

Arnold Moss Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



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Washington, D.C.**

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LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm75033738>

Prepared by Laura J. Kells

Collection Summary

Title: Arnold Moss Papers

Span Dates: 1935-1987

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1953-1987)

ID No.: MSS33738

Creator: Moss, Arnold, 1910-1989

Extent: 2,100 items ; 11 containers ; 4.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Actor, director, theatrical producer, and crossword puzzle maker. Correspondence, contracts, scripts, playbills and programs, financial records, speeches, writings, drafts of crossword puzzles, and printed matter documenting Moss's career primarily as a stage actor, producer, and director.

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

Burton, Philip, 1904- --Correspondence.

Malamud, Bernard--Correspondence.

Miller, Arthur, 1915-2005--Correspondence.

Moss, Arnold, 1910-1989.

Prince, Harold, 1928- --Correspondence.

Shaw, Bernard, 1866-1950. Back to Methuselah (1946)

Organizations

Library of Congress.

Shakespeare Festival Players

United States. Department of State.

Subjects

Acting.

Crossword puzzles.

Drama.

Repertory theater.

Theater--Africa.

Theater--Far East.

Theater--Latin America.

Theater--Production and direction.

Universities and colleges.

Occupations

Actors.

Crossword puzzle makers.

Theatrical producers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Arnold Moss, actor, director, theatrical producer, and crossword puzzle maker, were presented by him to the Library of Congress as gifts during the years 1966-1975 and as deposits 1975-1987. The deposits were converted to gifts in 1999.

Processing History

The papers of Arnold Moss were arranged and described in 1999. The finding aid was revised in 2007.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Some photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Sound recordings have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Arnold Moss Papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Arnold Moss in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Arnold Moss 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, Arnold Moss Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1910, Jan. 28	Born, Brooklyn, N. Y.
1928	A.B., College of the City of New York (later City College of the City University of New York), New York, N.Y.
1929-1931	Apprenticeship, Eva Le Gallienne's Civic Repertory Theatre, New York, N.Y.
1931	Broadway debut, <i>Wonder Boy</i> , Alvin Theatre, New York, N.Y.
1933	Married Stella Reynolds
1933-1940	Instructor, Speech and Theatre Department, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N.Y.
1934	A.M., Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1940	First major role on Broadway, <i>The Fifth Column</i> , Alvin Theatre, New York, N.Y.
1946	Film debut, <i>Temptation</i>
1954-1974	Appeared in programs of dramatic readings and performances as part of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Poetry and Literature Series, Library of Congress
1957-1958	Adapted, coproduced, and acted in George Bernard Shaw's <i>Back to Methuselah</i> on tour and on Broadway, New York, N.Y.
1959	Founded, directed, and starred in Shakespeare Festival Players, a touring repertory company

1961	American specialist in theater, Department of State, Central America and South America
1964	American specialist in theater, Department of State, Africa and the Far East
1973	Ph.D., New York University, New York, N.Y.
1973-1974	Visiting professor, Department of Dramatic Arts, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn.
1975	Visiting professor, Pace University, New York, N.Y. Writer, actor, "CBS Radio Mystery Theatre"
1976	Visiting professor, Eminent Scholar Program, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va.
1977	Visiting professor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.
1983-1984	National Visiting Scholar, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences
1989, Dec. 15	Died, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Arnold Moss (1910-1989) span the years 1935-1987 with the bulk of the material covering the period 1953-1987. Although Moss's acting career included roles in film and on radio and television, with related work as a narrator and an announcer, the main focus of his work was on the stage. Likewise, the main focus of the Moss Papers is on his roles in the theater as an actor, director, producer, and educator. Moss gained particular acclaim for his performances in the plays of William Shakespeare. This collection of his papers consists of three series: [General Correspondence](#), [Theater File](#), and [Subject File](#).

The [General Correspondence](#) series, 1954-1987, documents Moss's interests and activities primarily as they relate to his career. The major portion consists of letters received from friends and professional colleagues, although copies of letters sent are also included. Topics include efforts to gain employment as an actor, his work at colleges and universities, and his affiliation with professional organizations. Prominent correspondents include Philip Burton, Bernard Malamud, Arthur Miller, and Harold Prince.

The [Theater File](#), 1953-1987, comprises the largest portion of the papers and reflects the range of Moss's stage work. There are lengthy files on George Bernard Shaw's play, *Back to Methuselah*, which Moss adapted into a shorter version and coproduced with the Theatre Guild for a tour and Broadway run in 1957-1958. Moss also acted in the production, playing Shaw. The following year Moss founded and starred in a touring repertory company called the Shakespeare Festival Players. Records relating to the company include contracts, an itinerary, financial files, and press clippings. Also documented in the file is Moss's position as an American specialist in theater for the United States Department of State. He toured countries in Central and South America and later in Africa and the Far East giving performances and lectures. Files on concert readings relate to the one-man programs of dramatic readings such as "A Goodly Heritage," "The Seven Ages of Man," and "Windows on America" that Moss performed at colleges and universities and at civic and cultural organizations from the 1950s into the 1980s. For twenty years, Moss performed annually at the Library of Congress as part of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Poetry and Literature Series, and the related files contain correspondence, scripts, programs, and production notes. Most scripts are filed in a separate scripts section because Moss used the scripts for more than one production. The scripts are annotated, and many contain lighting and sound cues and stage diagrams.

The [Subject File](#), 1935-1987, contains material relating to Moss's other activities, his organizational affiliations, and his academic studies. Files on film, sound recordings, and television containing information in these areas are limited, and these aspects of his career are not well documented in the collection.

In addition to his work in the performing arts, Moss created crossword puzzles appearing in the *New York Times Magazine* and other publications. The crossword puzzle files contain correspondence with the *New York Times* puzzle editors and drafts of the puzzles. Speeches and writings files contain drafts of published and unpublished articles and speeches primarily relating to the theater. The file on New York University contains material on the doctoral degree which Moss started in the 1930s and completed in the 1970s with a dissertation on professional actors as guest artists in college and university theatrical productions.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [General Correspondence, 1954-1987](#)
- [Theater File, 1953-1987](#)
- [Subject File, 1935-1987](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-2

General Correspondence, 1954-1987

Letters received and a few letters sent.
Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.

BOX 2-9

Theater File, 1953-1987

Scripts, correspondence, playbills and programs, clippings, contracts, financial records, and other material relating to Moss's work in the theater.
Arranged alphabetically by title or type of production.

BOX 9-11

Subject File, 1935-1987

Correspondence, notes, résumés, clippings, speeches, writings, draft crossword puzzles, and printed matter.
Arranged alphabetically by name of organization, topic, activity, or type of material.

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BOX 1	Burton, Philip, 1970-1975, 1982-1986
BOX 1	"B-G" miscellaneous, 1958-1986, undated (6 folders)
BOX 1	Hamilton, Thomas H., 1961-1962
BOX 1	Hewitt, Alan, 1967-1973, 1983-1986
BOX 1	"H-K" miscellaneous, 1954-1986, undated (3 folders)
BOX 1	Library of Congress, 1968, 1973-1974, 1982-1985
BOX 1	"L" miscellaneous, 1954, 1962-1979
BOX 1	Malamud, Bernard, 1971-1972
BOX 1	Maleska, Eugene T., 1974, 1983-1986
BOX 1	Miller, Arthur, 1969-1970, 1980
BOX 1	Miller, Claire Glass, 1975-1978
BOX 1	"M-O" miscellaneous, 1963-1984, undated (3 folders)
BOX 1	Picon, Molly, 1975-1978
BOX 1	Prince, Harold, 1972-1978, 1986
BOX 1	"P" miscellaneous, 1959, 1971-1982, undated
BOX 2	"R-Z" miscellaneous, 1959-1987, undated (5 folders)
BOX 2	Unidentified, 1971, undated
BOX 2-9	Theater File, 1953-1987 Scripts, correspondence, playbills and programs, clippings, contracts, financial records, and other material relating to Moss's work in the theater. Arranged alphabetically by title or type of production.
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BOX 2	Box office statements, 1957-1958 (2 folders)
BOX 2	Contracts and agreements, 1957-1958 (2 folders)
BOX 2	Correspondence
BOX 2	Becker and London, 1957-1960
BOX 2	Miscellaneous, 1953-1966
BOX 2	Society of Authors, 1956-1966
BOX 2	Theatre Guild, 1953-1958, undated
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Theater File, 1953-1987

Container

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BOX 3	Miscellany, 1958, undated
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BOX 4	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> , 1959, undated
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BOX 4	"Parents and Children," 1968
BOX 4	"The Year That Trembled: 1865," 1965, undated
BOX 4	Miscellany, 1960-1966, undated
BOX 4	Press, 1957-1967, 1973, undated
BOX 4	Programs, 1954-1973, 1981
BOX 4	Miscellaneous productions and performances
BOX 4	<i>Follies</i> , 1972
BOX 4	<i>King Lear</i> , University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky., 1967-1968
BOX 4	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> , Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, 1964
BOX 4	Poetry Society of America, 1960-1969
BOX 5	<i>Story of a Soldier (L'Histoire du Soldat)</i> , 1953-1956
BOX 5	Various roles, 1958-1984, undated (2 folders)
BOX 5	Notes, sketches, minutes, and other miscellany, 1958, 1964-1976, undated
BOX 5	Repertory theater proposals, 1960-1961, undated
BOX 5	Scripts
BOX 5	<i>Back to Methuselah</i> <u><i>See Container 3, same heading</i></u>
BOX 5	<i>King Lear</i> , undated (5 folders)
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BOX 7	<i>Macbeth</i> , 1965 (3 folders)
BOX 7	<i>Measure For Measure</i> , undated (4 folders)
BOX 8	<i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i> , undated
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Theater File, 1953-1987

Container

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BOX 9-11	Subject File, 1935-1987 Correspondence, notes, résumés, clippings, speeches, writings, draft crossword puzzles, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by name of organization, topic, activity, or type of material.
BOX 9	Actors and actresses, undated
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BOX 10	New York University, New York, N.Y.
BOX 10	Correspondence, 1935-1940, 1970-1979
BOX 10	Dissertation material, 1972, undated
BOX 11	Phi Beta Kappa, 1976-1986
BOX 11	Sound recordings, 1956-1960, 1972-1979, undated
BOX 11	Speeches and writings, 1958-1984, undated (2 folders)
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BOX 11	Unemployment insurance, 1966-1970, undated

Subject File, 1935-1987

Container

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BOX 11

Viennese Opera Ball, 1971-1976, 1983, undated
(2 folders)