

# Guide to Theater and Movie Related Artifacts in the New York New Jersey Area

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## Descriptive Summary

- Creators:** The Theater and Movie Industry
- Title:** Guide to Theater and Movie Related Artifacts in the New York Metropolitan Area
- Dates:** 1924 - 1990
- Abstract:** The materials contained within this collection represent a wide range of print artifacts from the New York/New Jersey Theater and Movie Industry. These include: programs, playbills and movie flyers from Broadway and Canarsie Theaters in New York, Central Theater and the Rialto Theater in Passaic. Although a small collection, it offers a glimpse into the life of the popular neighborhood theaters in New Jersey. Through playbills, programs and flyers, one can appreciate the active theater life of New Jersey during the period 1924 - 1990.
- Quantity:**
- |        |              |           |
|--------|--------------|-----------|
| Box 1: | Programs     | 1 Folder  |
|        | NJ Playbills | 2 Folders |
|        | Movie Flyers | 3 Folders |
|        | Silent Stars | 1 Folder  |
| Box 2: | NY Playbills | 8 Folders |
- Collection No.:**

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## Biographical Sketch

The Broadway Playbill originated in 1884 by New York businessman Frank Vance Strauss as a free publication to theater goers. In 1934 it officially became 'The Playbill' and still remains a free publication to patrons in many theaters throughout the United States.

The **Broad Street National Bank of Trenton**, founded on May 19, 1887 and operated a small theater at 188 South Broad Street in Trenton. It printed 'A Little Chat,' pamphlets of silent screen stars. The bank became so popular that eventually two annexes were erected and a move to another location was necessary. Although it did not change its name, the Broad Street National Bank eventually moved to State and Montgomery Streets. The Broad Street Bank Building, at one time the tallest structure in Trenton, is number one on Trenton's Ten Most Endangered List.

The **Warner Brothers Playhouse** was located at 591 Main Avenue in Passaic New Jersey. It contained a single screen and seated 1, 035 seats. The Playhouse is currently closed and possibly demolished.

The **Central Theatre** in Passaic was located at 19 Central Avenue. It was built and operated by Harry K. Hecht, philanthropist, businessman and popular figure in Passaic New Jersey history. Designed by John and Drew Ebersson and erected by Washington Construction Co., the Central Theatre's main attractions were stage shows and "B pictures." Some of the acts at the Central were The Andrew Sisters, The Three Stooges, and Pink Floyd in the early seventies. Glenn Miller's last American performance before he departed to entertain troops in Europe was at the Central Theater. With the popularity of television, Central Theatre turned exclusively to movies. It had a single screen with 2,357 seats. It eventually closed in the middle Seventies and replaced by a McDonalds - which still stands today.

**Clifton Theatre** was located at 1138 Main Avenue in Clifton New Jersey. Opened on New Years Eve 1937, this theatre originally had a single screen with 1,100 seats. Demolished in 2001 after years of declining audiences, the Clifton Theatre was replaced by a Walgreen's.

The **Montauk Theatre** at 715 Main Avenue Clifton New Jersey seats 2,638. It was remodeled in 1924 and has served as a vaudeville theatre as well as a movie theatre. It currently operates as an adult movie house.

**Crandell Theatre** in Chatham New York is designed in Spanish style brick and stucco. This vaudeville/movie house opened on Christmas Day in 1926 and remains largely the same. Crandell Theatre seats 534 patrons.

The **Canarsie Theatre** is located 9310 Avenue L in Brooklyn New York. It was built in 1927 and held 1,470 patrons. It was gutted in 2004 and made into a Banquet Hall.

The **Café Theatre** was located at 320 Monroe Street Passaic New Jersey.

**Special Note:** Information on the **Rialto, Strand, Ritz and Cassino Theatre's** proved difficult to locate. Information on these four theatres will be added as it is received.

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## **Scope and Content**

The New York Musical Programs range from 1949 - 1990, most being from the period of 1949 - 1952. They compliment most of the Playbills in Box TM-2. The Playbills are from the years 1949 - 1952.

This collection offers a good example of New Jersey Theater and Movie house showings in the middle of the Twentieth Century. The flyers and playbills offer a wonderful example of New Jersey culture in small towns such as Clifton and Passaic during this period. They show the important role that entertainment played in the lives of local communities.

In addition to the above New Jersey Movie materials is a rare series of pamphlets entitled, "A Little Chat", printed in 1924. This series is relevant to New Jersey history because it is published by The Broad Street National Bank of Trenton. The pamphlets give a brief biography of major silent screen stars of the 1920's

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## **Arrangement Note**

The New York Musical Programs and the various New York and New Jersey Movie House flyers are divided into a series of seven folders. The contents of each folder is arranged chronologically, when possible.

The New York Playbills and ticket stubs are separated into eight folders. They are each arranged in chronological order.

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## **Series Descriptions**

### **Theater and Movie Artifacts**

This series contains New York Broadway Musical Programs and Playbills from 1949 - 1990, and materials related to various New York and New Jersey Movie Houses from 1936 - 1950.

## Container List

### BOX TM-1: THEATER AND MOVIE ARTIFACTS

#### Folder 1: Musical Programs, 1949 - 1990

- Sugar Babies, Me and Juliet, Dancin, Into the Woods
- Cats, Song and Dance, Call Me Mister, A Streetcar Named Desire
- Kiss Me Kate, Peter Pan, Carousel, The Madwoman of Chaillot
- Cyrano de Bergerac, The Strike, Richard III, Charley's Aunt
- Song of Norway, Porgy and Bess, On the Town, Finians Rainbow
- Beggar's Holiday, Brigadoon, South Pacific, Othello
- The Member of the Wedding, Bloomer Girl, Anne of the Thousand Days, The Pajama Game
- The Unsinkable Molly Brown, Damn Yankees, Oklahoma, Allegro
- High Button Shoes, Look, Ma, I'm Dancin!, Paint Your Wagon, Carmen Jones
- The Rose Tattoo, Mister Roberts, Private Lives, My Fair Lady
- New Girl in Town, Wish You Were Here, The King and I

#### Folder 2: 'A Little Chat' 1924, The Broad Street National Bank of Trenton

- Charles S. Chaplin, Rudolph Valentino, Lillian Gish
- Gloria Swanson, Norma Talmadge, Pola Negri
- Bebe Daniels, Virgia Valli, Lois Wilson

#### Folder 3: Warner Brothers Playhouse, Main Ave Passaic New Jersey, Movie Flyer

- Movie Flyers, March 1936 - August 1939, Forty-Eight total

Folder 4: Central Theatre Playbills, Passaic New Jersey,

- Playbills, May 30, 1950 – September 2, 1950, nine total

Folder 5: Various New Jersey Movie House Flyers

- Clifton Theatre, September 1938, three total
- Montauk Theatre (Passaic), October 1940, one total
- Rialto Theatre (Passaic), June 1937, one total
- Ritz Theatre (Garfield), June 1937, March 1938, November 1938, three total
- Strand Theatre (Clifton), February 1938, one total

Folder 6: Various New York Movie House Flyers

- Canarsie Theatre (Brooklyn), July 1939 – July 1940, twenty three total
- Cassino Theatre (Queechy Lake), August 1936, one total
- Crandell Theatre (Chatham), August 1936, one total

Folder 7: Café Theatre, Passaic, Playbill

- The Roar of the Greasepaint, The Smell of the Crowd, July 13, 1974
- Café Theatre Menu

BOX TM-2: THEATER PLAYBILLS, 1949 - 1952

Folder 1: New York Playbills

- Allegro, High Button Shoes, Where's Charley, Brigadoon, Look, Ma, I'm Dancin

Folder 2: New York Playbills

- Look, Ma, I'm Dancin, Annie Get Your Gun, Finian's Rainbow, The Cradle Will Rock, Cyrano de Bergerac (2)

Folder 3: New York Playbills

- Brigadoon, Call Me Mister, Oklahoma!, Finian's Rainbow, Beggar's Holiday, Othello

Folder 4: New York Playbills

- Song of Norway, Carousel, On the Town, Dear Ruth, Suds in Your Eye, Bloomer Girl

Folder 5: New York Playbills

- Angel Street, Carmen Jones, The Lady's Not For Burning, Concert Varieties, Bell, Book and Candle, Carousel

Folder 6: New York Playbills

- Where's Charley, Kiss Me Kate, A Streetcar Named Desire, Detective Story, Mister Roberts, South Pacific

Folder 7: New York Playbills

- The Telephone and the Medium, Peter Pan, Twentieth Century, The Member of the Wedding, The D'Oyly Carte Opera Company of London

Folder 8: New York Playbills

- South Pacific, The King and I, Oklahoma!, The Rose Tattoo, Paint Your Wagon

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**Name and Subject Index Terms**

Name Index Terms

Andrew Sisters, The  
Chaplin, Charles S.  
Daniels, Bebe  
Eberson, Drew  
Eberson, John  
Gish, Lillian  
Hecht, Harry K.  
Miller, Glenn  
Negri, Pola  
Pink Floyd  
Swanson, Gloria  
Talmadge, Norma  
Three Stooges, The  
Valentino, Rudolph

Valli, Virgia  
Vance Strauss, Frank  
Name Index Terms Continued  
Wilson, Lois

Subject Index Terms

Broad Street National Bank of Trenton  
Broadway  
Brooklyn, New York  
Café Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey  
Canarsi Theatre, Chatham, New York  
Cassino Theatre, Queechy Lake, New York  
Central Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey  
Chatham, New York  
Clifton, New Jersey  
Clifton Theatre, Clifton, New Jersey  
Crandell Theatre, Chatham, New York  
Garfield, New Jersey  
Little Chat, A  
McDonalds  
Montauk Theatre, Clifton, New Jersey  
New Jersey Movie Flyers  
New Jersey Movie Houses  
New Jersey Playbills  
New Jersey Theaters  
New York Movie Flyers  
New York Movie Houses  
New York Musicals  
New York Playbills  
New York Programs  
New York Theaters  
Passaic, New Jersey  
Playbill  
Rialto Theatre, Passaic, New Jersey  
Ritz Theatre, Garfield, New Jersey  
Strand Theatre, Clifton, New Jersey  
Trenton, New Jersey  
Vaudeville  
Walgreens  
Warner Brothers Playhouse, Passaic, New Jersey  
Washington Construction Company