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Guide to the

Walter Porczak papers

1969-1985

MssCol 2457

Forms part of the International Gay Information Center (IGIC) collection

Compiled by John D. Stinson, April 1990

Summary

Creator: Porczak, Walter

Title: Walter Porczak papers, 1969-1985

Size: 3.56 linear feet (7 boxes)

Source: International Gay Information Center, 1988

Abstract: Engineer and playwright born in Brooklyn, New York. His first professional play, "The Soft-Core Kid", was written in collaboration with Frank Hogan. It was produced (1976) at the Glines, a center for the encouragement of gay arts and culture in New York City. The papers include typescripts of plays and other writings, literary and diary notes and personal correspondence. Included are two scripts of plays by Frank Hogan and remarks made by Hogan at a memorial service for Porczak held on May 6, 1984 at the Unity Church in New York.

Access: Apply to Manuscripts and Archives Division for access at <http://www.nypl.org/mssref>.

Preferred citation: Walter Porczak papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Creator history

Walter Porczak (1935-1984) was born in Brooklyn, New York. His father had immigrated from Poland. A graduate of the City College of New York and Cooper Union Walter Porczak was by profession a licensed engineer and was employed for a time by the City of New York as a director of technical services. As a youth he became passionately fond of the theater, an interest which he carried over into his adult life. He studied playwriting at Columbia University, the New School and at the Herbert Macheison Workshop. His first professional play, the "Soft-Core Kid" (1976), was written in collaboration with his friend, the playwright, Frank Hogan. It was first produced in New York at the Glines, a center for gays at 260 West Broadway founded by John Glines to encourage the development gay arts and culture. Porczak and Hogan collaborated on several other plays which appear not to have been produced professionally. Walter Porczak was also known by his pen name "Walter Kubran". A memorial service for Porczak was given by his friends at the Unity Center in New York on May 6, 1984.

Scope and content note

The bulk of the papers (1969-85) consist of writings and notes. There are also personal miscellaneous papers including correspondence, diary notes and other papers.

The bulk of the writings consists of typescript drafts with corrections and emendations of Porczak's plays including those written in collaboration with Frank Hogan. Many of the plays are present in several variant drafts. Included are drafts of "The Soft-Core Kid" (also entitled "Rub-a-Dub-Dubbers"); his second play "The Endangered Species"; "Maynard Does the Can-Can"; "The Loved One"; "Son of Our Crowd"; and "Spanky". Included are several untitled plays and scripts of radio dramas. There are also scripts of his short stories and fillers intended for popular magazines, and several pornographic writings of a sado-masochistic nature. At the end of the writings series (in Container #111) are scripts of two plays by Frank Hogan: "Catharsis '85", a one-act, one-character play" (1985); and "Can't You Think of Anyone, Either?" (1970).

The notes consist of literary notes and jottings of ideas for his plays and other writings; and notes and collateral course papers kept while he was a student of creative writing.

Included in the personal miscellaneous papers are miscellaneous correspondence (1969-83) from friends relating mainly to literary matters and criticisms of works in progress; a few diary notes recording his thoughts, reflections, sexual activities and fantasies and notes for his writings.

There are also papers relative to a memorial service (May 6, 1984) for Porczak held at the Unity Center in New York including notes of remarks made by Frank Hogan in memory of Porczak and an audio cassette recording relating to the service.

In 1992, Hogan added to these papers a work of petit-point made by Porczak for Hogan in the mid -1960's. According to Hogan, Porczak designed and worked numerous petit-point pieces, often during Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. This work, which has been deframed, consists of the words "Be A Host" (part of a longer maxim of unknown origin: "In life, be a host, not a guest") and also depicts Hogan's grand piano.

In order to protect the privacy of individual persons a portion of the diary notes have been restricted.

Arrangement

The Walter Porczak papers are organized into the following series:

- I. Writings
- II. Personal miscellany

Key terms

Subjects

Authors, American
Dramatists, American
Gays' writings, American

Names

Hogan, Frank
Porczak, Walter

Container list

I. Writings

b.108 Plays

b.109 Plays

b.110 Other writings

b.111 Other writings

b.112 Notes

b.113 Notes

b.114 **II. Personal miscellany**