Finding Aid for the Fritzi Massary correspondence 6035

Finding aid prepared by Michaela Ullmann, Lisa Ebiner Gavit
USC Libraries Special Collections
Doheny Memorial Library 206
3550 Trousdale Parkway
Los Angeles, California, 90089-0189
213-740-5900
specol@usc.edu
2013
Title: Fritzi Massary correspondence
Collection number: 6035
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.21 Linear feet1 box
Date (inclusive): 1937-1943
Abstract: This collection contains the correspondence of Fritzi Massary with her colleague and friend Violet Oldak. It also includes one letter from Liesl Frank, Fritzi's daughter, to Violet Oldak, as well as a newspaper clipping about Fritzi Massary. Violet Oldak played the character Trudi in the original cast of Operette by Noel Coward and Fritzi Massary played Liesl Haren. They became friends during this time and stayed in touch afterwards.
creator: Frank, Liesl
creator: Massary, Fritzi, 1882-1969
creator: Oldak, Violet
Scope and Contents
Letters between Fritzi Massary and Violet Oldak. Both women were in the production regarding the original production of the Operette by Noel Coward. The collection also includes one letter from Fritzi Massary's daughter, Liesl Frank, to Violet Oldak.
Acquisition
Donated to USC by Caroline Mullan, a niece of Peter Oldak, Violet Oldak's son, in March 2013.
Biographical/Historical note
Violet Oldak was the daughter of Felix and Maria Clara Hedwig Wagner (nee Bartsch) who were German immigrants to Britain in the 1890s. They changed their name to Warner at one point. Felix died in 1913. Violet Oldak married Felix Oldak. She also had a brother named Arthur.
Fritzi Massary (born March 31, 1882, in Vienna, Austria, died January 30, 1969, in Los Angeles, California) was an Austrian-American actress and soprano singer. Born as Friederike Massaryk, she was a leading operetta singer in Berlin and Vienna. By 1912 she was established as the premier diva of her generation, and was known simply as "die Massary (the Massary)". She was closely associated with Oscar Straus, creating roles in six of his operettas, notably Der letzte Walzer in 1920. Despite her 1903 conversion to Protestantism, Massary fled Germany in late 1932 because of her Jewish heritage. She traveled through Austria and Switzerland to London, where she was befriended by Sir Noël Coward and starred in his Operette in 1938. In February 1939 she moved to Beverly Hills, California, where she lived until her death in 1969. Massary was married twice, first to an eye doctor Bernhard Pollack, and then in 1917 to the Austrian actor Max Pallenberg (1877-1934), who died in a plane crash in Karlsbad. Massary had a relationship withy Karl-Kuno Rollo Graf von Coudenhove (1887-1940), with whom she had her only child, Elisabeth Maria Karl (called Liesl) (1903-1979). Liesl later married the author Bruno Frank. Though Coudenhove was Liesl's father, Massary was never married to him. In fact, Coudenhove's family was nobility and threatened him with a mental institution to dissuade him from marrying an actress. (Source: Wikipedia)
Violet Oldak played the character Trudi in the original cast of Operette by Noel Coward and Fritzi Massary played Liesl Haren. They became friends during this time and stayed in touch afterwards.
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Preferred Citation
[Box/folder# or item name], Fritzi Massary correspondence, Collection no. 6035, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
Processing Information
The collection was rehoused and described by Michaela Ullmann and Lisa Ebiner Gavet in 2013.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Frank, Liesl -- Correspondence
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<td>Correspondence: Liesl Frank to Violet Oldak</td>
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<td>1, 10</td>
<td>Newspaper clipping about Fritzi Massary: &quot;A Piano in a Castle - and a Star Came Back&quot;</td>
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