

MS-511: Little Art Theatre of Yellow Springs

Collection Number: MS-511

Title: Little Art Theatre of Yellow Springs Collection

Dates: 1945-2008 (bulk 1952-2008)

Creator: Little Art Theatre

Summary/Abstract:

The collection contains program guides, brochures, posters, and artwork detailing movies shown at the Little Art Theatre of Yellow Springs, Ohio over more than fifty years. Also included are numerous promotional photos sent to the theatre from film distributors and studios. The Little Art Theatre was one of a network of small theatres that screened mainly foreign and independent films.

Quantity/Physical Description: 6.0 linear feet

Language(s): English

Repository: Special Collections and Archives, Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092.

Restrictions on Access:

There are no restrictions on access to this collection.

Restrictions on Use: Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

No one shall reproduce any of the six original pieces of art, known as the house light art, without written permission from the President of the board of the Little Art Theatre Association or its successor organization.

Preferred Citation:

[Description of item, Date, Box #, Folder #], MS-511, Little Art Theatre of Yellow Springs Collection, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio.

Acquisition: The Little Art Theatre of Yellow Springs Collection was donated to Wright State University Special Collections and Archives by the originating organization (Little Art Theatre) in July of 2014.

Accruals: No further accruals are expected.

Separated Material: Original oversized artwork is on top of the collection cabinets in Rm. 416, Posters are housed in Oversize Location 90, File 2.

Notes: Note that the program guide calendar fluctuated throughout the years, often running from December to November of the following year. The promotional photographs are in alphabetical order, by film.

Processed by: Finding aid written according to DACS standards by Jocelyn Robinson, 2016.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged by format and chronologically thereunder.

Historical Note:

The Little Art Theatre is among the most recognizable and beloved landmarks in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Well known for its commitment to diverse programming that includes first-run independent and foreign films, documentaries, cinema classics and special film events, the Little Art is part of the social fabric of the Yellow Springs community and the Miami Valley area. Established in 1929, it later became one of a network of small theatres that screened mainly foreign and independent films. It continues this legacy in 2016, and has added first-run features to its offerings. The Little Art became a nonprofit organization in 2009, and completed its first major renovation in 2013 bringing the theater into the digital age, while retaining its iconic houselights and beloved marquee. As “the best place to watch a movie, together” the Little Art Theatre provides experiences that entertain, inform, and inspire in an intimate hometown, single screen setting that cannot be replicated at the multiplexes. Additionally, the Little Art hosts community events, including a New Year’s Eve celebration and an annual thank you party for friends and partners of the Little Art. Other community collaborations include hosting area filmmaker’s or student film premieres and partnering with local nonprofits such as the Green Environmental Coalition, Tecumseh Land Trust, NAMI-YS, and WYSO to bring important documentaries to the screen. Its reach extends to the greater Miami Valley, including hosting screenings for the annual Dayton Jewish Film Festival and Wright State University Big Lens Film Festival.

In 1929, Dick and Mary Denison founded what was first called “The Little Theatre.” The theatre was integrated peacefully in 1942 when students from Antioch and nearby Wilberforce University staged a sit-in, which was planned with the help of Antioch faculty Jessie Treichler, Thomas Dowdell, and Herman Schnurer. The signature Art Deco murals mounted over the house lights in the mid 1940s were created by Antioch student Elizabeth Morss Graff. The theatre was purchased by the Art Theatre Guild of Scottsdale, Arizona, and became the Little Art Theatre in 1955. Ellen and Rod Hoover purchased the building in 1990. From 1987-1990 the Little Art was owned by Antioch College under the leadership of then college president Alan Guskin. From 1990 to 1997, the business was owned by Antioch College professor Jon Saari. After managing the Little Art for twenty years, Jenny Cowperthwaite purchased the business in 1998, and now serves as Executive Director. October 2009 marked a new era for the theatre, organizing as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation. In 2012 the Little Art Theatre Association launched a successful major capital campaign to upgrade and entirely remodel the theatre, adding digital projection and sound, full accessibility, new seats, improved sight lines, and a contemporary “industrial chic” lobby with an expanded concession stand.

Scope and Content:

The collection is arranged by format and chronologically thereunder. Included are program guides, brochures, posters, and artwork detailing the movies shown at the theatre. Also included are promotional materials, including numerous photos sent to the theatre from film distributors and studios. Researchers interested in small, independent movie houses would find this collection useful, as the array of films shown over the years is diverse and reflects a broad spectrum of the cinema art.

Subject Terms:**Organizations/Corporate Names**

Antioch College
Little Art Theatre

Places

Yellow Springs (Ohio)

Subjects (General)

Motion picture theaters

Material Types

Works of art
Brochures
Photographs
Posters

Collection Inventory

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Program Guides	Dec 1952
	2	Program Guides	Sep-Dec 1953
	3	Program Guides	Jan-Nov 1954
	4	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1955
	5	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1956
	6	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1957
	7	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1958
	8	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1959
	9	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1960
	10	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1961
	11	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1962
	12	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1963
	13	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1964

	14	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1965
	15	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1966
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	16	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1967
	17	Program Guides	Apr-Dec 1968
	18	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1969
	19	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1970
	20	Program Guides	Jan-Nov 1971
	21	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1972
	22	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1973
	23	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1974
	24	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1975
	25	Program Guides	Jan-Nov 1976
	26	Program Guides	Jan 1977-Jan 1978
	27	Program Guides	Feb 1978-Jan 1979
	28	Program Guides	Feb-Nov 1979
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	1	Program Guides	Feb-Nov 1980
	2	Program Guides	Dec 1980-Nov 1981
	3	Program Guides	Dec 1981-Nov 1982
	4	Program Guides	Dec 1982-Nov 1983
	5	Program Guides	Dec 1983-Nov 1984
	6	Program Guides	Dec 1984-Nov 1985
	7	Program Guides	Dec 1985-Nov 1986
	8	Program Guides	Dec 1986-Nov 1987
	9	Program Guides	Dec 1987-Nov 1988
	10	Program Guides	Dec 1988-Nov 1989
	11	Program Guides	Dec 1989-May 1990
	12	Program Guides	Dec 1990-Nov 1991
	13	Program Guides	Dec 1991-Nov 1992
	14	Program Guides	Dec 1992-Dec 1993
	15	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1994
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	1	Program Guides	Jan-Dec 1995
	2	Program Guides	Jan-Nov 1996
	3	Program Guides	Dec 1996-Nov 1997
	4	Program Guides	Dec 1997-Nov 1998
	5	Program Guides	Dec 1998-Nov 1999
	6	Program Guides	Dec 1999-Nov 2000
	7	Program Guides	Dec 2000-Nov 2001
	8	Program Guides	Dec 2001-Nov 2002
	9	Program Guides	Dec 2002-Nov 2003
	10	Program Guides	Dec 2003-Nov 2004

	11	Program Guides	Dec 2004-Jan 2006
	12	Program Guides	2006-2008
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	13	Classic Film Series Brochures	Undated
	14	The Art Film Brochures	Undated
	15	Promotional Materials	Undated
	16	Attendance Records	May 1989-Dec 1991
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
4		Promotional Photographs A-D	Undated
5		Promotional Photographs E-M	Undated
6		Promotional Photographs N-Z, uncategorized	Undated
<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
Loc. 90	2	Movie Posters: <i>Eraserhead</i> <i>The Europeans</i> <i>King of Hearts</i> <i>Lisa</i> <i>The Lovers of Teruel</i> <i>Solaris</i>	circa 1977 circa 1979 circa 1966 circa 1962 circa 1962 circa 1972
Rm. 416	On top cabinet	House Light Art (six pieces)	circa 1945