

The New York Public Library Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the Hugh Fordin collection 1908-2005 *T-Mss 2019-016

Processed by Valerie Wingfield in 2022.

Summary

Creator: Fordin, Hugh, 1935-2019

Title: Hugh Fordin collection

Date: 1908-2005

Size: 9.27 linear feet (27 boxes, 2 oversize folders)

Source: Donated by Peter Fass in 2019.

Abstract: The Hugh Fordin collection, dated 1908 to 2005, documents the career of writer and record producer Hugh Fordin (1935-2019). The collection primarily chronicles his research for Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II(1977) and The World of Entertainment! Hollywood's Greatest Musicals (1975).

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: Hugh Fordin collection, *T-Mss 2019-016. 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

Hugh Fordin (1935-2019) was a writer, record producer, and founder of DRG Records in 1976, which produced Broadway cast and concert albums. Fordin was recognized with eight Grammy nominations and a win for *The Producers* in 2001.

Fordin is best known for his authorized biography of Oscar Hammerstein entitled: *Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II* (1977). He also published *The World of Entertainment! Hollywood's Greatest Musicals* (1975). Fordin co-authored the book entitled *Jerome Kern the Man and His Music* with Jerome Kern and Dan Fox (1975).

Hugh Fordin died on February 26, 2019 in Titusville, New Jersey.

Scope and Content Note

The Hugh Fordin collection, dated from 1908 to the 2000s, documents the career of writer and record producer Hugh Fordin. The collection holds correspondence; daybooks; a ledger; photographs; printed matter; scripts; sheet music; the transcripts of oral interviews; writings; and audio and moving image materials.

This collection mostly focuses on Fordin's research for the publications, *Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II;* and *The World of Entertainment! Hollywood's Greatest Musicals.*

The book *Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II*, was documented with interviews of Dorothy Hammerstein, their son William, and notable individuals in the entertainment industry. Some of these interviews are available in the Transcripts files and the Audio and Moving Image materials. Other supporting materials for the biography are letters from Dorothy Hammerstein to Hugh Fordin; photographs of the Hammerstein family; and a "setting copy" draft with extensive editing of *Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II*. A second draft of the book lacks the front matter and the first forty-nine pages.

There are files about the lawsuit "Mary Wescher et al. vs Random House and Arthur Fordin." The files are not complete; however, it does indicate that this case was active between the years of 1978 and 1979. These documents include Fordin's response to the lawsuit and correspondence with his legal counsel.

Files concerning Fordin's other publication, entitled: *The World of Entertainment! Hollywood's Greatest Musicals* include the final galley proof under the draft title *Hollywood's Royal Family, The Freed Unit*. Other files hold research materials utilized by Fordin in preparation for this publication. This includes the production scripts for the MGM musicals *The Band Wagon; Funny Face; Gigi;* and *Singin' in the Rain*. It should be noted that the production scripts include scripts not related to this publication. For example, *House of Flowers*, written by Truman Capote and Harold Arlen and several scripts based on Fordin's work as a producer.

Printed Matter is primarily publicity material generated by MGM to promote their movies. The MGM material was printed on oversize card stock that featured their leading actors. The files also include more current productions that Fordin was involved with as a producer or possibly to promote his record company.

The Sheet Music files mostly document the MGM musicals. While most of the sheet music was published, several contain handwritten scripts. The sheet music includes music from *The Barkleys of Broadway*; *Broadway Melody of 1937*; *Easter Parade*; and *Singin' in the Rain*.

The Photograph files closely mirror the Sheet Music files with many commercially produced publicity photographs, including candid and backlot pictures. The files also hold "behind-the-scenes" shots of Audrey Hepburn preparing for her role in the production *Funny Face* taken by MGM photographer Bill

Avery.

Fordin utilized some personal and business files of Arthur Freed for his research. These files include Freed's daybooks; letters to Freed; and communications regarding the productions of *The Bandwagon* and *Carnival*.

The Audio and Moving Image section holds audio recordings of Dorothy and William Hammerstein for the biography of Oscar Hammerstein. Several of the audio and moving image materials include other entertainment projects that Freed was involved with.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into the following groups: Correspondence; Writings; Interviews; Production Scripts; Printed Matter; Photographs; Freed Business files

Key Terms

Occupations Authors. Biographers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Business correspondence Interviews Notated music Photographs Scripts Sound recordings Theater programs Video recordings

Subjects

Librettists Librettists -- United States -- Biography Playbills Sound recording executives and producers

Names

Fordin, Hugh, 1935-2019 Freed, Arthur, 1894-1973 Hammerstein, Dorothy, 1899-1987 Hammerstein, Oscar, II, 1895-1960

Container List

	Correspondence 1970s-1980s
b. 1 f. 1-3	General Correspondence 1970-1980s
b. 1 f. 4	Exclusive Rights for Hammerstein Biography 1973
b. 1 f. 5-7	Hammerstein, Dorothy 1973-1974
b. 1 f. 8-9	Mary Wescher et al. vs Random House and Hugh Fordin 1978-1979
	Writings 1960s-1970s
b. 2 f. 1-7 b. 3 f. 1-8 b. 4 f. 1-7	Getting to Know Him, the Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II
b. 1 f. 10-11	Jerome Kern, the Man and His Music 1975
b. 1 f. 12-17	Research Notes for Publications 1970s Topics include Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein and the musicals <i>The King and I</i> and <i>South</i> <i>Pacific</i> .
b. 4 f. 8	Untitled: Irving Berlin (about) 1965 This is a partial draft about Irving Berlin.
b. 4 f. 9	Petty Cash Ledger 1970s
	Interviews 1950s-1970s
b. 5 f. 1-2	Berlin, Irving, Louise Alter and Dorothy Fields 1973
b. 5 f. 3	DeMille, Agnes
b. 5 f. 5-6	Hammerstein, Dorothy
b. 5 f. 7	Hammerstein, Oscar II 1952-1953
b. 5 f. 8	Jacobson, Henry 1973
b. 5 f. 9	Josh, Logan 1973
b. 5 f. 10	Martin, Mary
b. 6 f. 1	Mathias, Alice Hammerstein
b. 6 f. 2	Mathias, Phil, Len Mence and Rex Stout
b. 6 f. 3	Rodgers, Richard, Dorothy Rodgers and Mary Rodgers Guertle
b. 6 f. 4	Sondheim, Stephen
b. 6 f. 5	Whyte, Jerome, John Fearnley and Robert Russell Bennett
	Production Scripts 1939-2005
b. 7 f. 1	<i>The Band Wagon</i> 1952 Script by Betty Comden and Adolph Green.
b. 7 f. 2	<i>Bedazzled</i> 1967 Screenplay by Peter Cook and Dudley Moore.
b. 7 f. 3	Cleopatra 1959
b. 7 f. 4	<i>The Day Before Spring</i> 1945 Book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, music by Frederick Loewe.
b. 7 f. 5	A Day in Hollywood, A Night in the Ukraine 1979 Album produced by Hugh Fordin.
b. 8 f. 1	<i>Funny Face</i> 1956 Final revised script. Written by Leonard Gershe.
b. 8 f. 2	<i>Gigi</i> 1957

	Production Scripts (cont.)
b. 8 f. 3	House of Flowers 1950 Script by Truman Capote and Harold Arlen.
b. 9 f. 1	<i>The Interview</i> 1954 Written By Roger Edens.
b. 9 f. 2	<i>Mata Hari</i> 1967 Book by Jerome Coopersmith; Lyrics by Martin Charnin; Music by Edward Thomas.
b. 9 f. 3	Romance With Music. The Life of Oscar Hammerstein 1939
b. 9 f. 4	Say It With Music 1966
b. 9 f. 5	<i>Singin' in the Rain</i> 1951 Script by Betty Comden and Adolph Green.
b. 9 f. 6	<i>Sweet Charity</i> 2005 Produced by Hugh Fordin.
	Printed Matter 1911-1990s
	Playbills, Promotional Materials 1911-1994
b. 10 f. 1	All For You 1925
b. 10 f. 2	Un Americain a Paris
b. 10 f. 3	Babes On Broadway 1942
b. 10 f. 4	Ballyhoo 1930
b. 10 f. 5	The Band Wagon 1953
b. 10 f. 6	Best Foot Forward 1943
b. 10 f. 7	<i>Broadway Baby</i> 1986 Promotional release of Dorothy Loudon's album.
b. 10 f. 8-9	Broadway Melody 1929
b. 10 f. 10	Broadway Melody of 1938
b. 11 f. 1	Du Barry Was A Lady 1943
b. 10 f. 11	Eartha Kitt Back In Business 1994
b. 10 f. 12	For Me And My Gal 1942
o. 1	Funny Face
b. 10 f. 13 b. 11 f. 2	Gigi 1958
b. 10 f. 14	Girl Crazy 1943
b. 10 f. 15 b. 11 f. 3	The Harvey Girls 1946
b. 11 f. 4	High, Wide and Handsome 1937
b. 10 f. 16	Home James! 1917 This is the promotional playbill for Columbia University's Club Varsity Show.
b. 10 f. 17	It's Always Fair Weather 1955
b. 11 f. 5	Joanna 1968
o. 1	Judy Garland
b. 10 f. 18	Lady Be Good 1941
b. 10 f. 19	Light in the Piazza 1962
b. 10 f. 20	Little Nellie Kelly 1940
b. 10 f. 21	Look Ma No Hands 1948
b. 10 f. 22	MGM 25 Years Young 1949

	Printed Matter (cont.)
b. 10 f. 23	Playbills, Promotional Materials (cont.) MGM Promotional Materials
b. 10 f. 23	Minstrel Show 1911
5. 101. 24	The file holds two broadsides.
b. 10 f. 25	Mississippi, Ol' Man River 1929
	The file holds a promotional copy of the lyrics in French.
b. 10 f. 26	Oklahoma 1955
b. 10 f. 27	Panama Hattie 1942
b. 10 f. 28	Silk Stockings 1957
b. 10 f. 29	Singin' in the Rain 1952
b. 10 f. 30	South Pacific 1951
b. 10 f. 31	Strike Up The Band 1940
b. 10 f. 32	Take Me Along 1959
b. 10 f. 33	Till The Clouds Roll By 1946
b. 10 f. 34	Thoroughbreds Don't Cry 1937
b. 10 f. 35	The promotional material features the song "Sun Showers." <i>Top Banana</i> 1954
b. 10 f. 36	Two Face Woman 1941
5. 101. 50	Publications, Assorted 1908-1980s
b. 12 f. 1	The Cinema of Gene Kelly 1962
b. 12 f. 2	DRG Catalogues
b. 12 f. 3	East West Manhattan Theatre 1931
b. 12 f. 5	George Gershwin Memorial Concert 1937
	The concert was held at the Hollywood Bowl, California.
b. 12 f. 6	Getting To Know Him (Book jacket.)
b. 12 f. 7	Hammerstein's Roof Garden 1908 Victoria Theatre of Varieties Program.
b. 11 f. 6	Jerome Kern 1930s-1940s
b. 12 f. 8	The files hold an article about Kern published in <i>Life</i> and a catalogue of his compositions.
b. 12 f. 9	Literary Caricatures of David Levine 1964
b. 12 f. 10	Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II Supplement to the Fact Book
b. 12 f. 11	Romantic and Glamorous Design 1974
	The Costume Institute, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
b. 12 f. 12	Vincente Minnelli 1959
b. 12 f. 13-22	Assorted Printed Matter 1930s-1980s
	Galley Proof 1975
b. 6 f. 6	The World of Entertainment! Hollywood's Greatest Musicals 1975 (Final galley proof.)
	Original title: Hollywood's Royal Family, The Freed Unit. Sheet Music 1933-1962
	The sheet music was arranged by title of production.
	The Barkleys of Broadway 1949
b. 13 f. 1	"Call On Us Again"
b. 13 f. 1	"The Courtin' of Elmer and Ella"

	Printed Matter (cont.) Sheet Music (cont.) The Barkleys of Broadway (cont.)
b. 13 f. 1	"Natchez on the Mississippi"
b. 13 f. 2	"The Poetry of Motion"
b. 13 f. 2	"Swing Trot"
b. 13 f. 2	"These Days"
	Broadway Melody of 1937
b. 14 f. 1	"Broadway Rhythm" The composition lacks a title page and may be the work of Nacio Herb Brown.
b. 14 f. 2	"Dear Mister Gable"
b. 14 f. 2	"Everybody Sing"
b. 14 f. 3	"Follow In My Footsteps"
b. 14 f. 4	"Got A Pair Of New Shoes"
b. 14 f. 5	"I'm Feelin' Like A Million"
b. 14 f. 6-7	"Lucky Star Ballet"
b. 14 f. 8	"Please Don't Monkey With Broadway"
b. 14 f. 8	"Sun Showers"
b. 14 f. 8	"Your Broadway And My Broadway"
	Dancing Lady 1933
b. 13 f. 3	"Life is a Merry-Go-Round"
	The Day Before Spring 1946
b. 13 f. 4	"Bing Bang"
b. 13 f. 4	"Ibbedy Bibbedy Sibbedy Sab"
b. 13 f. 4	"It's Time for the Love Scene"
b. 13 f. 4	"My Sentimental Nature"
b. 13 f. 5	"Opening, Segue From Main Title"
b. 13 f. 6	"The Statue Song"
b. 13 f. 6	"Who Could Forget You"
b. 13 f. 6	"You're So Reliable"
	Easter Parade 1948
b. 13 f. 7	"Beautiful Lady"
b. 13 f. 7	"Easter Parade"
b. 13 f. 7	"Easter Parade Finale"
b. 13 f. 7	"I Want to Go Back to Michigan (Down on the Farm)"
b. 13 f. 7	"Mister Monotony"
b. 13 f. 8	Ed Sullivan's Television Show The MGM Anniversary Show lyrics were in the same folder.
	Funny Face 1957
b. 15 f. 1	"Bonjour Paris!"
b. 15 f. 2	"Here Is Our Theme"
b. 15 f. 3	"On How To Be Lovely"
	Going Hollywood 1933
b. 15 f. 4	"Our Big Love Song"
b. 15 f. 4	"Temptation"

	Printed Matter (cont.) Sheet Music (cont.)
	The Harvey Girls 1946
b. 15 f. 5	"On the Atchinson, Topeka and Santa Fe Routine"
	Huckleberry Finn
b. 15 f. 6	"Ah' Bin Rich"
b. 15 f. 6	"The Cocklebur Song"
b. 15 f. 6	"Don't Run Mirandy"
b. 15 f. 6	"Huckleberry Finn"
b. 15 f. 7	"I Ain't Never Felt So Good Before"
b. 15 f. 7	"I'm the First Man"
b. 15 f. 7	"It Must Be Spring"
b. 15 f. 8	"Jumpin Jubilee"
b. 15 f. 8	"Pass That Peace Pipe"
b. 15 f. 8	"Pittsburgh Blue"
b. 15 f. 9	"That Fine Sunday Feeling"
b. 15 f. 9	"There Were Others Passing By"
b. 15 f. 9	"The World's Full Of Suckers"
b. 15 f. 9	"When You Grow Up You'll Know"
	The Pirate 1948
b. 16 f. 1	"Be A Clown"
b. 16 f. 1	"Coda to Ballet"
b. 16 f. 1	"Don Pedro's Arrival"
b. 16 f. 1	"Judy Awakens"
b. 16 f. 2	"Mack The Black" The file also holds a revised version of the song.
b. 16 f. 3	"Manuela"
b. 16 f. 3	"Mast"
b. 16 f. 4	"Nina"
b. 16 f. 5	"The Pirate"
b. 16 f. 6	"The Ring"
b. 16 f. 6	"Serafin"
b. 16 f. 6	"The Silhouette"
b. 16 f. 6	"Voodoo"
b. 16 f. 6	"The Wharf"
	Royal Wedding 1949
b. 17 f. 1	"I Got Me A Baby"
b. 17 f. 1	"The Sunday Jumps"
	Silk Stockings 1956
b. 17 f. 2	"Fated to be Mated"
	Singin' in the Rain 1952
b. 18 f. 1	"Beautiful Girl Montage"
b. 18 f. 2	"Broadway Ballet" final title: "Broadway Rhythm Ballet."

	Printed Matter (cont.) Sheet Music (cont.) Singin' in the Rain (cont.)
b. 18 f. 3	"Fit As A Fiddle"
b. 18 f. 3	"Good Morning"
b. 18 f. 3	"Lucky Star"
b. 18 f. 4	"Make 'em Laugh"
b. 18 f. 5	"Montage and Beautiful Girl"
b. 18 f. 6	"Moses"
b. 18 f. 7	"Singin' In The Rain"
b. 18 f. 8	"Would You"
b. 18 f. 8	"You Were Meant For Me"
	Student Tour 1934
b. 17 f. 3	"College Hymn"
	Two Girls On Broadway 1940
b. 17 f. 4	"Let's Dance"
	Yolanda and the Thief 1945
b. 17 f. 5	"Angel"
b. 17 f. 5	"Candlelight"
b. 17 f. 5	"Coffee Time"
b. 17 f. 5	"Coffee Time Part 2"
b. 17 f. 6	"Fiesta"
b. 17 f. 7	"I've An Angel"
b. 17 f. 7	"This is a Day for Love"
b. 17 f. 7	"Will You Marry Me?"
	Ziegfield Follies 1945
b. 17 f. 8	"Interview Finale"
	Assorted Sheet Music
h 10 f 1 11	This group of songs are stand alone or incomplete.
b. 19 f. 1-11	Assorted and Unidentified Sheet Music
	Photographs 1920s-1960s The photographs are arranged alphabetically within each group.
	Individuals 1920s-1960s
b. 20 f. 1	Academy of Motion Pictures, Founders of
b. 20 f. 2	American Society of Composers, American Society of Composers, Founders of
b. 20 f. 3	Astaire, Fred
b. 20 f. 4	Ball, Lucille
b. 20 f. 5	Berlin, Irving
b. 20 f. 6	Coward, Noel
b. 20 f. 7	Darnell, Linda
b. 20 f. 8	Fields, Dorothy
b. 20 f. 9	Fordin, Hugh and Mary Cooper 1968
b. 20 f. 10	Freed, Arthur
b. 20 f. 11	Friml, Rudolf

	Photographs (cont.) Individuals (cont.)
b. 20 f. 12	Gable, Clark and Alexis Smith 1949
b. 20 f. 13	Gardner, Ava
b. 20 f. 14	Garland, Judy
b. 20 f. 15	Gershwin, George and Ira
b. 23 f. 1-23	Hammerstein, Oscar and Family Olive Tell's photograph was glued to the back of a photograph of Elaine Hammerstein. Location: box 23 folder 2.
b. 20 f. 16	Harbach, Otto
b. 20 f. 17	Hendrix, Wanda 1962
b. 24 f. 1-12	Hepburn, Audrey 1957
b. 25 f. 1	Hollywood's Group Photograph
b. 20 f. 18	Horne, Lena
b. 20 f. 19-20 b. 25 f. 2-3	Kern, Jerome
b. 25 f. 4	Lugosi, Bela
b. 20 f. 21	Mayer, Louis B
b. 20 f. 22	Miller, Marilyn
b. 20 f. 23	Minnelli, Vincent
b. 20 f. 24	Oakland, Ben
b. 20 f. 25	Porter, Cole
b. 20 f. 26	Reynolds, Debbie 1931
b. 20 f. 27	Robeson, Paul
b. 20 f. 28	Rodgers, Richard
b. 20 f. 29	Rodgers, Richard and Lorenz Hart
b. 20 f. 30	Romberg, Sigmund
b. 20 f. 31	Ruby, Harry
b. 20 f. 32	Stafford, Jo
b. 20 f. 33	Stothart, Herbert
b. 25 f. 5	Streisand, Barbra and Gene Kelly
b. 20 f. 34	Waters, Ethel
b. 20 f. 35	Wright, Martha
b. 20 f. 36	Youmans, Vincent
b. 20 f. 36-37 b. 25 f. 6	Unidentified
	Productions 1929-1968
b. 21 f. 1	An American in Paris 1951
b. 21 f. 2	Band Wagon 1953
b. 21 f. 3	The Barkleys of Broadway 1949
b. 21 f. 4	Bells Are Ringing 1960
b. 21 f. 5	Brigadoon 1954
b. 21 f. 6	The Broadway Melody of 1929
b. 21 f. 7	Broadway Melody of 1936
b. 21 f. 8	Easter Parade 1948

	Photographs (cont.) Productions (cont.)
b. 21 f. 9	For Me and My Gal 1942
b. 21 f. 10	Funny Face 1957
b. 21 f. 11	Gigi 1958
b. 21 f. 12	Girl Crazy 1943
b. 21 f. 13	Good News 1947
b. 21 f. 14 b. 25 f. 7	The Harvey Girls 1946
b. 21 f. 15	Invitation to the Dance 1956
b. 21 f. 16	Joanna 1968
b. 21 f. 17	Meet Me in St Louis 1944
b. 21 f. 18	On the Town 1949
b. 21 f. 19	The Pirate 1948
b. 21 f. 20	Royal Wedding 1951
b. 21 f. 21	Showboat 1951
b. 21 f. 22	South Pacific 1958
b. 21 f. 23	Student Tour 1934
b. 21 f. 24	That's Entertainment
b. 21 f. 25	Till the Clouds Roll By 1946
b. 21 f. 26	<i>Top Hat</i> 1935
b. 21 f. 27	Yolanda and the Thief 1945
b. 21 f. 28	Ziegfield Folies 1946
b. 25 f. 8	Night and Day 1946
b. 22 f. 1-8 b. 25 f. 9	Unidentified, Assorted
	Freed Business Files 1952-1967
b. 26	Daybooks 1952-1957 There was no daybook for the year 1953.
b. 27 f. 1	Biographical
b. 27 f. 1-4	General Correspondence 1931-1960s
b. 27 f. 5	<i>The Band Wagon</i> 1952-1953 The file also includes a script for the lyrics by Howard Dietz and Arthur Schwartz.
b. 27 f. 6-7	Carnivale 1962-1963
b. 27 f. 8	Cole Porter's Cavalcade 1954-1967
b. 27 f. 9	<i>The Hollywood Reporter</i> 1948-1949 Arthur Freed publicity.
o. 2	Floor Plan of the Freed Unit
	Audio and Moving Image Materials 1950s-1970s The bulk of the audio and moving image materials are sound recordings; film is represented to a lesser extent.

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Audio and Moving Image Materials (cont.)

Sound Recordings 1950s-1970s

The sound recordings include interviews of Dorothy Hammerstein, William Hammerstein, Irving Berlin and others individuals who knew Oscar Hammerstein. There also are recordings from variety programs and recordings of MGM musicals including *An American in Paris; Easter Parade;* and *Goodbye Mr. Chips*.