
Finding Aid to the Samson DeBrier Papers, 1948-1995 Coll2014.005

Finding aid prepared by Loni Shibuyama

Processing this collection has been funded by a generous grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

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Title: Samson DeBrier papers

Identifier/Call Number: Coll2014.005

Contributing Institution: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 1.2 linear feet.1 archive box + 1 archive carton.

Date (inclusive): 1948-1995

Abstract: Correspondence, notes, photographs, clippings, biographical material, and other personal papers, 1948-1995, from actor, artist, and raconteur Samson DeBrier. After working as an actor in the 1910s and 1920s, most notably in the film *Salome*, the eccentric DeBrier remained in Hollywood and literati circles throughout his life and was known for hosting salons with creative locals in his Hollywood home. The bulk of the collection is correspondence sent to de Brier from 1954 to 1995.

creator: DeBrier, Samson, -1995

Biography

Samson DeBrier was born on March 18, 1909 and grew up in New Jersey. He moved to Hollywood, where he worked as a silent film actor, most notably in Alla Nazimova's *Salome* (1923). During this time, he also lived in Paris and fell in with the literati circles after befriending Andre Gide. Being independently wealthy from a real estate investment, DeBrier eventually settled in a Hollywood bungalow in the 1950s where he remained for the rest of his life. He was known for hosting art salons at his home, attracting the likes of Jack Nicholson, Anais Nin, Steve McQueen, Paul Mazursky, and Dorothy Parker, among others. In 1954, both DeBrier and his Hollywood bungalow were featured in Kenneth Anger's *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*. Samson DeBrier died on April 1, 1995.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

Conditions Governing Use

All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the ONE Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at USC Libraries as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

Acquisition

The correspondence files in this collection were donated by Jean Ferro, September 13, 2006. The photograph file was donated by Kenneth Anger, May 10, 1995. Donor and date of the remaining papers are unknown.

Preferred Citation

[Box/folder #, or item name] Samson DeBrier Papers, Coll2014-005, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Loni Shibuyama with assistance from Sean Wejebe, February 2014.

Scope and Contents

The collection comprises correspondence, notes, photographs, clippings, biographical material, and other personal papers, 1948-1995, of actor and artist Samson DeBrier. The bulk of the collection is correspondence, mostly Christmas cards, sent to DeBrier from 1954 to 1995. Also included is one biographical file of photocopied articles and photographs documenting de Brier throughout his life.

Arrangement

Correspondence is listed first. The remaining folders are arranged alphabetically.

Separated Materials note

Separated to the ONE periodicals collection:

Spartacus Magazine, No. 5 (November 1982).

Related Materials

Allan R. Ellenberger collection on Ramon Novarro, Coll2008-050, ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Correspondence

Gay actors

Samson DeBrier papers

Box 1, Folder 1-21

Correspondence 1954-1995

Physical Description: [21 folders]

Box 2, Folder 2

Address books and other personal papers 1948-1973

Box 2, Folder 1

Biographical material circa 1980-1995

Box 2, Folder 3

Business cards and contact information circa 1950-1980

Box 2, Folder 4

Clippings 1960-1975

Box 2, Folder 5

Financial records 1966-1968

Box 1, Folder 22

Notes circa 1960-1990

Box 2, Folder 6

Photographs and negatives circa 1940-1970

General Physical Description note: 6 photographs and 2 negatives (b&w).