Guide to the Screen Guild Players Recordings Collection, 1942-1948

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Guide to the Screen Guild Players Recordings Collection, 1942-1948

Collection number: PA Mss 28

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Date Completed:
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Screen Guild Players Recordings Collection,
Date (inclusive): 1942-1948
Collection number: PA Mss 28
Creator: Motion Picture Relief Fund
Extent: 97 disc recordings
Repository: University of California, Santa Barbara. Library. Dept. of Special Collections
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Shelf location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library’s online catalog.


Language: English.

Provenance
Unknown

Restrictions
None.

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Biography

The Screen Guild Players radio program originated as a manner in which to raise money for the Motion Picture Relief Fund. The Motion Picture Relief Fund was created on December 24, 1924 in response to increasing financial need in the Hollywood community. While there had been an earlier attempt to provide relief in the form of the Motion Picture War Service Association (created to help the families of those in the motion picture industry who had either enlisted or been drafted), it disbanded at the end of World War I. However, in many cases the need for financial assistance remained. And, with the onset of the Depression, many other individuals found themselves in financial straits. The Motion Picture Relief Fund was created to deal with these issues. Unfortunately, from 1924 to 1938, the fund’s expenditures consistently exceeded its income. As a result, the fund was reorganized.

During the first year of the newly organized fund, Jules Stein, founder of the Music Corporation of America, presented both the new president of the Motion Picture Relief Fund and the president of the Screen Actors Guild with an idea to raise money. He proposed that a radio program be presented by the motion picture industry with proceeds contributed to the fund. Under this proposal, actors and directors would donate their time, and writers and producers would allow the use of their material. A special contract would be arranged so that the sponsor would pay the Motion Picture Relief Fund a predetermined weekly fee.

After legal issues were resolved, the Columbia Broadcasting System presented the first network radio broadcast of the Screen Guild Show on Sunday, January 8, 1939, at 4:30 Pacific Time. At first, the program was formatted to meet the talents of the performers appearing in each particular show. This provided a large variety of program styles, including revues, musicals, and dramatizations. As time went on, it became obvious that actors were more willing to volunteer their services if they were already familiar with the part. As a result, the number of cinema adaptations presented in the show began to increase. The title of the show was changed to the Screen Guild Theatre, reflecting the increased use of dramatizations.

Gulf Oil Corporation sponsored the initial three years of the program. However, due to the uncertainty of the oil market with the onset of World War II, Gulf Oil chose not to continue. The Lady Esther Corporation took over and changed the name of the program to the Screen Guild Players, and during its sponsorship, the program consistently ranked in the top ten of the most popular radio shows. Unfortunately, there was a depression in the cosmetic industry in 1947, which caused Lady Esther to discontinue sponsorship. Camel Cigarettes, on a three-year contract, then purchased the show, but due to a time change, ratings began to fall. The show moved to various broadcasting networks before it was repurchased by the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1950. By this time, many of the usual radio sponsors were moving to the new medium of television, and ratings of the Screen Guild Players continued to fall. The final production of the show occurred on June 30, 1952.

In the thirteen years that the radio program ran, it earned $5,235,607 for the Motion Picture Relief Fund. A large portion of this amount went into the building of the Country Home, a retirement home for people from the Hollywood community, located in Woodland Hills.

Scope and Content

Recordings of 33 Screen Guild Players radio programs which aired between 1940 and 1948 and were used as a fundraising effort for the Motion Picture Relief Fund.

The collection contains a total of 33 shows. One show from the 1940 season, six shows are from the 1942-43 season (sponsored by the Lady Esther Corporation) directed by William Lawrence and written primarily by William Hampton. 22 shows from the 1943-47 seasons (sponsored by the Lady Esther Corporation) directed by William Lawrence and written primarily by Harry Kronman. Three shows are from the the 1947-48 season and one show is from the 1948-49 season both directed by William Lawrence and written primarily by Harry Kronman and sponsored by Camel Cigarettes. Performers included Nelson Eddy, Judy Garland, Gene Kelly, Agnes Moorehead, Bing Crosby, Johnny Mercer, Eddie Cantor, Dinah Shore, Gary Cooper, Frank Sinatra, Ingrid Bergman, Gregory Peck, Jimmy Durante, Ethel and Lionel Barrymore, and Douglas Fairbanks Jr.
1939-1940 Broadcasting Season

Additional Note
Sponsor
Gulf Oil Corp.
Produced by
Young & Rubicam
Host-Announcer
Roger Pryor
Orchestra
Oscar Bradley

ASZ272-74/D12 January 28, 1940 Private Worlds (Cast: Charles Boyer, Claudette Colbert, Isabel Jewell)

1942-1943 Broadcasting Season

Additional Note
Sponsor
Lady Esther Corporation
Sponsor representative
Pedlar and Ryan Advertising Agency
Network
Columbia Broadcasting System
Broadcast time
Monday, 7 p.m., Pacific Time
Producer-Director
William [Bill] Lawrence
Writer-Adapter
William [Bill] Hampton- unless otherwise indicated
Host-Announcer
Truman Bradley
Orchestra
Wilbur Hatch

A2314-15/D12 December 21, 1942 Juggler of our lady (Writer-Adapter, John Nesbitt; Cast: Nelson Eddy, Ronald Colman)
A2316-18/D12 March 22, 1943 For me and my gal (Cinema release: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Cast: Judy Garland, Dick Powell, Gene Kelly)
A2319-21/D12 May 31, 1943 Rebecca (Cinema release, David O. Selznick; Writer-Adapter, Harry Kronman; Cast: Joan Fontaine, Brian Aherne, Agnes Moorehead)
A2322-24/D12 September 13, 1943 Birth of the Blues (Cinema release, Paramount; Cast: Bing Crosby, Ginny Simms, Johnny Mercer)
A2325-27/D12 September 27, 1943 Thank your lucky stars (Cinema release, Warner Brothers; Writer-Adapter, Harry Kronman; Cast: Eddie Cantor, Dinah Shore, Dennis Morgan)
A2328-30/D12 October 11, 1943 Love affair (Cinema release, RKO; Writer-Adapter, Harry Kronman; Cast: Virginia Bruce, Herbert Marshall, Luis Alberni)
1943-1947 Broadcasting Seasons

Additional Note

Sponsor
Lady Esther Corporation
Sponsor representative
Biow Advertising Agency
Network
Columbia Broadcasting System
Broadcast time
Monday, 7 p.m., Pacific Time
Producer-Director
William [Bill] Lawrence
Writer-Adapter
Harry Kronman- unless otherwise indicated
Host-Announcer
Truman Bradley
Orchestra
Wilbur Hatch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Cast</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 6, 1944</td>
<td>The gay divorcee (Cinema release, RKO; Cast: Frank Sinatra, Gloria de Haven, Edward Everett Horton, Spring Byington)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 3, 1944</td>
<td>Hello, Frisco, hello (Cinema release, 20th Century Fox; Cast: Ginny Slims, Jack Okie, Dick Powell)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10, 1944</td>
<td>Farewell to arms (Cinema release, Paramount; Cast: Gary Cooper, Joan Fontaine, Pedro de Cordoba)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24, 1944</td>
<td>Snow White and the 7 dwarfs (Cinema release, Walt Disney; Cast: Jackie Cooper, Jacky Cooper, Dickie Cooper)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 3, 1944</td>
<td>Too many husbands (Cinema release, Columbia; Writers-Adapters, Harry Kronman, Jess Oppenheimer, Devrey Freeman; Cast: Frank Sinatra, Bill Goodwin, Donna Reed)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30, 1944</td>
<td>Anna Karenina (Cinema release, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Cast: Ingrid Bergman, Gregory Peck)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 25, 1944</td>
<td>Pinocchio (Cinema release, Walt Disney; Writers-Adapters, Harry Kronman, Jess Oppenheimer, Devrey Freeman; Cast: Fanny Brice, Hanley Stafford)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 8, 1945</td>
<td>Going my way (Cinema release, Paramount; Cast: Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, George Murphy)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5, 1945</td>
<td>Joan of Ozark (Cinema release, Republic; Cast: Joe E. Brown, Judy Canova)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12, 1945</td>
<td>Belle of the Yukon (Cinema release, International Pictures; Cast: Randolph Scott, Bob Burns, Dinah Shore, Gail Patrick)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 21, 1945</td>
<td>The desert song (Cinema release, Universal; Cast: Dennis Morgan, Francia White, Bruce Cabot)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25, 1945</td>
<td>New wine (Cinema release, United Artists; Cast: Ilona Massey, Paul Henreid)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11, 1946</td>
<td>Irish eyes are smiling (Cinema release, 20th Century Fox; Cast: June Haver, Dick Haymes)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 25, 1946</td>
<td>Sweethearts (Cinema release, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Cast: Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10, 1946</td>
<td>House of 92nd Street (Cinema release, 20th Century Fox; Cast: Lloyd Nolan, William Lundigan)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 29, 1946</td>
<td>Naughty Marietta (Cinema release, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Cast: Irene Manning, Allan Jones)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 26, 1946</td>
<td>Bells of St. Mary's (Cinema release, Rainbow Productions; Cast: Bing Crosby, Ingrid Bergman, Joan Carroll)</td>
<td>Columbia Broadcasting System</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A2381-83/D12  October 7, 1946  *The old lady shows her medals*  (Cinema release, Paramount; Cast: Ethel Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Douglas Fairbanks Jr.)
A2384-86/D12  December 23, 1946  *Snow White*  (Cinema release, Walt Disney; Cast: Edgar Bergen, Mary Jane Smith, Charles Kemper)
A2390-92/D12  May 12, 1947  *Brief encounter*  (Cinema release, Universal-International; Cast: Herbert Marshall, Lilli Parker)
A2393-95/D12  June 23, 1947  *Rose Marie*  (Cinema release, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer; Cast: Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy)

1947-1948 Broadcasting Season

Additional Note

Sponsor
Camel Cigarettes (R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company)
Sponsor representative
William Esty Advertising Agency
Network
Columbia Broadcasting System
Broadcast time
Monday, 7:30 p.m., Pacific Time
Producer-Director
William [Bill] Lawrence
Writer-Adapter
Harry Kronman- unless otherwise indicated
Host-Announcer
Michael Roy
Orchestra
Wilbur Hatch

A2396-98/D12  May 24, 1948  *Casbah*  (Cinema release, Universal-International; Cast: Yvonne de Carlo, Tony Martin, Marta Toren, Peter Lorre)
A2399-A2401/D12  June 7, 1948  *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*  (Cinema release, Walt Disney; Cast: Margaret O'Brien, Jimmy Durante, Mary Jane Smith)
A2402-04/D12  June 28, 1948  *Up in Central Park*  (Cinema release, Universal-International; Cast: Deanna Durbin, Dick Haymes, Charles Irwin)
1948-1949 Broadcasting Season

Additional Note

Sponsor
Camel Cigarettes (R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company)

Sponsor representative
William Esty Advertising Agency

Network
National Broadcasting Company

Broadcast time
Thursday, 7 p.m., Pacific Time

Producer-Director
William [Billi] Lawrence

Writer-Adapter
Harry Kronman- unless otherwise indicated

Host-Announcer
Vern Smith

Orchestra
National Broadcasting Company studio orchestra

A2405-07/D12 November 18, 1948 Rebecca (Cinema release, David O. Selznick; Cast: Loretta Young, John Lund)