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Music Division

Guide to the
Patricia Brooks papers
1867-2009
JPB 09-4

Compiled by Laura Slezak Karas, September 2011

Summary

Creator: Brooks, Patricia, 1933-1993

Title: Patricia Brooks papers, 1867-2009

Size: 3.07 linear feet (8 boxes)

Source: Gift of Paul Libin and Theodore Mann, 2005.

Abstract: The Patricia Brooks papers (1867, 1897-2009) document the professional vocal career of the artist, focusing on her operatic performances. The papers contain professional and personal correspondence; reproductions of photographs documenting her operatic career, including photographs of Brooks with Placido Domingo and Frank Corsaro; financial records and advanced ticket sales regarding Brooks' recital in 1977; as well as correspondence, notes, ticket lists, and potential performers relating to the New York City Opera's tribute to Brooks in 2008. Annotated, published scores make up the majority of the collection.

Access: To request materials, contact the Music Division (musicdiv@nypl.org) in advance.

Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Music Division. Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Copyright information: Copyright retained by any document's creator.

Preferred citation: Patricia Brooks papers, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Processing note

This collection was donated as part of the Circle in the Square records. In addition to the unprocessed material held by the Music Division, ten folders from the processed Circle in the Square records held by the Billy Rose Theatre Collection were integrated to create the Patricia Brooks papers.

Related collections

Circle in the Square records. Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

La Vie Parisienne [video recording]. Theatre on Film and Tape Archive, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Creator history

An accomplished pianist, dancer, and actress, Patricia Brooks is best known as a lyric soprano. Born November 7, 1933 in Manhattan to a musical family, Brooks trained as a performer from an early age. Her grandmother was a concert pianist and her mother, Eda Moultren Brooks, was a voice coach and performed in musical comedies along with her aunt. At the age of ten, Brooks won a WQXR award for her performance of Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor. Brooks studied viola, harmony, and theory at the High School of Music and Art (LaGuardia Arts) and studied dance at the Fokine School. As a teenager, she was a dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company until a knee injury ended her career. Interested in acting, Brooks enrolled in the Hunter College Theater Workshop, debuted at Circle in the Square under the direction of Jose Quintero, studied acting under Uta Hagen, and later worked under the direction of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, Arthur Penn, and William Ball. Brooks received vocal training at the Manhattan School of Music and was a pupil of Daniel Ferro.

Brooks performed with the New York City Opera for seventeen years, from her debut as Marianne in Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1960 to her farewell performance in Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor* in 1977. In total, Brooks performed thirty-two roles in six languages with the New York City Opera. Over the course of her operatic career, Brooks was known for her roles as Violetta in *La Traviata*, Manon in *Manon*, Melisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Brooks did not limit herself to operatic roles; she also sang with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and performed solos at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, among other locations. Notably, Brooks gave a command performance for President John F. Kennedy at the White House in 1963 and performed in *A Lincoln Evening* at the re-opening of Ford's Theatre in 1968.

After multiple sclerosis limited her breathing, Brooks retired from the stage in 1977 and began teaching voice as well as directing at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase.

In her personal life, Brooks was married to Circle in the Square co-founder Theodore Mann; the couple had two sons, Jonathan and Andrew. Brooks died of complications arising from multiple sclerosis on January 22, 1993.

Scope and content note

This collection documents the professional vocal career of Patricia Brooks, most strongly representing her operatic performances. Personal material is limited; items can be found interfiled in correspondence and photographs, as well as in personal miscellany, which includes Brooks' wedding announcement, passport, and journal entries. The Patricia Brooks papers also contain professional correspondence; press clippings; programs and publicity materials, including a program for *A Lincoln Evening* signed by Vice President Hubert Humphrey and Stuart Udall, Secretary of the Interior; obituaries; photographs, playbills, and postcards used as research materials for character and costume period study; financial records and advanced ticket sales regarding Brooks' recital in 1977; as well as correspondence, notes, ticket lists, and potential performers relating to the New York City Opera's tribute to Brooks in 2008.

Reproductions of photographs documenting her operatic career are also in the collection, including photographs of Brooks with Placido Domingo and Frank Corsaro, and a poster sized reproduction of a photograph and inscription by Jacqueline Kennedy regarding Brooks' command performance of *The Magic Flute* at the White House in 1963. A few original, personal photographs are also included. Annotated, published scores make up the majority of the collection.

Audio and visual recordings document Brooks' operatic career and consist of in-house and commercial recordings. Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Music Division (musicdiv@nypl.org) in advance. Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation and migration prior to access.

Commercial recordings of Patricia Brooks are held by the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, and can be found by conducting an author search in the catalog (www.nypl.org/catalog); Brooks will be listed as a performer.

Arrangement

Alphabetical by subject.

Key terms

Subjects

Opera -- New York State (N.Y.)

Occupations

Sopranos (Singers)

Names

Brooks, Patricia, 1933-1993

Mann, Theodore

New York City Opera

Special formats

Photographic postcards

Photographs

Playbills

Postcards

Posters

Programs

Scores

Scripts

Stereographs

Container list

- b.7 f.1 American Guild of Musical Artists--Dues Paid, 1963-1965
- b.7 f.2 Brooks, Ethel, 1986 (Résumé and flier)
- b.1 f.1 Columbia Artists Management, 1976-1980
 - Correspondence
- b.1 f.2-3 General, 1963-1992, undated
- b.7 f.3 General, 1977-1994, undated
- b.7 f.4 Bird, Bill, after 1993
 - The majority of this file consists of photocopies of Brooks' letters to Bird, dating from 1970-1984.
- b.7 f.5 Letters of Recommendation, 1981 (For Brooks as a vocal instructor)
- b.7 f.6 New York City Opera (NYCO) Tribute, 2008-2009
- b.1 f.4 Notes, undated
- b.1 f.5 Obituaries, 1993
- b.7 f.7 Performances--Lists, 1967-circa 1977
- b.7 f.8 Personal Miscellany, 1953, 1986-1988, undated
 - Includes Brooks' wedding announcement, passport, journal entries, and high school art journal.
- Photographs
- b.1 f.6 General, undated
- b.1 f.7 Backstage, undated (Photographs by Lois Kishenbaum)
- b.1 f.8 Opera, undated
- b.7 f.9 Personal, 1968, undated
- b.1 f.9 Personal, undated
 - t.1 Posters--*The Magic Flute*, undated (Reproduction on photograph paper)
 - Inscribed by Jacqueline Kennedy
- b.6 f.1 Posters--*Rigoletto*, 1960
 - Produced by the Greenwich Junior Women's Club.
- b.7 f.10-11 Press Clippings, 1958-1993, undated
- b.1 f.10-11 Press Clippings, 1963-2001, undated
- Programs and Publicity
- b.1 f.12 General, 1952, 1960-1967
 - The earliest program is for a dance performance (1952); the rest concern Brooks' vocal career.
- b.2 f.1-2 General, 1968-1985, undated
- b.7 f.12 General, 1969-1993
 - Includes program from Brooks' memorial service.
- b.7 f.13 Biographies, 1964-1971
- b.2 f.3 Biographies, 1969-1977, undated
- b.7 f.14 *Figaro* and *Mahagonny*, 1979, undated
 - Brooks directed these student productions.
- b.7 f.15 *A Lincoln Evening*, 1968 January 30
 - Brooks performed in *A Lincoln Evening* at the re-opening of Ford's Theatre; the program is signed by Vice President Hubert Humphrey and Stuart L. Udall, Secretary of the Interior.
- b.2 f.4 Recital Expenses, 1975-1977
- b.2 f.5 Recital Tickets, 1977
- Research Materials for Period Study

Research Materials for Period Study (cont.)

- b.7 f.16 Photographs, 1911, undated
Photographs may include Brooks' family members.

- b.8 f.1-2 Playbills, 1908-1940

- b.8 f.3 Postcards and Stereographs, 1897-1902, undated

Scores

Copyright dates are provided when available; all scores are published with the exception of *Arcifanfaro, King of Fools*.

- b.2 f.6 *6 Vocal Duets*, undated (Purcell, Henry)
- b.2 f.7 *12 Konzert und Opernarien*, 1930 (Bach, Johan Sebastian)
- b.2 f.8 *24 Songs for Voice and Piano (High)*, 1950 (Mahler, Gustav)
- b.2 f.9 *85 Songs for Voice and Piano (High)*, 1954 (Schumann, Robert)
- b.6 f.2-4 *Arcifanfaro, King of Fools*, undated
- b.2 f.10 *Ariel*, 1974 (Inscribed by the composer, Ned Rorem.)
- b.2 f.11 *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, 1969
This opera, composed by Kurt Weill, was directed at SUNY Purchase by Brooks.
- b.3 f.1 Cantata Numbers 51, 58, and 180, 1942, 1960, undated (Bach, Johan Sebastian)
- b.3 f.2 *Carmina Burana*, 1965
- b.3 f.3 *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, 1959
- b.3 f.4 *Duette für zwei Singstimmen und Klavier*, undated (Brahms, Johannes)
- b.3 f.5 *L'Elisir d'Amore*, 1961
- b.3 f.6 *Ernani, Ernani, involami*, 1971
- b.3 f.7-8 *Die Fledermaus*, 1951, undated
One of the two scores by Johann Strauss is also bound with a script for the San Francisco Opera Association.
- b.8 f.4 *Gianni Schicchi*, 1959 (Puccini, Giacomo)
- b.3 f.9 *The Impresario*, 1954
- b.4 f.1 *Lakmé*, 1950
- b.4 f.2 *Liebeslieder und Neue Liebeslieder*, 1956 (Brahms, Johannes)
- b.4 f.3 *Lucretia*, 1952
- b.6 f.5 Mad Scene, *Hamlet*, undated (Photostat. Thomas, Ambroise)
- b.4 f.4 *Le Nozze di Figaro*, 1951
- b.4 f.5 *L'Ormindo*, 1969 (Cavalli, Francesco)
- b.4 f.6 *Orpheus Britannicus*, 1948 (Purcell, Henry)
- b.4 f.7 *Pariser Leben (La Vie Parisienne)*, 1867 [?] (Offenbach, Jacques)
- b.4 f.8 "Roberto, o tu che adoro," *Roberto il Diavolo*, 1908 (Meyerbeer, Giacomo)
- b.6 f.6 *Su le Sponde del Tebro*, 1955 (Scarlatti, Alessandro)
- b.4 f.9 *To Be Sung Upon the Water*, 1974 (Argento, Dominick)
- b.5 f.1 *The Turn of the Screw*, 1957
- b.6 f.7 *Two Songs from the Opera The Dead City*, 1948 (Korngold, Erich Wolfgang)
- b.5 f.2 *Variazioni-Cadenze Tradizioni*, 1945 (Ricci, Luigi)

Scores (cont.)

- b.5 f.3 *Wir Geniessen die Himmlischen Freuden*, 1920 (Mahler, Gustav)
- b.5 f.4 Sheet Music, undated
Includes "Fallen Blossoms," by Eda Moultren Brooks.
- b.5 f.5 Translated Classical Works for Recitals, undated
- b.5 f.6 *La Vie Parisienne*, 1982 (Script)
Adapted from the original by Theordore Mann and Patricia Brooks.
- b.5 f.7 Miscellaneous Materials, 1957-1982, undated