

BROADSIDE

NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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TLA: THE YEAR IN PICTURES

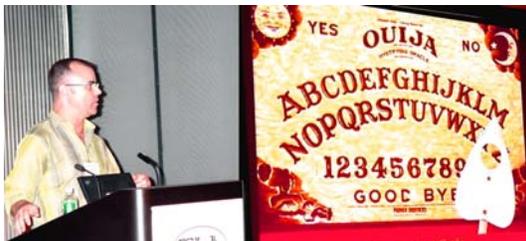
The Theatre Library Association held its first symposium of the new millennium, Performance Documentation and Preservation in an Online Environment, on October 10, 2003 at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The one-day event addressed the cutting-edge issues of performing arts documentation in a virtual environment. An international group of over 125 archivists, librarians, curators, conservators, scholars, and practitioners gathered for this provocative and challenging program. Here are some photographic highlights of the day.



Howard Besser of New York University presents "Preservation of Electronic Performance: New Paradigms."



Moderator Kenneth Schlesinger (left) with Richard Rinehart (center) and Howard Besser during the panel, "Digital Preservation: Paradigms and Partnerships"



Richard Rinehart of the Berkeley Art Museum presents "The Straw That Broke the Museum's Back? Documenting and Preserving Digital Art for the Next Century."



Hugh Denard of Theatron offers a virtual tour of ancient theatres during the panel, "Performing Arts Online: Virtually Across the Pond."



Jon Ippolito of the Variable Media Network presents "Digital Performance: Damnation or Salvation?"

IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Note—pg. 2; Franklin Furnace Archive—pg. 3; TLA/ASTR Conference Call—pg. 4; Member News —pg. 5; Book Reviews—pg. 5; TLA/ASTR Plenary pg.—8; Announcements & Queries—pg. 10; In Memoriam—pg. 10

Editor's Note:
Submission deadline for the Spring 2004 issue is June 28, 2004.
Ellen Truax
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Following are photographs from the 35th annual TLA Book Awards held in New York City on May 30, 2003.



David Saltz provides an overview of the Virtual Vaudeville Project during the panel, "Performing Arts Online: Projects and Perspectives."



Award-winning actress Marian Seldes is honored with a TLA Lifetime Membership Award in tribute to her exceptional dedication and service to the organization. Her award is presented by TLA Vice President, Dr. Martha S. LoMonaco.



Ann Doyle, Manager for Arts and Humanities Initiatives for Internet2 gives the closing remarks for the TLA Symposium



Louis Pizzitola (right), received the TLA Special Jury prize for his book, *Hearst Over Hollywood: Power, Passion, and Propaganda in the Movies* (Columbia University Press), presented by New York Times Associate Editor and former theatre critic, Frank Rich (left).



Craig Barron (left) and Mark Cotta Vaz, winners of the TLA Award for excellence in writing on film and broadcasting, for *The Invisible Art: The Legends of Movie Matte Painting* (Chronicle Books).

Franklin Furnace: Stokin' Towards a Virtual Future

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Safety is a relative concept. On my way to visit downtown arts and cultural organization *Franklin Furnace Archive*, my subway was diverted to the World Trade Center stop – which I had not seen since 2001. At the nondescript office building two blocks west housing the Furnace's world headquarters, the guard said he needed to take my photograph for a temporary building ID. When I asked him why, he said, "It makes people feel safer." Appropriately documented, I went up to the 6th floor.

Ironically, Franklin Furnace's mission statement is to "make the world safe for Avant-Garde Art." Founded in 1976, this relatively modest and gutsy organization has played a significant role in documenting and defining the lower Manhattan arts scene. Chameleon-like, it has reinvented itself on at least three occasions, reflecting changes in artistic practice, technological innovation, as well as real estate and economic vicissitudes – a prime motivator of downtown arts.

Founding Director Martha Wilson started the organization because there was no outlet for what became known as *artists' books* – galleries didn't want them, and publishers didn't know what to do with them. In fact, no term even existed for artists' books. Franklin Furnace's purpose was to collect, exhibit, and preserve them (which became the hardest task of all). Wilson initially knew that she was dealing with unique artifacts – "books" that were not necessarily text-based, but more a visual medium onto themselves.

Since cataloging terms were not available to describe them, over the years Franklin Furnace developed and contributed numerous terms to the *Getty Art and Architecture Thesaurus*. Some terms now in the vernacular include *mail art* and *Xerox books*, facilitated

by artists' adoption of photocopiers and offset printing. Seeking a secure, permanent home for this collection, the *Museum of Modern Art/Franklin Furnace/Artist Book Collection* was initiated in 1993 as an accessible resource at one of the world's leading art institutions. Franklin Furnace still accepts donations for this repository.

The Furnace never anticipated becoming a performance venue, but when an artist showed up in costume with a lamp and stool to give her reading, they realized this threshold had been crossed. Soon William Wegman was offering readings from *War and Peace* to his photogenic Weimaraner, *Man Ray* (the performance ended when the dog walked away). Many prominent downtown artists – Vito Acconci, Eric Bogosian, David Cale, Karen Finley, Robert Wilson – honed their early craft at the Furnace. The modest storefront on Franklin Street was often completely redesigned for installations. One artist converted it into a travel agency – passersby came in and tried to purchase tickets to Aruba!

With its penchant for experimentation, skewed entertainment, and pushing the envelope on "taste," Franklin Furnace has never been successful in staying out of trouble. The Giuliani-era Fire Department closed down its performance space for not being up to code – vindictively, it was perceived – coinciding with a controversial exhibition by Karen Finley. During the summer of 1990, Franklin Furnace was subjected to no fewer than three aggressive audits from the IRS, General Accounting Office, and the New York State Comptroller.

Ever the crusader, Martha Wilson retaliated by embarking on a campaign to purchase and renovate their historic building with its resident artists. Part way into her \$500,000 fundraising campaign, she had an epiphany when she realized she was trying to raise half a million dollars for a *shell*. Her work was about artistic content, after all. Doing an abrupt about face, she proposed to her Board in 1997 the radical concept of Franklin Furnace becoming a *virtual* organization, with no tangible physical location. Placing the bulk of organizational records in storage, they relocated to 500 square feet on John Street – their most extreme reinvention to date.

At first, Martha Wilson conceived of the Furnace operating as a netcasting facility. But relationships with sponsoring *dot.coms* proved problematic: prohibitive studio time and lack of flexibility for artistic needs. Artists also required adequate "ramp up" preparation to maximize their studio time. Fortunately – with the development of web-based art – she discovered that resources could be reallocated to an active commissioning program for *net.art*.

Through its *Future of the Present* program, Franklin Furnace currently funds both online works and public performances, which have a documentation component and may be webcast in various locations. As an example, this season a credentialed robot will conduct online psychoanalytic sessions. As a virtual organization, the Furnace has managed to attract an international roster of artists, as well as an international

audience. Paradoxically, by downsizing to an arts institution primarily accessible through its website portal, it effectively has extended its reach globally, with 60,000 individual visitors last year alone.

Since its early days as a collecting entity, Franklin Furnace has paid particular attention to documenting its work. Growing up in a Quaker family, Martha Wilson was accustomed to saving everything. Installations and performances were described – artists were asked to submit explanatory statements. The Archive contains over 50,000 slides recording its output. It transferred original ½” open reel tapes to VHS, then recently to mini DV – not a preservation format, but at least rendering work in an accessible digital form. They are seeking funding to transfer hundreds of VHS videotapes to higher quality digital counterparts.

The Furnace recently has created *The Unwritten History Project*, an ambitious undertaking to make their retroactive catalog available online. So far 26 artists and theme shows have been posted, providing visual documentation from scanned slides with accompanying description. Plans call for the integration of streaming video as well. The interface on *FileMaker Pro* software is intuitive and user-friendly. Simultaneously, they are building the complex backbone of the system, containing metadata linked to press articles and publications, still and moving images, in conjunction with artists' contact information, image rights, and permission releases. Obviously, according to Senior Archivist Michael Katchen, negotiating the rights and releases has been problematic. Some artists understandably may be reluctant to have images of their work displayed on the free Web, while others favor making it available to all.

The ultimate challenge, however, will be providing subject indexing to aptly describe this unique and frequently unclassifiable *oeuvre*. When employing a controlled vocabulary, how would you characterize Karen Finley's performances as the “nude, chocolate-smearred young woman?” Will assigning existing terms, *sex role* and *gender issues*, be adequate? When completed, this will be a rich and dynamic resource combining visual documentation and performance description, culled from the organization's extensive press files. Moreover, the database software is web-enabled, conforms to existing cataloging standards, and is highly adaptable to migration in the future.

Thinking about the future is unavoidable in this era of diminished resources and funding, as well as the largely unknown preservation issues surrounding ephemeral media art, particularly those that are *born digital*. To mitigate these threats and gain access to a network of sophisticated research and information exchange, Franklin Furnace is an active partner of both *Conceptual and Intermedia Arts Online (CIAO)* and the *Arts Space Archives Project (ASAP)*. CIAO, an innovative consortium comprised of arts organizations, museums, and universities (Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive, Cleveland Performance Art Festival, Getty Research Institute, Guggenheim Museum, University of Iowa, Walker Art Center, etc.), sponsors research on software emulation programs,

develops standards and best practices for image formats and file maintenance, proposes new terms for describing this variable media, as well as advocates for funding and public education on these issues. ASAP – consisting of affiliates such as College Art Association and *Bomb* magazine – is an online information network which attempts to locate materials from defunct Downtown arts organizations, and also advises on conservation and cataloging issues. As a smaller group, Franklin Furnace realizes the future of its output is dependent on sharing knowledge, pooling resources, and lobbying on a larger scale with the cultural heritage community to achieve visibility and support. Safety in numbers, as it were.

Leaving the office, I remarked, “Given Franklin Furnace's history, I'm afraid that the world will – thankfully – never be safe for the avant garde.” Martha Wilson responded, “You're right! We're going to have to rethink our motto.” The only constant with this organization is change.

As I left the building, I surrendered my ID badge. The guard let me keep my photo. “Get home safe,” he said.

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Kenneth Schlesinger
City University of New York

TLA PLENARY AT ASTR CALL FOR PAPERS: Conference Theme—TASTE

Any collection of documentary resources on popular entertainment is likely to contain material which users of the collection may find distasteful. Many performance genres can offend on moral, ethical, political, or even aesthetic grounds, whether by deliberate provocative intent on the part of their creators, or as a product of historical social environments which are no longer tolerated. Archival residue of such performances may be protected and given credibility by institutional surroundings or the passage of time, but some retain their power to shock and offend even when sterilized by history or the academic environment.

Libraries and archives have made use of many strategies for dealing with such material and with potential or actual objection to it –contextualization, interpretation, segregation, and even outright rejection are only a few of the administrative solutions to the problem. All of these practices affect what is available for scholarly research and to some extent manipulate the way in which scholars perceive these resources.

For its Plenary Session at the ASTR/TLA Annual Meeting in 2004, TLA invites papers from librarians and archivists describing methods which they have adopted for managing collections of the truly tasteless or deeply offensive, either in response to or in anticipation of

adverse responses from the users of such material. Scholars who have made use of such collections are invited to share experiences of the ways in which library and archival policies have either enhanced or inhibited their ability to do the work they have set out to do.

DEADLINE IS MAY 1, 2004.

Please send paper proposals to:

Prof. Marti LoMonaco, Chairman, TLA Plenary Committee,
E-mail submissions: msslomon@attglobal.net
(preferably within the body of the e-mail, rather than as an attachment).

Proposals can also be sent snail-mail to:

Prof. Martha S. LoMonaco
Chair, Department of Visual & Performing Arts
Fairfield University
North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824-5195

MEMBER NEWS

STAFF TRANSITIONS AT THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

TLA member **Mary Ellen Rogan** has been appointed Project Manager for the Wilson Processing Project, a multi-year initiative funded by Robert W. Wilson to process, catalog, and provide access to many of the archival and media collections housed at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. For the past twelve years, Mary Ellen served as Senior Archivist in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection at the Library for the Performing Arts. She is a recent recipient of the Bertha Franklin Feder Award, given annually to librarians at NYPL for outstanding efforts in making the Library's collections available and useful to the public. Mary Ellen is a graduate of the Columbia University School of Library Service.

Mary Ellen is succeeded as Senior Archivist in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection by TLA Executive Board member **Mark Maniak**. Mark has been on the staff of the Theatre Collection since 1998. His MLS is from Long Island University's Palmer School of Library and Information Science.

Kevin Winkler
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

BOOK REVIEWS

Menefee, David W. *Sarah Bernhardt in the Theatre of Films and Sound Recordings*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003. 160pp. ISBN 0-7864-1636-X, \$35.00.

I was told at an early age that Sarah Bernhardt was the greatest actress who ever lived. While my own definition of "greatness" has evolved considerably since grade school, there can be no denying the "Divine Sarah"'s impact on theatrical history. Now, thanks to

David Menefee's thorough research and undeniable enthusiasm for his subject, we can also celebrate her contributions to the art of moving pictures and sound recordings.

Following a foreword by Kevin Brownlow, and a solid biographical overview of Bernhardt's life and career, the author provides a detailed audiography of her all-too-brief wax cylinder recordings of poetry and play snippets, produced from 1880 to 1918. In many instances, the complete French text and translations are provided.

Menefee's section on Bernhardt's films begins with 1900's *Hamlet*, analyzes in detail her acknowledged masterpiece, 1912's *Queen Elizabeth*, and concludes with *The Fortune Teller* in 1923, which was completed mere hours before her death at the age of 79. Throughout each "-ography" section, Menefee weaves astute commentary on the circumstances surrounding many of the works, along with lengthy quotations from critical reaction of the time.

The book is thus a potent mélange of technological history, early motion picture lore, and an amazing artist's fascinating life story. It also includes a chronological listing of all Bernhardt's plays, films, and recordings, plus a bibliography and index.

Finally, what make this volume particularly lovely are the lavish photographs of Bernhardt in performance on stage and in her films. They are stunningly reproduced in beautiful detail and add immeasurably to the book's overall quality.

This title would be best suited to academic and public libraries with large film and theatre research collections, although general readers interested in Bernhardt will likely find in it much to enjoy. It reminds us why Sarah has been indeed "divine" to so many for so long.

Catherine Ritchie
Dallas (TX) Public Library

Peters, Margot. *Design for Living: Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, A Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. ISBN: 0-375-41117-8. List of Illustrations, Acknowledgements, Prologue, Notes, Bibliography, Chronology, Index. Xvi, 398 pages. Illus. Hardcover, \$30.00.

To anyone under 50, except theatre students professors and historians, Lunt and Fontanne are quite surely to ring no bells of recognition. Although as Margot Peters tells us in her delightfully readable and discerning dual-biography, "For four shining decades of the twentieth century Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne reigned as the most famous acting couple in the English-speaking theater." (p.3), they starred in only one talking picture (*The Guardsman*, 1931, adapted from one of their stage hits), and did radio and television before the age of tape recording. Peters acknowledges three previous biographical works on the Lunts: (George Freedley in 1958, Maurice Zolotow's *Stagestruck* in 1964, and Jared Brown's *The Fabulous Lunts* of 1986, the latter of which Peters says is "a

thorough, scholarly treatment..." (p. xv). No doubt these are "invaluable resources," (ibid) as Peters indicates, but they are hard to come by these days, and her research into the Lunts' personal lives and stage careers has taken her far beyond any previous biographer.

From their early separate lives in and out of the theatre, from the 1890s, through all of their public and private lives together, to the final stage triumph, *The Visit*, to Alfred's death in 1977, and on to Lynn's receipt of the Kennedy Center Honors in both their names in 1980 this is no doubt one of the most unusual love stories in the history of public performance. They both loved the theatre and Lynn, especially, really did not feel alive unless she was on the boards. Alfred found respite from performing in cooking (especially for guests) and "farming" at Ten Chimneys, their constantly building and never quite finished estate at Genesee Depot, Wisconsin.

There were no children and Peters deals gingerly with the question of sexuality, but there is little doubt that the Noel Coward play from which she takes her title had a particular and personal meaning. "...Design for Living explores the amorous escapades of an unconventional trio of artists—'magic people'. Leo, a writer, and Otto, a painter, are both in love with Gilda, who loves them in return, yet marries a convenient husband ... Today Coward's subtext is clearly visible. Otto and Leo are in love with each other, possibly more than with Gilda." (p. 123) The critical reaction to the ménage a trios ran from lukewarm to outright vitriolic; I am sure that today audiences would find the work amusingly metrosexual.

The Lunt's are mostly thought of today, if thought of at all, as the masters of drawing-room comedy, or what the French might call Boulevard farce. True, they had all the lightness of touch and the timing needed for featherweight theatre, but they had much, much more.

The pre-World War II *Idiot's Delight* (1936) "captures twenty-four hours in the lives of people captured in the chaos of impending war" (p. 147) and the wartime *There Shall Be No Night* (1940), a searing drama about the Russian invasion of Finland, proved that the Lunt's proved to any doubters that they were serious dramatic actors. Charlie Chaplin's opening night response: "Intended to come around afterwards but we were too deeply moved by the play and your memorable performances. It is a shaft of light shining through the somber skies." (p.188) Both Lynn and Alfred agreed that this was the most satisfying work they had ever done. When they took the play to England in 1943, the setting was changed to the German occupation of Greece. Opening in London in December during the blitz, the play was so personal to its cast and audiences that it seemed there was little separation between the presentation inside and the reality outside the theatre.

The decades of the Lunt's prominence in the theatre, 1920-1960, was still a time of touring in the United States. They took major productions all across the country, but in 1957, when they opened one of their last great comedic successes, *The Great Sebastians*, in San Francisco: "The theatre had changed. They missed other road companies in San Francisco—or

anywhere else for that matter." Then too, "Apparently the day of light comedy is gone—one must wear a sexual hair shirt to stay on Broadway these days." (p.266)

Their last work together was somewhat of a saga: the English translation of Friedrich Durrenmatt's *The Old Lady Pays a Visit*, later shortened to *The Visit*, directed by the 32 year old Peter Brook, who was just then getting world-wide attention. The Lunt's had been uncertain about the subject matter. "After all, in Brook's words, it's the story of 'this old woman who is very rich and she comes to Gullen, a little town in Europe, and she has a black panther, an empty coffin, two American gangsters, two blind musicians, and she's prepared to pay a billion marks to get a man killed because thirty years before he had given her an illegitimate baby.' But they agreed to meet with Brook." (p. 269-270). The rest became theatrical history.

It was decided to premiere the production in England, and the producer chose to open the pre-London tryout in Brighton on Christmas Eve, 1957. The audience had been misled into thinking the play was high comedy; many left at intermission, at the end the rest "stalked out in angry silence." (p. 272) The London theatre suddenly became "unavailable", so they toured the provinces to an icy reception except in Edinburgh. But producer Roger Stevens saw the play and decided, "This show'll be a sensation in New York." (p. 273) Stevens predicted correctly.

The Visit opened at the newly renamed Lunt-Fontanne Theatre (formerly the Globe) on May 5, 1958, to immediate acclaim. Brooks Atkinson: "After squandering their time on polite trivialities for a number of years, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne are appearing in a devastating drama... Our two most gifted comic actors look like our most gifted dramatic actors." (p. 279) After an interlude due to Alfred's ill health, the play reopened to full houses at the Morosco, and then toured 17 cities cross the country, breaking house records for a non-musical, then came back to fill the New York City Center for two weeks, and finally opened on London's West End on June 23, 1960, again to great acclaim. Booked for eight weeks, the show ran for twenty.

And so the dual career of this legendary acting couple came to a properly resounding end. Alfred's continued ill health precluded prolonged stage performing. Some television work followed, especially for Lynn, and friends frequented Ten Chimneys, sometimes far overstaying their welcome. There was a lot of traveling; they received showers of honors and awards, and a 1970 appearance on the Dick Cavett show, with Noel Coward, brought this reaction from Cavett: "...It thrilled not only the people who.....knew the Lunts and Coward, but also my youngest viewers, some of whom couldn't have told you exactly who the Lunts and Coward were the day before." (p. 302)

I hope Margot Peters' chronicle of their lives and times will get many more young people to know exactly who the Lunt's and Coward were.

The detailed notes on source, the excellent

bibliography, and the eight-page chronology of what seems to be every performance either of the Lunts ever gave on stage, screen, radio, television, and recording is astounding and highly recommended to all who want to pursue the story in more detail.

Truly, they don't make them like that anymore.

Richard M. Buck

Their Championship Seasons: Acquiring, Processing, and Using Performing Arts Archives. Edited by Kevin Winkler. (Performing Arts Resources, 22.) New York: Theatre Library Association, 2001. [142 p. ISBN 0-932-61019-6. \$30.]

Reprinted from *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*, vol. 59, no. 3 (March 2003) by permission of the Music Library Association.

The genre of case study is used as an educational tool in many disciplines. Good case studies teach important lessons about what worked or failed in a practical setting, and, written with enough time for hindsight and analysis, can offer insights into how various processes can be improved. While papers about archival collections and issues are commonly presented at conferences, they are rarely available to a wider audience in publication. The majority of the eight articles in *Their Championship Seasons* originated as conference or panel papers; all but one qualifies as a case study.

The lone exception to the case study model in this volume is Linda Fairtile's article about the challenge of providing good archival access to manuscript collections in the performing arts, and balancing this need against concerns for privacy. Fairtile presents the legal background of privacy concerns in the United States and examples that demonstrate the complexity of the situations that can occur.

This is especially true in the case of third parties represented in archival collections. For example, letters written by a third party to the creator of a collection were in all likelihood written without the expectation that they would ever be available to the public. In what instances should an archivist consider limiting or even sealing access to letters of this nature that reveal personal information? Indeed, what sort of personal information qualifies for privacy protection? These are questions that must be considered by any archivist and the decisions made by the archivist will have serious impact upon the work of researchers.

One of Fairtile's goals was to identify some common practices among institutions that hold manuscript collections in the performing arts. To this end she designed a survey that was distributed to sixteen repositories. Although the seven completed surveys contain too little data to be statistically relevant, the survey questions themselves are worthy of consideration, especially for any archive in the process of establishing or reviewing its policies.

Four of the eight articles in *Their Championship Seasons* are about the handling and use of the New York Shakespeare Festival Archives housed at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Billy Rose Theatre Collection. The festival was founded by Joseph Papp in 1954. Due to Papp's dedication and vision, the festival grew in scope and status to become one of New York's preeminent cultural institutions. It survives today as the Public Theatre/New York Shakespeare Festival. The collection (approximately nine hundred linear feet in size) documents Papp's career as well as the growth of the festival he founded.

Three articles, by Mary Ellen Rogan, Jeremy Megraw, and Michala Biondi, focus on the processing of the festival collection. Rogan's essay describes the administrative level of handling the collection, including budgeting for processing and supplies, appraisal, organization, and cataloging. She points to two lessons learned from the project. The first is the challenge of accurately estimating the size of a collection as complex as that of the festival. This is crucial to the budget process since any estimate of requests for supplies and the personnel needed to process the collection are based upon it. The second lesson is how to deal with the vagaries of personnel turnover for a project the duration of which will be measured in years rather than weeks or months. Only a crystal ball can adequately address this problem, but Rogan's solutions point to the need for flexibility and creativity once the process has been started.

Both Rogan and Megraw note that the treatment of the festival collection serves as a benchmark within their institution for handling similar archival collections in the future. One element of their cataloging of the collection may also serve a much wider community: their development of a thesaurus of theater terms necessary to describe the contents of the collection. The list of terms, including blocking scripts, set design drawings, costume sketches, and prop inventory sheets, once formalized, will be invaluable to other collections of theater materials. A collection of this magnitude and complexity demands such a carefully devised list of terms to distinguish its components.

Biondi's firsthand account of the pleasures and frustrations of processing the festival collection reveals more details about its contents and the special needs generated by them. These include the extensive files of clippings requiring equally extensive photocopying onto acid-free paper, the large quantity of duplication within the collection requiring painstaking weeding, and the unique production costume bibles (compilations of designs and artifacts from production costumes) that required special preservation treatment.

The fourth article about the festival collection provides one example of its potential use. Martha LoMonaco describes how she used the material to shape a production of *Hair* she was directing at Fairfield University in Connecticut. The festival collection contains three scripts for Papp's original 1967 Public Theatre production of the musical by Jerome Ragni and James Rado, notes by Ragni and Rado about the

production, and correspondence among the authors, Papp, the director, and the choreographer.

One of the most interesting aspects of LoMonaco's research is her discovery of the ways in which the original 1967 production differed from the 1968 Broadway production. The 1968 version of the show remains the authorized edition and most people know the show in this form, as what LoMonaco refers to as a "concept musical." The nude SCENE for which the 1968 version was infamous was not included in the 1967 production which conformed much more closely to the standard musical of the period.

Another collection housed in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection is the papers of Lucille Lortel. Lortel was an actress and theatrical producer known as the "Queen of Off-Broadway." She began her career as a producer at her own White Barn Theatre in Westport, Connecticut, in 1947. There she was able to produce less commercial works by playwrights such as Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet, and Samuel Beckett. She continued to support and produce innovative theater at the Theatre de Lys (later the Lucille Lortel Theatre) in New York beginning in 1956.

Camille Croce Dee's article about the Lortel collection, written with Francesca Pitaro and Donna Levi, describes the challenges met in processing a collection that was originally dispersed over at least three locations. The processors had to deal with a large quantity of document duplication among the different locations. As is often the case with personal collections, there was little meaning to the original order. Dee notes that one of the determining factors in deciding upon the final arrangement of at least one portion of the collection was the order already established in a published bio-bibliography about Lortel. This is a practical solution that simplifies research in at least that area of the collection.

The last two articles in the book chiefly deal with the use and promotion of archival collections. The first of these, by Nena Couch, is about the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute at Ohio State University. Couch, curator of the institute's collections, points to the establishment of close ties to academic departments within the university as one of the most positive and critical steps to insure that the institute remains vital to the educational and research missions of the university. Her examples of cooperative and interdisciplinary programs in which the institute participates speak to the benefits of a proactive attitude toward archival use.

David Farneth's article about the Weill- Lenya Research Center in New York is an enlightening case study of the operations of a composer archive. Unlike archives that exist as part of a larger public library or university collection, institutions such as the Weill-Lenya Research Center largely operate with private funding and are more often involved with promotional efforts that support the institution, such as the publication or recordings of works of the composer. Farneth's

description of the uses of the Weill Center's materials demonstrates not only the research value of its contents, but also the multifaceted character of Weill's career.

One of the most important lessons to be learned about archival use is its unpredictable nature. While this issue is something of a subtext in the other articles in the book, both Couch and Farneth provide examples of the tangential values hidden within a collection. Farneth notes that the Weill collection has also seen use for research into exile and émigré studies, women's studies, genealogy, literary history, and even studies in library science. He also points out that although scholarly use of an archive is the most common measure of its research value, this sort of use may not constitute the majority of uses of the collection. These are important points to remember as archivists arrange and describe collections, providing access to as wide a body of research as is feasible.

The articles in *Their Championship Seasons* may not break new ground in archival theory or practice, but that is not their intent. They allow us to learn about several interesting archival collections and expose us to issues commonly faced by all archivists, including concerns about privacy, challenges, and methods of processing; exploring potential uses of collections; and increasing the visibility of archives and their relevance to today's researchers. The book may not be essential for many music libraries, but should be considered as an addition to any library with archival or manuscript holdings.

John Bewley
State University of New York, Buffalo

TLA Plenary Attracts Large Audience at ASTR/TLA Annual Conference in Durham, North Carolina

Engaging a large audience with their research processes and outcomes, Martha S. LoMonaco, Nena Couch, Joseph Roach, and Susan Brady (also plenary chair) presented their papers at the Theatre Library Association plenary session, *From Archive to Art: (Re)Viewing the Performance in Museums and Libraries* at the 2003 annual conference of the American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR) and TLA held in Durham, North Carolina in November. Using original documents found in archival collections, libraries, and museums, the presenters shared performance research that generated several projects: the musical *Hair* performed using the author's original intent, *The Rape of the Lock* performed as a ballet with related art and music, and John Flaxman's sketchbook as art documentation and its relationship to theatre.

TLA Vice President Martha S. LoMonaco presented a paper entitled *Shaping Contemporary Performance via Archival Documents: 'Hair,' A Case Study* that examined her experience directing the musical in 1999 at Fairfield University. Not content or willing to direct *Hair* from what she already knew about it, she decided to research the original intent of the play. Marti used

The Joseph Papp/New York Shakespeare Festival Archives in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts as her primary research archive. Examining the original scripts from 1967, Marti developed a production concept that included the play's original themes: young people wanting to form a new society and their fear of being drafted into the Vietnam War.

Drawing on the author's original purpose and vision, the play was produced in the school's black box theatre with a 1960's inspired environmental bare stage. The audience was privy to stage happenings: actors warming-up, applying their make-up, and transforming themselves into their *Hair* characters; vocal warm-ups; props handed to the cast by crew members; the cast leaving the stage to retrieve props; and asking the audience to hold their applause between songs. The play opened with "Aquarius" performed as a hymn and ended with the audience being brought back to 1999 through slides of the Vietnam Memorial with the name of the lead character, Claude, added to the wall via photo technology. The ten performances of *Hair* were sold-out and provided a historically grounded production that was achieved through archival research.

Turning from producing a play to choreographing a ballet, Nena Couch presented her paper, *Choreographing the Document: Alexander Pope's 'The Rape of the Lock'*. Nena, along with a Dance Faculty member from Ohio State University, used the classroom to choreograph, perform, and transform Pope's poem, *The Rape of the Lock* into a ballet and performance danced in the Baroque style. They used the poem, as well as works of art depicting Baroque styles as a source of visual inspiration. The ballet was a challenge to choreograph for two reasons: making the language of the poem understandable to the audience and providing appropriate movement, and music that would speak to modern audiences. Research was not limited to collections at OSU. Stanford University, The New York Public Library for Performing Arts, and the University of Georgia collections were also consulted. The resulting dance was developed from cutting, editing, shifting, adding, and deleting characters, as well as swapping genders. Works of several choreographers and composers were used in the final dance.

Nena and her colleague followed a number of guidelines as they developed their ballet. First, they focused their research on English choreographers and dances performed in England, but included those dances performed in France in the Baroque style. Whatever could be portrayed by dance was, and they researched 18th century notation to create new dances in the style of that period, using English music whenever possible. Documenting the performance included videotaping technique classes, interviews and performances in area schools. A 3-part CD was produced and included information on the process of creating the dance and the final ballet. By incorporating poetry, dance, music, and art in ways not originally intended, the final ballet became a creative, respectful re-working of earlier times.

Continuing with 18th century research, Joseph Roach and Susan Brady addressed the use of art as a primary source for theatre research. They presented their findings in their paper, *Art as Archive: Flaxman Sketches Siddons*. Championing the potential of the art museum as a source for theatrical research, Joseph and Susan used a sketchbook by John Flaxman (1755-1826) as the catalyst for researching and establishing the relationship (if any) between Flaxman and the actress Sarah Siddons (1755-1831). The sketchbook is held by the Department of Prints and Drawings, Yale Center for British Art.

The sketchbook contains drawings of Siddons in her role as Constance in Shakespeare's *King John*. And although there is evidence that Flaxman was not generally a theatregoer, Joseph and Susan felt that the sketches were drawn from live performance(s), particularly since Flaxman's drawings show the sequence of emotions that Constance's character goes through. Conducting historical research on the play, they concluded that the sketches and stage directions supported each other and thus the sketches were for the most part drawn from the actual staging. Flaxman even developed a chess set and based the Queen on the sketches of Siddons. Dating the sketches was difficult, as there was no evidence as to where or when the sketches were created. A 1794 watermark was visible, but could not necessarily be used to verify the date because the stationary company did not always change the watermark from year to year. There are additional undated sketches of Siddons in the British Museum.

Questions from the audience included whether there were plans to publish the sketches (yes), and where are the Flaxman archives are held (at Yale, as well as in England). Susan ended the presentation by encouraging participants to look for research fellowships and opportunities from museums.

The session was extremely engaging to an audience perhaps larger than any other for a TLA plenary at the ASTR/TLA conference. The presenters' work provided impetus for attendees to consider that poems, sketches, and other arts materials and performances can be utilized for theatre research.

Judy Markowitz
University of Maryland

Excerpt from remarks made at the ASTR Awards luncheon in Durham, North Carolina

Today, as a self-defining community of scholars, we celebrate outstanding theatre research. It's a practice and a passion which implicates all of us. However (and this is a big however), sometimes when we put our names to a piece of scholarship we forget the degree to which we have been assisted and guided by the research librarians who have placed materials before us. Time and again, the members of the TLA make research appear easier than it is because they have

understood and shared and facilitated our work. Today I'm identifying just one of these remarkable archivist-scholar-librarians, and – at the express request of the ASTR Executive - I will be asking you in a moment to applaud **Annette Fern**. Annette Fern isn't alone. She's one of a line of fine librarians at the Harvard Theatre Collection and one of numerous past and present top-notch librarians in our major and lesser theatre collections. ASTR cites Annette because her retirement - and the resulting vacuum at Harvard - oblige us to consider how indebted we are to the TLA who share this conference with us and who are all indispensable members of our research community.

Like many of my colleagues here, I've been blessed in my encounters with Annette. She is singular. She is formidable. Annette has never been one just to pull items off the shelf or resort to finding-aids which she had twitched to make more responsive to theatre historians' queries. Rather, like so many of her TLA colleagues, Annette developed an intimate knowledge of the vast holdings around her and then – and this is important – *listened*. Annette *listened* to what we so inadequately expressed when we made our research needs known. Annette anticipated. She second-guessed us. She found and placed under our noses what we would have asked for if only we had been smart enough – or had done our preparation well enough - to suspect that such items exist. A scholar in her own right (I know of no one with her intricate knowledge of 19th century American musical theatre), Annette sometimes contradicted, but contradicted with understanding and with the kind of information which set us back on track and which added unexpected resonances to our work. She contradicted with conspicuous humour and not a little irony, and we soon learned that we disregard her advice to our intellectual detriment. Many of us have our Annette Fern experiences and our Annette Fern stories, and many of us cherish our repeated visits to the HTC. I'm only one of those many, sorry that Annette has retired, but pleased that Annette is a colleague and even more pleased that she has become a friend. Now – at the behest of the ASTR executive – I ask Annette (who – embarrassed by this attention - is probably muttering dark curses under her breath) to stand, and I ask all of you to thank her and to honour with our applause Annette and –as well—our colleagues in the TLA.

David Mayer
University of Manchester

ANNOUNCEMENTS & QUERIES

In anticipation of a December 2005 major loan exhibition devoted to the art and life of Sarah Bernhardt to take place at The Jewish Museum in New York City, we are eager to locate works of art, objects, and archival materials relating to the actress and her many extended tours in the United States from 1881 through 1918. Curators: Carol Ockman, Professor of Art History, Williams College; Kenneth E. Silver, Professor of Fine Arts, New York University. Please contact: Karen Levitov, Assistant Curator, The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10128. Phone: 212-423-3285; fax: 212-423-3232; or email klevitov@thejm.org

IN MEMORIAM

Sidney Jackson Jowers (1950, Physics) died June 25 in Canterbury, England, aged 74. Mrs. Jowers, a costume designer and researcher, was an authority on theatrical costume, and authored *Theatrical Costume, Masks, Make-up and Wigs: A Bibliography and Iconography* (Routledge, 2000). She also wrote the section on costume in the four-volume *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (Macmillan, 1994), and was awaiting publication of her most recent work, *A Wedding Gift: The First Wedding Book*, her commentary on a 1475 manuscript account of the Sforza Renaissance wedding.

A resident of Canterbury since 1968, Mrs. Jowers had a varied career. After graduating from Vassar College, she traveled Europe and North Africa with her husband on a Lambretta, ran a newspaper, then a restaurant, in Santa Cruz, CA, and taught high school math, having graduated from the UC Berkeley graduate program in teacher education. She costumed premieres by Lou Harrison and Alan Ridout, and numerous productions at the Gulbenkian and Marlowe theatres in Canterbury; she was costume designer for the Ludlow, England, and Santa Cruz Shakespeare festivals, and costumed Christopher Fry's *Sleep of Prisoners*, staged in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral for Fanfare for Europe. She presented for the International Federation for Theatre Research and the International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts.

She is survived by her two children, Laura Jowers and Andrew Jowers, both teachers.

Laura Jowers

PAUL MYERS: 1917 – 2004

Paul Myers died on February 2th, just two weeks short of his 87th birthday, in a nursing home in upper New York State, close to his daughter (whom he adored) and her family.

His entry in *Notable Names in the American Theatre* (James T. White, 1976) notes the facts of his career: actor and stage manager for the Washington Square Players at New York University (1936-38); first professional appearance in New York in 1939; actor and stage manager with the touring James Hendrickson-Claire Bruce Shakespearean Repertory Company (Dec. 1940-March 1941); associated with *Stage Magazine* (1941); docent at the Cooper Union Museum (1941-42); co-author of two books on performing arts research; member of the Theatre Collection of The New York Public Library since 1945, becoming Curator in 1967.

But for those of us who knew him as a friend and colleague, this does not begin to describe the warm human being with the sunny disposition who dashed around the corridors of the Theatre Collection at a fast trot for over 35 years, until ill health forced his retirement in 1980. A short, stocky man, full of bad

jokes – he told visiting groups that when he woke up in the morning, the first thing he did was check the obituaries in the *New York Times*; if his name was not there, he got up and got dressed – and good humor, Paul made the Theatre Collection a friendly place for staff and readers. Some users were at the height of their professions (one of his very good friends was Brooks Atkinson of the *Times*), while others were students tackling term papers and theses, or theatre buffs eager to read the latest reviews or find out about a favorite performer. All were welcomed with a smile as fellow enthusiasts.

My first meeting with Paul occurred during my last semester at library school, when I was assigned to visit the Theatre Collection and “find out what it’s all about.” One Saturday afternoon I went to a small enclosure off the main reading room in the Central Building at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street. Paul was in charge of the skeleton staff that day, and in between helping readers he regaled me with a lively account of the history and operation of the division and strongly recommended a return trip during the week to meet George Freedley, founder and Curator of the Collection, to see if they could use a volunteer. The whole idea was fascinating, and back I came to meet Mr. Freedley (a rather formidable character) and thereafter to spend Saturday afternoons in the stacks as a volunteer, pasting stage and film reviews into scrapbooks. Serendipitously, Paul was promoted to First Assistant just as I was graduating from library school, and I was hired to fill his old slot.

In 1965, the Theatre Collection was moved to larger and more visible quarters in the newly-constructed Lincoln Center complex. Amid growing tensions, caused partially by the “quantum leap” in hours, readership, and the addition of a very large book collection to our previous non-book holdings, and partially by the newly-created position of Chief of all the research divisions at Lincoln Center – previously division chiefs had reported directly to the Director of the Research Libraries – the Theatre Collection lost the relative independence it had enjoyed since its founding in 1931. George Freedley chafed under the unwanted supervision and became increasingly irascible; for two years, Paul acted as the buffer between the Curator and the staff, always cheerfully available to soothe hurt feelings and calm things down, and never letting us see whatever strains it put on him.

Deteriorating health forced Freedley’s retirement in 1967. Paul was promoted to Curator, and I became his First Assistant. The atmosphere throughout the division improved immediately. Paul loved the theatre, loved people, and he loved being a theatre librarian, and this enthusiasm and good will communicated itself to staff and public. He enjoyed almost every aspect of his work, and as a “hands-on” Curator he continued doing the things he loved – cataloging, answering reference letters, speaking to visiting VIPS and groups, and assisting the public in the reading rooms. There was, however, one element of his job that he disliked as a needless distraction from the real purpose of the Theatre Collection, and that was attendance at high-level committee meetings. He gave vent to these feelings on one memorable occasion, when he showed up with a batch of socks which he proceeded to darn,

explaining that he didn’t want the morning to be a complete waste of time. Needless to say, his quirky sense of humor was not appreciated by the upper levels of administration, and he was sent a tart memo excusing him from further meetings, which suited him perfectly.

Health problems led to Paul’s retirement in 1980, but he continued to enjoy the theatre and in spite of deteriorating eyesight, he walked all around New York City without assistance. He visited the Theatre Collection on special occasions and attended meetings of the Theatre Library Association until the late ‘90s. When TLA decided to establish an Award for Distinguished Service in Performing Arts Librarianship, I had the honor of introducing Paul Myers as the first recipient in 1995; and the following year came an even greater honor when Paul introduced me as the second recipient. It gave me the chance to thank him for all he had meant to me and other members of the staff during his long career.

Paul lived in a residence run by the Society of Friends in New York City, and we occasionally got together to go to the theatre. Although he could see only vague shapes on the stage, he enjoyed listening to the dialogue and the interaction between actors and audience. Even after my move to Arizona in 1996, we would meet for lunch and perhaps a matinee on my annual trips back to New York. When it became necessary for him to have more care, Patsy found a nursing home near her, and Paul was moved there. We continued to keep in touch, as did other friends and former colleagues, although the correspondence and phone calls became more and more one-sided as his memory failed along with his health. Even then, Patsy would visit him with the entertainment section of the *Sunday Times*, and they would discuss the theatre of the 1940s and ‘50s, which was still vivid in his mind.

Paul Myers may be gone in a physical sense, but for me his spirit continues to stride the streets of New York and the halls of the library. He lives in the hearts of all of us who were privileged to know him.

Dorothy L. Swerdlow

