



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

American Negro Theatre scrapbook

1945-1948

Sc MG 363

This inventory was prepared as part of an archival preservation project to arrange, describe and catalog resources essential for the study of the African-American theater history. The necessary staff and supplies for the Blacks on Stage: African-American Theater Arts Collection Project were made available through a combination of funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the City of New York.

Summary

Creator: American Negro Theatre

Title: American Negro Theatre scrapbook

Date: 1945-1948

Size: 1 vol

Source: Gift of Maxwell Glanville, 1983 (SCM 83-22).

Abstract: The American Theatre Scrapbook was donated and possibly compiled by Maxwell Glanville, however there is no mention of him in the programs or articles.

Preferred citation: American Negro Theatre scrapbook, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

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Creator History

Maxwell Glanville was born in February 1918 in Antigua, West Indies and attended the New School for Social Research in New York City. He began his career as an actor with the American Negro Theatre (ANT) and the Committee for the Negro in the Arts (CNA), but subsequently became a playwright, producer, and director. Glanville was also a founder and artistic director of the American Community Theatre (ACT); all three groups were formed in Harlem, New York. His theatre credits include: *Home Is the Hunter*(1945); *Walk Hard*(1946); *Anna Lucasta*(1946 to 1947); *How Long Till Summer*(1949); *Freight*(1950) *Autumn Garden*(1951); *Take A Giant Step*(1953) *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*(1955); *Simply Heavenly*(1959); *Nat Turner*(1960); *Golden Boy*(1964) and *Zelda*(1969). He also appeared in such films

as: *Cotton Comes to Harlem*, *The Out of Towners*(1970), and *Come Back Charleston Blue*(1972) and on television in *N.Y.P.D.*, *Newark* and *Reality*(1979), and in a Bell Telephone commercial (1981).

The American Negro Theatre (ANT), 1940 to 1951, was cofounded by Abram Hill and Frederick O'Neal. ANT provided professional training and development, and produced plays concerning aspects of black life that appealed primarily to the Harlem community. The Committee for the Negro in the Arts (CNA) was active in the theatre although it was more of an interracial, cultural group that, according to one author, was comprised of the "Harlem radical political leftwing." During the period of the CNA's activity, 1947 to 1954, a number of black-authored plays were produced, among them: *Florence*, *Just A Little Simple*, and *A Medal for Willie*. Unlike ANT, CNA's upscale fee for admittance to its productions hindered many Harlem community theatergoers from attending CNA's productions.

In 1951, Glanville produced *Soul Gone Home* at Club Baron and three plays, *Alice in Wonder*, *The Other Foot*, and *A World Full of Men*. Following the demise of ANT (1951) and CNA (1954), Glanville founded the American Community Theatre (ACT) in 1958 and became its artistic director. While with ACT, he produced some of his own plays, including *The Bonus*(1961), *Cindy*(1962), and *Long Stretch-Short Haul*(1969). In 1970 Glanville wrote *Dance to the Nosepicker's Drum* with Rudy Gray, one of his students from ACT. At that time it was decided to emphasize training rather than the development of a theatre company, therefore, the company was renamed ACT/Pro/Workshop. Productions of ACT were usually presented at various community theatres around New York City including the Harlem Young Men's Christian Association.

Moreover, Glanville directed *Light in the Cellar*(1975), *Tale of an Instant Junkie*, *Anna Lucasta*(1978), *Branches from the Same Tree*(1980), *God's Trombone*(1982) and *Outside Daughters*(1986). Less than a decade before his death in January 1992, Glanville wrote *TWIT* with Gertrude Greenidge (1986).

Scope and Content Note

The American Negro Theatre scrapbook, donated by Maxwell Glanville, dates from 1945 to 1947 and contains articles from the Burrell Clippings Service, as well as clippings from other sources, telegrams, and programs. Programs include *On Strivers' Row*, *Juno and the Paycock*(featuring student actors), *You Can't Take It With You*, and *Angel Street*. The scrapbook contains reviews of plays, follow-up articles on actors and actresses who appeared in ANT productions, and articles on ANT's history until approximately one decade after its founding. There is also publicity on ANT ancillary activities, specifically ANT radio broadcasts of plays and operas, and their theatre instruction classes, articles on Frederick O'Neal and Abram Hill, newspaper and magazine pictures from ANT productions, and editorials about the ANT.

Maxwell Glanville is not listed on the above programs nor mentioned in any of the newspaper clippings. There is no discernible arrangement to the contents in the scrapbook.

Container List

- b. 1 Reviews and Feature Articles on 1945-1946 season 1945-1946
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Home is the Hunter*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *On Strivers' Row*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Green Pastures*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Three Is A Family*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Anna Lucasta*
- v. 1
- b. 1 Publicity for 1946 summer productions 1946
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Angel Street*
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- b. 1 *You Can't Take It With You*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Juno and the Paycock*
- v. 1
- b. 1 Reviews and feature articles on 1946-1947 season 1946-1947
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Walk Hard*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Home Is the Hunter*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *On Strivers' Row*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *The Peacemaker*
- v. 1
- b. 1 *Rain*
- v. 1
- b. 1 Publicity for the thirteen week 1946 WNEW sponsored ANT Operatic series,
v. 1 plays, and theatre instruction classes 1946