 *Goethe; Ice Shows; Indigo; Mignon; Properties* circa 1877-1900
- Theatres
- b. 12 f. 8 Austria; England; France circa 1871-1880?
- b. 12 f. 9 Germany 1878, circa 1878
- b. 12 f. 10 Hungary; United States circa 1878
- b. 12 f. 10 *Il Trovatore* circa 1878
- b. 12 f. 4 *Mourning Becomes Electra - Set and Costumes by Robert Edmond Jones* circa 1931  
Includes 2 photographs by Vandamm; 1 mount signed.
- b. 12 f. 11 *Le Nozze degli Dei - Alfonso Parigi, Designer - 1637* circa 1932
- b. 12 f. 11 *Porgy - Cleon Throckmorton, Designer* 1927  
Includes 2 photographs by Vandamm.
- b. 12 f. 12 *(The) Pretenders - After George : Duke of Saxe Meiningen* circa 1932
- b. 12 f. 12 *La Princess d'Elide - Versailles - 1664 May 8* circa 1932
- b. 12 f. 13 *Processional - Mordecai Gorelik, Designer* 1925
- b. 12 f. 13 *Das Rheingold - Adolphe Appia - 1892* circa 1932

Research Material (cont.)

- b. 13 f. 1 **Sabbatini, Nicola** circa 1932  
Includes photograph by Peter A. Juley & Son of title page of Sabbatini's [Sabbattini on title page] book, *Practica di Fabricar Scene, e Machine ne' Teatri* (Ravenna : Per Pietro de' Paoli, e Gio. Battista Giouannelli Stampatori Camerali, 1638).
- b. 13 f. 1 **Saint Joan - Trial Scene - Raymond Sovey, Designer** 1924
- b. 13 f. 1 **Salmacida Spolia - Inigo Jones - 1640** circa 1932  
Includes photograph by Peter A. Juley & Son of drawing.

Scenery

Design

- b. 13 f. 2 **France : 17th Century** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph by Peter A. Juley & Son of the Medieval Hell Scene--Epoch of Louis XIV; engraving ascribed to Le Pautre.
- b. 13 f. 2 **Sweden : 18th Century - Drottningholm : Court Theatre** circa 1932
- Perspective**
- b. 13 f. 2 **Del Chiaromonti - 1675** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph of diagram from Scipione Chiaramonti's *Delle Scene, e Teatri : Opera Postuma*.
- b. 13 f. 2 **From Jacopo Fabris : Instruction** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph by Peter A. Juley & Son of diagram.
- b. 13 f. 3 **Serlio, Sebastiano - Scena Comica from the English Edition - 1611** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph by Peter A. Juley & Son.
- b. 13 f. 3 **Strange Interlude** 1928  
Includes 1 photograph by Vandamm.
- b. 13 f. 4 **Technical Practice - Eccyclema after R.C. Flickinger** circa 1932?
- b. 13 f. 4 **Teodosio il Giovane - Roma - Filippo Juvara - 1711** circa 1932

Theatres

- b. 13 f. 5 **Cycloramas** circa 1932  
Includes 6 photographs on 2 mounts: 3 are of drawings and 3 are of the Dresden Opera House.
- b. 13 f. 6 **France : Paris : Theatre du Palais Royale** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph of diagram of interior.
- b. 13 f. 6 **Italy : Vicenza : Olimpico** circa 1932  
Includes 3 photographs on 1 mount of drawings of interior.
- b. 13 f. 7 **Projected - From Jacopo Fabbris** circa 1932  
Includes 1 photograph of diagram of interior.
- b. 13 f. 7 **United States : New York : Garrick** circa 1920s  
Includes 1 photograph of exterior.
- b. 13 f. 8 **United States : New York : Guild** circa 1925-1932  
Includes 3 photographs: 1 by John Wallace Gillies, Inc. of lobby; 1 of diagram of interior; 1 of architects' rendering of exterior.

Research Material (cont.)

- b. 13 f. 9 *Tristan and Isolde - Adolphe Appia - 1896 and 1923* circa 1932?  
Includes 5 photographs on 3 mounts; 4 are by Peter A. Juley & Son.
  
- b. 13 f. 10 *Valley Forge* 1934  
Includes 1 photograph by Vandamm; signed mount.