



The New York Public Library  
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

**John Wulp designs and photographs**

1946-2005

\*T-Vim 2016-013

Purchase of this collection was made possible by support from the JP Fletcher Foundation, Inc.

Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016 .

## Summary

**Creator:** Wulp, John

**Title:** John Wulp designs and photographs

**Date:** 1946-2005

**Size:** 4.19 linear feet (10 boxes, 2 oversized folders, 1 tube)

**Source:** Purchased from John Wulp, 2016

**Abstract:** John Wulp (1928-) is an American set designer, theater producer, director, playwright, photographer, and teacher. His designs and photographs date from 1946 to 2005, and document his eclectic theater career.

### Conditions Governing Access:

Video materials are unavailable pending digitization.

**Conditions Governing Use:** For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Theatre Division at [theatre@nypl.org](mailto:theatre@nypl.org).

**Preferred citation:** John Wulp designs and photographs, \*T-Vim 2016-013. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016 .

## Creator History

John Wulp (1928-) is an American set designer, theater producer, director, playwright, photographer, and teacher. His most commercially successful work, which he co-produced, was a Broadway production of *Dracula*, starring Frank Langella in the title role, that opened in 1977 and ran until 1980. Wulp's other notable productions include *Lydie Breeze*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo*, *Red Eye of Love* and *O, Pioneers!* . Edward Gorey and John Guare were his frequent collaborators. He has worked in New

York City, Boston, Nantucket, and Maine.

As a young man, Wulp worked as a magazine editor and as a freelance photographer. Throughout his career, he shot his own photographs of theatrical performances, reference material, stage sets of his productions, and actors appearing in his plays.

Wulp taught theater at Playwrights Horizons Theater School at New York University in the 1980s, and later in his career taught kindergarten through twelfth-grade at the North Haven Community School in Maine. *On This Island*, a documentary broadcast in the early 2000s on PBS's *Independent Lens* program, focused on Wulp, his students, and life on North Haven Island. Wulp is also a painter whose works have been exhibited in galleries and sold as commissioned portraits. He currently lives on Vinalhaven Island, Maine (2016).

## Custodial History

The collection was sold by John Wulp to the library in June 2016. A detailed item list created prior to processing is included in the collection.

## Scope and Content Note

Files relating to Wulp's theatrical work comprise the majority of this collection. Production materials include original sketches and paintings for backdrops and set designs; photographs depicting stage sets, performances of plays, actors' portraits; promotional posters for plays produced or designed by Wulp; programs; and reviews and scripts for many of Wulp's plays. Designs take the form of small sketches and watercolor paintings, as well as oversized paintings on illustration board.

Another group of photographs consisting mainly of freelance projects shot by Wulp early in his career is also present. Notable personalities featured in these photographs include composer John Cage and actress Barbara Harris. A shoot Wulp did with The Paper Bag Players theater company is included. A few photographs by other photographers are also present. Most photographs are black and white. Numerous negatives, contact sheets, and photographic prints are included.

The collection also includes video recordings of a few of Wulp's plays, which are not available pending digitization.

**Arrangement:** The collection is divided into two groupings, Theatrical Productions and Photographs, and arranged by format, then alphabetically by production name or folder title.

## Key Terms

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photography

Scripts

Set design paintings

Watercolors (paintings)

### Occupations

Set designers -- United States

**Subjects**

Theater -- Production and direction

Theater -- United States

## Container List

### Theatrical Productions

- b. 1 f. 1-4      1978-1987  
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *Hamletmachine*, *Lydie Breeze*, and *Tinned Lettuce* .

### Designs

- b. 1 f. 5-12      1957-2005  
Includes *Becoming Memories*, *Crucifer of Blood*, *The Mikado*, *O Pioneers!*, *Red Eye of Love*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .
- b. 2 f. 1-8      circa 1946-1979  
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *MacBeth*, *The Master Bulider*, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Richard III*, and *This Week* magazine.
- b. 3 f. 1-5      *O Pioneers!* circa 1988
- o. 1      *Lydie Breeze* 1984
- o. 2      *Lydie Breeze* 1984

### Photographs

- b. 1 f. 13-27      1961-2005  
Includes *Crucifer of Blood*, *Endicott and the Red Cross*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo*, *The Master Bulider*, *The Mikado*, the Nantucket Stage Company, *Red Eye of Love*, *Semmelweiss*, *Tiger Tail*, and *Tinned Lettuce* .
- b. 4 f. 1-3      1958-1984  
Includes *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Lydie Breeze*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .

### Posters

- b. 1 f. 28      *Hamlet* 1986
- b. 2 f. 8      *Lydie Breeze* 1984
- t. 1      1977-circa 1989  
See item list for titles in tube.

- b. 5 f. 1-7      Programs 1949-2007  
Includes *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *Dracula*, *Hamletmachine*, *The Little Locksmith*, *Endicott and the Red Cross*, *Red Eye of Love*, and *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* .

- b. 5 f. 8-11      Reviews 1948-1999

### Scripts

- b. 5 f. 12-16      1978-1992  
Includes *Amphigorey: The Musical*, *Bosoms and Neglect*, *Dracula*, *Gardenia*, and *Hamletmachine* .
- b. 6 f. 1-9      1961-2002  
Includes *Islands*, *Knights of the Roundtable*, *The Little Locksmith*, *Lydie Breeze*, *The Master Builder*, and *O Pioneers!* .
- b. 7 f. 1-2      1956-1976  
Includes *Orpheus* and *The Red Devil Battery Sign* .
- Red Eye of Love*
- b. 7 f. 3-6      1957, undated
- b. 8 f. 1-8      1982-2013
- b. 9 f. 1-2      1980-1984  
Includes *Tinned Lettuce* and *Women and Water* .

### Photographs

- b. 4 f. 4-7      circa 1958-1962

Photographs (cont.)

- b. 9 f. 3-28     *The American Dream - Leave It To Jane* 1958-1974
- b. 10 f. 1-22     Lewis - Unidentified 1958-1978