



The New York Public Library
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Shirley Herz papers

1959-1984

*T-Mss 2012-036

Compiled by Robyn Hjermstad, 2014

Summary

Creator: Herz, Shirley

Title: Shirley Herz papers

Date: 1959-1984

Size: 3.88 linear feet (9 boxes, 1 oversized folder)

Source: Unknown donor, unknown date.

Abstract: Shirley Herz (1925-2013) was an American press agent for Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater. The collection (1959-1984) holds press releases, photographs, newspaper articles, program proofs, and other publicity materials for shows and actors Herz represented.

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Creator History

Shirley Herz (1925-2013) was an American press agent for Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater. She also represented actors, dancers, and nightclubs. Herz moved to New York City after attending the University of Pennsylvania for two years and quickly immersed herself in the theater community. In 1953 she met and worked briefly for actress Rosalind Russell. The next year she began her first Broadway job as a press assistant to Dorothy Ross for *House of Flowers* (1954). Herz publicized several Broadway and Off-Broadway shows as a solo press representative before launching her own firm, Shirley Herz Associates, in 1971. Over the course of her career she represented hundreds of shows and individuals, eventually earning a Tony Honors for Excellence Award in 2009. Among the several Broadway productions she promoted were *Miss Isobel* (1957); *Mary, Mary* (1961); *Oh! Calcutta!* (1969); *Strider* (1979); and the Tony Award winning *La Cage aux Folles* (1983). Herz's other clients included the Red Parrot Nightclub and several Off-Broadway theaters such as Ensemble

Studio Theatre, the Jewish Repertory Theatre, the Classic Stage Company, and the Irish Repertory Theatre.

Herz was a longtime board member of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers (ATPAM) and The Broadway League.

Shirley Herz died in 2013.

Scope and Content Note

The Shirley Herz papers date from 1959 to 1984 and hold production files, client files, correspondence, clippings, and scripts. The collection chiefly documents Herz's work with her agency, Shirley Herz Associates, during the 1980s.

Production files and client files make up the bulk of the collection. Production files typically hold press releases, production photographs, head shots, advertising invoices, proposed production budgets, and newspaper articles. Some production files only contain photographs, such as the file for *Strider* (1979). Other productions documented in the collection include *Baseball Wives* (1982), *Some Men Need Help* (1982), *Marilyn: An American Fable* (1983), and *Perfectly Frank* (1983). Press releases, programs, announcements, and reviews for concerts at the Red Parrot Nightclub during the early 1980s are present. Musicians and musical groups documented include Joey Heatherton, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Julie Budd, the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, Jaye P. Morgan, and Lainie Kazan. Researchers should also consult the clippings in the collection, as several productions not represented in the production files are documented through reviews held there.

Client files hold biographical and publicity material gathered by Herz for actors she represented, including Myrna Loy, Dorothy Loudon, Viola Rubber, Valerie Taylor, and Obba Babatundé. The contents of the files vary, though typically they hold press releases, articles, and headshots. Press releases and articles may be for upcoming or past shows. Some files contain memorandums between Herz's office and the actors concerning television or radio interviews.

Correspondence in the collection is limited and dates from 1976 to 1981. It reflects various aspects of publicity, such as program planning, news story proposals, advertising, production hiring, and arranging opening night tickets for critics. Correspondents include Herz and her staff at Shirley Herz Associates, namely Sam Rudy and Peter Cromarty.

Clippings are largely from newspapers outside of New York City. They review Broadway, Off-Broadway, and touring productions such as *The Royal Family* (1975), *Whistler* (1981), and *Wally's Café* (1981).

The scripts in the collection are for five plays: *Brassy* (1980), *Before I Wake* (1981), *Re/Play* (1981), *You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet* (1981), and *Zoology* (1983). They consist of unmarked working and completed copies.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into the following categories: Correspondence; Clippings; Production Files; Client Files; and Scripts. Correspondence and Clippings are arranged chronologically. All other groups are arranged alphabetically by production or name.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)

Photographs

Press releases

Occupations

Press agents -- New York (State) -- New York

Subjects

Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Theater -- Public relations

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-8 Clippings 1973-1983
- b. 1 f. 9 Correspondence 1976-1981
- Client Files
- b. 2 f. 7-8 1970s-1980s
Miscellaneous headshots.
- b. 1 f. 11 1980
- b. 2 f. 1-3 1980-1983
- b. 1 f. 10 Babatundé, Obba 1981-1982
- b. 2 f. 4 Horwin, Lee 1981
- b. 2 f. 5 Loudon, Dorothy 1971
- b. 2 f. 6 Loy, Myrna 1971
- b. 2 f. 9 Rackmil, Holt, and Brown 1978-1982
- b. 3 f. 1-2 Rubber, Viola 1959-1970
- b. 3 f. 3 Tyler, Valerie 1981
- Production Files
- b. 6 f. 5-7 1979-1982
- b. 3 f. 4 *Bags* 1982
- b. 3 f. 5-7 *Baseball Wives* 1982
- b. 3 f. 8 *Broadway Scandals of 1928* 1982
- b. 3 f. 9 Cherubs Guild 1982
Masque and Dacha and *Invitation to a March*.
- b. 3 f. 10 *Dance a Little Closer* 1983
- b. 3 f. 11-12 Ensemble Studio Theatre 1981-1983
- b. 9 f. 11 Ensemble Studio Theatre 1982-1983
- b. 4 f. 1-2 *Fiesta for Madrid* 1969
- b. 4 f. 3-5 *Francis* 1981-1982
- b. 4 f. 6 *High Spirits* 1982
- b. 4 f. 7 *Homeboys* 1981-1982
- b. 4 f. 8 *The Killing of Sister George* 1981
- b. 5 f. 1 *The Lady From Dubuque* 1980
- b. 5 f. 2-5 *Marilyn: An American Fable* 1982-1983
- b. 5 f. 6 *Marvelous Gray* 1982
- b. 6 f. 1 *Max* 1983
- b. 6 f. 2-4 *The Midnight Visitor* 1981-1982
- b. 7 f. 1-3 *The Music Keeper* 1982
 - o. 1 Music Theatre Group 1987
LPA C12 Drawer 18
- b. 7 f. 4 *Ned and Jack* 1981
- b. 7 f. 5 *Nostalgic for the Future* 1984
- b. 7 f. 6 *Nurse Jane Goes to Hawaii* 1982

Production Files (cont.)

- b. 7 f. 7-8 *Perfectly Frank* 1980
- b. 7 f. 9 *Platinum* 1978
- b. 8 f. 1-2 The Red Parrot Nightclub 1982-1984
- b. 8 f. 3 *The Royal Family* 1975-1976
- b. 8 f. 4 *Scarecrow* 1981
- b. 8 f. 5-7 *Some Men Need Help* 1982
- b. 9 f. 1-2 *Some Men Need Help* 1982
- b. 9 f. 3 *The Steinettes* 1983
- b. 9 f. 4 *Strider* 1979
- b. 9 f. 5 *Wayland Flowers and Madame* 1982

Scripts

- b. 9 f. 6 *Before I Wake* 1981
- b. 9 f. 7 *Brassy* 1980
- b. 9 f. 8 *Re/Play* 1981
- b. 9 f. 9 *You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet* 1981
- b. 9 f. 10 *Zoology* 1983