Guide to the Spencer Berger Collection on Film, Theater, and Music

YCAL MSS 759

by Beinecke staff

2008

P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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New Haven, CT 06520-8330
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CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 759

CREATOR: Berger, Spencer, 1917-2002

TITLE: Spencer Berger Collection on film, theater, and music

DATES: 1876–2000

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 15.55 linear feet (27 boxes) + 2 broadside folders, 2 art

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection consists of material created and accumulated by Spencer Berger, stemming from his avocational interest in film, theater, and music, and from his particular research and collecting activities focused on actors John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, and Ethel Barrymore and musicians Ted Lewis and Leopold Stokowski. Material includes correspondence; photographs, including movie stills and autographed photographs of John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Ethel Barrymore, and others; playbills, clippings, and other printed material; notes; scrapbooks; and other papers.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.berger

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.berger.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Boxes 24-25 (35mm film): Restricted Fragile Material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Spencer Berger Collection on Film, Theater, and Music is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Spencer Berger Collection on Film, Theater, and Music. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

This collection has received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and in some instances minimal organization. Various acquisitions associated with the collection have not been merged and organized as a whole. Each acquisition is described separately in the contents list below according to month and year of acquisition. In 2013, the collection was renamed from Spencer Berger Papers to Spencer Berger Collection on Film, Theater, and Music.

As a rule, descriptive information found in the Collection Contents section is drawn in large part from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

Former call numbers: Uncat Za Ms 246, Uncat Za Ms 468, Uncat Za Ms 511, and Uncat MSS 993.

Spencer Berger (1917-2002)

Spencer Merriam Berger was a business executive and film historian. He was born on May 6, 1917 in New Haven, Connecticut, and graduated from Yale University in 1940. He served as president and chairman of the board of the former Berger Brothers Company of New Haven, which made women’s and surgical corsets. He was a leading authority on the actors John, Lionel, and Ethel Barrymore, and an enthusiast of Ted Lewis and Leopold Stokowski.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of material created and accumulated by Spencer Berger, stemming from his avocational interest in film, theater, and music, and from his particular research and collecting activities focused on actors John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, and Ethel Barrymore and musicians Ted Lewis and Leopold Stokowski. Material includes correspondence; photographs, including movie stills and autographed photographs of John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Ethel Barrymore, and others; playbills, clippings, and other printed material; notes; scrapbooks; and other papers.
Arrangement

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December 1995 Acquisition
5.51 linear feet (12 boxes) + 2 broadside folders, 2 art

The December 1995 Acquisition contains correspondence, notes, photographs, scrapbooks, and printed materials, such as programs and playbills, relating to stage performances, film, and the Barrymore family. Included are correspondence between Margot Peters and Spencer Berger; autographed photographs of Warner Baxter, Marie Dressler and others; and a collection of articles relating to Vitaphone and Warner Brothers on the twentieth anniversary of talking pictures.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 468.


Files are not arranged in any particular order.

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<td>b. 16</td>
<td>Movie promos</td>
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**December 1996 Acquisition**

*0.5 linear feet (2 boxes)*

The December 1996 Acquisition consists chiefly of photographs of members of the Barrymore family and others; included are photographs signed by the Barrymores, Joan Bennett, Eric Blore, George Gershwin, Leopold Stokowski, and Lawrence Tibbett. In addition, there are movie stills and printed materials.

Former call number: Uncat Za Ms 511.

Gift of Spencer Berger, 1996.

Files are not arranged in any particular order.

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<td>John Barrymore estate auction poster; John Barrymore biography poster</td>
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**November 2007 Acquisition**

9.33 linear feet (12 boxes)

The November 2007 Acquisition consists of correspondence, writings, photographs, printed and other materials relating to film, the Barrymore family, Leopold Stokowski, Ted Lewis, and other cultural figures and activities.

Former call number: Uncat MSS 993.


Boxes 24-25 (35mm film): Restricted Fragile Material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Files are not arranged in any particular order.

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<td>Misc. re: film</td>
<td>1917–1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 29</td>
<td>Sunday clips, programs, etc.</td>
<td>1937–1987, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 29</td>
<td>Film at Yale</td>
<td>1965–1988, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 29</td>
<td>Beinecke</td>
<td>1926–1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 29</td>
<td>Acquisition data and catalog indices</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversize</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 30</td>
<td>Scrapbook of Barrymore performances</td>
<td>1908–1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 30</td>
<td>Walt Disney’s Fantasia, 50th Anniversary commemorative program</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 30</td>
<td>The Stage</td>
<td>1933 June</td>
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Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects
Motion picture actors and actresses -- United States
Musicians -- United States

Genres / Formats
Audiovisual materials
Photographs

Names
Barrymore, Ethel, 1879-1959
Barrymore, John, 1882-1942
Barrymore, Lionel, 1878-1954
Berger, Spencer, 1917-2002
Lewis, Ted, 1892-1971
Stokowski, Leopold, 1882-1977