New Accessions
Recent highlights include:
Yolanda Sonnabend Archive
[Donated by Joseph Sonnabend]
Margaret Tyzack Archive
[Donated by Marion Candido]
Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory Archive
[Donated by the company]
Flora Robson letters
[Donated by Richard Purver]
Shine Exhibition tinsel prints
[Donated by the artists]
Susannah York Archive
[Donated by Sasha & Orlando Wells]

Forthcoming Events
Public Events
Depicting Ghosts: Museums at Night 16th May 2013
Doors Open Day 14th September 2013

Friends' Events
Visit to Sands Films, London 17th June 2013 tbc
Trip to the Theatre Collection Langford Store 8th July 2013

Please note that not all the details for these events are yet available. Please look out for more details on our website, Facebook page and in

Please note: if you have received this newsletter by mail it means that your name and address are stored on the Theatre Collection mailing list. These details may be used by the Theatre Collection, and also more widely by the University of Bristol. Should you wish your details to be removed from the mailing list, please contact us.

THEATRE COLLECTION MAILINGS

Winter 2012/3 Issue 29

MUSEUM’S ACCREDITATION SUCCESS!
“The scheme is regarded as one of the most innovative and effective developments in the museum sector. It has led the way in raising museum standards”
Arts Council England

The Theatre Collection is delighted to announce it has been re-awarded Accredited Museum Status by Arts Council England.

For the Theatre Collection this is a great achievement. It has held Museum Status since 2001 but the awarding body, Arts Council England, brought in new requirements and a different set of standards in 2011. Being a museum with high standards of collections care and which is open to all is at the heart of what we do, but providing the comprehensive documentation to prove this was no small feat.

This award is one of a number recently made to the Theatre Collection from bodies such as the National Archives Cataloguing Grants Programme (see p.2), Renaissance Small Grants Programme and Noel Coward Foundation.
The University of Bristol Theatre Collection has been awarded £22,371 by the National Archives under the latest round of the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives.

M&M was donated, to the University’s Theatre Collection in 2011, thus creating one of the world’s largest collections dedicated to British theatre history.

Volunteers have already begun work on the mammoth task of repackaging the boxes into archival envelopes prior to the cataloguer taking up post.

Researchers were queuing up to get access to the collections once again and could have been forgiven for not noticing the huge changes that had gone on.

The Theatre Collection fully re-opened in October 2012 following refurbishment works.

Subjects of enquiries ranged from general family history enquiries and requests for images of Donald Wolfit and Richard Burton to the Anzac Coves Pierrot Troup and various live art artists and performances.

We held a number of public events, including our regular behind the scenes tours for groups such as the Bristol Museums and Galleries Group and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and we hosted an ‘In Conversation with Stephanie Cole’ event which was extremely popular. The Shine exhibition also generated several ‘spin-off’ events and talks.

We had 725 visitors in the reading room during the same period.

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One From the Archive...

This fascinating photograph shows the front of the Drama Department, where the Theatre Collection is located. This image is dated 28th June 1912, and was “taken on the occasion of the visit by their late Majesties King George V and Queen Mary to open the King Edward VII Memorial Infirmary” (part of the Bristol Royal Infirmary).

The image shows a large number of people who have turned out to greet the King and Queen, seen driving past in their carriage.

The Vandyck Building was originally home to the Van Dyck Printers and was acquired by the University in 1964, along with other buildings in Park Row for the princely sum of £53,500. It later became home to the Drama Department.

Drama Dept Update

The Theatre Collection currently has two third year undergraduates from the Drama Dept doing their Independent Study placement with us.

Warren and Ryan are undertaking basic collection tasks to experience the type of work that is required in an archive/museum.

They are currently auditing the collections in one of our main strong rooms at the Park Row site, following the building work last summer, to ensure that all our location information is up to date.

Ryan will also be working on scanning items from the Live Art Archives, while Warren will be helping with general administrative and data entry tasks that are essential to the smooth running of the Theatre Collection.

Changes any visitors will have noticed include a new lick of paint for the reading room, and a slight change of layout that means that there is space for a member of staff to sit in the reading room as a first point of call for any on-site visitors.

However, the major changes have happened behind the scenes, with new air conditioning systems being installed in all our strong rooms. These help us to conform to the best standards for the storage of archive and museum collections.

All this means that we are better able to care for the collections that we are responsible for.

How the Pictures Learnt to Walk

A digital touch-table that brings the experience of pre-cinema and early filmmaking back to cinema audiences and museum visitors has been developed by researchers at the University of Bristol and UWE, working with Aerian Studios.

The touch-table enables users to learn about different technologies used to create moving images from the 1830s to the early C20. Optical devices like the Zoetrope, the Phenakistoscope and the Kinora have been digitally recreated, together with a rich variety of interchangeable imagery from prominent museum collections.

The touch-table was on display at the Theatre Collection earlier in the year before going on loan to museums across Europe. We are hoping it may come back soon!

More information can be found at: http://www.bris.ac.uk/news/2013/9129.html.
INTO THE FUTURE:
The National Review of Live Art (1986-2010)
Video Archive Online
IS NOW LIVE!

www.bristol.ac.uk/nrla/online-archive

The Drama Department and the Theatre Collection are proud to announce the launch of the NRLA Video Archive Online, as part of the AHRC-funded Into the Future project.

The Archive
The National Review of Live Art (NRLA) Video Archive documents performances from the prestigious NRLA festival. Presented in over 1,700 files, the audio-visual footage covers the period from 1986, when the festival was first recorded on film, to its final year in 2010. As well as recordings of performances, there are tapes of installations, discussions and interviews with participating artists.

Digitising the Archive
To preserve the NRLA Video Archive’s fragile formats beyond their limited lifespan, a project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Capturing the Past, Preserving the Future, enabled digitisation of the footage up to 2006. A second AHRC-funded project, Into the Future: Sustainable Access to the National Review of Live Art Digital Archive completed the digitisation, added new data from the final years of the festival (2007-2010) and has made the material accessible online.

The NRLA Video Archive website includes three case studies exploring different approaches to the archiving of live art online and offers users their own workspace to annotate videos and make links between works both within and without the archive, providing a uniquely valuable resource to artists, researchers and students of live art and contemporary performance.

Margaret Tyzack Archive
Material relating to the life and work of Margaret Tyzack (OBE) (1931-2011) has been donated to the Theatre Collection by her sister.

Tyzack spent a lifetime on stage, television and in films, from training at RADA to her last appearance on the London stage in 2009. She is perhaps most well remembered for her roles in the Forsyth Saga (1960s) and more recently in Eastenders.

The archive contains photographs, a/v material, scripts, reviews and press cuttings and various other paperwork covering the whole period of her career.

A Plea for help …..

Do you enjoy sewing? We are desperately in need of volunteers who can help us make up a variety of archival bags to store costumes and other items which won’t go into boxes. It would be simple machining and all materials provided. More details are available from Jo, Bex or Heather.

We also still need help sorting and numbering our extensive programme collection.

Donations
Please note that to avoid excessive duplication of material, we are currently not accepting theatre programmes until we have rationalised our current holdings of over 150,000 programmes.

We are also no longer accepting routine donations of books unless they are of particular importance or relevance to our archival collections.

Margaret Tyzack in Phaedre, National Theatre, 2009

Margaret Tyzack in Phaedre, National Theatre, 2009
New Archives

Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory

In January, SATTF donated 13 years of archive material to the Theatre Collection. The archive comprises dozens of files of material from every production staged by the company since its inception in 2000 including props, prompt scripts and photos.

Props include the Goddess Masks from, The Tempest (2010) by prop maker Geoff Sims, (pictured above. Photo Graham Burke).

Listen to Artistic Director, Andrew Hilton describing the archive contents on BBC Radio Bristol this morning: http://bbc.in/10GvC0J (starts at 50 minutes and 24 secs in).

More details are available on the SATTF website at www.sattf.org.uk.

Yolanda Sonnabend Design Archive

Last year the Theatre Collection was donated the archive of designer Yolanda Sonnabend.

Yolanda is a well known and highly respected set and costume designer, who has worked in theatre, opera and film for many decades. She studied painting and stage design at the Slade School of Fine Arts (1955-60), and has taught there and at other art schools both in the UK and abroad.

The archive contains designs from theatre, ballet and opera productions, dating from 1957 (A Blue Rose) to 2012 (a production of Cinderella) and covers locations such as the Royal Opera House, Sadler’s Wells, the Old Vic, as well as

Performing Documents Project Update

This project, involving the Live Art Archives, is a joint collaboration between the University of Bristol Drama Department, the University of Exeter and Arnolfini. Successful symposia covering the first two project strands Remake (artists using and re-using the archives of others) and Redux (artists re-visiting their own archives) have taken place and the team is working hard on the final strand, Replace (curatorial responses to archives) and on preparing for the exciting 2 day conference in April. The project exhibition Version Control is running at Arnolfini until 14th April 2013 and the associated Franko B exhibition runs at the Theatre Collection until 12th April (see p. 11).

Further information about the project is available on the project webpage at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/research/performing-documents/ and on Facebook.

New Archives

Yolanda Sonnabend Design Archive

Live Art News

BBC Your Paintings Online

In December the Public Catalogue Foundation and the BBC completed their ambitious project to put online the United Kingdom’s entire collection of oil paintings in public ownership.

We are delighted to announce that the 212,000 paintings now viewable include 119 paintings from the Theatre Collection!

See the paintings for yourself at http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/galleries/locations/university-of-brislington-theatre-collection-7047
A vast amount of scanning of the John Vickers photographic archive has been undertaken as the first stage in making these wonderful images more accessible.

ArenaPAL, the picture agency with whom we work, have scanned the prints from the collection and now a volunteer is working on producing the necessary metadata (see next item).

Please note that we do not have access to these images yet but we hope to do so - so keep an eye out for more information.

Hard Boiled Eggs

by Roger Gregory, volunteer

I am in the early stages of a project to caption the John Vickers archive of photographs ready to be made available via ArenaPAL.

It is not often one has a chance to indulge in such a productive trip down memory lane. I have only reached the M’s in this alphabetical cornucopia so who knows what amazing discoveries I’ll be making and who I’ll be meeting during the coming year.

So far I have discovered a baby faced Richard Burton in his first West End performance in 1944 - Druid’s Rest by Emlyn Williams and a very young Richard Pasco in Alec Clunes’ Hamlet of 1951. Here is Laurence Olivier with ridiculous moustache and Ruritanian uniform in Arms and the Man in the Old Vic Company Wartime season at the New Theatre. Peter Finch and John Mills in The Damascus Blade at the Bristol Hippodrome appear alongside the Old Vic School who in 1948 staged the Kurt Weill musical Down in the Valley.

There are mystery faces too who presently defy research - Mary Fyfe, Mlle Gendoline and Elaine Delamelle, Alfred Deller shot through an aquarium of fish, George Bander, Valerie and Brigitte Booth (mother and daughter?)

If you have any information on any of these people please do contact the Theatre Collection.

The Franko B archive has been housed at the Theatre Collection since 2008, and hosts an extensive set of documents that preserve documentation of Franko’s performance work, from the 1980s through to 2008, alongside items of a more bureaucratic nature, documents of his personal life and the wider cultural/political context of the time these documents were created.

The exhibition will run from the 14th March to the 12th April 2013 (although closed from Friday 29th March to Tuesday 2nd April).

The opening times are: Monday 12pm to 4pm, Tuesday - Friday 10am to 4pm

The exhibition is part of Cara’s PhD practice-led research and is supported by the University of Bristol’s AHRC-funded project Performing Documents (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/research/performing-documents/).

Cara Davies, PhD student

Reading Franko B: Moments in Love.

Franko B, I Miss You, neon, 2002, photo courtesy of Manuel Vason

This is the Theatre Collection’s first ever exhibition from the Live Art Archives and celebrates the wonderful array of documents housed in the Franko B archive. Curated by PhD researcher Cara Davies, this exhibition is a fragmented narrative of his creative and personal histories.

Asking: who is Franko B? What can we perceive about his identity through the archive? What relationships does this provoke between audience, document and artist? Why do we fall in love with him? The exhibition showcases a diverse range of documents from Franko’s archive, questioning what they embody and disseminate about his artistic practice and the contexts he works in.

Cara Davies, PhD student
Shine

The exhibition Shine opened on November 26th at the AGM of the Friends, where I gave a talk about how the discovery of thirty five tinsel prints in the Mander & Mitchenson Collection had led to the idea of inviting local printmakers to devise work inspired by these amazing 19th century pieces. When Jennie Norman and I unwrapped eighteen pieces of work by Louella Frankel Jones, Mary Rouncefield, Mary Collett, Diana Favell, Theo Wood, Angie Broome, Jo Poole, Tessa Henry, Caroline Case, Elaine Knight, David Johnson, and Kimmy Thomson we were delighted to be able to find a further nineteen prints from Mander & Mitchenson as suitable partners for the display. Everything went together splendidly!

By the time the exhibition closed on February 28th it had been seen by over 500 visitors.

For this success thanks are due to the Friends who helped with a special Saturday morning opening in December; the student newspaper Epigram which featured a review; and to Dr Catherine Hindson for a Guest Lecture on January 31st on the popular London stage in the early 19th century. Most of all, thanks to my fellow artist printmakers and especially to those who have donated their work to the Theatre Collection.

Liz Bird, volunteer

Negative Repackaging

The repackaging of the glass plate negatives in the John Vickers archive is continuing apace. Our volunteer, Liz Bird is working away at this on a weekly basis and also continues to organise occasional “wrapathons” to help with this work.

Liz has calculated that with the help of these “wrapathons”, the original estimate of 7 years to complete the repackaging of the 20,000 glass plates has been reduced to 1–2 years! A huge improvement for a project that Liz is determined to see finished.

Work has also begun on the repackaging of the celluloid negatives within the John Vickers archive - another 20,000 of these are to be done. Two volunteers are currently working hard on this area of the collection.

Congratulations to Laura, who has been volunteering with us for six months as she has gained a place on the MA Archives and Records Management at UCL! We want to say a big thank you and wish her all the best in her studies.

As part of the project for the National Cataloguing Grant Scheme (see p.2) that the TC has received, five volunteers have started repackaging the M&M reference boxes on Wednesday afternoons, taking the material out of the poor quality files and placing them into acid-free folders. Four are brand new volunteers!

Welcome to another new volunteer (previously a member of the Theatre Collection Management Committee). Cathryn is now retired and helping with the repackaging of the John Vickers celluloid negatives.
**Friends’ News**

**FRIENDS AGM 2013**

The Friends of the Theatre Collection will be holding its AGM on 8th May this year.

Previously the AGM has been held each November but following a resolution last year, it was agreed to move the meetings to the spring; partly to avoid asking people to attend on cold winters’ night, but also to have a more timely publication of reports of the previous year’s business.

At the AGM in November, members were able to have a close-up look at the painting of Ben Jonson (1572-1637) held in the Mander & Mitchenson Collection, which had been badly damaged at some time in the past. The Friends have given £1,376 to have the painting repaired, and its frame restored and protected so that it may be put on public exhibition.

This year’s AGM will be preceded by a private viewing of a new exhibition of some of the material held in the Julia Trevelyan Oman archive. Students on the MA History of Art course are curating the exhibition of this renowned theatre designer’s work.

Full details of the AGM are sent separately to Friends of the Theatre Collection.

Paul Madine,
Council member, Friends of the University of Bristol Theatre Collection

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**Friends’ Events**

After the success of our events in 2012 the Friends of the Theatre Collection are planning more this year. These include a visit to the Langford Store and pub lunch, a Saturday morning tour of Bristol Old Vic with our Chairman Andrew Stocker, a visit to Sands Films in London including their costume workshop and picture research library, and an evening visit to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School’s Christchurch Studios in Clifton.

There will also be opportunities for us to help when the Theatre Collection opens for Museums at Night on 16th May and Bristol Doors Open Day on Saturday 14th September. Please look out for further details and book early to avoid disappointment.

These events are an excellent way for us to raise some funds to support the Theatre Collection and meet other members of the Friends.

Rosemary Silvester
Council member, Friends of the University of Bristol Theatre Collection

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**Depicting Ghosts**

This year for the first time, the Theatre Collection (along with other museums and collections within the University of Bristol) will be open for Museums at Night. This is a national initiative which seeks to encourage visitors into museums, galleries and heritage sites by throwing their doors open after hours and putting on special evening events.

The Theatre Collection is holding an event on the theme of ghosts in the theatre and will include a talk by Dr. Catherine Hindson, a chance to look at ghostly material from the archive and try your hand at creating ghostly effects.