Finding Aid for the Federal Theatre Project Scripts and Publications, 1936-1939

Collection number: 820

UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections
Manuscripts Division
Los Angeles, CA

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Federal Theatre Project Scripts and Publications,
Date (inclusive): 1936-1939
Collection number: 820
Creator: Federal Theatre Project (U.S.)
Extent: 9 boxes (4.5 linear ft.)
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library. Department of Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Abstract: The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) was a part of the Works Progress Administration (1935-39) and was the first arts endeavor to be extensively funded by the U.S. government. The FTP staged plays reflecting the reality of Depression-era America, created opportunities for minorities, and brought new audiences to theaters. The collection consists of plays, synopses of plays, lists of plays, radio scripts, and three volumes of folk songs and ballads.

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Language: English.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Federal Theatre Project Scripts and Publications (Collection 820). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: 1218064

Biography

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP), part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) from 1935-39, was the first arts endeavor to be extensively funded by the U.S. government; aside from providing work for thousands of unemployed theatrical people, it stimulated the portrayal of new subject matter; the FTP staged plays reflecting the reality of Depression-era America, created opportunities for minorities, and brought new audiences to theaters.

Scope and Content

Collection consists of plays, synopses of plays, lists of plays, radio scripts, and three volumes of folk songs and ballads. Also includes copies of scripts from the Project archives at George Mason University, and videotaped interviews with Gene Stone and Jeff Corey.

Organization and Arrangement

Arranged in the following series:

1. Radio scripts (Boxes 1-2).
2. Plays (Boxes 3-4).
3. Synopses of plays (Boxes 5-9).
4. Folk songs and ballads (Box 9).
5. Prelude to swing, production bulletin (Box 9).

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Federal Theatre Project (U.S.)--Archives.
United States. Works Progress Administration.
American drama 20th century--Archival resources.

Radio Scripts

Abstract: Federal Theatre Radio Division (A project of the Works Progress Administration)

Scope and Content Note

Box 1: 25 scripts
Box 2: 12 scripts

Box 1
A capella in bronze. no.30 [Richard Milburn]. November 28, 1938.

Box 1
Dramatic fragments. no.14 [Domestic tie-up]. April 10, 1937.

Box 1

Box 1
Elizabethan theatre. no.1 [Volpone]. November 1, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.2 [Duchess of Malfi]. November 15, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.3 [Philaster]. November 22, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.4 [A new way to pay old debts]. November 29, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.5 [Tamburlaine the Great]. December 6, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.6 [The silent woman]. December 13, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.7 [Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay]. December 20, 1938.
Box 1  Elizabethan theatre. no.8 [The shoemaker’s holiday]. December 27, 1938.
Box 1  Immortals of science: George W. Carver. n.d.
Box 1  Immortals of science: no.13 [Madame Curie]. n.d.
Box 1  Immortals of science: no.32 [Robert Koch]. February 1, 1938.
Box 1  Immortals of science: no.35 [Alexander Graham Bell]. February 22, 1938.
Box 1  Immortals of science: no.54 [What time is it]. July 6, 1938.
Box 1  King Arthur & his knights, no.1. May 1, 1939.
Box 1  King Arthur & his knights, no.2. May 8, 1939.
Box 1  King Arthur & his knights, no.3. May 15, 1939.
Box 1  Living portraits from the Bible. no.1 [Queen Esther]. n.d.
Box 1  Living portraits from the Bible. no.4 [Sarah]. n.d.
Box 1  Living portraits from the Bible. no.10 [Shunammite woman]. March 21, 1937.
Box 1  Living portraits from the Bible. no.37 [Solomon and the maid of Shunem]. October 3, no year.
Box 1  Living portraits from the Bible. no.59 [Daniel: Prince of Judah]. March 6, 1938.
Box 1  Master builder, by Henrik Ibsen. June 13, 1937.
Box 2  The popular theatre. no.15 [How perfectly shocking]. March 27, 1937.
Box 2  The popular theatre. no.18 [Mountain music]. April 10, 1937.
Box 2  The popular theatre. no.33 [Romeo and Juliet]. July 24, 1937.
Box 2  The popular theatre. no.59 [O’Riley is my name]. January 22, 1938.
Box 2  The popular theatre. no.77 [Highway to glory]. June 4, 1938.
Box 2  The sad shepherd. n.d.
Box 2  Their greatest story. no.2 [Surprise for the boys]. November 5, 1938.
Box 2  Their greatest story. no.3 [Christ in concrete]. November 12, 1938.
Box 2  They walked with beauty. no.7 [Goya]. n.d.
Box 2  They walked with beauty. no.26 [Jonathan Swift]. November 7, 1938.
Box 2  Turning points in famous lives. no.41 [Chic Sale]. September 18, 1937.
Box 2  Turning points in famous lives. no.31 [Leeuwenhoek]. July 10, 1937.

Plays

Abstract: Federal Theatre Project. Works Progress Administration
Scope and Content Note
Box 2: 8 plays
Box 3: 8 plays
Box 4: 6 plays

Box 2  The advent and nativity of Christ. 1937.
Box 2  Arent, Arthur. Triple A plowed under. 1936.
Box 2  Blum, Edwin Harvey. The kickback. n.d.
Box 2  Coventry Mircle play. 1937.
Box 2  Coventry Mircle play. n.d.

Physical Description: Typescript (carbon).

Box 2  Fagan, J.B. And so to bed. n.d.
Box 2  The farce of Monsieur Pierre Patelin, or The mutton trial. n.d.
Box 2  The farce of the worthy Master Pierre Patelin, the lawyer. n.d.
Box 3  Gerstenberg, Alice. Alice in wonderland. n.d.
Box 3  Giacosa, Giuseppe. Like falling leaves. n.d.
Box 3  Green, Howard J. and Raymond Leslie Goldman. The people’s choice. n.d.
Box 3  Huxley, Aldous. The world of light. n.d.

Physical Description: Typescript (carbon).
Box 3
Savage, George. *See how they run*. n.d.
The second shepherds’ play, [adapted] by Harold Whitehall. n.d.

Physical Description: Typescript.

Box 4

Physical Description: Typescript.

Box 4

Physical Description: Typescript (carbon).

Box 4
Unidentified play: title page missing. n.d.

Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of plays: A-G.

Synopses of Plays

Box 5
Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of plays: H-Z.

Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of Plays

Physical Description: 14 vol.: 

Box 6
Anglo-Jewish plays. 1938.
Anti-war plays. 1937.
Anti-war plays, foreign and Anglo-Jewish. 1937.
Anti-war plays, royalty list.
Catalogue of full-length plays. n.d.
Catholic plays. Parts 2 and 3. 1938.
Easter plays. 1937.
Early American plays. Part 1. n.d.
Full-length plays. Part 2. 1936.
Halloween; Thanksgiving; Plymouth Days. n.d.
Health--Safety--Humane children’s plays. 1936.

Box 7
Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of plays:

Physical Description: 13 vol.

Box 7
Holiday musical plays. Part 2. 1938.
Holiday plays for children: orchestrations. n.d.
Irish plays. 1938.
Jewish plays and pageants. 1937.
Marionette plays. 1936.
Marionettes: origin and development. n.d.
Monologues. 1938.
Musical plays. 1937.
Musical plays. [list]. n.d.
Musical plays. Supplement to former list of same title. 1936.
Synopses of Plays

Box 8

Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of plays:

Physical Description: 17 vol.

Box 8

Negro plays. 1938.
Negro plays. A suggested list. 1938.
Old Testament plays. 1938.
Operettas for high schools: orchestrations. n.d.
Operettas for children: orchestrations. n.d.
Operettas for adults: orchestrations. n.d.
Puppet theatre plays. 1938.
Puppeteer's guide, by Ralph Chesse and Amy Creasy. n.d.
Rural plays. Part 2. 1937.

Box 9

Federal Theatre Project. Synopses of plays:

Physical Description: 9 vol.

Box 9

Russian plays. n.d.
Spanish plays, old and new. 1937.
Theatre technique. no.1. Make-up. 1937.
Theatre technique. no.2. Costume. 1937.
Theatre technique. no.3. Puppets and masks. 1937.
Yiddish anti-war plays. 1937.

Folk-Songs and Ballads

Physical Description: 3 vol.

Box 9

Folk-songs of America. 1938.
Folk tunes from Mississippi. 1937.
Traditional ballads mainly from West Virginia. 1939.

Miscellaneous

Physical Description: 8 vol.

Box 9

Prelude to swing. Monday, June 12, 1939.

Physical Description: ca. 80 leaves. Includes costume sketches.

Scope and Content Note