

**MG  
643**

**LILY YUEN**

**PAPERS**

**The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research  
in Black Culture  
515 Malcolm X Boulevard  
New York, New York 10037**

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 515 Malcolm X Boulevard  
 New York, New York 10037-1801

COLLECTION  
 Lily Yuen Papers

Sc MG 643

Bulk Dates:	1926-1982
Extent:	Shelving Unit: 1 print box Linear feet: .4
Source and Date:	Rose Dezonie August 14, 1998
Processor's Name:	Janice Quinter
Date Finding Aid Completed:	2003
Abstract:	Documentation of the dancing and entertainment career of the revue performer, Lily Yuen.
Provenance:	Rose Dezonie, Lily Yuen's sister
Access:	Unrestricted access
Reproductions:	All requests subject to limitations noted in divisional policies on reproduction.
Copyright:	Information on copyright (literary rights) available from repository.
Other Source of Description:	RLIN #: NYPW04-A4
Citation:	[Item], Lily Yuen Collection, Sc MG 643, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library
Index Terms	
Names:	Yuen, Lily; Brown-Skin Models
Subject:	African American theater-United States; African American entertainers; African American wit and humor; African American women entertainers; African Americans in the performing arts; Dance, Black-United States; Revues-United States; Women entertainers-United States; Women in the performing arts-United States.

**LILY YUEN (1908- ). PAPERS, 1926-1992.**  
**.4 lin. ft. (1 printbox)**

**Biography**

Lily Yuen was a singer and dancer, who also considered herself a comedienne, performer of novelty songs, parodies and specialty acts, as well as an emcee, in the 1920's and 1930's. She was a principal in the Brown-Skin Models, an annual touring revue produced by Irvin C. Miller in which her sister, Libo, also appeared. Yuen performed in "Broadway Rastus," "Fast and Furious" and "Yeah Man." Lily Yuen, also known as "Hoy Hoy" and "Pontop," was born in Georgia and lived her adult life in New York City.

**Scope and Content**

The Lily Yuen Collection provides some documentation of the dancing and entertainment career of this revue performer, in addition to containing personal family papers. A small number of papers pertain to Yuen's mother, brother, husband, and her sister and colleague, Libo (Olivia) Yuen. Of interest are two manuscript joke books containing hundreds of jokes, many titled, often about the relationship between men and women. There are also programs for the Brown-Skin Models, "Fast and Furious" and "Yeah Man," and sheet and manuscript music, some with parts, and most annotated, including "Can't Believe" and "Why Do I Lie to Myself About You?" A scrapbook of newspaper clippings documents Yuen's career as a Brown-Skin Model during the group's nationwide tours (1926-1930). The scrapbook emphasizes Yuen's fellow dancer, Blanche Thompson, who was a principal dancer in Brown-Skin Models, as well as Florence Mills of "Bye Bye Blackbirds" fame. Yuen's sister, Libo, is also mentioned in the scrapbook as a dancer.

**Provenance**

Gift of Rose Dezonie, August 1998  
SCM 98-40

Processed by Janice Quinter  
January 28, 2003

**Container List**

**Box    Folder**

1	1	Personal Papers, 1926-1992
	2	Family Documents, Autograph Album, 1929-1976
	3	Contracts, Professional Organizations, 1949-1959
	4	Joke Books (2), n.d.
	5	Programs, 1926-1932
	6	Scrapbook, 1926-1930
	7	Printed Matter – <u>The Tattler</u> , 1929
	8	Song Books, 1932-1937
	9	Music
	10	Music

**MANUSCRIPTS, ARCHIVES AND RARE BOOKS DIVISION**

**SEPARATION RECORD**

The following items were removed from:

**Name of Collection/Papers** Lily Yuen Collection

**Accession Number** MG 643, SCM 98-40

**Donor:** Rose Dezonie

**Gift** X                      **Purchase** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date received:** August 1998

**Date transferred:** August 1998

The item(s) listed below have been sent to the division indicated, either to be retained or disposed of there. Any items that should receive special disposition are clearly marked.

**Schomburg Photographs and Print Division:**

Photographs

**Accessioned by:** Janice Quinter      **Date** August 13, 2003