

Theatre for Youth and Community Collection

What do we collect?

We collect nationally in scope with a regional focus on the Phoenix metropolitan area, centering on four main areas: youth theatre, education, community and theatre for young audiences. This includes manuscripts, scripts, educational and curricular materials, design materials and theatre company records.

The collection provides insight into the history and development of the field of theatre for young audiences, the implementation of drama in education programs, theatre in education and the performing arts for young audiences worldwide. Materials in this collection document the history of the field and the educational work of its practitioners, and helps to form its memory. We are in an exciting time for disruptive, innovative work that actively works towards anti-racist and anti-oppressive futures. We aim to center the experiences, perspectives and needs of BIPOC creators with an intersectional approach. We amplify identities that are historically marginalized based on gender, ability and belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community. It is a time to reimagine producing, touring and funding models, cross-cultural community partnerships, environmental and eco-theatre, and Theatre for the Very Very Young (TVVY).

We embrace the exciting new directions of the field and its evolving path forward.

Caelin Ross, curator
caelin.ross@asu.edu

lib.asu.edu/theatre

View finding aids:
azarchivesonline.org



Photograph of Childsplay performing the world-premier of *The Masquerade of Life/La Mascarada de la Vida* at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, 1991, Childsplay records, (MSS-222), Arizona State University Library.

Who are we?

Mission, vision and values

ASU Library's Theatre for Youth and Community Collection has a primary mission to acquire, preserve and make available materials that document the international history of professional theatre for young audiences, youth theatre, theatre education and community-engaged theatre practices.

We work to leverage the power and potential of collections that reflect the diversity of our community. We seek to provide robust research support and creative teaching and learning opportunities, and to strengthen regional connections with institutional partners.

Our vision is to build a more inclusive collection that acknowledges the past while also documenting the present.

Our values include:

- » **Care.** We operate from a care-based approach in the ways we work with researchers and collections. We seek to build trust in our stewardship of our collections and provide quality service to our users.
- » **Collaboration.** We strive to engage with our partners in support of faculty, students and our community by providing creative and innovative leadership in education, collection management, and outreach. We believe that everyone, including youth has much to contribute and share.
- » **Community.** We foster a culture of respect and accountability while recentering historically marginalized narratives. We also value accessibility, inclusivity and equity in the partnerships we seek to sustain on campus and in the community.



Nashville Children's Theatre records. (MS SC CDT-7),
Arizona State University Library.

Collections:

The Theatre for Youth and Community (TFYC) collection includes over 2,600 linear feet of archival papers, over 3,000 books, 300 journal titles and over 400 audiovisual media. The following is a sampling of major collections.

David Saar and Yellow Boat Collection (MSS-291)

Features production materials and the original 54 Benjamin Saar paintings used to inspire the writing of "The Yellow Boat," an award-winning play about the first child to contract AIDS in Arizona in the 1980s.

Childsplay (MSS-222)

Childsplay, a non-profit professional theatre for young people and their families, was founded by David Sarr in 1977 in Tempe, Arizona, receiving national and international acclaim.

Jonathan Levy (MSS-209)

Books and manuscripts documenting the early history of theatre for youth, the status of children in society and the cultural taste and sensibility of child education.

Irene Corey (MSS-282)

Irene Corey, award-winning theatrical set, costume and make-up designer, was the Artistic Director for the Everyman Players and the designer of Barney, best known from the television series "Barney & Friends." This collection includes over 700 renderings, sketches, correspondence, notes and photographs that underscore Corey's pioneering work in theatrical costume, set and makeup design.

Lowell and Nancy Swortzell (MSS-220)

Resources documenting Lowell and Nancy Swortzell's development of the NYU Program in Educational Theatre in 1966, the first educational theatre program of its kind in the world.

Additionally, collections represent many familiar names associated with Theatre for Youth and related areas.

Playwrights: Suzan Zeder, Moses Goldberg, Aurand Harris, Mary Hall Surface, Flora Atkin, Sandra Fenichel Asher, Brian Kral and more.

Professional theatre companies: Dallas Children's Theatre; Honolulu Theatre for Youth; Metro Theatre Company (St. Louis, MO); Nashville Children's Theatre; Seattle Children's Theatre; Seem-to-be-Players (Lawrence, KS).

University professors and authors: Jed Davis (University of Kansas), Kenneth Graham (University of Minnesota), Coleman Jennings (University of Texas at Austin), Nellie McCaslin (New York University), Cecily O'Neill (Ohio State University).

National organizations: American Association of Theatre Educators (AATE) and its predecessors; Theatre for Young Audiences/ United States of America (TYA/USA); Association Internationale du Théâtre de l'Enfance et la Jeunesse (ASSITEJ); the Children's Theatre Association of America (CTAA) and the Children's Theatre Foundation of America (CTFA).

Collection history

Originally the Child Drama Collection, this repository began in 1979 as part of an effort to spearhead the development of the Child Drama program for theatre for youth students and faculty at ASU and to meet the research needs of professional artists and educators throughout the world. Librarian Marilyn Wurzburger, head of Special Collections, and Lin Wright, chair of the ASU Department of Theatre, collaborated to establish the collection. That same year the Children's Theatre Association of America (CTAA), the national theatre for youth association, designated ASU as the site for its archive. The ASU Library approved the establishment of this new collection in 1980. Under the stewardship of Katherine Krzys, the collection grew to be the world's largest archival repository of manuscripts, ephemera and educational materials related to the history of youth theatre.



Photograph of Rosa Lee Scott, circa 1972. Rosa Lee Scott papers. (MSS-273), Arizona State University Library.



Reference services

Please contact ASU Library through **Ask an Archivist** to make an appointment to view materials from the collection in the Wurzburger Reading Room (rm. 138) at Hayden Library on ASU's Tempe campus.

askalibrarian.asu.edu/askanarchivist or **480-965-4932**

Appointments should be made at least five business days in advance.

Image above: "The Yellow Boat" artwork by Benjamin Saar, David Saar and Yellow Boat Collection (MSS-291), Arizona State University Library.