

**The New York Public Library
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
Billy Rose Theatre Division**

**Joan Personette Costume Designs
ca. 1940s-1950s**

***T-VIM 2013-057**

Summary

Title: Joan Personette Costume Designs, ca. 1940s - 1950s

Size: 8 linear feet (7 boxes)

Preferred citation: Joan Personette Costume Designs, *T-VIM 2013-057, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Provenance note

The collection was donated by Jack J. Dreyfus in 2007.

Biographical note

Joan Personette was born on June 30, 1914 in Irvington, New Jersey. She studied at the New York School of Design, then worked for Rusick's Clothing Store. Personette later became evening gown designer for Milgrim's. She designed costumes for the Roxy Theatre stage shows from 1939-1952 and went on to design the Broadway musical revues *Hellzapoppin*, 1938, and *Two on the Aisle*, 1951. Personette also designed costumes for a number of editions of *Skating Vanities*, ca. 1940s-1950s, as well for nightclub shows, and for actress Tallulah Bankhead's television show and Las Vegas debut.

She married financier John J. (Jack) Dreyfus in 1939. They had one son John; they separated after four years and later divorced.

In 1959, Personette studied under Hans Hofmann in Provincetown, Massachusetts, then at the Art Students League, and also with Milton Avery, developing her talent as an abstract painter and collage artist. Her work has been exhibited nationally, including several retrospectives. Personette died in Reno, Nevada, where she had lived for several decades, on August 29 1998.

Scope and content note

This collection contains original costume designs by Joan Personette. Includes 50 color designs, possibly for Roxy Theatre shows, ca. 1940s, and several designs possibly for *Skating Vanities*, a skating show produced annually, ca. 1940s-1950s. All the designs are matted and framed; a number are signed; several include swatches; a few have handwritten captions. A number of backings from the designs' original framings are also included in the collection.

Container list

Costume Designs, ca. 1940s

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1	Lederhosen Type Costume Includes color on paper design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.25.
1	2	Powder Blue and White Gown Includes color on board (?) design; signed; also includes 3 backings with labels for Costume Illustrations 1675.1999.26, 1675.1999.28, 1675.1999.45.
1	3	"Rosie" - Tan Capri Pants with Black Top Includes color on paper design; also includes 2 backings with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.30, 1675.1999.36.
1	4	White Dress with Black, Grey Striped Apron and White Pilgrim Hat Includes color on paper design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.31.
1	5	Duotone Green Striped Dress Includes color on paper design; signed; also includes 2 backings with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.32 and 1675.1999.32.
1	6	White Tutu with Black Top and Red Hat, Gloves Includes color on board design; signed; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.33.
1	7	Short White Dress with Ruffled Hem and Pantaloon Includes color on board design; signed; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.034.
2	1	Red Gown with Lighter Overskirt Includes color on board design; signed; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.037.
2	2	Green, Grey and White Dress with Striped Bottom, Solid Overskirt, Grey Flowers on Sleeves Includes color on board design; signed; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.38.
2	3	Blue with White Trim and Pink Waistband Showgirl Costume Includes color on paper design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.41.
2	4	Black Fitted Jumpsuit with Brown (Fur?) Bolero and Boots Includes color on board design; signed; also includes 2 backings with label for Costume Illustrations 1675.1999.42 and 1675.1999.29.
2	5	Long Sleeved Forest Green Gown with Pinkish Overskirt (Includes color on board design; signed.)
2	6	Long Red and White Polka Dot Dress with White Top with Black Trim (Includes color on board design; signed.)
2	7	Green and White Vertical Striped Gown with Ruffled Bottom Tier, Black Top, and Green Scarf (Includes color on board design; signed.)
2	8	Black and White Checked Gown (?) with Black Bow at Neck, Puffed Long Sleeves; Also Yellow-Green Vertical Strip Includes color on board design; signed; also includes 3 backings for Costume Illustrations 1675.1999.24, 1675.1999.46 and 1016.1999.55; #1016.1999.55 has notes in French on costume. It is unclear which designs correspond to these backings.
3	1	African Figure - Male (Includes color on board design.)
3	2	Showgirl Costume - Brazilian (?) - Green and Pink Tiers with Ball Fringe Includes color on board design; signed. This design identified as for Roxy Theatre in exhibition catalog.
3	3	"Chinese" - Pink Gown with Green Feathers at Top (Includes color on board design; signed.)
3	4	"Little Black Sambo" - Three Figures Holding Palm Leaf Parasols (Includes 3 color designs on 1 sheet; signed.)

- 3 5 Stars and Stripes-Type Dress and Hat
Includes 2 copies of color on board design; 1 has notes in pencil.
- 4 1 Showgirl Costume - Cranberry and White with Feathers (Includes color on board design; signed.)
- 4 2 Pink and Rust Tutu with Hat and Parasol (Includes color on paper design; signed.)
- 4 3 Duotone Blue Striped Sheath Dress with Side Slit and Black Drape with Fringe around Waist (Includes color on board design; signed.)
- 4 4 White Dress with Scarf Bottom Skirt
Includes color on board design; also includes 3 backings with label for Costume Illustrations 1675.1999.47, 1675.1999.48, 1016.1999.53. It is unclear which designs correspond to these backings.
- 4 5 Green Top with White Collar and Cuffs, Red Patch Pockets, Striped Scarf, over Tan Pencil Skirt
Includes color on board design; signed; color samples in lower left corner; second sketch of design variation in lower right corner; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.4; #43 also on upper left corner of backing.
- 5 1 Turquoise Gown with Panel with Black Striped Squares
Includes color on paper design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1016.1999.51; also contains notes on costume in pencil.
- 5 2 Showgirl Costume - Orange with Feathers and Large Bow on Back (Includes color on paper design.)
- 5 3 Blue and Aqua Dress with Front Slit and Muff - "Rue Madelaine" Lamppost (Includes color on paper design.)
- 5 4 Showgirl Costume - Black, Red and White - Strapless, with Separate Black Collarpiece (Includes color on board design; signed.)
- 5 5 Pink and White Striped Gay Nineties(?) Gown with Overskirt with Pickups
Includes color on board design; signed; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1016.1999.52.
- 5 6 White Mermaid Gown with Pink Hanging Crystals, Holding Heart (Includes color on board design; signed.)
- 5 7 Chinese Costume - Male - Chartreuse and Pink with Circular Headdress (Includes color on board design; signed.)
- 6 1 Pastel Blue and Pink Medieval Gown with Pointed Headdress and Veil
Includes color on paper design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.15; #45 also in upper right corner.
- 6 2 Showgirl Costume - Brown Trimmed with Orange Feathers (Includes color on paper design.)
- 6 3 Blue 19th Century Dress with Pink Ruffled Cranberry Overskirt and Parasol (Includes color on board design.)
- 6 4 African Costume - Female - Orange Pants with Orange, Coral, and Pink Feathers, with Bowl Shaped Headdress (Includes color on paper design.)
- 6 5 Showgirl Costume - Black and White with Some Red, Black Dots and Filigree Design, and Parasol
Includes color on paper design with swatches; signed.
- "Boys East Indian" Costumes
- 6 6 Grey and Cerise (Includes color on paper design; signed.)
- 6 7 Brown-Green Top with Brown and Grey Stripe and Dotted Bottom (Includes color on paper design; signed.)
- 6 8 Coral, Orange and Hot Pink Striped Full Skirt and Bolero with Beads
Includes color on board design with swatches; also includes drawing of short bottom design in upper right corner.
- 7 1 White and Gold Elizabethan Style Dress with Overskirt (Includes color on board design; signed.)

- 7 2 Pink and White and Green and White Gingham Check (1890s?) Mermaid Gown with White Collar and Green Checked Parasol (Includes color on paper design.)
- Skating Show Costumes, ca. 1940s-1950s (Possibly *Skating Vanities* for various years.)
- 7 3 Blue-Green 1890s Jacket and Dress with Panatloons and White Muff (Includes color on paper design.)
- 7 4 "Ball [or Bell] Girls" - Red with Black and White Trim, Short Skirt with Bolero (Possibly for Skating Show) (Includes color on paper design.)
- 7 5 Black, White and Grey Dress with White Top and Scalloped Layered Skirts (Possibly for Skating Show?) (Includes color on paper design.)
- 7 6 Native American Fringed Skirt with White Peasant Blouse (Possibly for Skating Show?)
Includes color on board design; also includes backing with label for Costume Illustration 1675.1999.10.
- 7 7 Pink and White Off the Shoulder Dress with Striped Skirt and Scalloped Overlay (Possibly for Skating Show?) (Includes color on board design; signed.)