



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**Mervyn Nelson papers**

1982-1990

\*T-Mss 1993-045

## Summary

**Creator:** Nelson, Mervyn, -1991

**Title:** Mervyn Nelson papers

**Date:** 1982-1990

**Size:** .1 linear feet (1 portfolio)

**Source:** Papers: Bequest, Estate of Mervyn Nelson, 10/28/93

**Abstract:** Mervyn Nelson acted, wrote, produced, and directed for stage and film. He began in vaudeville at the age of five and worked on Broadway (1940-1960), appearing in *TIS OF THEE* (1940) and *THE SNARK WAS A BOOJUM* (1943), and directing *BABES IN ARMS* (1951), *THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY*, and *TICKETS, PLEASE*. His writing included a play, *THE IVY GREEN*, and films, *SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE...*, and *FUN AND GAMES*. He also wrote and produced *THE JAZZ TRAIN* (1955), an all black revue that toured the United States and Europe, and directed stage shows for the Roxy Theatre in New York City. In his later years he taught acting and was a consultant to the Producer Circle Company. The collection, from his late career, primarily focuses on a projected filming of a second international tour of *THE JAZZ TRAIN*, this one to the Far East. It contains correspondence, notes and photocopies of photographs from the earlier production. Also included is material from other productions with which Nelson was involved: a contact sheet (1983) from *LA CAGE AUX FOLLES*, cast notes and ad layouts for *FUN AND GAMES*, and a program and flyer from *CHEATERS* which he directed in 1990; as well as two greeting cards.

**Preferred citation:** Mervyn Nelson papers, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

Mervyn Nelson acted, wrote, produced, and directed for stage and film. He began in vaudeville at the age of five and worked on Broadway (1940-1960), appearing in *TIS OF THEE* (1940) and *THE SNARK WAS A BOOJUM* (1943), and directing *BABES IN ARMS* (1951), *THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY*, and *TICKETS, PLEASE*. His writing included a play, *THE IVY GREEN*, and films, *SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE...*, and *FUN AND GAMES*. He also wrote and produced *THE JAZZ TRAIN* (1955), an all black revue that toured the United States and Europe, and directed stage shows for the Roxy Theatre in New York City. In his later years he taught acting and was a consultant to the Producer

Circle Company.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The collection, from his late career, primarily focuses on a projected filming of a second international tour of THE JAZZ TRAIN, this one to the Far East. It contains correspondence, notes and photocopies of photographs from the earlier production. Also included is material from other productions with which Nelson was involved: a contact sheet (1983) from LA CAGE AUX FOLLES, cast notes and ad layouts for FUN AND GAMES, and a program and flyer from CHEATERS which he directed in 1990; as well as two greeting cards.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Theater -- Production and direction

### **Names**

Nelson, Mervyn, -1991