

# Laura Drake Seattle Historic Theaters Project Oral History Collection, 1980-2000

## Overview of the Collection

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Creator</b>                     | Drake, Laura Ann  |
| <b>Title</b>                       | Laura Drake Seattle Historic Theaters Project Oral History Collection   |
| <b>Dates</b>                       | 1980-2000 (inclusive)<br>1980 2000  |
| <b>Quantity</b>                    | .42 cubic feet (2 boxes)  |
| <b>Collection Number</b>           | 5209 (Accession No. 5209-001)   |
| <b>Summary</b>                     | Oral history interviews with stage performers, audience members, and a theater manager involved with vaudeville in Seattle.   |
| <b>Repository</b>                  | <a href="#">University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections</a><br>Special Collections<br>University of Washington Libraries<br>Box 352900<br>Seattle, WA<br>98195-2900<br>Telephone: 206-543-1929<br>Fax: 206-543-1931<br><a href="mailto:speccoll@uw.edu">speccoll@uw.edu</a> |
| <b>Access Restrictions</b>         | The collection is open to the public.   |
| <b>Additional Reference Guides</b> | <a href="#">View inventory/container list for this accession</a>  |
| <b>Languages</b>                   | English   |

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## Biographical Note

Laura Ann Drake is a professional actor in theater, film, and television. In 2001 she opened Stage Struck, a theater school for young people. She spent her formative years in Minnesota and since 1978 has lived on the West Coast, in Los Angeles, and Seattle.

Drake's study of historic theater, especially vaudeville, started in 1979 with a City of Seattle "Artist-In-the-City" grant. Through her research, Drake wrote, directed, and produced a play about the history of vaudeville in Seattle. In Los Angeles during the 1980s, she met and directed many older performers (some ex-vaudevillians) in a play about their lives. Realizing the importance of the theater history she had collected over the years, Drake began to teach the history of vaudeville in public schools through cultural education grants from the King County Arts Commission. Drake wrote a play about vaudeville for her students and Roosevelt High School students. It was performed at the Moore Theatre, one of Seattle's oldest performing venues.

## Content Description

The collection consists of seven interviews conducted by Laura Ann Drake with stage performers, audience members, and a theater manager, all of whom were involved primarily with vaudeville in Seattle and elsewhere on the West Coast. Drake taped the interviews on audio cassette tapes with support from a special projects grant from the King County Landmarks and Heritage Commission in 1999-2000. All recordings were made in 2000, with the exception of the Ted Harris interview, which was made circa 1979 or 1980. Each audio interview is accompanied by a transcript, transcript index, and biography. Photocopied materials, including photographs, also supplement some interviews.

## Use of the Collection

### Restrictions on Use

The creator's literary rights have been transferred to the University of Washington Libraries.

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Donated by Laura Ann Drake in November, 2000.

### Processing Note

Processed by Gene Polhamus in September 2003.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Overview, circa 2000

Box-folder1/1

### Transcripts and Summaries

| Container(s) | Description   | Dates         |
|--------------|---|---------------|
| Box/Folder   |   |               |
| 1/2          | Albin, Dolores<br><i>Albin, Dolores</i> , dancer, singer, comedian. Starting in 1916, Dolores Albin performed in a vaudeville song and dance act in Chicago. After her family moved to Los Angeles, she became part of "Dolores and Eddy", a vaudeville act booked through the Fanchon and Marco circuit. Later, Dolores was part of the three-person Adagio Act, where she was thrown between two men as part of the dance act. The group performed with the Paramount Publix Units, playing Paramount Theatres all over the country. This interview was taped in Los Angeles. | July 17, 2000 |

| Container(s) | Description   | Dates           |
|--------------|---|-----------------|
| 1/3          | <p>Cody, Mora Lucille<br/> <i>Cody, Mora Lucille</i> , audience member. Starting when she was five years old, Mora Cody went to see vaudeville, live music, and silent films in downtown Seattle on a weekly basis. She recalls many vaudeville performers and opera stars, and has detailed memories of Seattle's historic theaters in the 1920s and 1930s. She also knew vaudevillian/stripper Gypsy Rose Lee and jazz singer Peggy Lee as children in West Seattle, where all three grew up.</p>   | April 16, 2000  |
| 1/4          | <p>Frudiger, Thelma N.<br/> <i>Frudiger, Thelma N.</i> , audience member. As a child in the 1910s, Thelma Frudiger and her sister went to see live theater and silent movies quite regularly in Seattle. Mrs. Frudiger shares her memories of performers, musicians, and many early theaters. At eighteen, she started working at the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. In the 1930s she worked for the Seattle Athletic Club, and in 1941 she started working for Boeing at Plant One.</p>  | July 22, 2000   |
| 1/5          | <p>Garner, Paul "Mousie"<br/> <i>Garner, Paul "Mousie,"</i> comedian/pianist. Mousie Garner started performing as a young teenager, and by the age of eighteen he was on the road with a vaudeville act called "Jack Pepper with Mustard and Ketchup." He was also one of the original stage stooges in "Ted Healy and the Three Stooges" in the 1920s and '30s. In the 1940s, Garner served in World War II, and at the end of the war, he toured Europe with the USO show, "Hellzapoppin." In the 1950s, he was under contract with comedic performer Spike Jones for eleven years. Garner vividly remembers his experiences playing the Orpheum and Fox (later the Music Hall) theaters in Seattle. This interview was taped in Las Vegas, Nevada.</p> | January 7, 2000 |
| 1/6          | <p>Harris, Ted<br/> <i>Harris, Ted</i> , audience member and theater manager. In the 1920s, Mr. Harris worked as assistant manager for the Pantages Theatre, located at Third and University in Seattle. Later, Harris ran the Trianon Ballroom. He recalls his job duties at the Pantages, the performers who played there, and theater activity in Seattle during the 1920s and 1930s.</p>  | circa 1980      |
| 1/7          | <p>Leroy, Zoanne M.<br/> <i>Leroy, Zoanne M.</i> , dancer, singer, actor, child of a performer. Zoanne Leroy started performing in vaudeville as a child in Seattle. She and her mother had an act together, and she was billed as "The Miniature Sophie Tucker." Later, Leroy and her</p>  | August 11, 2000 |

| Container(s) | Description   | Dates        |
|--------------|---|--------------|
|              | mother toured in USO shows through parts of California. When she was a teenager, Leroy became part of the Barclay Girls Dance Troupe in Seattle. The troupe performed for returning Korean War soldiers and also performed at the Palomar (originally the Pantages) Theatre. Later Leroy graduated from the University of Washington's Drama Department and began a long and successful stage, film, and television career.   |              |
| 1/8          | Patterson, Gene M.<br><i>Patterson, Gene M.</i> , audience member, child of a theater manager. Gene Patterson's father was the manager of the Orpheum Theatre in Seattle and the Paramount Theatre in Portland, Oregon, and her family was close to theater architect, B. Marcus Priteca. She remembers film and live performance theaters in Seattle during the 1930s and 1940s. She also discusses her father's life and remarks that going to the movies in the luxurious theaters of the time was a special occasion. | May 12, 2000 |

## Interviews on Audio Cassette Tape

| Container(s) | Description                                | Dates           |
|--------------|--|-----------------|
| Box          |  |                 |
| 2            | Albin, Dolores                             | July 17, 2000   |
| 2            | Cody, Mora Lucille                         | April 16, 2000  |
| 2            | Frudiger, Thelma N.                        | July 22, 2000   |
| 2            | Garner, Paul "Mousie"<br>2 sound cassettes | January 7, 2000 |
| 2            | Harris, Ted<br>2 sound cassettes           | circa 1980      |
| 2            | Leroy, Zoanne M.                           | August 11, 2000 |
| 2            | Patterson, Gene M.<br>2 sound cassettes    | May 12, 2000    |

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Laura Drake Seattle Historic Theaters Project Oral History Collection, 1980-2000  
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv69093>

Actors--Washington (State)--Seattle  
Comedians--Washington (State)--Seattle  
Dancers--Washington (State)--Seattle  
Musicians--Washington (State)--Seattle  
Personal Papers/Corporate Records (University of Washington)  
Theater--History--20th century  
Theater--Interviews  
Theaters--Washington (State)--Seattle  
Theatrical managers--Washington (State)--Seattle

**Personal Names :**

Albin, Dolores, 1906-  
Cody, Mora Lucille, 1919-  
Frudiger, Thelma N., 1905-  
Garner, Paul, 1909-  
Harris, Ted, 1904-  
LeRoy, Zoanne  
Patterson, Gene M., 1928-

**Geographical Names :**

Seattle (Wash.)

**Form or Genre Terms :**

Oral histories  
Sound recordings

**Other Creators :**

**Corporate Names :**

Seattle Historic Theaters Project  
(creator)

2005 (Last modified: 3/12/2016)



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