Guide to the Clifford Odets Theatrical Materials MS.P.006

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Note
Arts and Humanities--Theater--Theater General
Contributing Institution: Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries
Title: Clifford Odets theatrical materials
Creator: Odets, Clifford
Identifier/Call Number: MS.P.006
Physical Description: 0.6 Linear Feet (1 box and 2 oversize folders)
Date (inclusive): 1928-1955 and undated
Abstract: This collection consists of draft scripts of The Country Girl, The Flowering Peach, and The Russian People; reviews of theatrical performances; correspondence; programs; and family photographs accumulated by renowned playwright Clifford Odets. The bulk of this collection comprises reviews of Odets' theatrical performances found in newspaper clippings and magazine articles. A scrapbook contains clippings documenting a variety of Odets' plays performed in 1935, in addition to an article written by Odets describing his internment in Havana during his investigation into the treatment of Cuban writers and artists.
Language of Material: English
Access
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Preferred Citation
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Date accessed.
For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.
Acquisition Information
Processing History
Preliminary processing by Special Collections and Archives staff, ca. 1996. Fully processed by Adrian Turner, 2001.
Biography
Clifford Odets was an American playwright prolific from the 1930s through the 1950s and renowned for his plays with Marxist leanings. He was born July 18, 1906 in Philadelphia to immigrant Rumanian and Russian parents. His family moved to New York in 1908. After studying drama in high school and pursuing various minor acting jobs in New York and Philadelphia, he joined the Group Theatre of New York and began to write plays for Broadway, including Awake and Sing! In 1935 he joined the Communist Party and traveled to Cuba as the head of a delegation to investigate atrocities against Cuban artists and writers. He moved to California the following year and married Luise Rainer in 1937. He divorced Rainer in 1939 and was remarried in 1943 to Bette Grayson.
In the late 1930s, he gained increasing financial stability through his critically acclaimed works. After his highly successful Golden Boy appeared in 1937, he went on to write numerous plays, including his adaptation of Konstantin Simonov's The Russian People (1942) and the popular The Country Girl (1950). His last play, The Flowering Peach (1954), was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, but the award was given to Tennessee Williams for his Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Odets lived in Hollywood until his death in 1963.
Collection Scope and Content Summary
This collection consists of draft scripts of The Country Girl, The Flowering Peach, and The Russian People; reviews of theatrical performances; correspondence; programs; and family photographs accumulated by renowned playwright Clifford Odets. The bulk of this collection comprises reviews of Odets' theatrical performances found in newspaper clippings and magazine articles. A scrapbook contains clippings documenting a variety of Odets' plays performed in 1935, in addition to an article written by Odets describing his internment in Havana during his investigation into the treatment of Cuban writers and artists.
The personal correspondence almost exclusively comprises letters between Odets and his father, Louis J. Odets, concerning particular plays, Clifford's marriages, and financial issues. Also included is a single letter from the artist Georgia O'Keefe, who, along with her husband Alfred Stieglitz, corresponded with Odets. A number of the newspaper clippings and magazine articles were mailed with these letters, along with draft scripts of The Country Girl, The Flowering Peach, and The Russian People.

Most of the photographs are portraits of Odets taken throughout various periods of his life, including early childhood images in New York. There are also several photographs depicting Odets’ former wives, Luise Rainer and Bette Grayson.

**Collection Arrangement**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or format.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Theater -- Archives
American drama -- 20th century.
Playwrights.
Scrapbooks
Plays.
Photographic prints
Odets, Clifford -- Archives

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**Camp Tioga performances**

- **Tioga News Minstrel Number 1928 August 25**
  - Physical Description: Photocopy.

- **Tioga News Program Number 1928 August 4**
  - Physical Description: Photocopy.

**Correspondence 1938-1954**

- **Dramatic contract for I Got the Blues (Awake and Sing!) 1933**
  - Note
    - Signed by Odets and manager.

**Photographs**

- **Betty Grayson, portrait 1943**
- **Odets and family undated**
- **Odets’ child undated**
- **Odets adult and teenage portraits undated**
  - Physical Description: 11 items.
- **Oversize material undated**
  - Physical Description: 3 items.
- **Odets with Ambassadors Standley and Litvinov, Washington D.C. 1942**
- **Odets with Luise Rainer ca. 1937**
  - Physical Description: 2 items

**Scripts and reviews of theatrical performances**

- **Clash by Night, clippings of reviews 1941**
- **The County Girl**
- **Clippings of reviews 1950**
- **Magazine article reviews**
- **The Hollywood Reporter 1950**
- **Variety 1950**
- **Script, 3rd draft 1949**
- **Script, 4th draft 1950**
- **The Flowering Peach**
- **Clippings of reviews 1954**
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**Scope and Content Note**

Contains newspaper clippings of reviews of various works. *Awake and Sing!* typescript of WEAF radio broadcast mounted on leaf 16.

Feature article on various works.