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## **Theater**

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### **I. Scope**

For purposes of this statement, theater is defined as performance on stage or analogous performing space. It encompasses theatrical traditions from all cultures and periods worldwide, and includes legitimate theater, music theater, folk drama, puppetry, vaudeville, minstrelsy, revue, burlesque, circus, dance (see the Dance Collections Policy Statement for broader coverage), and chautauqua. This statement addresses primary and secondary documentation in all formats on theatrical history, criticism, theory, bibliography, biography, law, and production.

Formats include paper, sound and moving images, machine-readable material, book material, serials, multi-format ethnographic collections, and electronic content, including web sites, web logs, modifications of content from other media and published and unpublished sources, web/internet content acquired/accessed through cooperation with other institutions.

Primary materials include, but are not limited to, manuscripts, personal and business papers, organization records, iconography, sound and moving images, and set, costume, and theater building design and theater born digital materials.

Secondary materials include, but are not limited to, monographs, serials, exhibition catalogs, newspapers (including advertisements and reviews) and dissertations.

The Library's core collections of published books and periodicals in theater are in various segments of the P classification area. Dramatic literature and relevant biography, criticism and history are covered in the national and area literature segments of P, e.g., PS for United States literature including drama. Stage production materials are largely in PN.

Other classification schemes which include material on theater are GT which, along with PR, includes publications on folk dramas including mummies's plays, GV, which includes dance in the theater, K, for theatrical law and legislation, M, covering music theater, N which includes design materials and theatrical architecture, and T which includes treatment of applied technology as used in the theater. GV includes stage dance materials.

Theater as it relates to dance and music is addressed also in the respective Collections Policy Statements on those subjects. Collections Policy Statements relevant to theater include:

Dance

Fine and Decorative Arts - Books

Fine and Applied Arts - Non-book Materials

Folklore and Folklife

Literature and Language

Manuscripts

Moving Images Materials

Music

Sound Recordings and Radio

## **II. Research Strengths**

Specific areas of distinction in Library theater materials include:

- 1) unpublished dramas deposited for United States copyright since 1870, including scripts from American musical comedy, burlesque, the legitimate stage, and vaudeville;
- 2) the James Madison Carpenter Collection in the American Folklife Center, which includes some 300 British folk plays.
- 3) special collections of published dramatic literature including the Francis Longe Collection of theater works in English published between 1607 and 1812; the Toinet Collection of French literature, containing numerous plays of the 17th and 18th centuries; dramatic incunabula and early editions from the Elizabethan period, including Shakespearean quarto editions; Yiddish theater; Chinese plays and Japanese No, Kyogen and Kabuki drama;
- 4) special collections of primary materials including the Federal Theatre Project Archives; personal papers of individuals (notably, women, theatrical producers, and actors) prominent in the American theater; and resources for the study of the American musical theater, such as the collections related to George and Ira Gershwin Collection, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Irving Berlin, Leonard Bernstein, Victor Herbert, and others;
- 5) iconographic theatrical documentation including a very large poster collection, lithographs, chromolithographs and woodcuts; theater photographs including original daguerreotypes and portraits of theater personalities from the mid-19th century onward; and documentation on theater buildings, including drawings, historical prints, and various types of photographs, and materials from the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), and a growing collection of theatrical design and theater architecture.

Collections Overviews statements relevant to theater include:

Architecture, Design and Engineering

Dance  
Decorative Arts  
Fine Arts  
Graphic Arts  
Linguistics and Languages  
Manuscripts  
Motion Pictures  
Music  
Radio  
Rare Books  
Sound Recordings  
Television

### **III. Collection Policy**

The Library recognizes the importance of theater to national and international cultural life; and of theater documentation to scholars, the theatrical community, and the general public. Therefore, the Library endeavors to maintain broad strength in theater materials, placing special emphasis on theater in the United States, but also collecting foreign published materials comprehensively. The Library collects documentation on the history of theatrical production; on the history of folkloric theater; on theory and analysis of theater and drama; and on social, intellectual, business, and broad cultural history as it relates to theater.

The Library recognizes that theater of the highest quality often is produced through theater organizations located in communities or areas not generally categorized as significant cultural centers. Especially in recent decades, a number of professional regional theater companies in the United States (e.g., Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., Center Stage in Baltimore) have become the source for theater of quality, with broad ramifications for United States theater and its history. Therefore, the Library will endeavor to collect documentation on major professional theatrical production and theater companies wherever located. However, the Library will not collect documentation on nonprofessional theater or theater which is of purely local interest.

With regard to primary source material, special emphasis shall be on theater and theater personalities of the United States, with foreign material to be considered only when of the most exceptional importance to study of theater.

With regard to secondary and electronic information sources, documentation will be collected on a comprehensive level on all aspects of United States theatrical history, literature, bibliography,

biography, theory and criticism; and on significant stage production. For purposes of this CPS, significant stage production will be understood to mean stage production in major performance centers, defined as: 1) communities recognized as cultural centers; and 2) institutions recognized for superior quality in theatrical activity.

With respect to theater outside the United States, the Library will endeavor to collect documentation on a research level on major trends and aspects of the history of theater and theatrical production in all cultural areas worldwide in recognition of the increasing globalization of the Library's interests.

The following sections cover policy for acquisition of specific types of materials for the Library's theater collections:

A. Primary source material

The Library collects the personal and business papers of persons who have made major contributions in work related to the theater. This will include, but not be limited to, dramatists, directors, producers, actors and actresses, costume and set designers, agents, critics, and others in theater deemed to have made major contributions to the history of the theater.

The Library collects artistic and administrative documentation on significant theatrical production, comprehending evolution of production from initial concept to final form.

Primary material to be collected includes, but is not limited to, play scripts, playbills, scripts, personal and business papers, promptbooks, photographs, posters, heralds, billboards, sound recordings and moving image, set and costume designs, technical drawings, lighting plots, stage diagrams and blueprints. Archives of theater organizations are considered for acquisition only when of the most critical importance to the history of theater in the United States.

Special emphasis shall be on theater and theater personalities of the United States, with foreign material to be considered only when of the most exceptional importance to study of theater.

B. Published textual material

The Library endeavors to acquire for its classified collections works of serious scholarship in all aspects of theater on a world-wide basis. These include, but are not limited to, dramatic literature, monographs, periodicals, exhibition catalogs, and dissertations. Works to be collected include play texts; theatrical theory, analysis and criticism, history, and biography; and intellectual, social, economic history as these relate to the theater. The collection is maintained at the levels specified in Section VI below.

C. Moving image and sound recordings

The Library collects moving image and sound recording materials, primary and secondary, documenting significant theatrical production in all production phases, from initial concept to final form.

D. Electronic Sources

The Library endeavors to collect Electronic Information Sources of value to research in study of theater. This includes sources from academic institutions and from theater companies and

other organizations involved in professional theater. In the face of the enormity of the still relatively young world of electronic and web based information and its extraordinary growth dynamic and potential, the Library is taking pains to determine how best to capture information potentially available, and to develop guidelines for so doing. This effort and developing strategy includes attention to the world of performance.

- E. Library policy with regard to editions of material collected through copyright deposit is set out in: Copyright "Best Edition" of Published Copyrighted Works for the Collections of the Library of Congress

#### **IV. Acquisitions Sources: Current and Future**

##### **A. Current Sources**

1. Primary sources through gift, copyright deposit (e.g., typescripts and manuscripts of unpublished plays) and purchase. Primary sources include manuscript, typescript, stage design, theater architectural design, poster and other graphics materials, photographs.
2. Published sources through copyright deposit, purchase and, to a much lesser extent, gift. Publications of interest include plays, theatrical history and criticism, biography, studies in design, directing, acting, and all aspects of professional theatrical production, arts administration, the business of the theater including finance, legal aspects, and general administration, playbills, and serials.
3. Electronic form. Includes publications and information sources available through subscription or freely available online (assuming sufficient direction given to readers by staff in locating electronic materials of interest), web logs, current and historical information on theater history and past and current and future performance; Library fostered web sites through digitization of stage related materials with attendant annotation, explication,

##### **B. Future Sources**

Continuation of experience as noted above, but with great emphasis on expectation of continuing rapid expansion of Electronic Form. The Library has a critical role in emergence of broadly based information sources, fostered perhaps through development of consortiums, alliances and partnerships of theater companies and organizations for formation of dissemination of information of all aspects of theatrical production including multi-dimensional offerings to promote study of theater. The Library will take increasingly an active hand in growth of such facets of information flow by going beyond its own walls to reach to, not only other libraries, but to non-library institutions whose holdings and capabilities hold promise for far reaching dialogue and communication helpful to readers and researchers. The Library increasingly will be part of a much broader array of information connectivity. Example: Possibility of new levels of cooperation between the Library and the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, an experiment with marked potential for development of information flow and enrichment, which through the two major institutions, could have impact for reaching new levels of audience far beyond the fruitful investigation into cooperation between two institutions, which, together, could reach electronically audiences of a kind perhaps not yet even come to mind.

With regard both to electronic sources as well as traditional primary and secondary sources, the Library will seek to expand collecting in non-Western areas of the world. The significant increase in professional performance in countries such as China and India requires closer attention.

## V. Collecting Levels

The following list is arranged according to subclasses or facets of the Library of Congress Classification which pertain to the subject of theater. The collecting levels are numbered to conform with the Conspectus of the Research Libraries Group. For a complete definition of these levels see the General Introduction to the Collections Policy Statements.

Note: Whenever two collecting levels are listed, the first number refers to material having to do with the United States, the second, to material having to do with all other areas.

LC Classification	Subject	Collecting Level
	<b>Circuses, Spectacles, etc.</b>	
GV1800-1828		5/4
Circuses.		
GV1833		5/4
Wild West shows.		
GV1834		5/4
Rodeos.		
GV1835		5/4
Carnivals. Side shows. Freaks, wonders, etc.		
GV1836		5/4
Waxworks.		
GV1838		5/4
Amateur circuses, etc.		
GV1841, 1843		5/4
Spectacles, "Son et Lumiere" etc.		
GV1851-1860		5/4
Amusement parks, resorts, gardens, etc.		
	<b>Law of the United States</b>	
KF2992.L5		5
Lindey on Entertainment, Publishing and the Arts.		
KF3987		5
Control of Social Activities - Amusements.		
KF4296		5
Theater and theaters.		
KF5702.T4		5
Building Laws - Theaters.		
	<b>Fine Arts</b>	

NA278.T5	4
Theaters, Greek (Architecture).	
NA325.T5	4
Theaters, Roman (Architecture).	
NA6602.T5	4
Theaters (Architecture), Colleges and Universities.	
NA6820-6845	5/4
Theaters (Architecture).	
NC1800-1850	5/4
Posters, as these relate to theater.	
ND2880-2888	5/4
Panoramas, Dioramas, Cosmoramas, Scene Painting.	
<b>Arts in General</b>	
NX1-210	5/4
General.	
NX280-410	5/4
Study and Teaching.	
NX420-430	5/4
Exhibitions.	
NX440-600	5/4
History of the Arts.	
NX620	5/4
General Works.	
NX650-694	5/4
Special Subjects.	
NX700-750	5/4
Patronage of the Arts.	
NX800-820	5/4
Special Arts Centers.	
<b>The Performing Arts. Show Business.</b>	
PN1560	5/4
Periodicals.	
PN1569	5/4
Yearbooks.	
PN1570-1573	5/4
Societies.	
PN1574	5/4
Congresses, Conferences, Etc.	
PN1575	5/4
Expositions.	
PN1576-1578	5/4
Study and Teaching.	
PN1579	5/4
Dictionaries.	
PN1580	5/4

Performing Arts as a Profession.	
PN1581	5/4
History.	
PN1583	5/4
Biography.	
PN1584	5/4
General Works.	
PN1586-1589	5/4
Centers for the Performing Arts.	
PN1590	5/4
Special Topics.	
<b>Drama</b>	
PN1600-1609	5/4
Periodicals.	
PN1610	5/4
Yearbooks.	
PN1611-1620	5/4
Societies, Museums Libraries.	
PN1621-1623	5/4
Collections.	
PN1625	5/4
Dictionaries.	
PN1627	5/4
Indexes to Children's Plays.	
PN1631-1633	5/4
Philosophy, esthetics, Scope, relations, etc.	
PN1654-1655	5/4
General Works on the Drama and the Stage.	
PN1660-1669	5/4
Techniques of Dramatic Composition.	
PN1701	5/4
Study and Teaching.	
PN1707	5/4
Criticism.	
PN1708	5/4
Biography of Critics.	
PN1711	4
Characters, Heroes, Heroines, etc.	
PN1720-1861	5/4
History.	
PN1865-1988	5/4
Special types of drama.	
<b>Dramatic Representation. The Theater.</b>	
PN2000-2009	5/4
Periodicals.	

PN2012	5/4
General yearbooks.	
PN2015	5/4
Societies.	
PN2018	5/4
Congresses.	
PN2019	5/4
Expositions.	
PN2020-2021	5/4
Collections.	
PN2035	5/4
Dictionaries.	
PN2036-PN2037	5/4
General Works on the Theater.	
PN2038	5/4
Addresses, essays, lectures.	
PN2039	5/4
Philosophy. Esthetics, etc. Relations to other Arts.	
PN2052	4
Directories. Guidebooks, etc. (International)	
PN2053	5/4
Management, Organization, Administration.	
PN2054	4
Guides to the Selections of Plays.	
PN2055	5/4
Acting as a Profession.	
PN2056	4
Professional Ethics for Actors.	
PN2058	4
Psychology of the Actor.	
PN2058-2071	5/4
Art of Acting.	
PN2073	5/4
Contracts, Blanks, Forms, Diaries, etc.	
PN2074	5/4
Theater as a Profession.	
PN2075-2080	5/4
Study and Teaching.	
PN2081	5/4
Special Methods of Presentation.	
PN2085-2096	5/4
The Stage and Accessories.	
PN2100-2193	5/4
History.	
PN2205-2217	5/4
Biography.	
PN2219	5/4
Special Topics.	
PN2220-3035	5/4

Special Regions or Countries. PN3151-3171	3
Amateur Theatricals. PN3175-3191	3
College and School Theatricals. PN3195	5
Minstrel Shows. PN3203-3282	5
Tableaux, Pageants, "Happenings,"etc. PN6110.5-6120	5/4
Collections of General Literature. Drama. <b>Technology in the Theater.</b>	
 TK4399.T6	5/4
Special uses of electric lighting. Theaters. TK7881.9	5/4
Applications of electronics. Sound systems. Theaters, auditoriums, etc. <b>Bibliography. Library Science</b>	
 Z286.T5	5/4
Theatrical Publishing. Z675.T36	5/4
Theatrical libraries. Z695.1.T27	5
Theater, cataloging. of literature on. Z5781	5/4
Theater. Bibliography.	

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