Screen Writers Guild Records

Finding aid created by Writers Guild Foundation Archive staff using RecordEXPRESS
Writers Guild Foundation Archive
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2018
Descriptive Summary

Title: Screen Writers Guild Records
Dates: 1921-1954
Collection Number: WGF-WGA-VII
Creator/Collector: Screen Writers’ Guild 1921-1954Writers Guild of America, West
Extent: 16.4 linear feet
Online items available: https://archive.org/search.php?query=publisher%3A%28screen%20writers%20guild%29
Repository: Writers Guild Foundation Archive
Los Angeles, California 90048
Abstract: The Screen Writers’ Guild records detail the activities and development of members and the board. The collection contains early guild documents including correspondence, membership records, awards materials, board meeting minutes and other items.
Language of Material: English
Access
Available by appointment only.
Publication Rights
The responsibility to secure copyright and publication permission rests with the patron.
Preferred Citation
Screen Writers Guild Records. Writers Guild Foundation Archive
Acquisition Information
Transferred from the Guild Executive Office Transfiles in storage.
Biography/Administrative History
The Screen Writers’ Guild began in late 1920/early 1921 as a professional club for film writers working in Hollywood. Membership included induction into the social group The Writers as well as professional affiliation with the Authors’ League of America. In 1933, members formalized the Screen Writers’ Guild as a labor union and it blossomed into the central organization representing screenwriters. In 1938, the Guild was officially recognized by the federal government as a labor union with collective bargaining rights. By 1941, writers began working under the first approved contracts and in 1942, the first long term contract was signed by writers and producers. In 1954, the Screen Writers’ Guild merged with the television and radio guilds, and branched into two divisions, Writers Guild of America, West in Los Angeles and Writers Guild of America, East in New York.
Scope and Content of Collection
The Screen Writers Guild Records contains early guild documents including correspondence, membership records, awards materials, board meeting minutes and other items. Series I is comprised of the WGAW Executive Director Transfiles, documents preserved by the guild’s executive offices in Los Angeles from the 1920s to the present. Highlights include member correspondence, materials related to the Hollywood blacklist and code agreements. Members represented include Frances Goodrich, Lillian Hellman, Ring Lardner Jr., Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Albert Maltz, Frances Marion, Dorothy Parker, Preston Sturges, Dalton Trumbo and Billy Wilder. The records also reflect the business of the SWG Board, from meeting minutes to employment reports. Although most of the collection is unprocessed, a selection has been rehoused and inventoried at the folder level. Material continues to be processed and records will be updated when information becomes available. Linear footage measurement reflects processing completed. Early guild publications Screen Guilds Magazine (1934-1936) and The Screen Writer (1945-1948) have been digitized and are available at the Internet Archive.

Indexing Terms
Authors’ League of America
Hollywood blacklist
Labor--History
Screen Writers’ Guild--Archives
Writers Guild of America--Archives
Screenwriters--United States
Television writers--United States
Radio writers--United States
Labor unions
McCall, Mary C., Jr., 1904-1986.
Hughes, Rupert, 1872-1956.
Mankiewicz, Joseph L., 1909-1993
Parker, Dorothy, 1893-1967.
Lardner, Ring, 1885-1933.