

**The New York Public Library**

**Billy Rose Theatre Division**

**John Boyt Costume Designs**  
1946-1956

**\*T-VIM 2010-024**

## Summary

**Title:** John Boyt Costume Designs, 1946-1956

**Size:** 2 linear feet (4 boxes)

**Preferred citation:** John Boyt Costume Designs, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

## Related materials note

Related materials may be found in the Dodger / Eaves-Brooks Costume Plots, ca. 1947-1965, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

## Biographical note

Designer, producer and writer John Boyt was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1921. A graduate of Bloomfield New Jersey High School, he attended Union College 1938-1941 and graduated from the University of Iowa in 1943.

From the 1940s to the early 1980s, Boyt designed costumes, sets, and occasionally lighting for theater, dance, opera, television, and film. His credits include Broadway, off-Broadway and regional theater productions, as well as New York City Ballet and New York City Opera.

From 1948 to 1951, Boyt was art director for WENR-TV Chicago where he also wrote, directed and produced shows for the network. He was head of the costume department of NBC Television in New York City in 1952. Boyt's film work included *Cops and Robbers* (1973), *Report to the Commissioner* (1975) and *Ragtime* (1981).

Only his costume sketches for the Broadway productions of *The Playboy of the Western World* by J.M. Synge with Burgess Meredith, Mildred Natwick, Maureen Stapleton, and Julie Harris (Booth Theatre 1946), the men's costumes for *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare with Katharine Cornell, Charlton Heston, Tony Randall, Maureen Stapleton and Eli Wallach (Martin Beck Theatre 1947), and *The Lovers* by Leslie Stevens with Morris Carnovsky, Darren McGavin, Pernell Roberts, and Joanne Woodward (Martin Beck Theatre 1956) are represented in the collection.

Boyt died in 1986 in New York City.

## Scope and content note

The John Boyt Costume Designs consist of more than 80 of his sketches for *The Playboy of the Western World* (Booth Theatre, 1946), *Antony and Cleopatra* (men's costumes) (Martin Beck Theatre, 1947) and *The Lovers* by Leslie Stevens (Martin Beck Theatre, 1956). A number of the sketches have handwritten notes on the versos. For each of the three productions there is also a page or two of handwritten notes, probably written by Boyt relating to the costumes and sometimes to the productions.

*The Playboy of the Western World* designs are filed before the designs for *The Lovers* because of size and volume.

**Container list***Antony and Cleopatra, 1947*

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Notes (Includes 2 pp. of handwritten notes (probably by Boyt) on the costumes and production.)
	2	Alexas and Antony
	3	Aquilifer (Caesar's Army) and Caesar
	4	Caesar's Guards, Canidius and Cleopatra's Messenger
	5	Clown, Demetrius, and Dercetas & Guards (Includes 3 costume sketches.)
	6	Dolabella and Enobarbus
	7	Gallus and Lepidus
2	1	Maecenas, Menas and Menecrates
	2	Messenger and Old Soldier (Antony's Army)
	3	Pompey, Pompey's Servants and Proculeius
	4	Scarus, Scarus Wounded and Proculeius
	5	Slaves, Soothsayer and Standard Bearer (Small bits of fabric swatches attached to Slaves sketch)
	6	Taurus and Thyreus
	7	Varius and Ventidius
3	1	Notes on <i>The Lovers</i> and <i>The Playboy of the Western World</i> Costumes, 1946, 1956 <i>The Playboy of the Western World</i> , 1946
	2	Christy Mahon, Honor Blake and Jimmy Farrell
	3	The Jockey's Dress, Michael James and Old Mahon
	4	Pegeen Mike, Philly Cullen and Sara Tansey
	5	Shawn Keogh, Susan Brady and A Villager (The Widow Quinn) <i>The Lovers</i> , 1956
	6	Costume Sketch #2: Dovane Wedding, Costume Sketch #4: Clothilde Wedding
	7	Costume Sketch #5: Peasant Girl #1, Costume Sketch #6: Peasant Girl #2
	8	Costume Sketch #9: Peasant Woman #5, Costume Sketch #10: Marc Working
	9	Costume Sketch #13: Probus Working, Costume Sketch #15: Simon
	10	Costume Sketch #16: Saul, Costume Sketch #17: Tomas
	11	Costume Sketch #18: Wheelwright, Costume Sketch #19: Blacksmith
	12	Costume Sketch #20: Tanner, Costume Sketch #22: Peasant Man #2
	13	Costume Sketch #23: Peasant Man #3, Costume Sketch #24: Peasant Man #4
	14	Costume Sketch #26: Chrysagon – Wedding Costume Sketch #27: Austricht
4	1	Costume Sketch #28: Herstal, Costume Sketch #29: Draco
	2	Costume Sketch #30: Blaise in Mourning (Includes 2 sketches.)
	3	Costume Sketch #31: Escavalon, Costume Sketch #37: Stewards to Escavalon (Two)
	4	Costume Sketch #38: Clement of Metz - Travelling, Costume Sketch # 42: Sextus - Wedding Vestments
	5	Costume Sketch #43: Two Decani - Wedding
	6	Costume Sketch #44: Peasant Man #5, Costume Sketch #45: Peasant Man #6
	7	Costume Sketch #46: Peasant Man #7 (Steward), Costume Sketch #47: Peasant Man #8 (Steward)
	8	Costume Sketch #48: Peasant Man #10, Costume Sketch #49: Peasant Man #10 (Includes 2 sketches.)
	9	Costume Sketch #50: Dovane Dressed (Dup. of #1), Costume Sketch #51: Peasant Woman #6, Peasant Woman #7