



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

John Wulp designs and photographs

1946-2005

*T-Vim 2016-013

Purchase of this collection was made possible by support from the JP Fletcher Foundation, Inc.

Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016 .

Summary

Creator: Wulp, John

Title: John Wulp designs and photographs

Date: 1946-2005

Size: 4.19 linear feet (10 boxes, 2 oversized folders, 1 tube)

Source: Purchased from John Wulp, 2016

Abstract: John Wulp (1928-) is an American set designer, theater producer, director, playwright, photographer, and teacher. His designs and photographs date from 1946 to 2005, and document his eclectic theater career.

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:

Video materials are unavailable pending digitization.

Conditions Governing Use: For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Theatre Division at theatre@nypl.org.

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Processing note: Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016 .

Creator History

John Wulp (1928-) is an American set designer, theater producer, director, playwright, photographer, and teacher. His most commercially successful work, which he co-produced, was a Broadway production of *Dracula*, starring Frank Langella in the title role, that opened in 1977 and ran until 1980. Wulp's other notable productions include *Lydie Breeze*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo*, *Red Eye of Love* and *O, Pioneers!*. Edward Gorey and John Guare were his frequent collaborators. He has worked in New York City, Boston, Nantucket, and Maine.

As a young man, Wulp worked as a magazine editor and as a freelance photographer. Throughout his career, he shot his own photographs of theatrical performances, reference material, stage sets of his productions, and actors appearing in his plays.

Wulp taught theater at Playwrights Horizons Theater School at New York University in the 1980s, and later in his career taught kindergarten through twelfth-grade at the North Haven Community School in Maine. *On This Island*, a documentary broadcast in the early 2000s on PBS's *Independent Lens* program, focused on Wulp, his students, and life on North Haven Island. Wulp is also a painter whose works have been exhibited in galleries and sold as commissioned portraits. He currently lives on Vinalhaven Island, Maine (2016).

Custodial History

The collection was sold by John Wulp to the library in June 2016. A detailed item list created prior to processing is included in the collection.

Scope and Content Note

Files relating to Wulp's theatrical work comprise the majority of this collection. Production materials include original sketches and paintings for backdrops and set designs; photographs depicting stage sets, performances of plays, actors' portraits; promotional posters for plays produced or designed by Wulp; programs; and reviews and scripts for many of Wulp's plays. Designs take the form of small sketches and watercolor paintings, as well as oversized paintings on illustration board.

Another group of photographs consisting mainly of freelance projects shot by Wulp early in his career is also present. Notable personalities featured in these photographs include composer John Cage and actress Barbara Harris. A shoot Wulp did with The Paper Bag Players theater company is included. A few photographs by other photographers are also present. Most photographs are black and white. Numerous negatives, contact sheets, and photographic prints are included.

The collection also includes video recordings of a few of Wulp's plays, which are not available pending digitization.

Arrangement: The collection is divided into two groupings, Theatrical Productions and Photographs, and arranged by format, then alphabetically by production name or folder title.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photography
Scripts
Set design paintings
Watercolors (paintings)

Occupations

Set designers -- United States

Subjects

Theater -- Production and direction
Theater -- United States

Container List

Theatrical Productions

- b. 1 f. 1-4 1978-1987
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *Hamletmachine*, *Lydie Breeze*, and *Tinned Lettuce* .

Designs

- b. 1 f. 5-12 1957-2005
Includes *Becoming Memories*, *Crucifer of Blood*, *The Mikado*, *O Pioneers!*, *Red Eye of Love*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .
- b. 2 f. 1-8 circa 1946-1979
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *MacBeth*, *The Master Bulider*, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Richard III*, and *This Week* magazine.
- b. 3 f. 1-5 *O Pioneers!* circa 1988
- o. 1 *Lydie Breeze* 1984
- o. 2 *Lydie Breeze* 1984

Photographs

- b. 1 f. 13-27 1961-2005
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *Endicott and the Red Cross*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo*, *The Master Bulider*, *The Mikado*, the Nantucket Stage Company, *Red Eye of Love*, *Semmelweiss*, *Tiger Tail*, and *Tinned Lettuce* .
- b. 4 f. 1-3 1958-1984
Includes *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Lydie Breeze*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .

Posters

- b. 1 f. 28 *Hamlet* 1986
- b. 2 f. 8 *Lydie Breeze* 1984
- t. 1 1977-circa 1989
 See item list for titles in tube.

- b. 5 f. 1-7 Programs 1949-2007
Includes *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *Dracula*, *Hamletmachine*, *The Little Locksmith*, *Endicott and the Red Cross*, *Red Eye of Love*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .

- b. 5 f. 8-11 Reviews 1948-1999

Scripts

- b. 5 f. 12-16 1978-1992
Includes *Amphigorey: The Musical*, *Bosoms and Neglect*, *Dracula*, *Gardenia*, and *Hamletmachine* .
- b. 6 f. 1-9 1961-2002
Includes *Islands*, *Knights of the Roundtable*, *The Little Locksmith*, *Lydie Breeze*, *The Master Builder*, and *O Pioneers!* .
- b. 7 f. 1-2 1956-1976
Includes *Orpheus* and *The Red Devil Battery Sign* .

Red Eye of Love

- b. 7 f. 3-6 1957, undated

Theatrical Productions (cont.)

Scripts (cont.)

Red Eye of Love (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 1-8 1982-2013
- b. 9 f. 1-2 1980-1984
Includes *Tinned Lettuce* and *Women and Water* .

Photographs

- b. 4 f. 4-7 circa 1958-1962
- b. 9 f. 3-28 *The American Dream - Leave It To Jane* 1958-1974
- b. 10 f. 1-22 Lewis - Unidentified 1958-1978