

The Old Vic Company North American tour program

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1958-1959



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Author: Meghan Glasbrenner

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Fenwick Library, MS2FL
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Fax Number: 703-993-8911
speccoll@gmu.edu
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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0545

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Unit Date

1958-1959

box

1 (folder)

Language

English

Abstract

The Old Vic Company program for the 1958-1959 North American tour featuring productions of three plays by William Shakespeare: Hamlet, Twelfth Night, and Henry V.

Creator

Old Vic Company

Extent

.01 Linear Feet 1 folder

Physical Location

R 73, C 2, S 4

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

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Donor is unknown.

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Historical Information

The Old Vic Theatre Company was founded in 1818 as the Royal Coburg Theatre and was originally known for producing primarily popular melodramas. The theatre was renamed the Royal Victoria following a remodel in 1833 and become known popularly as "the Old Vic." In 1880 it came under the management of Emma Cons (1838-1912), a well-known social reformer, and the theatre transformed into the Royal Victoria Hall and Coffee Tavern, focusing on temperance amusements such as music concerts and scenes from Shakespeare and operas. In 1912, Cons' niece Lilian Baylis (1874-1937) took over management of the theatre and in 1914 introduced the company's first regular Shakespeare season. By 1918 the Old Vic was established as London's only permanent Shakespearean theatre and by 1923 had performed productions of all of Shakespeare's plays.

The Old Vic continued to grow throughout the 1920s and 1930s, but the physical building was damaged during German air raids in 1940 causing the company to be temporarily relocated. Following World War II, the theatre building reopened in November 1950 and was granted Grade II listed building status in 1951. When Laurence Olivier was appointed as first director of the National Theatre in 1962, which had been established in 1946, the governors of the Old Vic offered their building as its temporary home and in 1963 the Old Vic company was disbanded.

Scope and Content

The Old Vic Company program for the 1958-1959 North American tour featuring productions of three plays by William Shakespeare: Hamlet, Twelfth Night, and Henry V. This is a full season program that contains full production credits for each show title, including cast and crew bios, notes from the director, and selected favorite scenes from the play with text from the script. The program also includes general historical

information on the Old Vic and features credits for Judi Dench in one of her first professional seasons as a stage actress.

Related Materials

The Special Collections Research Center holds other theatrical programs, such as the Mary Lavigne programs collection and Broadway souvenir theatre programs collection.

The University of Bristol holds the Old Vic (London) Archive.

Keywords

Performing arts

Theater

Theater programs

Theater -- Europe

Theater -- England -- London

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616. Hamlet

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616

Bibliography

Britannica. 2024. "Old Vic." September 27. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Old-Vic-London-theatrical-company>.

Theatre Collection | University of Bristol. n.d. "Old Vic (London) Archive." Accessed January 28, 2026. <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection/explore/theatre/old-vic-london-archive/>.

Arrangement

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