

Sid Caesar Papers

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Prepared by Laura J. Kells

Collection Summary

Title: Sid Caesar Papers

Span Dates: 1950-1963

ID No.: MSS55260

Creator: Caesar, Sid, 1922-

Extent: 2000 items ; 46 containers plus 1 oversize ; 18.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Actor and comedian. Chiefly annotated working scripts for "Your Show of Shows" (1950-1954), the television series in which Caesar appeared with Imogene Coca, Howard Morris, and Carl Reiner; and scripts and production files for "Caesar's Hour" (1955-1957), the series in which he appeared with Janet Blair, Nanette Fabray, and Morris and Reiner.

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.

People

Blair, Janet.

Brooks, Mel, 1926-

Caesar, Sid, 1922-

Coca, Imogene.

Diamond, Selma.

Fabray, Nanette.

Gelbart, Larry.

Kallen, Lucille.

Keller, Sheldon.

Morris, Howard, 1919-

Reiner, Carl, 1922-

Simon, Neil.

Stewart, Michael, 1929-1987.

Tolkin, Mel.

Subjects

Television scripts.

Television--Production and direction.

Titles

Caesar's hour (Television program)

Your show of shows (Television program)

Occupations

Actors.

Comedians.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Sid Caesar, actor and comedian, were donated to the Library of Congress by Caesar per Larry Spellman in 1987.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Sid Caesar is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Sid Caesar are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Sid Caesar Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1922, Sept. 8	Born, Yonkers, N.Y.
1939-1942	Played saxophone in small bands and orchestras in New York City and at resorts in the Catskills, N.Y.
1942-1945	Served in Coast Guard, stationed at Brooklyn Barracks, N.Y.; toured in Coast Guard show, "Tars and Spars"
1943	Married Florence Levy
1946	Appeared in motion picture <i>Tars and Spars</i>
1947	Toured nightclubs and theaters as a comedian
1948	Appeared in Broadway review <i>Make Mine Manhattan</i>
1949	Television series "Admiral Broadway Revue"
1950-1954	Television series "Your Show of Shows," originally part of NBC's "Saturday Night Revue"
1954-1957	Television series "Caesar's Hour"
1958	Television series "Sid Caesar Invites You"
1962-1963	Star of Neil Simon's Broadway musical, <i>Little Me</i> Appeared in motion picture, <i>It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World</i> Television series "As Caesar Sees It"
1966	Filmed motion picture <i>The Busy Body</i>
1967	Television special "The Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris Special"
1973	Motion picture <i>Ten From Your Show of Shows</i> released
1975	Filmed motion picture <i>Barnaby and Me</i>

1976	Appeared in motion picture <i>Silent Movie</i>
1978	Appeared in motion picture <i>Grease</i>
1979	Filmed motion picture <i>The Fiendish Plot of Dr. Fu Manchu</i>
1981	Appeared in motion picture <i>History of the World, Part I</i>
1982	Published, with Bill Davidson, autobiography, <i>Where Have I Been?</i> (New York: Crown Publishers. 280 pp.)
1987	Appeared in opera <i>Die Fledermaus</i>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Sidney (Sid) Caesar (1922-) span the period 1950-1963 and focus primarily on his two most popular television series, "[Your Show of Shows](#)" and "[Caesar's Hour](#)." The papers consist mainly of annotated scripts for the live programs which aired on NBC. Both shows were acclaimed for the comedic talents of Caesar and his fellow performers as well as for the writing staff which went on to have successful careers in the theater, motion pictures, and television.

The "[Your Show of Shows](#)" series contains scripts for this ninety-minute weekly variety show, produced by Max Liebman, which ran from 1950 to 1954 and consisted of original comedy as well as music and dance. The stars of the program were Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca, with a supporting cast of Carl Reiner and Howard Morris and a weekly guest star who served as host or hostess. Writers for the series included Mel Brooks, Lucille Kallen, Neil Simon, and Mel Tolkin. Among the memorable routines were the husband and wife skit, "The Hickenloopers," satiric versions of silent films and contemporary motion pictures, and pantomimes such as the "The Clock." Scripts contain annotations for air times and cameras, as well as texts of commercials. Many files also contain playbills for the live performances. These files are incomplete as indicated by gaps in the program numbers on the container list.

The "[Caesar's Hour](#)" series contains program files for Caesar's hour-long series, similar in format to "Your Show of Shows," which ran from 1954 to 1957. The supporting cast for this program included Carl Reiner, Howard Morris, Nanette Fabray, and Janet Blair. Writers included Mel Brooks, Selma Diamond, Larry Gelbart, Shelly Keller, Mike Stewart, and Neil Simon and featured sketches were "The Commuters" and "The Professor." The files include the director's air scripts annotated with camera shots and set diagrams, "as performed" scripts on which improvisations and other changes are noted, and production files which contain annotated scripts, timings, schedules, costume and prop lists, and playbills.

A small [Miscellany](#) series contains skits from scripts from "Your Show of Shows," "Caesar's Hour," and the 1958 series "Sid Caesar Invites You" which appear to have been brought together for use on other television shows or appearances.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in four series:

- ["Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954](#)
- ["Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957](#)
- [Miscellany, 1950-1963](#)
- [Oversize, 1955](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-20	<u>"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954</u> Scripts, playbills, and related production material. Arranged chronologically within television seasons and numbered according to episode.
BOX 20-46	<u>"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957</u> Scripts, playbills, and related production material. Arranged chronologically within television seasons and numbered according to episode.
BOX 46	<u>Miscellany, 1950-1963</u> Selected sketches from several television series and miscellaneous correspondence. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX OV 1	<u>Oversize, 1955</u> A set design described according to the series, folder, and box from which the item was removed.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-20	"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954 Scripts, playbills, and related production material. Arranged chronologically within television seasons and numbered according to episode.
BOX 1	1949-1950 season 25 Feb. 1950 (1) 4 Mar. 1950 (2) 11 Mar. 1950 (3) 18 Mar. 1950 (4) 25 Mar. 1950 (5) (2 folders) 1 Apr. 1950 (6) 8 Apr. 1950 (7) (2 folders)
BOX 2	15 Apr. 1950 (8) 22 Apr. 1950 (9) 29 Apr. 1950 (10) (2 folders) 6 May 1950 (11) 13 May 1950 (12) 1950-1951 season
BOX 3	9 Sept. 1950 (14) 4 Nov. 1950 (22) 11 Nov. 1950 (23) 18 Nov. 1950 (24) 25 Nov. 1950 (25) 9 Dec. 1950 (27) 23 Dec. 1950 (29) 30 Dec. 1950 (30) 6 Jan. 1951 (31)
BOX 4	13 Jan. 1951 (32) 20 Jan. 1951 (33) 27 Jan. 1951 (34) 3 Feb. 1951 (35) 10 Feb. 1951 (36) 17 Feb. 1951 (37) 24 Feb. 1951 (38) 3 Mar. 1951 (39)
BOX 5	10 Mar. 1951 (40) 17 Mar. 1951 (41) 24 Mar. 1951 (42) 31 Mar. 1951 (43)

"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954

Container

Contents

	7 Apr. 1951 (44)
	21 Apr. 1951 (46)
	28 Apr. 1951 (47)
	5 May 1951 (48)
BOX 6	12 May 1951 (49)
	19 May 1951 (50)
	26 May 1951 (51)
	2 June 1951 (52)
	1951-1952 season
	8 Sept. 1951 (53)
	(2 folders)
	15 Sept. 1951 (54)
	22 Sept. 1951 (55)
BOX 7	29 Sept. 1951 (56)
	6 Oct. 1951 (57)
	13 Oct. 1951 (58)
	20 Oct. 1951 (59)
	(2 folders)
	3 Nov. 1951 (61)
	10 Nov. 1951 (62)
	17 Nov. 1951 (63)
BOX 8	24 Nov. 1951 (64)
	1 Dec. 1951 (65)
	22 Dec. 1951 (68)
	(2 folders)
	29 Dec. 1951 (69)
	5 Jan. 1952 (70)
	12 Jan. 1952 (71)
	19 Jan. 1952 (72)
	26 Jan. 1952 (73)
BOX 9	2 Feb. 1952 (74)
	(2 folders)
	9 Feb. 1952 (75)
	16 Feb. 1952 (76)
	23 Feb. 1952 (77)
	1 Mar. 1952 (78)
	8 Mar. 1952 (79)
	15 Mar. 1952 (80)
	22 Mar. 1952 (81)
BOX 10	29 Mar. 1952 (82)
	5 Apr. 1952 (83)
	12 Apr. 1952 (84)
	19 Apr. 1952 (85)
	26 Apr. 1952 (86)
	3 May 1952 (87)
	10 May 1952 (88)
	17 May 1952 (89)

"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954

Container

Contents

	24 May 1952 (90)
BOX 11	31 May 1952 (91)
	(2 folders)
	1952-1953 season
	6 Sept. 1952 (92)
	13 Sept. 1952 (93)
	20 Sept. 1952 (94)
	27 Sept. 1952 (95)
	4 Oct. 1952 (96)
	11 Oct. 1952 (97)
BOX 12	18 Oct. 1952 (98)
	25 Oct. 1952 (99)
	1 Nov. 1952 (100)
	8 Nov. 1952 (101)
	15 Nov. 1952 (102)
	22 Nov. 1952 (103)
	29 Nov. 1952 (104)
BOX 13	6 Dec. 1952 (105)
	13 Dec. 1952 (106)
	20 Dec. 1952 (107)
	27 Dec. 1952 (108)
	3 Jan. 1953 (109)
	10 Jan. 1953 (110)
	17 Jan. 1953 (111)
	(2 folders)
BOX 14	24 Jan. 1953 (112)
	31 Jan. 1953 (113)
	7 Feb. 1953 (114)
	(2 folders)
	14 Feb. 1953 (115)
	21 Feb. 1953 (116)
	28 Feb. 1953 (117)
	7 Mar. 1953 (118)
BOX 15	14 Mar. 1953 (119)
	21 Mar. 1953 (120)
	28 Mar. 1953 (121)
	4 Apr. 1953 (122)
	11 Apr. 1953 (123)
	18 Apr. 1953 (124)
	25 Apr. 1953 (125)
	2 May 1953 (126)
BOX 16	May 1953 (127)
	(2 folders)
	16 May 1953 (128)
	23 May 1953 (129)
	30 May 1953 (130)
	1953-1954 season

"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1954

Container

Contents

	26 Sept. 1953 (133)
	10 Oct. 1953 (134)
BOX 17	24 Oct. 1953 (136)
	7 Nov. 1953 (137)
	5 Dec. 1953 (140)
	12 Dec. 1953 (141)
	19 Dec. 1953 (142)
	2 Jan. 1954 (143)
	9 Jan. 1954 (144)
	(2 folders)
	16 Jan. 1954 (145)
BOX 18	30 Jan. 1954 (146)
	6 Feb. 1954 (147)
	13 Feb. 1954 (148)
	27 Feb. 1954 (149)
	(2 folders)
	6 Mar. 1954 (150)
	(2 folders)
BOX 19	13 Mar. 1954 (151)
	(2 folders)
	27 Mar. 1954 (152)
	3 Apr. 1954 (153)
	10 Apr. 1954 (154)
	24 Apr. 1954 (155)
	1 May 1954 (156)
	8 May 1954 (157)
BOX 20	22 May 1954 (158)
	29 May 1954 (159)
	5 June 1954 (160)
BOX 20-46	"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957
	Scripts, playbills, and related production material.
	Arranged chronologically within television seasons and numbered according to episode.
BOX 20	1954-1955 season
	27 Sept. 1954 (1)
	4 Oct. 1954 (2)
	11 Oct. 1954 (3)
	25 Oct. 1954 (4)
	22 Nov. 1954 (7)
BOX 21	29 Nov. 1954 (8)
	6 Dec. 1954 (9)
	(3 folders)
	20 Dec. 1954 (10)
	(4 folders)
BOX 22	27 Dec. 1954 (11)
	(3 folders)

"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957

Container

Contents

	3 Jan. 1955 (12) (4 folders)
	17 Jan. 1955 (13) (3 folders)
BOX 23	24 Jan. 1955 (14) (4 folders)
	31 Jan. 1955 (15) (4 folders)
	14 Feb. 1955 (16) (3 folders)
BOX 24	21 Feb. 1955 (17) (4 folders)
	28 Feb. 1955 (18) (4 folders)
	14 Mar. 1955 (19)
BOX 25	21 Mar. 1955 (20)
	25 Apr. 1955 (24)
	9 May 1955 (25) <i>See also Oversize</i>
	16 May 1955 (26)
	23 May 1955 (27)
	6 June 1955 (28)
	13 June 1955 (29)
	20 June 1955 (30)
BOX 26	1955-1956 season
	26 Sept. 1955 (31) (2 folders)
	3 Oct. 1955 (32) (4 folders)
	10 Oct. 1955 (33) (2 folders)
BOX 27	(2 folders)
	24 Oct. 1955 (34) (3 folders)
	31 Oct. 1955 (35) (2 folders)
BOX 28	7 Nov. 1955 (36) (3 folders)
	21 Nov. 1955 (37) (2 folders)
	28 Nov. 1955 (38) (3 folders)
BOX 29	5 Dec. 1955 (39) (3 folders)
	19 Dec. 1955 (40) (3 folders)
	26 Dec. 1955 (41)
	2 Jan. 1956 (42) (3 folders)

"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957

Container

Contents

BOX 30	16 Jan. 1956 (43) (2 folders) 23 Jan. 1956 (44) (3 folders) 6 Feb. 1956 (45) (3 folders)
BOX 31	13 Feb. 1956 (46) (2 folders) 20 Feb. 1956 (47) (3 folders) 27 Feb. 1956 (48) (3 folders)
BOX 32	12 Mar. 1956 (49) (3 folders) 19 Mar. 1956 (50) (2 folders) 26 Mar. 1956 (51) (3 folders)
BOX 33	9 Apr. 1956 (52) (3 folders) 16 Apr. 1956 (53) (3 folders) 23 Apr. 1956 (54) (2 folders)
BOX 34	(1 folder) 7 May 1956 (55) (2 folders) 14 May 1956 (56) (3 folders) 21 May 1956 (57) (3 folders)
BOX 35	4 June 1956 (58) (2 folders) 11 June 1956 (59) (2 folders) 18 June 1956 (60) (2 folders) 1956-1957 season 15 Sept. 1956 (61) (1 folder)
BOX 36	(2 folders) 22 Sept. 1956 (62) (3 folders) 6 Oct. 1956 (63) (2 folders)
BOX 37	(1 folder) 13 Oct. 1956 (64) (3 folders)

"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957

Container

Contents

	20 Oct. 1956 (65)
	(3 folders)
BOX 38	3 Nov. 1956 (66)
	(2 folders)
	10 Nov. 1956 (67)
	(2 folders)
	17 Nov. 1956 (68)
	(2 folders)
BOX 39	1 Dec. 1956 (69)
	(3 folders)
	8 Dec. 1956 (70)
	(3 folders)
	15 Dec. 1956 (71)
	(1 folder)
BOX 40	(2 folders)
	29 Dec. 1956 (72)
	(3 folders)
	5 Jan. 1957 (73)
	(2 folders)
BOX 41	(1 folder)
	12 Jan. 1957 (74)
	(3 folders)
	26 Jan. 1957 (75)
	(3 folders)
BOX 42	2 Feb. 1957 (76)
	(2 folders)
	9 Feb. 1957 (77)
	(3 folders)
	23 Feb. 1957 (78)
	(3 folders)
BOX 43	2 Mar. 1957 (79)
	(3 folders)
	9 Mar. 1957 (80)
	(3 folders)
BOX 44	23 Mar. 1957 (81)
	(3 folders)
	30 Mar. 1957 (82)
	(3 folders)
	6 Apr. 1957 (83)
	(2 folders)
BOX 45	20 Apr. 1957 (84)
	(3 folders)
	27 Apr. 1957 (85)
	(3 folders)
	4 May 1957 (86)
	(2 folders)
BOX 46	(1 folder)

"Caesar's Hour," 1954-1957

Container

Contents

18 May 1957 (87)

(3 folders)

25 May 1957 (88)

(3 folders)

BOX 46

Miscellany, 1950-1963

Selected sketches from several television series and miscellaneous correspondence.
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.

BOX 46

Letters and lists, 1961-1963, undated

Sketches

"Caesar's Hour," 1955-1956

"Sid Caesar Invites You," 1958

"Your Show of Shows," 1950-1953

BOX OV 1

Oversize, 1955

A set design described according to the series, folder, and box from which the item was removed.

BOX OV 1

"Caesar's Hour"

1954-1955 season

9 May 1955 (25) ([Container 25](#))