
Leonard Freeman Collection

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Writers Guild Foundation Archive

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Leonard Freeman Collection

Dates: 1967-1980

Collection Number: WGF-MS-003

Creator/Collector: Freeman, Leonard, 1920-1974

Extent: 12.3 linear feet

Repository: Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Los Angeles, California 90048

Abstract: The Leonard Freeman Collection, 1967-1980 contains a complete set of scripts and accompanying production materials for the original television series Hawaii Five-O from the personal collection of series creator Leonard Freeman. Nearly every script is supplemented with production reports, call sheets, cast and crew lists, shooting schedules, censorship notices, and other studio memoranda.

Language of Material: English

Access

Available by appointment only.

Publication Rights

The responsibility to secure copyright and publication permission rests with the researcher.

Preferred Citation

Leonard Freeman Collection. Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Acquisition Information

Gift of the Rose Freeman Estate, September 6, 2012

Biography/Administrative History

Leonard Freeman was a film and television writer and producer best known as the creator of the crime drama series Hawaii Five-O, which aired on the CBS network from 1968-1980. Born on October 31, 1920 in Sonoma County, California, Freeman's early writing credits include the film dramas Steel Town (1952) and The All American (1953). Freeman also wrote episodes for several television anthology programs throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, penning installments for Four Star Playhouse (1954), Matinee Theater (1956), The 20th Century Fox Hour (1956), Fireside Theater (1956), Men of Annapolis (1957-1958), Target (1958), Lux Playhouse (1958-1959), Alcoa Theater (1957-1959), The David Niven Show (1959), Goodyear Theater (1959), and The Barbara Stanwyck Show (1961). From 1961-1962, Freeman wrote and produced episodes for Route 66. This weekly drama followed the cross-country travels of Tod Stiles (played by Martin Milner) and Buz Murdock (played by George Maharis) in their iconic Corvette convertible. In 1961, Freeman partnered twice with director Gordon Douglas. He wrote the screenplay for Claudelle Inglish and co-wrote with Leigh Brackett the western Gold of the Seven Saints starring Clint Walker, Roger Moore, and Leticia Román. He later returned to the western genre by writing and producing Hang 'Em High (1968) starring Clint Eastwood. Though Freeman may have first dipped into the world of police dramas by writing an episode of The Detectives in 1959, his crowning achievement was the development and long-term success of Hawaii Five-O, whose pilot entitled "Cocoon" first aired as a two-hour TV movie on September 20, 1968. Detective Lieutenant Steve McGarrett (played by Jack Lord) and his elite Hawaiian state police unit would go on to bring down international secret agents, organized crime syndicates, and other island delinquents for twelve seasons (1968-1980) – a television procedural crime tenure unsurpassed until 2003 by Law and Order. Freeman passed away in 1974 during Hawaii Five-O's sixth season.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Leonard Freeman collection is organized into the following series: Series I is comprised of television scripts and production materials. Aside from the original pilot (for which production materials are available), the entire Hawaii Five-O series (276 scripts in all) is represented in 71 bound volumes. Nearly every script is supplemented with production reports, call sheets, cast and crew lists, shooting schedules, and other studio memoranda such as occasional story critiques from Freeman and other producers as well as meticulous censorship notices from the CBS Network.

Indexing Terms

Television Scripts

Hawaii Five-O (Television program : 1968-1980)

Television writers

Television producers and directors

