

MS 11

Papers of Loudon Sainthill

- Summary
 - Administrative Information
 - Biographical Note
 - Associated Content
 - Series List and Description
 - Box/Folder Description
-

Summary

Creator: Loudon Sainthill and Harry Tatlock Miller

Title: Papers of Loudon Sainthill

Date range: 1938-1969

Reference number: MS11

Extent: 3 boxes + 4 large polypropylene boxes + 1 oversized box and 1 buckram-covered large binder

Overview

The collection comprises programmes, photographs, ephemera, correspondence and papers that had been retained by Loudon Sainthill and Harry Tatlock Miller. They are arranged according to Sainthill's original order of source and/or date.

Keywords

Ballets Russes, Monte Carlo Russian Ballet, Colonel W. de Basil's Monte Carlo

Russian Ballet

Key Names

Loudon Sainthill, Harry Tatlock Miller, Rex de Charembac Nan Kivell, Colonel W. de Basil

Administrative Information

Access

Contact the National Gallery of Australia Research Library reference desk librarians.

Phone +61 2 6240 6530

Email rlr@nga.gov.au

Provenance

During 1988 and 1989 James Mollison, then Director of the Australian National Gallery, corresponded and met with Harry Tatlock Miller, a close associate of Loudon Sainthill, regarding the Sainthill papers in his possession. These were donated to the then named Australian National Gallery by Harry Tatlock Miller on 6 February 1989.

Preferred Citation Note

MS 11 Papers of Loudon Sainthill [Box number: folder number], National Gallery of Australia Research Library Archives, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

Biographical Note

Loudon Sainthill was born in 1919, Hobart, Tasmania, and spent his early school years in Melbourne. Sainthill was greatly influenced by the theatre after seeing performances of Colonel W. de Basil's Monte Carlo Russian Ballet in the late 1930s. He was drawn to the colour and settings used on the stage, which was reflected in his first exhibition of paintings in Melbourne in 1939. That same year he travelled with the ballet company to London where Rex de Charembac Nan Kivell, director of the Redfern Gallery, successfully exhibited his paintings. Sainthill was mainly self-educated; his art studies at the Art School of the Melbourne Technical College lasted for a relatively short time.

After befriending Colonel W. de Basil and many of the dancers in the company, Sainthill was approached with a commission to design Serge Lifar's *Icare*. The commission was, however, eventually secured for Sidney Nolan by Lifar and Peter Bellew. Sainthill did succeed in obtaining a commission for Nina Verchinina's *Etude*, although Sainthill's designs were not used for performances.

Following the completion of the 1939-1940 tour of the Original Ballets Russes, Sainthill travelled with the company to London. Returning to Australia in the early 1940's Loudon served as a private in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps (RAAMC), began exhibiting at Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, and became a member of the Merioola Group an artists' colony at Merioola. During 1941 Sainthill received a series of commissions from Hélène Kirsova to create costumes and set designs for the Kirsova Ballet, including *A Dream – and a Fairy Tale*, *Faust*, *Les Matelots*, and *Vieux Paris*. These designs are now held by the National Gallery of Australia (NGA).

In 1945 Sainthill provided a large suite of costume designs for the Art Gallery of NSW exhibition *A History of Costume from 4000 B.C. to 1945 A.D.*, which were subsequently purchased, by public subscription, for the AGNSW. During the 1947-1949 Ballet Rambert dance company's Australian tour, Sainthill collaborated with other artists on producing printed material for the company.

For further online resources relating to Sainthill's printed work for the Ballet Rambert tour see the National Library of Australia's online exhibition *Dance people dance*, ['Artistic impact \(Item 7\)'](#).

In 1949 Sainthill returned to London, where he undertook his first professional engagement as a costume and set designer for a production of *The Tempest*, at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon. This 1951 production was directed by Michael Benthall and reprised in 1952 and 1953. Sainthill designed three further productions in 1951, including *Coppelia* for Sadler's Wells Ballet, London. This was followed by *Le Coq d'or* (1954) for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, directed by Robert Helpmann, and The Sleeping Princess ballet sequence for the Korda Film production of *The Man who Loved Redheads* (1954).

Over the course of his career Sainthill designed sets and costumes for almost fifty productions for opera, ballet, film, revue, pantomime, and musical performances in England and the USA. He died in 1969 in London.

Associated Content

Subject

Loudon Sainthill Archives Exhibitions

Costume history

Ballet companies, Great Britain

Marie Rambert ballet

Theatre programs

Ballet Russes

Relationship to the National Gallery of Australia Research Library

The National Gallery of Australia Research Library Archives also hold MS10 Papers of Hélène Kirsova which related directly to this collection. Other Ballets Russes material held in the research library Archives include MS68 Papers of Paul Jellard, MS69 Papers of Costumes and decors for Diaghilev and de Basil ballets and MS41 Papers of Florence and Kathleen Martin.

Relationship to the National Gallery of Australia Collection

The National collection holds drawings of costume and set designs of over 1000 items and is held under Theatre arts, Australia Collection: The Loudon Sainthill archive of his theatre costume and set designs, acquired 1976.

Series List and Descriptions

Series 1 - Theatre programmes, exhibition catalogues, newspaper cuttings

Box 1 Folders 1 – 7; Large Folders 1 – 4

Contains an extensive series of programmes relating to Sainthill's activities as a theatrical designer in England. Productions which are represented by programmes in this collection include *The Lyric Review* (1951), *The Tempest* (1951), *A Phoenix too Frequent* (1951), *Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, 1952*, *The Tragedy of King Richard II* (1952), *The Globe Review* (1952), *The Lyric and*

Globe Review (1953), *The Apple Cart* (1953), *A Women of No Importance* (1953), *The Night of the Ball* (1954), *Tiger at the Gates*(1955), *The Night of the Ball* (1955), *Romeo and Juliet* (1955), *Othello* (1955), *The Jazz Train* (1955), *Antony and Cleopatra* (1956), *The Merchant of Venice* (1957) starring Robert Helpmann, *King Henry VIII* (1957), *Expresso Bongo* (1958), *Flesh to a Tiger* (1958), *Cinderella* (1958), *Aladdin* (1959) directed and choreographed by Robert Helpmann, *Fine Fettle* (1959), *Othello* (1959), *Belle* (1961), *Semi-Detached* (1962), *Sail Away* (1962), *Half a Sixpence* (1963), *Hughie* (1963), *Fielding?s Music Hall Revue* (1964), *The Wings of the Dove* (1964), *The Right Honourable Gentleman* (1966), *Canterbury Tales* (1967), *The Four Musketeers* (1967), *Canterbury Tales*, and *Houdini: Man of Magic* (1979).

In addition there is a photocopied list of 'Productions Designed by Loudon Sainthill' as included in *Loudon Sainthill: Memorial Exhibition* catalogue, and a copy of Tatlock Miller (ed.), *The Old Vic Theatre Company: a tour of Australia and New Zealand* ([London]: British Council, 1948), which was designed and decorated by Loudon Sainthill.

Exhibition catalogues

A small series of exhibition catalogues relating to the Loudon Sainthill Memorial Exhibition at David Jones Art Gallery, Sydney 1973.

Newspaper cuttings

A selection of press articles from various Australian newspapers relating to Sainthill's career, including articles relating to his exhibitions and theatrical reviews. Also included are an invitation and flyer for the 1973 Redfern Gallery, London exhibition *The Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Designs for the Theatre*. Obituaries are included.

Series 2 - Correspondence

Box 2 Folders 1 - 7

The series contains letters from many notable Australian art figures and reflects Sainthill's theatrical and literary interests. These correspondents include Roy

Alderson, Luciana Arrighi, Michael Benthall, Lillian Browse, Charles Cochrane, Noel Coward, Joan Evershed and Harry Tatlock Miller.

Other notable correspondents are those who offered their condolences to Harry Tatlock Miller after Loudon Sainthill's death. These include Katherine Hepburn, Cecil Beaton and Vivien Leigh.

Series 3 – Photographs

Box 3 Folders 1 – 9; Oversized box; Buckram-covered Folder

This series comprises photographs of Loudon Sainthill and actors and dancers performing in various theatre productions in Australia and abroad, 1949-1958. These include photographs of costume and set designs by Loudon Sainthill, and approximately sixty for dance productions including those for Kirsova's *Faust*, *A Dream and a Fairy Tale*, and *Vieux Paris*.

Photographs of Loudon Sainthill Memorial Exhibition, 1972

Photographs of the set of *The Apple Cart*, 1953

Photographs of the set of *Orpheus Descending*, 1958