

**The New York Public Library  
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Billy Rose Theatre Division**

Guide to the  
**Lincoln Center Theater records**  
1979-1991  
\*T-Mss 1991-024

Compiled by Lea Jordan, July 2013

## **Summary**

**Creator:** Lincoln Center Theater (New York, N.Y.)

**Title:** Lincoln Center Theater records, 1979-1991

**Size:** 20.38 linear feet (39 boxes, 19 other items)

**Source:** Donated by Jack Lines, 2011.

**Abstract:** The Lincoln Center Theater was formed as a non-profit in 1985 to present and develop theatrical works and make the performing arts accessible to a wide audience through the use of low cost and free tickets for culturally under-served populations. The Lincoln Center Theater records hold production files from the group's early seasons (1985-1990) as well as files documenting the group's 1985 restructuring and transition from earlier management. There are also financial and facilities rental materials from the theater's time under the Lincoln Center Theater Company which managed the physical theater's operations from 1979 to 1985.

**Access:** Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Inquiries regarding audio/visual materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division ([theatrediv@nypl.org](mailto:theatrediv@nypl.org)). Sound recordings will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

**Copyright information:** For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

**Preferred citation:** Lincoln Center Theater records, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Collection rehoused. Original file groupings maintained. Duplicate printed material removed.

## Creator history

The Lincoln Center Theater Company (LCTC) opened in 1980, under the direction of Richmond Crinkley with a five-member committee of advisors consisting of Woody Allen, Sarah Caldwell, Liviu Ciulei, Robin Phillips, and Ellis Rabb. Edward Albee was the company playwright. The LCTC was the third resident company at the Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont and Mitzi Newhouse theaters. Previous resident companies were the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center (1964-1973) and Joe Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival (1973-1977). The governing body of the Lincoln Center Theater Company was the Vivian Beaumont Theater, Inc., which oversaw the various uses of the theater.

The LCTC only presented one season, from 1980-1981, which included *Macbeth*, *The Philadelphia Story*, and a new play by Woody Allen, *The Floating Light Bulb*. The productions were generally not well received. Crinkley then decided that the Beaumont would need major renovations before the next season could continue. Lincoln Center's governing body, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc., asked that the renovations be postponed until the company could reevaluate its artistic mission.

Crinkley prevailed and a \$6.5 million interior renovation of the Vivian Beaumont closed the theater from late 1981 to 1983. In addition to adding a proscenium arch, the renovation improved acoustics and sight-lines and increased seating capacity from 1,143 to about 1,200. These renovations, combined with the fact that LCTC had not produced any further resident seasons, were a point of contention between Crinkley and Lincoln Center. Disagreements escalated in 1984 when the Lincoln Center board stripped the Beaumont of the use of the words "Lincoln Center" in its name and denied the theater access to Lincoln Center funds. The restrictions were removed in 1985 in exchange for an agreement by the Vivian Beaumont Theater, Inc. board to take on new members and elect new leadership, which would move towards establishing an active resident company. From 1978 through 1985, the Beaumont had been primarily rented to outside producers, and the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater had remained mostly unused.

In 1985, the building's current management – Lincoln Center Theater (LCT) – was established. This change in management was led by former New York City Mayor John Lindsay, who assembled a new board of directors and signed Gregory Mosher as Director and Bernard Gersten as Executive Producer. Crinkley resigned in 1985 shortly after the new board was appointed.

The new board formed committees for maintaining the building, fundraising, and program development. Fundraising for their first season began at once, with solicitation of corporate donors, the continued rental of the Beaumont and Newhouse, and a succession of galas. The new company opened their first production, *House of Blue Leaves*, in the spring of 1986 and produced their first full season in 1986-1987. The theater went on to open many notable productions, including *Anything Goes* (1987), and *Mule Bone* (1991). *Mule Bone* was written in 1930 by Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston. After a falling out between the two authors, the manuscript was shelved and never produced. Lincoln Center worked with the estates of both authors to produce the play for the first time in January of 1991. LCT also produced the South African musical *Sarafina!* (1987) and an accompanying documentary film, *Voices of Sarafina!*.

In 1991, Linda LeRoy Janklow and Andre Bishop succeeded Lindsay and Mosher as chairman and artistic director, respectively. Lincoln Center Theater has outlasted all prior managements combined and has become America's largest non-profit theater. The company continues to produce plays and musicals at the Beaumont, the Newhouse, and other theaters around the city.

## Scope and content note

The Lincoln Center Theater records hold production files, committee records, financial materials, and facility rental records for both the short-lived Lincoln Center Theater Company (1979-1985) and Lincoln Center Theater. The Lincoln Center Theater records document the productions under that company's first administration, Lindsay and Mosher (1985-1991).

The production files document individual productions mounted by the companies. Productions are arranged by season and then opening date. The amount and content of the files varies by production. Files may include programs, director notes, cast sheets, contact lists, scene breakdowns, orchestral scores, prop lists, lighting and sound designs, fly cues, and scripts. Scripts may be drafts of production scripts, marked operating scripts, stage manager's scripts, and those used for music and lighting cues. There are limited photographs. *Anything Goes* is the most fully represented production, with general production files as well as the full set of orchestral parts used in the pit. The files for *Sarafina!* also hold correspondence and contracts regarding the documentary film produced about the creation of the musical. The *Mule Bone* files hold research and script drafts which trace the reconstruction of the piece. Lincoln Center Theater Company's 1980-1981 season files contain only production photographs. Open reel tapes of backing instrumentation for *House of Blue Leaves* and *Measure for Measure* are here, as well as sound recordings of *Anything Goes*. Additionally, there are cartridge sound effect tapes identified by effect and not production. Sound recordings will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

In 1985, the building's current management - Lincoln Center Theater- was established. Former mayor John Lindsay assembled a board of directors and hired Gregory Mosher as director and Bernard Gersten as executive producer. The committee files document this change of management, and hold notes and correspondence from the newly formed building committee, development committee, and special events committee. There are budget estimates for the renovation of the Newhouse and Beaumont theaters for the new enterprise, as well as fundraising needs and charts with estimated operating costs. There is also correspondence and notes relating to the December 1985 benefit gala that marked the return of a resident company to the Beaumont.

The financial records of the Vivian Beaumont Theatre, Inc. hold files from 1980 to 1985, representing time spent working with the Lincoln Center Theater Company. There are annual budgets, statements, accounting reports, central services payments to Lincoln Center, and ledgers for cash received, all arranged by date.

The facilities rental files document the Vivian Beaumont Theater, Inc.'s primary activity under Lincoln Center Theater Company – renting the Beaumont for income. Rental activities continued through December of 1985, when Lincoln Center Theater was ready to take over the space with their own resident company. These files, arranged by date, contain lists of staff required for each event, payment terms, lists of hours worked by facility staff, correspondence with the event planner, and occasionally programs from various events.

## Arrangement

Alphabetical by file type.

## Key terms

### Subjects

Theater -- 20th century

Theater -- Production and direction

Theater -- Reviews

**Names**

Lincoln Center Theater (New York, N.Y.)

**Special formats**

Correspondence

Scores

Scripts

## Container list

- b.1 f.1-10 Committee Files, 1985
  - Facilities rental Files
- b.2 f.1-13 1979-1984
- b.3 f.1-12 1984
- b.4 f.1-15 1984
- b.5 f.1-12 1985
- b.6 f.1-17 1985
- b.7 f.1-15 1985
- b.8 f.1-11 1985
  - Financial Records
- b.9 f.1-13 1980-1984
- b.39 f.1-3 1980-1984
- b.10 f.1-13 1984-1985
  - Production Files
  - 1980-1981
  - b.11 f.1-2 *The Floating Light Bulb*, 1982-1983
  - b.11 f.3-4 *Macbeth*, 1982-1983
  - b.11 f.5 *The Philadelphia Story*, 1982-1983
  - 1985-1986
  - b.11 f.6 *Parie du Chien and The Shawl*, 1985-1986
  - b.11 f.7-10 *The House of Blue Leaves*, 1985-1986
  - t.1 *The House of Blue Leaves*, 1985-1986
  - 1986-1987
  - b.12 f.1 *Bohpa!*, 1986-1987
  - b.12 f.2 *Children of Asazi*, 1986-1987
  - t.14 *Woza Africa Festival*, 1986-1987
  - b.12 f.3-4 *The Transposed Heads*, 1986-1987
  - b.12 f.5-7 *The Front Page*, 1986-1987
  - b.13 f.1 *Bodies, Rest, and Motion*, 1986-1987
  - t.2 *Bodies, Rest, and Motion*, 1986-1987
  - b.13 f.2 *Death and the Kings Horseman*, 1986-1987
  - t.5 *Death and the Kings Horseman*, 1986-1987
  - t.6 *Death and the Kings Horseman*, 1986-1987
  - t.3 *The Regard of Flight*, 1986-1987
  - t.4 *Comedy of Errors*, 1986-1987
  - 1987-1988
  - Anything Goes*
- b.13 f.3-5 General, 1987-1989
- b.14 f.1-8 General, 1987-1989

Production Files (cont.)

1987-1988 (cont.)

*Anything Goes* (cont.)

- b.15 f.1-7 General, 1987-1989
- b.16 f.1-5 General, 1987-1989
- b.39 f.4 General, 1987-1989
- t.7 General, 1987-1989
- b.30 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.31 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.32 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.33 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.34 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.35 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.36 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.37 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.38 Scores, 1987-1989
- b.16 f.6-7 *Sarafina!*, 1987-1988
- b.17 f.1-5 *Sarafina!*, 1987-1988
- t.8 *Sarafina!*, 1987-1988
- t.9 *Sarafina!*, 1987-1988
- b.18 f.1-2 *Ron Giovanni*, 1987-1988 (Canceled production)
- b.18 f.3-4 *Boys Life*, 1987-1988
- b.18 f.5 *Speed the Plow*, 1987-1988
- b.19 f.1-2 *Speed the Plow*, 1987-1988
- t.10 *Speed the Plow*, 1987-1988
- b.19 f.3 *I'll Go On*, 1987-1988

1988-1989

- b.19 f.4-7 *Road*, 1988-1989
- t.12 *Road*, 1988-1989
- b.20 f.1-5 *Waiting for Godot*, 1988-1989
- b.20 f.6 *Our Town*, 1988-1989
- b.21 f.1-5 *Our Town*, 1988-1989
- b.21 f.6-7 *Measure for Measure*, 1988-1989
- b.22 f.1-4 *Ubu*, 1988-1989
- b.23 f.1-4 *Ubu*, 1988-1989
- t.11 *Ubu*, 1988-1989

1989-1990

- b.23 f.5 *Oh Hell*, 1989-1990
- b.24 f.1-4 *Oh Hell*, 1989-1990

Production Files (cont.)

1989-1990 (cont.)

- b.24 f.5-6      *The Tenth Man*, 1989-1990
- b.25 f.1-5      *The Tenth Man*, 1989-1990
- b.26 f.1      *The Tenth Man*, 1989-1990
- b.29 f.5      *The Tenth Man*, 1989-1990
- t.13      *The Tenth Man*, 1989-1990
- b.26 f.2-5      *Some Americans Abroad*, 1989-1990
- t.15      *Some Americans Abroad*, 1989-1990
- b.26 f.6      *Six Degrees of Separation*, 1989-1990

1990-1991

- t.17      *Township Fever*, 1990-1991
- t.18      *Township Fever*, 1990-1991
- b.27 f.1-5      *Mule Bone*, 1990-1991
- b.28 f.1-5      *Mule Bone*, 1990-1991
- t.16      *Mule Bone*, 1990-1991
- b.29 f.1-4      *Mr. Gogol and Mr. Preen*, 1990-1991
- t.19      *Mr. Gogol and Mr. Preen*, 1990-1991