

**The New York Public Library  
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center  
Billy Rose Theatre Division**

Guide to the

## **Paper Bag Players records**

1958-2009 (bulk 1990-2004)

\*T-MSS 2010-020

Compiled by Kit Messick, August 2011

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Paper Bag Players

**Title:** Paper Bag Players records, 1958-2009 (bulk 1990-2004)

**Size:** 7.36 linear feet (14 boxes, 8 volumes)

**Source:** Donated by Katherine Mele, President, 2011

**Abstract:** The Paper Bag Players is a company of adults who create and perform original, contemporary, musical theater for children. The records document the administrative activities of the Paper Bag Players, and to a lesser degree, their performances. Material includes production files; financial files; fan mail from children; collateral material and ephemera; scrapbooks; a small quantity of original artwork; and Audio and Video material.

**Access:** Collection is open to the public. Photocopying prohibited. Advance notice may be required.

Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Collection. Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

**Preferred citation:** Paper Bag Players records, \*T-Mss 2010-020, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

### **Processing note**

Financial material has been largely weeded. Records relating to the organization will have been retained; records pertaining to individuals (employees, donors, etc.) have been removed due to privacy concerns. Clippings have been transferred to LPA, to be integrated into the pre-existing Paper Bag Players clippings files. Duplicates and deaccessioned material will be returned to LPA. A/V material has been transferred to Special Formats Processing.

### **Related collections**

Paper Bag Player clippings file. Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Paper Bag Players photographs. Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Paper Bag Players typescripts. Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

### **Creator history**

The Paper Bag Players is a company of adults who create and perform original, contemporary, musical theater for children. The Paper Bag Players was founded in 1958 by Judith Martin, Shirley Kaplin, Sudie Bond and Remy Charlip. All four shared creativity during the first years, but as the company developed, Judith Martin more and more shaped The Paper Bag Players identity. Martin remained in the role of artistic director for fifty years, and as a writer, designer, director and actress, she both established and embodied The Paper Bag Players style. In 1966, Donald Ashwander joined the company as composer and performer. Ted Brackett assumed the role of artistic director in 2009, after having worked closely with Judith Martin for 23 years.

The Paper Bag Players have toured in 37 states, as well as to Canada, England, Scotland, Wales, Israel, Iran, Egypt, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. The first theater for children to perform at Lincoln Center and to receive a grant from the NEA, The Bags have been recognized with an OBIE, awards for excellence from the American Association for Theater and Education, American Theater Wing Awards, the New York State Artists Award, The Broadway Theater Institute Award for Theater and Education. The company is still active as of 2011.

Source: Paper Bag Players. "The Paper Bag Players: History," accessed August 4, 2011, <http://www.paperbagplayers.org/history.html>.

### **Scope and content note**

The records document the administrative activities of the Paper Bag Players, and to a lesser degree, their performances. Material includes production files, financial files, fan mail from children, collateral material and ephemera, scrapbooks, and a small quantity of original artwork. The documents are primarily focused on the period 1990-2004, with very little material documenting the earlier decades of their work. The collection also includes Audio and Video material, including recordings of Paper Bag Players scores, and film and videotape of productions and public appearances. This material is currently being processed and is not available for consultation.

Additional material relating to the Paper Bag Players is available in the clippings files of the Music Division, and in the photograph collection of the Billy Rose Theater Division. Prompt books and typescripts of some Paper Bag Players productions are also available in the Billy Rose Theatre Division.

### **Arrangement**

The Paper Bag Players records are organized into the following series:

Series I: Administrative Files, 1987-2008

Fan Mail, 1995-2001

Series II: Press and Public Relations, 1997-2002

Series III: Visual and Collateral Material, 1958-2009

Series IV: Scrapbooks, 1960-1990

**Key terms**

**Subjects**

Children's plays, American  
Musical theater -- New York (State) -- New York  
Theater management -- New York (State) -- New  
York

**Names**

Ashwander, Donald  
Charlip, Remy  
Martin, Judith  
Paper Bag Players

**Special formats**

Financial records  
Scrapbooks

## Container list

### Series I: Administrative Files, 1987-2008

Administrative files consist of production files, financial and legal documents, and material relating to the death of PBP's long-time musical director, Donald Ashwander. Production files document Paper Bag Players productions and tours, including contracts with venues and vendors; licensing agreements; technical riders; tour and rehearsal schedules; and some correspondence. Material covers the years 1989-1992, and is arranged chronologically by season. No files for 1997 are present. Calendars record rehearsal and performance times, venues, house size, and other details pertinent to the scheduling of their shows. Financial files include bank reconciliation statements; donation logs; tax returns; quarterly reports; audits used to maintain the company's nonprofit status; and other accounting documents for the period 1997-2008. Files related to Donald Ashwander contain condolence correspondence sent to Judith Martin and others; programs and ephemera relating to memorial services; material relating to his music, including programs from performances outside of the Paper Bag Players, drafts of liner notes, and a copy of *The Piano Music of Donald Ashwander, Vol. II*, a songbook compiled and produced by his family after his death; and a small quantity of photographs. 9 boxes

#### Production Files, 1989-2002, 2005-2006

- b.1 f.1-2 1989-1990
- b.1 f.3-4 1991-1992
- b.1 f.5 Taiwan 1992
- b.2 f.1 1992-1993
- b.2 f.2 1992-1993 (*The Paper Bag Players + You*)
- b.2 f.3 1992-1993 (*Rain or Shine*)
- b.3 f.1 1994-1995 (*Rubbish, She Cried*)
- b.3 f.2 Japan 1995
- b.4 f.1 1995-1996 (*On Top of Spaghetti*)
- b.4 f.2 *On Top of Spaghetti*--Video production, 1996-2002
- b.4 f.3-4 1998-1999 (*Hot Feet*)
- b.5 f.1 1998-1999 (*Hot Feet*)
- b.5 f.2-4 1999-2000 (*Mollie Wiggle & Minnie Shake*)
- b.5 f.5 2000-2001 (*Fortunately*)
- b.6 f.1-2 2000-2001 (*Fortunately*)
- b.6 f.3 *Fortunately*--Video production, 2000-2001
- b.6 f.4-5 2001-2002 (*Knock Knock Knock, Anybody Home?*)
- b.7 f.1-2 2001-2002 (*Knock Knock Knock, Anybody Home?*)
- b.7 f.3 2005-2006 (*Pineapple Soup!*)

#### Calendars, 1978-2008

- b.7 f.4 1978-1989
- b.7 f.5 1990-1999
- b.7 f.6 2000-2008

#### Financial Files, 1997-2008

- 1997-1998
- b.8 f.1 Check register
- 1998
- b.8 f.2 Audit

**Series I: Administrative Files** (cont.)

Financial Files (cont.)

1998 (cont.)

b.8 f.3 Bank reconciliation statements

b.8 f.4 Tax returns

1999

b.8 f.5 Audit

1999-2000

b.8 f.6 Bank reconciliation statements

b.8 f.7 Quarterly reports

2000-2001

b.8 f.8 Audit

b.8 f.9 Quarterly reports

2001-2002

b.8 f.10 Bank reconciliation statements

b.8 f.11 Donation log

b.8 f.12 Tax returns

2002

b.8 f.13 Audit

b.9 f.1 Tax returns

Donald Ashwander Files, 1989-1995

b.9 f.2 Condolence correspondence, 1994-1995

b.9 f.3 Memorials, 1994-1995

b.9 f.4 Music, 1993-1995, undated

b.9 f.5 Photographs, Undated

b.9 f.6-10 **Fan Mail, 1995-2001**

**Series II: Press and Public Relations, 1997-2002**

Consists predominantly of fan mail from children and teachers, as well as select clippings in old, foreign, or obscure publications. Researchers seeking a more extensive documentation of the Paper Bag Players in secondary sources should consult the Paper Bag Players clippings file held by the Music Division. 4 boxes

b.10 f.1-5 Fan Mail, 2001-2002

b.11 f.1-6 Fan Mail, 2003-2006

b.12 f.1 Fan Mail, 2007

b.12 f.2 Teachers' Letters, 1995-2005

b.12 f.3 Reviews, 1974-2007

Compiled by PBP as a one-sheet for press kits

Select Clippings

b.12 f.4 1961-1967

b.12 f.5 1968-1970

b.12 f.6 1971-1979

b.12 f.7 2000-2006

### Series III: Visual and Collateral Material, 1958-2009

Contains predominantly material generated in support of Paper Bag Players fundraising and advertising campaigns, such as benefit invitations and programs; flyers for performances; programs; and study guides created for the plays. One folder of original artwork and mock-ups is also available. 4 boxes, one oversize folder

#### Benefit Material

- b.12 f.8 1987-1989
- b.13 f.1 1990-1992
- b.13 f.2 1993-1994
- b.13 f.3 1995
- b.13 f.4 1996-1997
- b.13 f.5 1998
- b.13 f.6 1999
- b.13 f.7 2000-2003
- b.13 f.8 2004
- b.13 f.9 2005
- b.13 f.10 2006
- b.14 f.1 2007
- b.14 f.2 2008
- b.14 f.3 Stationery Samples, undated

#### Flyers, Programs, and Study Guides

- b.14 f.4 1958-1961 (*Cut-Ups; Scraps; Group Soup*)
- b.14 f.5 1963-1965  
*My Horse is Waiting*; various festivals
- b.14 f.6 1966-1969  
*The Chicken and the Egg; Guffawhaw; Group Soup; Fortunately; Scraps; Baked Alaska; My Horse is Waiting; Hot Feet; Dandelion; Hands Off! Don't Touch!; Ma and the Kids*; and various festival performances.
- b.14 f.7 1970-1975  
*I Won't Take a Bath!; Dandelion; Hot Feet; My Horse is Waiting*; and various festival performances.
- b.14 f.8 1976-1979  
*Mama's Got a Job; Christmas All Over The Place; Grandpa; Everybody, Everybody*; and others.
- b.14 f.9 1980-1984  
*Dandelion; Mama's Got a Job; Hot Feet; I Won't Take a Bath!; Reasons to be Cheerful*; and others.
- b.14 f.10 1985-1989  
*Group Soup 2; Any Friend of Yours is a Friend of Mine; No Problem; Fell Off a Truck - What Luck!; Thimble Bellies; Hot Feet*.
- b.14 f.11 1990-1994  
*No Problem; When My Cousins Slept Over; You Won't Believe This, But; The Paper Bag Players and You; Rain or Shine; Dandelion*.

**Series III: Visual and Collateral Material** (cont.)

Flyers, Programs, and Study Guides (cont.)

- b.14 f.12 1995-1999  
*"Rubbish!" She Cried; On Top of Spaghetti; The Horrible Horrendous Hideous Haircut; The Big Sleep Over; Hot Feet; Mollie Wiggle & Minnie Shake.*
- b.14 f.13 2000-2004  
*Fortunately; Knock Knock Knock, Anybody Home?; The Cat's Meow; Where is That Bear?.*
- b.14 f.14 2005-2009  
*Put on Your Shoes, I've Got News!; Pineapple Soup; Christmas All Over the Place; Dandelion; On Top of Spaghetti; Wet Paint; Make a Little Room for Me; The Paper Bag Players: 50 Years of Theater Art* (exhibit at NYPL.).
- of.1 Drawings and Mock-Ups, undated
- b.15 1960-1963
- b.16 1963-1967
- b.17 1967-1971

**Series IV: Scrapbooks, 1960-1990**

Scrapbooks contain press clippings; advertising and marketing material; photographs; playbills and programs; and other material documenting the performances and tours of the Paper Bag Players. Volumes are arranged chronologically. 9 volumes

- b.18 1967-1979
- b.19 1970-1973
- b.20 1974-1976
- b.21 1979-1984
- b.22 1985-1987
- b.23 1987-1990