Theatre Survey 54:2 (May 2013)
© American Society for Theatre Research 2013
doi:10.1017/S0040557413000069

RE: SOURCES
BETH A. KATTELMAN

Sharon Marcus

THE THEATRICAL SCRAPBOOK

Librarian's nightmare or researcher's dream? Theatre historians frequently use and librarians happily acquire the rare theatrical scrapbook related to a single famous individual, but many undervalue and overlook ordinary theatrical albums, and with good cause: the ordinary theatrical scrapbook's provenance is often unclear, its compilers are usually unknown, and its contents are typically heterogeneous, commonplace, and decaying. The cracked bindings and flaking newsprint characteristic of such scrapbooks frustrate conservation, while their clippings, programs, and images pose serious cataloging challenges, shorn as they often are of identifying information. Finally, at least some of the material in these albums (such as newspaper clippings) is often duplicated elsewhere, making their contents easily seem redundant.[1]

This essay argues, nonetheless, for the importance of the ordinary theatrical scrapbook as archive and medium. As an archive, the theatrical scrapbook is a repository for performance ephemera. As a medium, scrapbooks record how past theatre aficionados merged the stage and the page, image and print, the mechanical and the handmade (111; Figure 1).[2] This essay also constitutes a road map for theatre historians, archivists, and librarians interested in understanding theatrical scrapbooks as a genre. Many individual scrapbooks reward close reading, but discerning the idiosyncrasy of any single album requires an understanding of

---

Sharon Marcus is the Orlando Harriman Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. She is the author of Apartment Stories: City and Home in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London *(University of California Press, 1999) and* Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England *(Princeton, 2007), which has been translated into Spanish and won the Perkins Prize for best study of narrative, the Albion Prize for best book on Britain after 1800, the Alan Bray Memorial Award for best book in queer studies, and a Lambda Literary Award for best book in LGBT studies. She is currently writing a book about theatrical celebrity in the nineteenth century.*

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

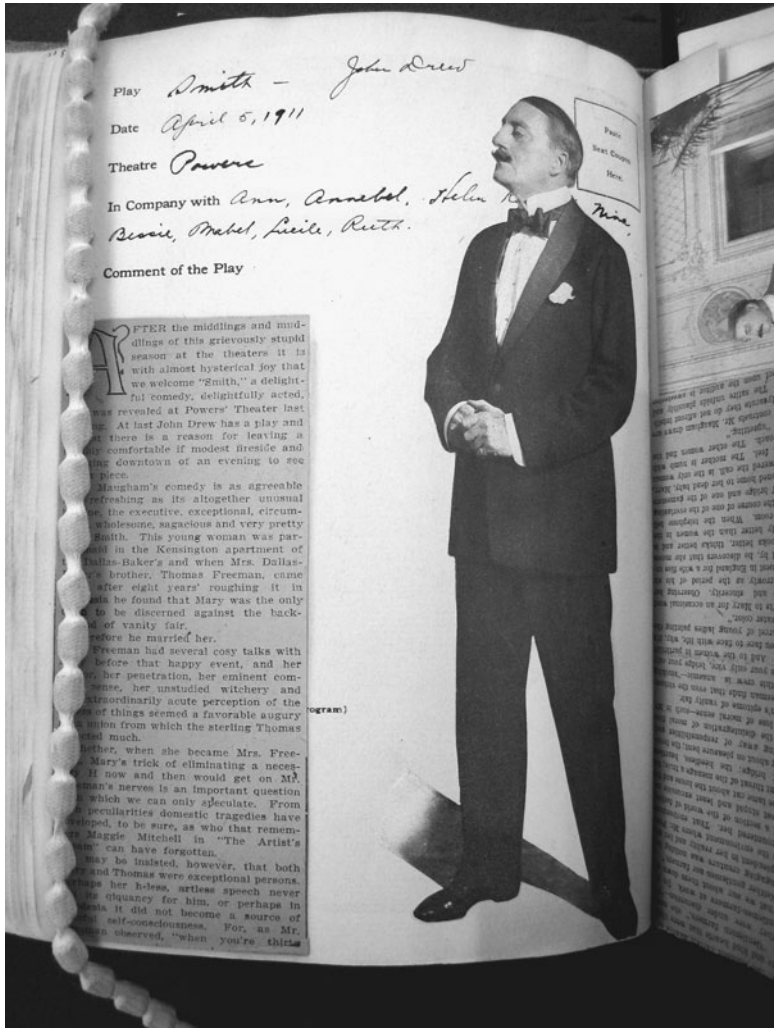


Figure 1.
John Drew in *Smith*. SPEC.TRI.SCRAPBOOK.111, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

scrapbooks in the aggregate, as a document type. To the best of my knowledge, there has been almost no scholarly discussion of theatrical albums as a genre, and most scrapbook collections lack detailed finding aids. This essay seeks to close that gap. Taking the scrapbook holdings of Ohio State's Theatre Research Institute (TRI) as a representative corpus, I offer a brief history of theatrical scrapbooks; a

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

taxonomy to help scholars navigate and interpret albums; and a sampling of some of the historical and theoretical questions that scrapbooks inspire and help answer. At the outset and in conclusion, I use my current research on Sarah Bernhardt and theatrical celebrity to exemplify some of the surprising issues the TRI albums raise.

Scrapbooks are invaluable resources for several reasons. First, each clipping or photograph in an album is contextualized by the hundreds of others that the compiler placed alongside it, thus adding layers of meaning that each item would lack if encountered in its original source or in isolation. Second, theatrical scrapbooks complicate our understanding of what counted as performance, because they suggest that theatregoers treated representations of performances as extensions of the theatrical experience. Third, theatrical scrapbooks can help us better understand that most elusive element in theatre history—the audience—in its interactions with performance in general and with specific plays and performers in particular. As heterogeneous assemblages and handmade artifacts, theatrical albums reflect the multifarious passions, habits, and quirks of ordinary theatregoers rather than the views of professional nineteenth-century drama critics or the choices of present-day archivists. An item encountered in a scrapbook is there because someone in the past read it and found it sufficiently interesting—attractive, provocative, irritating—to preserve in an album that offers invaluable information about its compiler's taste in performers, plays, and genres of performance.

Finally, scrapbooks demonstrate the importance of integrating theatre studies with performance and media studies. Some scrapbook compilers mixed theatre ephemera with material about dance, opera, and film (157); others pasted images of Ethel Barrymore next to pictures of Anna Pavlova, Enrico Caruso, and Theda Bara. Some treated plays as simply one point on a spectrum that included not only music, dance, and opera but also World's Fairs, political conventions, army shows, and sporting events; lectures on history, literature, and mesmerism (142, 68); and outings to hotels (46), night clubs, and celebrity restaurants (34). Even a capacious rubric such as performance unduly compartmentalizes what for audience members often appears to have been a single entertainment network. The Leffingwell albums,[3] which are replete with material about early film, demonstrate that those continuities also existed for actors, who often shuttled between Broadway and Hollywood during the silent era.

I came to theatrical scrapbooks in the course of researching Sarah Bernhardt and nineteenth-century theatrical celebrity. Having consulted Bernhardt archives in Paris, London, Cambridge, and New York, I wanted to situate the actress in the context of other star performers, test assertions that journalists had made about her incomparability and popularity with theatregoers worldwide, and achieve a better understanding of the fans who make celebrity possible. Reviewers and biographers often compared Bernhardt to Rachel, Helena Modjeska, and Eleanora Duse; did theatregoers make the same connections in their albums? Did U.S. scrapbooks represent Bernhardt as a supremely great performer or as simply one among many others, and if so, which others? I also had questions about how Bernhardt's celebrity varied over space and time. Was she most popular in cosmopolitan cities such as New York? Did her fame have clearly defined peaks and troughs? How did the advent of film affect her stardom?

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

As documents produced by theatre aficionados, scrapbooks also seemed uniquely suited to help me explore questions about fans, who often remain hazy, hypothetical figures in histories of celebrity. What could scrapbooks reveal about how audience members experienced performers and how they handled the ephemera that made stars recognizable? Did album compilers favor text or images? Were scrapbooks focused on actors in particular roles, and did they ever plot the arc of a theatrical career? Theories of stardom emphasize that fans want intimacy with stars and are interested above all in their private lives. Did scrapbooks prove this to be the case? Finally, since I was interested in how theatre gave fans access to the star's live presence, I was also curious about whether scrapbook compilers found ways to register that presence even when working with representations.

While attending a conference in Columbus, Ohio, I made a preliminary visit to The Ohio State University's Theatre Research Institute and with the help of curator Nena Couch immediately found individual scrapbooks of interest to a Bernhardt scholar. Scrapbook 79 put Bernhardt in relation to a surprisingly disparate set of actresses, including Blanche Bates, Lotta Faust, and Paula Edwards, a vaudeville "Belle of New York." Scrapbook 68 introduced me to a Philadelphia theatregoer who between 1891 and 1895 saw Ellen Terry and Henry Irving multiple times but attended only one of Bernhardt's many performances during that same period. Scrapbook 157, which assembled souvenirs from a tour to Europe in 1906–8, included a deluxe program for the 1906–7 season of the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt in Paris that enabled me to compare its graphic design to those of major theatres such as the Empire, the Comédie-Française, and another eponymous Parisian theatre directed by the actress Réjane.

I learned that there were many more such albums but that they were mostly uncataloged, so that the only way to know if they were useful to my work would be to examine them. Under the auspices of a TRI fellowship, I spent a month in 2011 studying the entire scrapbook collection, whose size—172 scrapbooks—was small enough to examine each individually yet large enough to provide a reasonable basis for generalization. The TRI collection also covered a sufficiently broad chronological span to register change over time. The materials in the albums span a century that began in 1859 (102) and ended in the early 1960s (99, 138, 139, 140). Its geographical coverage was also impressive: although the compilers were almost all American (including those touring Europe), many frequented venues in Midwestern and Southern cities that receive little notice from theatre historians. I have since consulted smaller scrapbook collections at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland; the Hampden–Booth Theatre Library in New York City; and the Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library. However, unless otherwise noted, all references in this essay are to the TRI scrapbooks.

Theatrical Scrapbooks as Genre: History

The ordinary theatrical scrapbook has had no historian to date. Essays on the use of documents in theatre history rarely highlight scrapbooks, and theatrical

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

albums are barely mentioned in either *The Scrapbook in American Life* or in Ellen Gruber Garvey's *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance*.[4] Scholars have usefully linked nontheatrical scrapbooks to consumer culture, to changing technologies of print and image production, and to new forms of authorship and political activism, but the predominant mode of interpreting scrapbooks has been biographical and sociological: scholars have mined albums for what they reveal about the identities and subjectivities of their makers. Most theatrical albums, however, offer scant information about their compilers, although there are some notable exceptions. For example, a pair of albums kept separately by a wife (37) and husband (39) document a courtship cemented by shared theatre attendance and a marriage riven by diverging tastes: he became a Shakespeare and Wagner buff, she preferred light entertainment such as *Trilby* and *The Prisoner of Zenda*.

Historians trace the origin of scrapbooks to the commonplace books of the early modern period in which scholars copied and commented on extracts from their reading. In the antebellum period, two kinds of scrapbook predominated. The first was a highly visual artifact, a precursor to today's sticker book, consisting almost entirely of brightly colored chromolithographed images known as scraps. The second was the keepsake album, which mixed engravings with texts consisting mostly of useful information and morally uplifting material copied by hand, clipped from the periodical press, or authored by the compiler and friends. The TRI collection contains several examples of this second type of album, which blends theatre reviews with poems, jokes, recipes, news items, obituaries, notable quotations, sketches of flowers, generic images of women in picturesque landscapes, and personal mementos such as valentines and bits of lace (51, 64, 102). After the commercialization of photography in the late 1860s, the photograph album, a third type of scrapbook, became dominant. In its early days, this type of album often combined images of notable people and places with those of family members.[5]

What, then, is the history of the scrapbook dedicated exclusively to performance? Compilations of theatrical news items and reviews pasted into blank books date back to the eighteenth century. Until the 1880s most theatrical albums consisted primarily or even exclusively of text, because for much of the nineteenth century playbills and posters consisted almost entirely of words.[6] In the 1860s, *cartes-de-visite,* the precursors of today's postcards, offered affordable and widely available images of actors, but their thickness made them difficult to insert in albums that were not equipped with specially designed slots. The immediate impetus for the increase in theatrical scrapbooks most likely came from the revolutionary integration of printed text and image that had begun earlier in the nineteenth century but by the 1880s had increased exponentially. By the last decades of the nineteenth century, newspapers, magazines, posters, playbills, and programs had all become heavily visual. Not surprisingly, the golden age of theatrical scrapbooks, from 1880 to 1920, also coincided with the heyday of U.S. theatre. In turn, the growth of theatre, the periodical press, and theatre scrapbooks were all made possible by very broad historical changes: the expansion of leisure time, increased

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

travel and mailing speeds, and advances in lighting and staging. All of those developments made attendance at live performances more available and appealing to all classes and made it easier, more affordable, and more entertaining for theatregoers to amass and peruse printed matter in books.

Scrapbooks can help us construct the history of the increasingly elaborate theatrical iconography that promoted live theatre and became an end in itself, precious enough for theatregoers to preserve it. Through albums, we can trace the rise of new ways of representing performers and performance, such as images of actors in private life or behind-the-scenes photographs of script readings and rehearsals (48). Around 1900, theatre magazines began to look more like scrapbooks and scrapbooks more like magazines; both began to integrate image and text in increasingly inventive layouts. Some scrapbook compilers replicated that new freedom of design in their own compositions, liberating images from their backgrounds and playing with scale and layout to create collages that sometimes bordered on the surreal (1; Figure 2). Some theatre magazines began to place ornate graphic frames around images, resulting in pages that resembled commercial photo albums, which often included preprinted decorative frames on each page. In this way, periodicals created album-ready images that invited clipping and compilation (87; Figure 3).

In the 1910s, new printing capacities made it possible for magazines to adopt layouts that liberated images of performers from the frame altogether and began to communicate something of the kinesis of actors onstage. Figure 4 (2) conveys the complex interaction between the album page and the represented stage: the figures appear to be moving forward within a stage space that itself seems to leap off the page (an effect accentuated by layering the leftmost hands of the figures on top of a column of print), even as the album page frames and holds them back.

Images such as these suggest that scrapbooks and magazines were modeled on each other, with magazine designers anticipating that readers would be searching for images and texts to place in their albums and album compilers emulating composition techniques they encountered in the press, often adding whimsical flourishes. In other instances, compilers treated their albums as books, complete with hand-drawn titles. For example, Scrapbook 162 features a drawing of a raised theatre curtain between whose folds, where the stage would be, appear hand-lettered words describing the album's contents: "Actors and Actresses I have seen in New York," a charming example of the coincidence of album page and theatrical space. In all these cases, as I discuss in more detail below, the page becomes a kind of stage, creating relationships among images of performers; linking album creators, handlers, and viewers; and contrasting the album page as material support to the album page as negative space.

Theatrical Scrapbooks as Genre: Taxonomy

The first question one would ask of any individual scrapbook—Is it typical or unusual?—requires a grasp of the genre as a whole. What are the key parameters for classifying theatrical scrapbooks, the relatively stable categories within which compilers made variable choices?

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 2.
(right). Maude Eburne in *A Pair of Sixes* surreally juxtaposed with the epic film *Cabiria*. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.1, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.



Figure 3.
(right). Clip-ready image of Julia Marlowe. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.87, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 4.
(left). Joseph Santley and Gaby Deslys in *Stop! Look! Listen!* Note the care Leffingwell lavished on cutting out the contours of the performers' heads, hands, and feet. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.2, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

Recycled versus Purpose-built

The physical album offers suggestive hints about the compiler's age, gender, wealth, and temperament and the place of the album in his or her life. Did the compiler thriftily place programs in an old volume of congressional reports, insert items onto the pregummed pages of the popular scrapbooks patented by Mark Twain,[7] or use an expensive tooled leather album with gilt edges to preserve memorabilia from a trip to European capitals? As these examples suggest, the most salient bibliographical distinction is between purpose-built and repurposed albums. Purpose-built albums fall into two primary groups: generic albums with blank pages and albums designed specifically for theatre-related materials (e.g., 37, 57), with preprinted indices and headings directing compilers how to comment on plays attended (77; Figure 5).

The repurposed albums in the TRI collection recycle used notebooks (51), ledgers (64), and published books such as *Ohio School Reports* (46) and the 1901 *Union List of Periodicals* (143), but such palimpsests are very much the minority in this and other theatrical scrapbook collections. Albums also vary by type of binding, cover materials, paper dimensions, quality of endpapers, and number of pages. For cataloging and citation purposes it is useful to note whether pages are prepaginated and, if they are not, whether the compiler has paginated them by hand. The physical method of compilation is also important; most items are glued onto the album page, but in a few rare cases, compilers laced programs and playbills into an album's covers (107).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Who, What, When, and Where

In turning to an album's contents, a theatre historian will first ask what kinds of material it contains and how relevant they are to performance. Some albums include menus and valentines alongside ticket stubs, seating charts, programs, reviews, and articles (46, 57). Next, one should determine an album's geographical and chronological range: What areas and time span does it cover? The TRI's varied holdings allow researchers to compare scrapbooks within and across historical periods and geographical areas. Although many of the TRI albums focus on Columbus, Ohio, a significant number encompass larger U.S. and European cities, including New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, DC, London, and Paris, and some document performance in smaller cities such as Dayton, Akron, Hartford, Rochester, and Mount Vernon. Some compilers traveled rarely, limiting themselves to one regional theatre scene, whereas others made several short trips a year to New York and Chicago or spent entire summers touring European capitals.

Next one asks, Who made the album?—a question that is often difficult to answer, since many scrapbooks are anonymous, and most compilers who inscribed their names on album covers have left few historical traces. One can infer much about a compiler's theatregoing life, however, from his or her album. Most compilers, unsurprisingly, appear to have been regular theatregoers who on average attended performances several times a month, usually over a period of several years, sometimes for decades. Some confined their theatregoing to the same one or two theatres for years (52), whereas others patronized multiple, diverse venues (61). A handful probably had more intimate connections to the theatre: the compiler of Scrapbook 111 appears to have been the daughter and niece of actresses in the Grace Hayward Stock Co. of Oak Park, Illinois, and another appears to have been a professional musician who worked in schools and theatres (68). A few compilers seem to have attended performances in person only rarely and instead used their albums to create virtual and vicarious theatregoing lives. The prodigious Burrill H. Leffingwell, for example, assembled around twenty albums that constitute an encyclopedic record of almost every Broadway performance from 1915 to 1934, with some added coverage of the period from 1880 to 1915 and of film, opera, and dance. His actual theatre attendance, however, seems to have been mostly limited to his hometown of Rochester, New York.

Curators versus Completists

The next question to ask is whether an album's contents suggest any particular focus. Most albums simply reflect the compiler's fairly regular attendance at a varied set of performances, but some albums are highly curated, others ambitiously encyclopedic. Curators might focus on an individual drama critic (61) or on a single actor (101, 110, 169). Other curators concentrate on a single type of performer or performance. The anonymous compiler of albums 78–88, for example, used a series of small notebooks bound in red leather to collect images of actresses produced from 1898 to 1901. The opening pages of each album tend to focus on established stars such as Julia Marlowe, Maude Adams, and Sarah

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Bernhardt, and the middle sections on popular comediennes with athletic physiques. Sequestered in the back pages of each album are images of starlets from the follies and burlesque circuits, who were rarely known for playing particular roles but were expert at posing seductively in extravagant costumes.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from such curators were the completists. One such compiler, who regularly documented his weekly summer attendance at the Lakeside Park Casino vaudeville shows in Akron, Ohio, was so determined to create a comprehensive record of what he saw that when he lacked a printed program, he handwrote a list of each act presented (46). The ultimate completist was Leffingwell, whose albums, organized by theatrical season, provide exhaustive coverage of almost every Broadway show produced each year in addition to coverage of opera, dance, follies, and film. The albums are dauntingly large, often weighing over ten pounds, and their oversized onionskin pages are almost too thin to support the voluminous materials affixed to them.

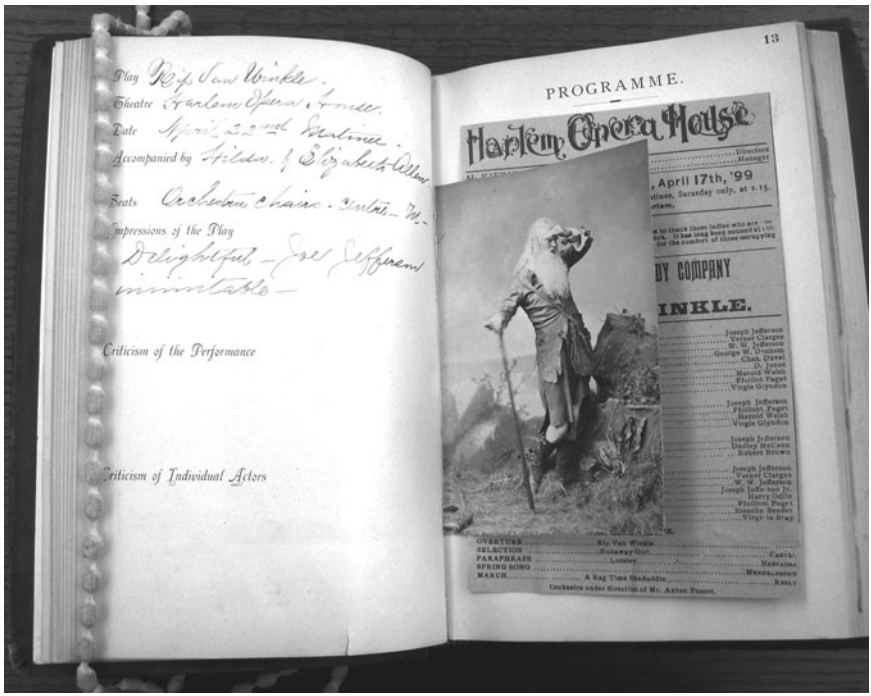


Figure 5.
Sample spread (of Joseph Jefferson in *Rip Van Winkle*) from a theatre-specific album with preprinted headings. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.77, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Disentanglers versus Entanglers

One can also classify albums in terms of how compilers approached page layout. Disentanglers favored highly regular page composition. Those who sought to maximize the number of materials compiled layered clippings so that they overlapped like tiles. Those who aimed to link related information treated the page as a grid of fixed columns and kept items visually distinct from one another. Those for whom the album functioned as a way to record and concentrate their interests centered each item on the page like an image within a frame, transforming the album into a shrine. Most compilers, however, were entanglers who used the album page to create variable, irregular arrangements. Entanglers tended to draw on multiple sources for their materials, and the scale, shape, number, and layout of items on entangled pages often varies a great deal across and even within their albums.

To combine several layers of text with images of different sizes and shapes on a single page required both great care and a free, even zany approach to compilation. Some entanglers favored a hodgepodge of photographs and printed matter, eschewing any chronological ordering of materials (109) or treating the album page something like a drawer in which to store random objects (58; Figure 6). By contrast, other entanglers borrowed organizing devices from books, creating chapterlike sections within albums. The compilers of Scrapbooks 103 and 48 mostly separated textual materials about the plays (cast lists, synopses) from images depicting performers. The compiler of the red leather albums allotted about twelve pages to each of the actresses featured in each album and inserted blank pages to demarcate the transitions from one chapter to another. The assembler of Scrapbook 63 created pages devoted to specific actresses, including a set of facing pages devoted to Olga Nethersole (63; Figure 7).

Focusers versus Constellators

Modes of managing content and source materials varied as well. Focusers zoomed in on a particular type of information: they excised the advertisements that surrounded cast lists in theatre programs (77), removed captions when culling images from newspapers, and even pared images of actors down to their outlines, removing frames and backgrounds. Constellators, by contrast, preferred to contextualize material, keeping journalistic articles and theatre programs intact, or documenting a single topic by combining print and images drawn from multiple sources. Constellators created albums whose hybrids of print and photography replicated how theatre itself blended the playbook and the human figure.

Annotators

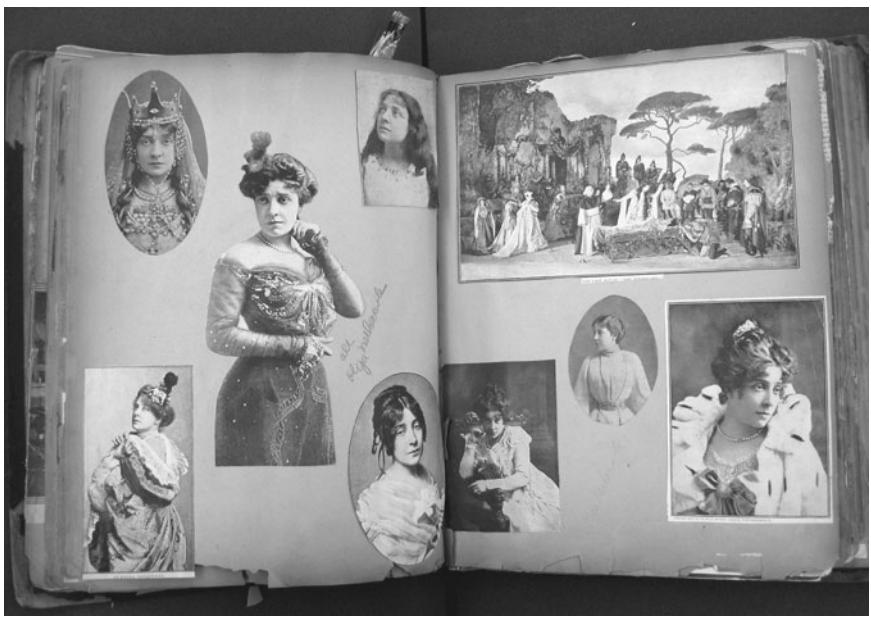
Of greatest interest to researchers are compilers who annotated their materials. Most did not, but the TRI collection contains several significant examples of albums with handwritten commentary (77, 111, 144, 167). The most common annotation in any theatrical album is a date, which is often crucial, because many of the cast lists in scrapbooks provide the day, month, and hour of performance but not the year. The emphasis of scrapbooks on the calendrical

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 6. *(left).* Clippings from various shows overlap, even though casts do not. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.52, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

Figure 7. *(below).* Clippings of Olga Nethersole. SPEC. TRI. SCRAPBOOK.63, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.



https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

illuminates the extent to which theatregoing both marked time and passed it. Dates can help us track whether matinees were more frequently attended by female compilers than male ones, can help us note the infrequency of summer performances, and can demonstrate that those wealthy enough to spend a week or month in New York during the holiday season often saw a different show each night.

Most scrapbook comments seem to have been made at the time of compilation, which was not necessarily the time of actual theatre attendance. The majority of compilers seem to have saved up materials for months or even years, then placed them in albums at periodic intervals. A few, however, seem to have compiled first and commented much later. The compiler of Scrapbook 66, for example, wrote about seeing E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe on tour in 1913, "Of this repertoire, 'The Taming of the Shrew' was the only one witnessed. A very, very, memorable occasion. Have never wanted to see it done again." The finality of this retrospective statement in a scrapbook that focuses on the years 1903–13 but concludes with items from 1921 suggests that the annotation was made in the course of a retrospective perusal of the album some years after its initial compilation.

Theatre historians today rarely cite the opinions of past audience members who were not professional drama critics, and many researchers assume that such views went undocumented in the days before fan clubs and online reviewing. Annotated theatrical scrapbooks can remedy this deficit through remarks that range from the laconic to the loquacious. Some reveal that theatregoers cared more about their seat location or who accompanied them to the play than about the plays themselves, or at least found it easier to list such information than to pass judgment on what they saw. Even those results are not as meager as they may at first seem. Annotated albums that record seat locations help us understand compilers' economic resources and the relative appeal of different shows. Lists of attendees demonstrate that people often went to the theatre in surprisingly large groups; the compiler of Scrapbook 111, for example, saw a 1910 performance of *The Melting Pot* with nine people (see also 37, 62, 77).

In many instances, scrapbooks provide a rare insight into audience reactions. On seeing Mrs. Leslie Carter in *Zaza* in 1899, the compiler of Scrapbook 77 wrote, under "Impressions of the Play," that it was "A very naughty play—but very fascinating." Interestingly, this was one of the rare plays that she attended alone and an even rarer occasion on which she sat in the aisle, noting that the house was "standing room only." Annotations often underscore the extent to which spectators cared more about performers than about the works performed, since many compilers ignored the preprinted rubrics that asked for their impressions of the play, offering instead their impressions of the players. The compiler of Scrapbook 77, for example, commented on a page devoted to an 1899 performance of *Rip Van Winkle*, "Delightful—Joe Jefferson inimitable" under the heading "Impressions of the Play," ignoring the more appropriate rubrics provided for assessing "the performance" and "individual actors" (see Figure 5).

The compiler of Scrapbook 144 used her album to hone her critical skills, beginning with the banal but charming observation that *Aida* is "an awful heavy

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

play." By the end of the book, she was offering more pungent comments on a 1913 performance of *The Lady of the Slipper:* "I don't just see why it should be called a '*Modern* Cinderella.' I should say almost the same old fairy-tale. . . . *Ancient* Cinderella." The same compiler handmade a storyboard booklet for the stage version of Louis Joseph Vance's *The Fortune Hunter* by writing captions for each production still; these identified dramatis personae and repurposed key lines of the novel's text as dialogue, stage directions, and plot summary (Figure 8).



Figure 8.
Handwritten dialogue and narration added to production stills of *The Fortune Hunter* (with John Barrymore and Mary Ryan). SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.144, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Scrapbooks as History

What can theatrical scrapbooks teach us about the history of performance? First, they are a trove of information about the economics, geography, and sociology of theatre spectatorship. Albums tell us how often compilers went to which theatres, what kinds of performance they attended, who accompanied them, where they sat, and where they went before and after the show. Most albums include numerous theatre programs whose advertisements for pawnshops or pianos offer hints about the social class of the venue's clientele and help us reconstruct the surprisingly long history of practices such as celebrity endorsements of consumer goods, usually cosmetics and cigarettes. Scrapbooks inform us when theatres introduced electricity (68), what tickets cost, how seating arrangements varied, and what the promotional books, photographs, and sheet music sold in theatre lobbies were like. For example, Scrapbook 61 includes a program from an 1887 performance of *Arcadia* that vaunts the sale at each performance of "Cabinet Photographs of Corinne, as 'Tom-Tom,' also a beautiful book, entitled 'Corinne, a Child of the Stage,' a story of her life, with illustrations" and alerts the audience that they can buy the sheet music from the waltzes played during the intermission from "the libretto boys in the audience."

Scrapbooks also have much to teach us about key areas in theatre studies such as national, gendered, and racial performance. On the national front, scrapbooks register how the global and the regional inflected American theatre, offering abundant information about how extensively British performers and plays made their way across the United States and how often U.S. playwrights translated and adapted French and German plays in the days before international dramatic copyright (37, 61, 68). Albums also attest to regional variations in the degree to which drama was a global, transnational enterprise: although theatres in Philadelphia and New York frequently advertised plays as "adapted from the French" (61, 68), theatres in Columbus were less likely to present such works, and when they did so, they rarely highlighted their French origins in promotional materials. Albums demonstrate that the United States had a national theatre culture in which many plays and performers toured the entire country on a regular basis, but they also point to local variations within a single state: in Ohio, an Akron theatre might advertise a play or star as "Southern" (46), whereas Columbus and Cleveland theatres vaunted the New York origins of their productions.

Scrapbooks have much to offer those interested in gender and theatre. Though we now think of scrapbooking as a primarily female occupation, roughly a third of the books in the TRI collection whose contributors can be identified were men, and albums compiled by men and women both show an interest in male performers. Scrapbooks also attest to how frequently actresses donned male garb at the turn of the century. Scholars interested in women's long-standing contributions to playwriting and stage production can benefit from the abundance and catholicity of information in these sources. Though none of the TRI scrapbooks focuses on women as writers, directors, or producers, one nonetheless finds many mentions of women working as costume designers, set designers, and choreographers from the 1880s to the 1920s, as well as reminders that several actresses, including Amelia Bingham, Maxine Elliott, and Mrs. Fiske, successfully managed their own

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

theatre companies (3, 68, 70, 82, 86). Scrapbooks also help bring the figure of the female playwright into historical focus. Many of us may know that one of the longest-running Broadway hits of the 1920s, *Abie's Irish Rose*, was written by a woman, Anne Nichols; TRI albums demonstrate that this fact was well known and was advertised to audiences at the time. Scrapbook 17, for example, contains material referring to Nichols as "Broadway's only stage directress" and vaunting her "$1,000,000 hit." Several TRI albums also contain materials related to plays by Rachel Crothers and Zoe Akins (8) as well as by women now best remembered as novelists, such as Frances Hodgson Burnett (106, 111), attesting that theatregoers went to see works by women even when reviewers gave them a tepid reception.

Theatrical scrapbooks have much to teach us about another key area in theatre studies: racial performance. The TRI albums alert us to works that are now more or less forgotten but were popular in their day, such as *L'Article 47*, a hit for Clara Morris as Cora the Creole in 1872, which was reprised with Helen Blythe in Columbus in the late 1880s (51). Other albums contain interesting early examples of white performers sharing the stage with African American ones (81). Scholars are now beginning to recognize that white women participated fairly actively in minstrel shows, even performing in blackface, and several TRI albums corroborate this (3, 46). Other albums show white female performers deliberately adopting African American material and performance styles. The handwritten caption to an image from Scrapbook 51, for example, describes actress May Irwin, who is depicted in a pose of fixed concentration, "learning coon songs in her city apartments with 'Sarah' as her critic" (Figure 9).

Scrapbooks also remind us that white and black were not the only vectors of cross-racial performance. Although much has been written about blackface performance, scrapbooks reveal that yellowface was also a prevalent convention on the middlebrow stage. In the TRI albums, one encounters Alla Nazimova in *Red Lantern* (8), DeWolf Hopper playing the Regent of Siam (46), and Fay Bainter, one of many white women who played Topsy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, cast as Asian in several productions (8). Scrapbook 172, which was kept by a booking agent who took detailed notes rating vaudeville circuit performers, not only commented on numerous blackface minstrel acts but also recorded his impressions of "the Colored Chinaman and the Cook," both roles that were played by African American men.

A full history of the representation of Asians in U.S. and British theatre has yet to be written, but our sense of post-1945 works such as *South Pacific* and *Flower Drum Song* changes when we realize that lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II, the grandson of theatrical impresario Oscar Hammerstein, was probably well aware of the orientalist musical comedies and spectacles that were one of the most popular, durable genres of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here, as so often, scrapbooks tell us what actual theatregoers saw, not what critical canons later memorialized—and theatregoers were seeing *San Toy* and *Chu Chin Chow*. Scrapbooks also demonstrate that the popularity of such shows consisted not merely in the large numbers of tickets sold but also in the range of theatregoers purchasing them. The ubiquity of programs for *San Toy* and *Chu Chin Chow* across the TRI corpus shows that these plays were able to attract theatregoers

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

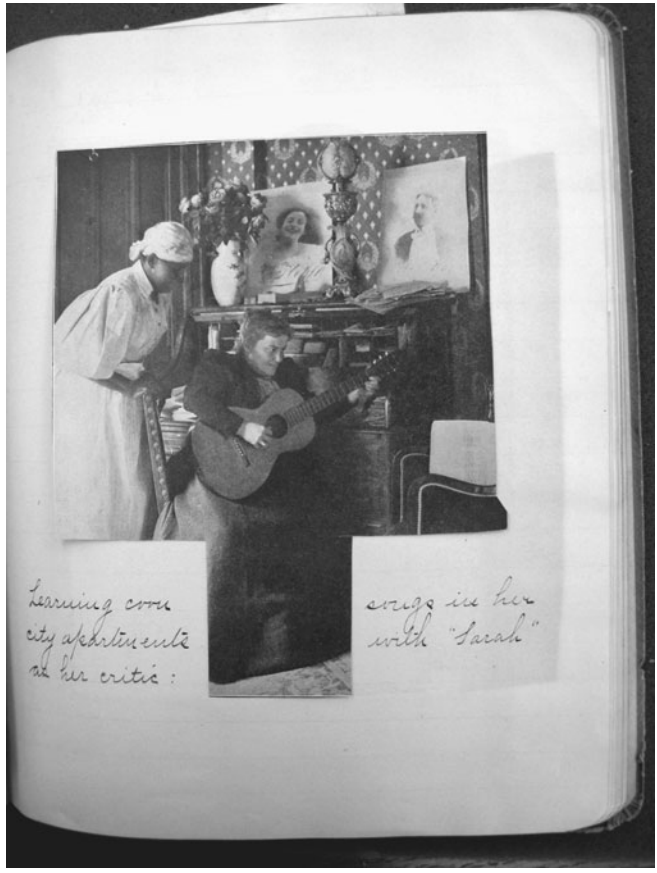


Figure 9.
The caption to this image of May Irwin reads "Learning coon songs in her city apartment with 'Sarah' as her critic." SPEC.TRI.SCRAPBOOK.81, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

with otherwise widely divergent tastes. Scrapbooks also attest to the many imitations those two hits spawned—including but not limited to *A Trip to Chinatown*, *Wang*, *The Geisha*, *Pearl of Pekin*, *Said Pasha*, *The Begum*, and *The Darling of the Gods*. These works have received some attention from scholars interested in orientalism and performance and merit even more, given what the archive tells us about their impact on popular culture.[8]

Scrapbooks constitute a vernacular history of performance organized around the performers, plays, and playwrights who appealed to audiences rather than those who appealed to drama critics or scholars. Most compilers showed interest

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

in actors who are still studied today, but many were also passionate about performers who are now mostly forgotten—Mazie Follette, Della Fox, Amelia Bingham. The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century performers who fascinate us now were not necessarily those who captivated audiences then. If scrapbooks reflect audience tastes accurately, we should be paying far more attention, for example, to Julia Marlowe, Ethel Barrymore, E. H. Sothern, John Drew, and Laurette Taylor. Lillie Langtry and Mrs. Potter received terrible reviews when they toured the United States in the late 1880s, but that did not deter the compiler of Scrapbook 61 from seeing both of them multiple times—a caution against using drama criticism to gauge popularity and impact. Similarly, scrapbooks teach us that audiences adored (as they still adore) genres that critics despise and scholars neglect, such as light musical comedies, religious spectacles, and military shows.

Finally, scrapbooks are invaluable sources for the history of celebrity. They definitively prove that a global star system linking France, Great Britain, and the United States existed before the rise of film and the studio system. Even more valuably, they give us a rare view of late nineteenth-century celebrity culture from the perspective of fans, who indulged their desire to get close to stars by accumulating, manipulating, and arranging representations of them. Photographs of stage actors were precursors of the close-up, and like that cinematic technique, such images enabled spectators to feel more intimate with a star's image than they could ever feel to the actual star onstage. In Figure 10, the cropping of the large photograph of Julia Marlowe's face on the right-hand page, already in extreme close-up and looking directly at the camera, brings the performer's image nearer to the album viewer than she would have appeared even to a theatre spectator using opera glasses.

Many albums position their compilers not simply as viewers seeking to approach actors but also as directors using images of stars to make or stage a scene on the album page. Scrapbooks represent the fan's dual impulse to exalt and diminish the star: compilers magnified stars by lavishing attention on them but reduced them to images smaller than life; they captured them on the page, stilling their bodies and silencing their voices, but also made efforts to animate the page and turn the album into a form of toy theatre.

For some compilers, getting closer to and animating the star involved reworking some aspect of a photograph, playbill, or article by hand, thus turning the consumption of representations that existed in multiple copies into the production of unique, artisanal objects, restoring what Walter Benjamin called the "aura" to the very objects whose mechanical reproducibility made aura seem a thing of the premodern past. The compiler of Scrapbook 51 copied by hand a poem used in a play and pasted her manuscript into an album page otherwise filled with printed matter. Other compilers colored images by hand (9, 85). Another painstakingly applied glitter to a handwritten inscription on a postcard. In an album devoted to the history of theatre and film in Columbus, Joseph Bernhard transcribed newspaper and magazine articles, reproduced the printed lettering of theatre programs by hand, and drew copies of photos and lithographs, noting the date and time when he completed each page of his artisanal book (41).

By far the most common form of achieving intimacy with stars and reanimating them by hand was the cutout photograph, which increased the viewer's

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

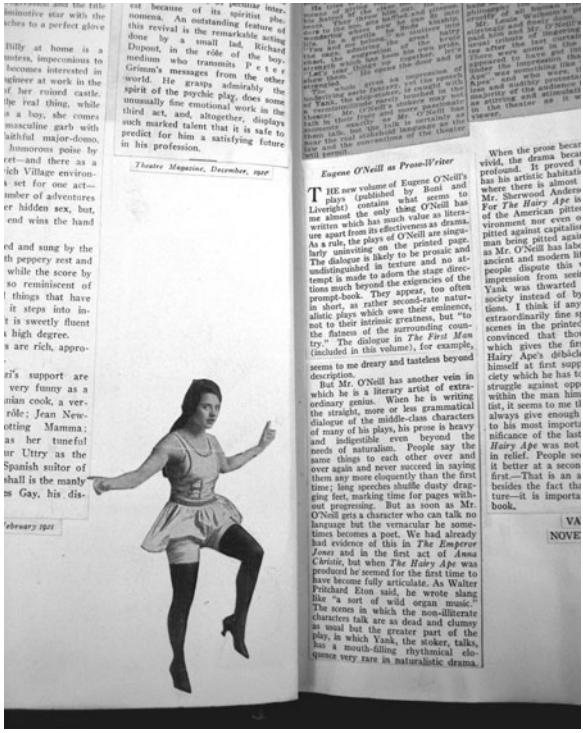


Figure 10.
A Julia Marlowe spread. SPEC.TRI.SCRAPBOOK.111, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

ability to project presence onto flat, still, black-and-white representations. Numerous compilers liberated images of actors from rectilinear frames, using deft scissor work to emphasize how the dynamic, fluid contours of images endowed performing bodies with the illusion of motion. The resulting images embodied not only the actors depicted in them but also the hands and eyes of compilers whose dexterity, concentration, and sensual awareness enabled them to reproduce the curve of a waist and each wave of the hair. It is as though the compilers were sculpting paper dolls, miniature versions of actors for their own personal delectation, as in Figure 11, from Scrapbook 72. In these instances, compilers transformed static, two-dimensional newsprint images, their halftone dots sometimes visible, into animated simulacra.

In some cases, cutouts stand in relative isolation, with ample negative space around them; sometimes they overlap with other images; and sometimes they are collaged onto text (Figure 12). In a few cases, compilers ignore the outlines of the actor's face or body and instead elaborate a new frame in the shape of a heart or a letter (79). In all of these cases, the isolation of the actor's figure from a preexisting background transfers the performer's image into an environment of the compiler's own making. The most interesting and gifted scrapbook compilers had

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Theatre Magazine, December, 1926

Eugene O'Neill as Prose-Writer

THE new volume of Eugene O'Neill's plays (published by Boni and Liveright) contains what seems to me almost the only thing O'Neill has written which has much value as literature apart from its effectiveness as drama. As a rule, the plays of O'Neill are singularly uninviting on the printed page. The dialogue is likely to be prosaic and undistinguished in texture and no attempt is made to adorn the stage directions much beyond the exigencies of the prompt-book. They appear, too often in short, as rather second-rate naturalistic plays which owe their eminence, not to their intrinsic greatness, but "to the flatness of the surrounding country." The dialogue in *The First Man* (included in this volume), for example, seems to me dreary and tasteless beyond description.

But Mr. O'Neill has another vein in which he is a literary artist of extraordinary genius. When he is writing the straight, more or less grammatical dialogue of the middle-class characters of many of his plays, his prose is heavy and indigestible even beyond the needs of naturalism. People say the same things to each other over and over again and never succeed in saying them any more eloquently than the first time; long speeches shuffle dusty dragging feet, marking time for pages without progressing. But as soon as Mr. O'Neill gets a character who can talk no language but the vernacular he sometimes becomes a poet. We had already had evidence of this in *The Emperor Jones* and in the first act of *Anna Christie*, but when *The Hairy Ape* was produced he seemed for the first time to have become fully articulate. As Walter Pritchard Eaton said, he wrote slang like "a sort of wild organ music." The scenes in which the non-illiterate characters talk are as dead and clumsy as usual but the greater part of the play, in which Yank, the stoker, talks, has a mouth-filling rhythmical eloquence very rare in naturalistic drama.

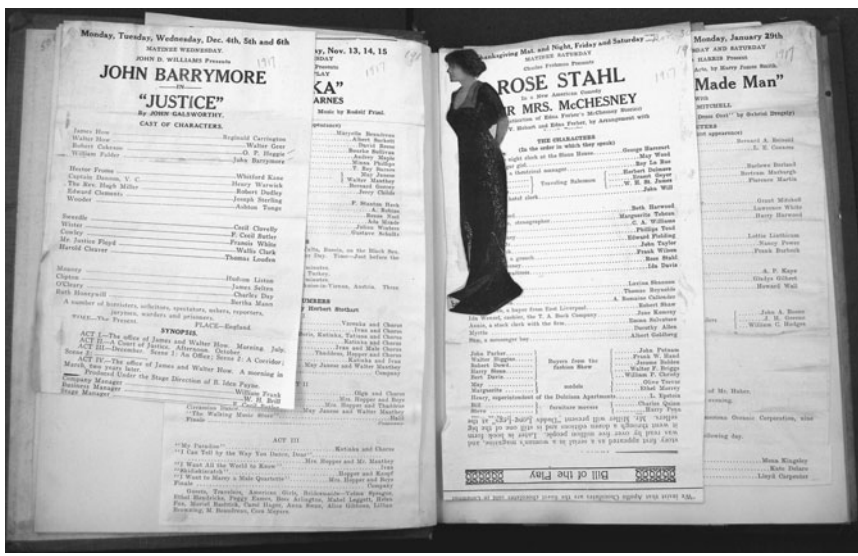
When the prose becam vivid, the drama becam profound. It proved t has his artistic habitati where there is almost Mr. Sherwood Anders For *The Hairy Ape* is of the American pitte vironment nor even o pitted against capitalis man being pitted again as Mr. O'Neill has labo ancient and modern li people dispute this impression from nea Yank was thwarted society instead of b tions. I think if any extraordinarily fine s scenes in the printe convinced that sho which gives the fir Hairy Ape's débâch himself at first supp ciety which he has t struggle against opp within the man him list, it seems to me t always give enough to his most importa nificance of the last *Hairy Ape* was not in relief. People se it better at a secon first.—That is an a besides the fact tha ture—it is importa book.

VA

NOVE

Figure 11. *(left).* Mitzi Hajos in *Head over Heels* points to text describing her later show *Lady Billy*. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.72, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

Figure 12. *(below).* Rose Stahl superimposed on a playbill for *Our Mrs. McChesney.* SPEC. TRI. SCRAPBOOK.65, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.



https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

compositional skills that imbued static images with kinetic energy. In the example discussed earlier, cutting around the outlines of the performers' bodies lends an already dynamic image an additional level of simulated motion (see Figure 3). Some compilers accentuated that dynamism by singling out images that appear to be bursting out of the page (Figure 13). Often compilers carefully juxtaposed figures with frontal, right profile, and left profile orientations so that one appears to gaze at another across the page or to look beyond the page into the space adjacent to the book or coincident with the viewer holding it (Figure 14). In another example (Figure 15), the deliberate overlapping of the hand in the image on the right onto the image of the boat on the left gives the impression that an actress from one production still is reaching out toward actors from another. The canny combination of the contrastive shading in the printed images with the bright line of negative space between them lends a startling illusion of depth to this composition.

Conclusion

Scrapbooks can improve our understanding of existing paradigms, render more vivid what we already know, and surprise us into novel discoveries. Turning to a scrapbook to find material about a specific play or performer can be frustrating because the absence of adequate catalogs and indices means that most albums must be searched manually. Fortunately, there is something to learn from each page. One arrives looking for Sarah Bernhardt, one departs having found Mazie Follette—one of the several lesser-known performers whose images the compiler of Scrapbook 79 placed in the back pages of an album whose front section focused on the venerable French actress. Nor is there any lack of valuable material about the usual suspects: the TRI scrapbooks include dozens of items about Sarah Bernhardt that are not, to my knowledge, reproduced elsewhere.

One of my most interesting discoveries during the month I spent with the TRI scrapbooks was a negative one: the absence of Bernhardt material, especially performance ephemera, in the majority of these albums. Cross-referencing the chronological and geographical spans of the TRI albums with the dates of Bernhardt's U.S. tours reveals that many compilers did not register seeing her perform even when they lived in cities that she visited and even when their albums demonstrated that they had the financial resources to attend costly shows. The sparseness of the annotations in most albums makes it difficult to interpret this gap. A TRI ledger from the Great Southern Theatre proves that on at least one occasion when Bernhardt came to Columbus, in 1917, she was one of the highest earners of the fiscal year. Did Bernhardt plays sell out so fast that many compilers were unable to obtain tickets? Were those who rarely went to the theatre more interested in her than were regular attendees? Was Bernhardt ephemera too precious to subject to the destructive adhesives used to fix materials in scrapbooks?

Scrapbooks additionally help us situate Bernhardt's stardom not only in relation to her great predecessors and rivals, such as Modjeska, but also in relation to a bevy of lesser-known imitators, such as Fanny Davenport and Mademoiselle Hortense Rhéa. All three actresses often appeared in the same towns as Bernhardt a

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 13.
Nellie Butler bursting out of the page. SPEC.TRI.SCRAPBOOK.78, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.

Figure 14.
Clippings of Julia Marlowe as Lady Macbeth. SPEC.TRI. SCRAPBOOK.111, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, The Ohio State University.



https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press



Figure 15.

Beatrice Michelena in the 1915 film of *Salvation Nell* reaches into a still from another movie. SPEC.TRI.SCRAPBOOK.2, Scrapbook Collection, Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee Theatre Re search Institute, The Ohio State University.

few months after she did, performing many of the same roles (see 61). Because scrapbooks contextualize performers instead of isolating them, they also reveal that each new generation of actresses had its Bernhardt imitator—Olga Nethersole, Nazimova, Theda Bara—who raised the specter of Bernhardt's obsolescence but never managed to supplant her. Indeed, the appearance of young pseudo-Bernhardts may have underscored her continuing appeal as the originator of an enduring type, with each imitator functioning as a surrogate for the star herself, who despite her active touring schedule might still be seen in some U.S. cities only once or twice per decade.

Theatrical scrapbooks provided me with new theses and puzzles about Bernhardt's career as a celebrity as well as her work as a performer. Album clippings confirm that by the 1880s, Bernhardt had become a standard for measuring other actresses, but they also establish some surprising comparison points. For example, Mrs. Leslie Carter was billed as the "American Sarah Bernhardt" (2), and Cosima von Wagner, not herself an actress, was dubbed a Sarah Bernhardt type (39). Although multiple albums spanning decades contain materials that

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

affirm Bernhardt as a superlative actress, they also reveal that she was far from being the most beloved star. Actresses such as Elsie Janis, Julia Marlowe, Ethel Barrymore, and Maude Adams inspired much more devotion in compilers. Where Bernhardt emerges as unparalleled is in her ability to set the terms of her celebrity. The vast actress iconography provided by scrapbooks shows that Bernhardt was unique among her 1880s and 1890s peers in the frequency with which she had herself photographed as herself rather than in costume for a role, a practice that other stars began to adopt after 1900. Albums also help us to discern other ways that Bernhardt created a distinctive image. For example, she almost completely eschewed the practice, common for many actresses, of being photographed in front of a mirror.

Theatrical scrapbooks are pedagogical tools as well as aids to research. Any course on theatre would benefit from exposing students to scrapbooks, because an hour or two spent leafing through them illustrates better than any textbook the centrality of theatre to people's lives and conveys the look of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century players, productions, and theatres. Scrapbooks offer traces of the experience of theatregoing, turning encounters between live bodies into scraps of text and image that each album recombines into a provisional unit. Like the photographs that fill them, scrapbooks combine vivid immediacy with indelible absence and loss: someone went to the theatre, saw a play, took programs as souvenirs, foraged in newspapers and magazines for clippings, and sorted and arranged their finds in these books, but we will never who those compilers were, never see what they saw, never know for whom their albums were intended. They were almost certainly not intended for us, the theatre historians of the twenty-first century, yet for that very reason they offer us unique access to an elusive theatrical past—not as transparent windows onto history, but as situated sources that advertise the preferences, desires, and obsessions that lie at the heart of any performance culture.

ENDNOTES

1. Ellen Gruber Garvey, *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 210–11.

2. The Scrapbook Collection at the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute (TRI) of The Ohio State University currently contains 172 items. The parenthesized numbers that appear in the text refer to the item numbers for this collection.

3. Scrapbooks 1–33 were donated to the TRI by Burrill Henry Leffingwell and thus are referred to here as the Leffingwell albums.

4. Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia P. Buckler, eds., *The Scrapbook in American Life* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Garvey. For a rare discussion of the scrapbook as a useful source in theatre history, see "*e-Interpreting*: The Audience as Cultural Repository," in which Lynne Conner compares two annotated theatrical scrapbooks from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to contemporary ways of digitally registering audience response; *Theatre Annual* 65 (2012), 19–34.

5. On the history of scrapbooks, see Tucker et al.; Garvey.

6. For an example of a text-heavy theatrical scrapbook that covers the 1790s through the 1820s, see Scrapbook 4, Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum Records, 1910–1971, Columbia University

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Rare Book & Manuscript Library, New York, NY. For an illustration of how text-heavy albums persisted into the 1870s, see the Edwin Booth Scrapbooks 1865–1868, 1870–71, 1871–73, Hampden–Booth Theatre Library, New York, NY.

7. See Garvey, 60–86.

8. See Krystyn R. Moon, *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s–1920s* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040557413000069 Published online by Cambridge University Press