



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Carole Shelley papers

1940s-2016

*T-Mss 2021-010

Processed by Valerie Wingfield in 2022.

Summary

Creator: Shelley, Carole

Title: Carole Shelley papers

Date: 1940s-2016

Size: 15.75 linear feet (42 boxes, 3 tubes)

Source: The collection was a gift of the Estate of Carole Shelley, through Catherine Chadwick, 2021.

Abstract: The Carole Shelley papers, dated 1940s to 2016, document the career of character actor Carole Shelley (1939-2018). Her collection contains correspondence, production scripts, notes, photographs, posters, costume sketches, scrapbooks, animation cels, awards and sound recordings.

Conditions Governing Access:

Inquiries regarding audio and moving image materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatre@nypl.org). Audio and moving image materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Preferred citation: Carole Shelley papers, *T-Mss 2021-010. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Valerie Wingfield in 2022.

Creator History

Carole Shelley (1939-2018) was a character actor on stage, film, and television. Born in London, England, her parents were Deborah (Bloomstein) Shelley, a singer and Curtis Shelley, a composer. Shelley's career started in childhood as an advertising model and actress. Her early credits include the plays *Great Expectations*; *Simon and Laura*; and the films *Give Us This Day*; and *It's Great to be Young*.

During the 1960s, Shelley transitioned to adult roles, mostly appearing in theatrical productions. In 1964, Shelley moved to New York City, never returning to live in England. Success followed quickly with her Broadway debut in *The Odd Couple* as one of the Pigeon sisters in 1965. This led her to appear in both the film version and the television series. Other notable roles include Amelia in the Disney animation *The Aristocats* (1970); Madame Morrible in *Wicked* (2003); and Grandma in *Billy Elliot* (2009). Shelley also performed during the summer at The Shaw Festival in Toronto, Canada.

Her nominations and awards include a Tony award for her role as Mrs. Kendal in *The Elephant Man* and a Tony nomination as Jane in *Absurd Person Singular*.

Shelley died of cancer in 2018.

Scope and Content Note

The Carole Shelley papers, dated from 1940s to 2016, document her career as a featured actor on stage, in film, and on television. The collection spans her childhood in England, to her adult career in the United States. The collection has the following arrangement: correspondence, writings, photographs, scripts, awards and nominations, memorabilia, animation cels, costume sketches, posters, artifacts, and audio and moving image materials.

The correspondence hold letters from colleagues, prominent individuals in the entertainment industry, and fans. These files include good wishes and congratulations for Shelley's nomination and Tony Award for her portrayal of Mrs. Kendal in *The Elephant Man*. Related material located in other groups are the photographs from the stage production with actors Philip Anglim and Mark Hamill in the title role; posters from the Off-Broadway and Broadway productions; and sketches with fabric samples for her costumes.

The writings include daybooks, and notes for productions that include *Arms and the Man*, *As You Like It*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Stepping Out* and *The Taming of the Shrew* and some poetry by Shelley.

The scripts, utilized for rehearsals, have extensive underlining, lines edited out or added, comments in the margins, and doodling by Shelley. These scripts occasionally include notes, the schedule of performances, the author of the script, location of the production, score, different editions of the script, and letters to Shelley from the director regarding her character in the stage production *Cabaret*.

The photographs offer strong evidentiary visual information about Shelley in productions. The files have pictures of Shelley performing with other actors; preparing for her roles; publicity shots and portraits of Shelley. Many of the photographs are in black and white, with the name of the photographer occasionally identified. Early photographs of Shelley are located in scrapbooks in the Memorabilia section.

Other files are the animation cels from the Disney animation *The Aristocats*, posters, and costume sketches.

The Audio and Moving Image section holds mostly audio recordings from the productions where Shelley was credited in the production. The video recordings document Shelley's work in film, television and stage productions.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into the following groups: Correspondence; Writings; Photographs; Scripts; Awards and Nominations; Memorabilia; Animation Cells; Costume Sketches; Posters; Artifacts; Audio and Moving Image Materials.

Key Terms

Subjects

Actors -- Great Britain
Actors -- United States
Costume design
Off-Broadway theater
Theaters -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Albums (books)
Diaries
Photograph albums
Photographic prints
Playbills (Posters)
Scripts
Sound recordings

Geographic Names

Broadway (New York, N.Y.)

Names

Shelley, Carole

Container List

Correspondence 1955-2016

- b. 1 f. 1-15 General Correspondence 1955-2015
- b. 2 f. 1-15 Chronological.
- b. 3 f. 1-11
- b. 4 f. 1-7

Prominent Correspondents 1970s-2000s

Alphabetical by surname.

- b. 4 f. 8 Anglim, Philip 1979
- b. 4 f. 9 Ayckbourn, Alan
- b. 4 f. 10 Azenberg, Emanuel 1977-1996
- b. 4 f. 11 Baer, Richard 1973
- b. 4 f. 12 Blakemore, Michael 1990
- b. 4 f. 13 Browne, Coral 1990
- b. 4 f. 14 Burton, Kate 2016
- b. 4 f. 15 Champion, Marge 1987
- b. 4 f. 16 Chenoweth, Kristin
- b. 4 f. 17 Coward, Noël 1965-1970
- b. 4 f. 18 Cullum, John 1996
- b. 4 f. 19 Cummings, Constance 1979
- b. 4 f. 20 Dale, Jim 1980
- b. 4 f. 21 Ephron, Nora 2004-2006
- b. 4 f. 22 Evans, Monica
- b. 4 f. 23 Gaines, Boyd 1999
- b. 4 f. 24 Gormley, Margaret
- b. 4 f. 25 Grey, Joel 2008
- b. 4 f. 26 Grizzard, George 1977-1996
- b. 4 f. 27 Harnick, Sheldon 1979-2002
- b. 4 f. 28 Hirsch, Judd 1978
- b. 4 f. 29 Holbrook, Hal
- b. 5 f. 1-2 Hutt, William 1975-1979
- b. 5 f. 3 Jones, Cherry 1987
- b. 5 f. 4 Kern, Walter 1979
- b. 5 f. 5 Kiley, Richard 1979
- b. 5 f. 6 Lansbury, Angela 1979
- b. 5 f. 7 Lapine, James 1982-1993
- b. 5 f. 8 Langella, Frank 2002
- b. 5 f. 9 Langham, Michael
- b. 5 f. 10 Le Gallienne, Eva 1976
- b. 5 f. 11 Lineman, Brian 1977-1982
- b. 5 f. 12 Long, William Ivey 1982-1999
- b. 5 f. 13 Loudon, Dorothy 1975

Correspondence (cont.)
Prominent Correspondents (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 14 LuPone, Patty 1994
- b. 5 f. 15 Lynne, Gillian 2003
- b. 5 f. 16 McDowall, Roddy 1992
- b. 5 f. 17 McKenzie, Julia 1992
- b. 5 f. 18 Maguire, Gregory 2006
- b. 5 f. 19 Marshall, Robert
- b. 5 f. 20 Mays, Jefferson 2015
- b. 5 f. 21 Mendes, Samuel Alexander
- b. 5 f. 22 Menzel, Idina
- b. 5 f. 23 Nelson, Portia 1971
- b. 5 f. 24 Nichols, Mike 1965-1991
- b. 5 f. 25 Papp, Walter 1982
- b. 5 f. 26 Parsons, Estelle 1976
- b. 5 f. 27 Prince, Harold 1965-2003
- b. 5 f. 28 Rabb, Ellis 1976-1977
- b. 5 f. 29 Redgrave, Lynn 1976-2009
- b. 5 f. 30 Reed, Joseph Verner
- b. 5 f. 31 Richardson, Ian 1978-1979
- b. 5 f. 32 Rivers, Joan
- b. 5 f. 33 Rudd, Paul
- b. 5 f. 34 Scales, Prunella 1996
- b. 5 f. 35 Schoenfeld, Gerald 1980-1982
- b. 5 f. 36 Schwarz, Stephen
- b. 5 f. 37 Simon, Neil 1965-1995
- b. 5 f. 38 Stiller, Jerry and Anne Meara 1975
- b. 5 f. 39 Tandy, Jessica 1983
- b. 5 f. 40 Taylor, Holland 1979
- b. 5 f. 41 Thompson, Emma 1989
- b. 5 f. 42 Thompson, Eric
- b. 6 f. 1 Uhry, Alfred 1998
- b. 6 f. 2 Walton, Tony 2000-2013
- b. 6 f. 3 Whitehead, Paxton 1977
- b. 6 f. 4 Worth, Irene 1990s

Writings 1970s-1980s

Daybooks 1973-1976

- b. 6 f. 5 European and Russian Tour 1973
- b. 6 f. 6 *The Royal Family* 1976

Notes 1970s-1980s

Alphabetical by title of production.

- b. 6 f. 7 *Arms and the Man* 1982
- b. 6 f. 8 *As You Like It*

Writings (cont.)

Notes (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 9 *The Cherry Orchard* 1981
- b. 7 f. 1 *King Lear*
- b. 7 f. 2-3 *The Lion in Winter* 1987
- b. 7 f. 4-5 *The Merchant of Venice*
- b. 7 f. 6 *The Millionairess* 1977
- b. 7 f. 7-8 *Romeo and Juliet* 1977
- b. 7 f. 9 *The Six Loves of Shakespeare*
- b. 7 f. 10 *Stepping Out*
- b. 7 f. 11 *The Taming of the Shrew* 1972
- b. 8 f. 1 *Three Plays For Puritans*
- b. 8 f. 2 *The Tragedy of Macbeth* 1973
- b. 8 f. 3-4 *Twelfth Night* 1974
- b. 8 f. 5 Thompson, Eric Notes To Shelley
These notes were written to Shelley regarding two productions *Absurd Person Singular* and *The Norman Conquests*.

Assorted Files 1980s

- b. 8 f. 6 Biographical
- Interview and Presentations
- b. 8 f. 9-10 American Academy of Dramatic Arts 1981
- b. 8 f. 11 Colleen Dewhurst Memorial
- b. 8 f. 7 Interview. Carole Shelley on George Bernard Shaw 1982
- b. 8 f. 8 *Lecture: The Elephant Man* 1982
- b. 8 f. 12 Self Reflection
- b. 38 f. 1 Talk 2008
- b. 8 f. 13 Unidentified Graduation Ceremony 1989
- b. 9 f. 1-7 Writings by Shelley
The files include poetry.

Photographs 1958-2016

Productions 1958-2016

The files also include the name of the theatre used for the production.

The arrangement is alphabetical by the name of the production.

- b. 9 f. 8 *Absurd Person Singular* 1974-1975
- b. 39 f. 1
- b. 9 f. 9 *The Aristocats* 1970
- b. 9 f. 10-11 *Arms and the Man* 1982-1986
Shelley performed in two different productions.
- b. 9 f. 12 *The Art of Living* 1960-1961
- b. 9 f. 13 *As You Like It* 1972
- b. 9 f. 14 *The Astrakhan Coat* 1967
- b. 9 *Bewitched* 2005
- b. 9 f. 17 *Billy Elliott* 2008-2011
- b. 9 f. 18 *Blithe Spirit* 1982
- b. 9 f. 19 *The Boston Strangler* 1968

Photographs (cont.)

Productions (cont.)

- b. 9 f. 20 *Broadway Bound* 1987-1988
- b. 9 f. 21 *Cabaret* 1999-2003
- b. 39 f. 2 *Cafe Royale* 1961
- b. 9 f. 22 *The Cherry Orchard* 1980
- b. 9 f. 23 *The Circle* 2001
- b. 10 f. 1 *City Lights* 1977
- b. 10 f. 2 *The Club* 1983-1984
- b. 10 f. 3 *The Country Wife* 1973
- b. 10 f. 4 *Dear Antoine: or, the Love That Failed* 1983-1984
- b. 10 f. 5 *The Destiny of Me* 1992-1993
- b. 10 f. 6 *The Devil's Discipline* 1978
- b. 10 f. 7 *A Doll's House* 1973-1974
- b. 10 f. 8-9 *The Elephant Man* 1979-1981
- b. 39 f. 3-8
- b. 10 f. 10 *Going Dutch?* 1959
- b. 10 f. 11 *A Gorey Halloween* 1978
- b. 10 f. 12 *Hay Fever* 1970
- b. 10 f. 13 *The Importance of Being Earnest* 2005
- b. 10 f. 14 *King Lear* 1972
- b. 10 f. 15 *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* 1997
- b. 10 f. 16 *Later Life* 1993
- b. 10 f. 17-18 *Lettice and Lovage* 1988
- b. 39 f. 9
- b. 10 f. 19 *London Suite* 1995
- b. 10 f. 20 *Loot* 1968
- b. 10 f. 21 *Man and Superman* 1977
- b. 10 f. 22 *Mary Mary* 1963-1964
- b. 39 f. 10
- b. 10 f. 23 *The Millionairess* 1977
- b. 10 f. 24 *Misalliance* 1980
- b. 10 f. 25 *The Misanthrope* 1983
- b. 10 f. 26 *The Miser* 1990
- b. 10 f. 27 *My Fair Lady* 2016
- b. 11 f. 1 *New Cranks* 1960
- b. 39 f. 11-12
- b. 11 f. 2 *Noël Coward's Sweet Potato* 1968
- b. 11 f. 3 *Noises Off* 1984-1985
- b. 11 f. 4 *The Norman Conquests* 1975-1976
- b. 11 f. 5 *Not For Keeps* 1984
- b. 11 f. 6-8 *The Odd Couple* 1965-1970s
- b. 39 f. 13-14
- b. 11 f. 9 *The Play's the Thing* 1978
- b. 11 f. 10 *Ring Around the Moon* 2006
- b. 11 f. 11 *Road to Wellville* 1994

Photographs (cont.)

Productions (cont.)

- b. 11 f. 12 *Robin Hood* 1973
- b. 11 f. 13 *Romeo and Juliet* 1974
- b. 11 f. 14 *The Royal Family* 1976-1977
- b. 11 f. 15 *She Stoops to Conquer* 1972
- b. 11 f. 16-17 *Show Boat* 1995-1998
- b. 11 f. 18 *Stepping Out* 1987
- b. 11 f. 19 *The Taming of the Shrew* 1973
- b. 11 f. 20 *Thark* 1977
- b. 11 f. 21-24 *Tonight at 8:30* 1971
- b. 11 f. 25 *A Tribute to Mary Martin and Ethel Merman* 1991
- b. 11 f. 26 *Twelfth Night* 1974
- b. 11 f. 27 *Twelve Dreams* 1981-1982
- b. 11 f. 28 *Waiting for the Parade* 1983-1984
- b. 12 *Wicked* 2003-2008
- b. 41 f. 5
- b. 12 f. 3 *Winston's Nightclub* 1958-1959
- b. 12 f. 4 *What the Butler Saw* 1989
- b. 12 f. 5-6 Unidentified Productions
- b. 12 f. 7-17 Shelley, Carole
- b. 40 f. 1-15
- b. 41 f. 1-4 t. 1-2
- b. 41 f. 6-7 Contact Sheets
- b. 12 f. 18 Unidentified Actors

Scripts 1949-2016

The scripts are arranged alphabetically by title of the production.

- b. 13 f. 1 *Absurd Person Singular* 1974
- b. 13 f. 2 *The Astrakhan Coat* 1966
- b. 13 f. 3-6 *Billy Elliot* 2008
- b. 13 f. 7 *Broadway Bound* 1987
- b. 14 f. 1-5 *Cabaret* 1991-2000
- b. 14 f. 6 *The Clinic* 1987
- b. 14 f. 7 *The Club* 1983-1984
- b. 14 f. 8 *The Country Wife* 1973
- b. 15 f. 1 Two scripts with edits.
- b. 15 f. 2 *Dear Antoine: or, the Love That Failed* 1983
- b. 15 f. 3-4 *The Destiny of Me* 1992
- b. 15 f. 5 *A Dolls House* 1973
- b. 15 f. 6-7 *The Elephant Man* 1977-1979
- The files hold two scripts. One of the scripts, dated 1977, was subtitled "Deformed."
- b. 15 f. 8 *The Film Society* 1997
- b. 15 f. 9 *Frasier* 1998
- Episode: "Merry Christmas, Mrs. Moskowitz."
- b. 16 f. 1-3 *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* 2014
- b. 16 f. 4 *Give Us This Day* 1949

Scripts (cont.)

- b. 16 f. 5 *Going Home* 1994
- b. 16 f. 6 *The Grand Hunt* 1980
- b. 16 f. 7 *I Can't Imagine Tomorrow*
- b. 16 f. 8-9 *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* 1997
- b. 17 f. 1 *Later Life* 1993
- b. 17 f. 2-4 *Lettice and Lovage* 1988-1989
The file holds two revised scripts, for the years 1988 and 1989, with notes.
- b. 17 f. 5 *Little Murders* 1971
- b. 17 f. 6-11 *London Suite* 1994-1995
- b. 18 f. 1-3
- b. 18 f. 4 *Loot* 1966
- b. 18 f. 5 *Love Letters*
- b. 18 f. 6 *The Man on the Floor* 1994
The script lacks Act I.
- b. 18 f. 7 *Man and Superman* 1977
Only Act III in the file.
- b. 18 f. 8 *The Misanthrope* 1982
- b. 18 f. 9 *The Miser* 1990
- b. 18 f. 10 *My Fair Lady* 2016
- b. 18 f. 11 *Noises Off* 1985
- b. 19 f. 1-3 *The Norman Conquests* 1973
- b. 19 f. 4 *Nothing On* 1994
- b. 19 f. 5-7 *The Odd Couple* 1967
- b. 20 f. 1 *Oh Coward!* 1972
- b. 20 f. 2 *The Play's the Thing*
- b. 20 f. 3 *Press Cuttings*
- b. 20 f. 4 *The Queen of Greenwich Village* 2009
- b. 20 f. 5 *Red Peppers*
- b. 20 f. 6 *The Royal Family* 1976
- b. 20 f. 7 *Settling Accounts* 1995
- b. 20 f. 8 *She Stoops to Conquer* 1972
- b. 20 f. 9 *Show Boat* 1995
- b. 21 f. 1
- b. 21 f. 2 *Stepping Out* 1987
- b. 21 f. 3 *Tartuffe* 1982
- b. 21 f. 4 *Twelve Dreams* 1981
- b. 21 f. 5-7 *Waiting For The Parade*
The files hold two scripts.
- b. 21 f. 8 *Wicked*
- b. 22 f. 1-6
- b. 22 f. 7 *What the Butler Saw* 1988
- b. 22 f. 8 Workshops, Speeches for
Awards and Nominations 1973-1999

Awards and Nominations (cont.)

- b. 23 f. 1 *Absurd Person Singular* 1974-1975
Nomination for the Antoinette Perry Award for "Best Supporting Actress."
- b. 23 f. 2 *Billy Elliot* 2008-2009
Nomination for the Antoinette Perry Award for "Featured Actress in a Musical."
- b. 23 f. 3 *Broadway Bound* 1988
The Bay Area Theater Critics Circle presented the "Outstanding Achievement Award" for principle performance.
- b. 23 f. 4 *A Doll's House* 1973-1974
The Joseph Jefferson Awards nomination for best actress in a principle role.
Elephant Man
- b. 23 f. 5 Antoinette Perry Award and Nomination 1978-1979
- b. 23 f. 6 Outer Critics Circle Award 1978-1979
- b. 23 f. 7 *Frasier* 1998-1999
An Emmy Award for outstanding writing for the episode "Merry Christmas, Mrs. Moskowitz."
- b. 23 f. 8 *Later Life* 1994-1995
The Connecticut Critics Circle Award for outstanding actress.
- b. 23 f. 9 *The Millionairess* 1977
Certificate from the Young Men's Christian Association.
- b. 23 f. 10-11 *The Norman Conquests* 1975
b. 38 f. 2 The Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle award and nomination for a supporting role.
- b. 23 f. 12 *A Royal Family* 1977
Shelley received the Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle Award for performance in a major role.
- b. 23 f. 13 *Stepping Out* 1986-1987
Nomination for performance as a featured actress by the American Theatre, Inc. and the League of American Theatres and producers, Inc. for the Antoinette Perry Award.
- b. 23 f. 14 *Twelve Dreams* 1982
Shelley received an Obie Award for her performance.

Memorabilia 1940s-2000s

- b. 38 f. 3 Art Print
- b. 24 f. 1-2 Autographs
 - b. 25 *Broadway Bound* 1988
The container holds a scrapbook.
 - b. 38 f. 4 *Cabaret*
 - b. 38 f. 5 *The Country Wife*
 - b. 38 f. 6 *The Elephant Man* 1979
- b. 24 f. 3-11 Events and Memorials Attended 1970s-2000s
 - b. 26-27 London Scrapbooks 1940s-1960s
This material is a scrapbook of clipping regarding Shelley's early acting career in London.
Wicked
 - b. 28 Photograph Albums
 - b. 30 Recording Industry Association Certified Album
 - b. 29 Assorted Memorabilia
 - b. 29 Mixed Memorabilia
 - b. 38 f. 7
- Animation Cels 1970
 - b. 31 f. 1-2 *Aristocats* 1970

Costume Sketches

- b. 32 f. 1 *Arms and the Man* 1983
- b. 32 f. 2 *The Country Wife* 1973
The file holds an item described as "the actual letter writ" by Carole Shelley.
- b. 32 f. 3 *Dear Antoine: or, The Love That Failed* 1984
- b. 32 f. 4 *The Elephant Man*
- b. 33 f. 1
- b. 32 f. 5 *Man and Superman* 1977
- b. 32 f. 6 *The Millionairess*
- b. 34 f. 1 *The Miser*
- b. 32 f. 7 *She Stops To Conquer*
- b. 34 f. 2 *Shadow Play*
- b. 34 f. 3 *Twelfth Night*
- b. 35 f. 1 *Waiting For The Parade*
- b. 35 f. 2 *Wicked*
- b. 35 f. 3 Unidentified
- b. 35 f. 4 Costumes and Accessories Notebook

Posters 1960s-2000s

- b. 36 f. 1-2 *Absurd Person Singular* 1974
- b. 36 f. 3 *And, Now Noel Coward* 1968
- b. 36 f. 4 *The Astrakhan Coat* 1966
- b. 36 f. 5 *The Destiny of Me* 1992
- b. 36 f. 6 *The Devil's Disciple* 1978
- b. 36 f. 7-8 t. 3 *The Elephant Man* 1977-1979
- b. 36 f. 9 *Hay Fever* 1970
- b. 36 f. 10 *Later Life* 1993
- b. 37 f. 1 *Lettice and Lovage*
- b. 37 f. 2 *London Suite* 1994
- b. 37 f. 3 *Loot* 1966
- b. 37 f. 4-5 *Noël Coward's Sweet Potato*
- b. 37 f. 6 *The Norman Conquests*
- b. 37 f. 7 *The Odd Couple*
Location: Plymouth Theatre, New York City.
- b. 37 f. 8-9 *The Royal Family*
- b. 37 f. 10 *Show Boat* 1995
- b. 37 f. 11 *Stepping Out* 1987
- b. 37 f. 12 *Wicked*

Artifacts 1979-1985

- b. 42 American Jewish Committee, Women's Campaign Board 1985
- b. 42 *The Elephant Man* 1979
Antoinette Perry Tony Award.

Audio and Moving Image Materials 1949-2009

The bulk of the audio and moving image materials are sound recordings; videos are represented to a lesser extent.

Inquiries regarding audio and moving image materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division (theatre@nypl.org). Audio and moving image materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Video Recordings 1949-2009

The video recordings represent Shelley's work in the entertainment business including *A Tribute to Mary Martin and Ethel Merman*; *Lettice and Lovage* and the television series *Spencer For Hire*.

Sound Recordings 1968-1997

The sound recordings are mostly productions that Shelley worked in including *As You Like It*; *Don Juan In Hell*; *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*; *The Elephant Man*; and *The Norman Conquests*. There are also several recordings of dialects .

Dialects

The recordings were for a Polish accent, southern accents, and for the play *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*.