

Guide to the Sara Greenspan Theatre Guild Files, 1925-1969

***T-Mss 1968-005**

Billy Rose Theatre Division

**The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, New York**

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Descriptive Summary

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| Title: | Sara Greenspan Theatre Guild Files |
| Collection ID: | *T-Mss 1968-005 |
| Creator: | Greenspan, Sara |
| Extent: | .21 linear feet (1 box) |
| Repository: | Billy Rose Theatre Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts |

Abstract: The Sara Greenspan Theatre Guild Files chiefly contain correspondence relating to activities of the Theatre Guild during some of its most significant years of operation. Sara Greenspan, who began as secretary with the Guild in 1925, served as the business manager of the prestigious production company for twenty years before retiring in 1963.

Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

Preferred Citation

Sara Greenspan Theatre Guild Files, *T-Mss 1968-005, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and cataloged in October 2007.

Related Materials

The Theatre Guild Archive is held by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Biographical Note

In a lengthy association that spanned some of the most significant years of operation for the Theatre Guild, Sara Greenspan (1894-1968), served as the prestigious production company's business manager. She began with the Guild as a secretary in 1925 and later functioned as its business manager for twenty years before retiring in 1963. Greenspan's positions with the Guild enabled her to interact with many of the most important composers, directors, performers, and playwrights in twentieth century American theater. Among the most delicate of her duties was the distribution of opening night tickets for productions put on by the Guild. Greenspan also was responsible for completing many of the administrative tasks involved with running the Theatre Guild-American Theatre Society Subscription Service, which handled national touring productions. Shortly before her retirement, she appeared as an extra in *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals* (1963), the final episode in the Theatre Guild's television anthology series, *The United States Steel Hour*. Greenspan, who was born in New York City, attended Washington Irving High School and was married to pharmacist Meyer Levy.

Scope and Content Note

The Sara Greenspan Theatre Guild Files chiefly contain correspondence, consisting mostly of letters sent to Greenspan in her capacity as business manager for the Guild. Also included in the collection are two programs, a contract for her appearance on *The United States Steel Hour*, and a brief history of the activities of the Theatre Guild generated by Congressman Emmanuel Celler. Notable among the correspondents are Carlotta Monterey O'Neill (who mainly wrote to Greenspan concerning the allocation of tickets to performances of plays by her husband, Eugene O'Neill) and George Bernard Shaw's secretary, Blanche Patch. Also of interest are several postcards sent to Greenspan during her earliest years with the Guild, from some of the organization's founders, including Theresa Helburn, Philip Moeller and Helen Westley.

| Box/Folder | Description |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Box 1 | |
| F. 1 | <i>Congressional Record</i> offprint, circa 1946 (Extension of remarks on the Theatre Guild made by Emanuel Celler.) |
| F. 2 | Contract, 1963 (For Greenspan's appearance in <i>The Old Lady Shows Her Medals</i> .) Correspondence, 1925-1969 and undated |
| F. 3 | C-H, 1925-1968 and undated (Includes letters from Theresa Helburn.) |
| F. 4 | L-M, 1946-1969 and undated |
| F. 5 | O'Neill, Carlotta Monterey, 1933-1948 and undated |
| F. 6 | Patch, Blanche, 1943-1949(George Bernard Shaw's secretary.) |
| F. 7 | Pe-S, 1943-1965 and undated (Includes letters from Eleanor Roosevelt's secretary and Dore Schary.) |
| F. 8 | Unidentified, 1963 |
| F. 9 | Postcards, 1925-1938 and undated (Most appear to be from Philip Moeller.) |
| F. 10 | Programs, 1957-1958 |