Lee Blessing:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Blessing, Lee, 1949-
Title: Lee Blessing Papers
Dates: 1960s-1999
Extent: 17 boxes, oversize flat file (7.14 linear feet)
Abstract: The papers consist primarily of typescripts of plays, teleplays, and screenplays spanning the career of this American playwright.
Language: English.
Access: Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Gift, 1999 (Gift no. 11507)
Processed by: Liz Murray, 1999
Repository: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin
Scope and Contents

The papers of American playwright Lee Blessing consist primarily of typescripts of plays, teleplays, and screenplays covering his entire career from his college years in the early 1970s to date. Blessing organized his materials by title, with corresponding publicity, reviews, and associated material, prior to delivery to the Ransom Center. The small amount of correspondence in the collection pertains mostly to collaboration and performance issues.

The collection is organized into two series: Works and Personal. Blessing's scripts, usually a series of dated drafts, are arranged alphabetically, followed by programs and reviews. His critically acclaimed play "A Walk in the Woods" is particularly well-represented. Numerous screenplays, often in collaboration with his wife Jeanne Blake and others, are also present as are teleplays and episodes for television series such as "Picket Fences," "Homicide," and "Nothing Sacred." Posters of performances of Blessing's plays, as well as other's works, are included in the collection, as are slides from performances of several of his plays.

Series II contains material from his high school and college years in the 1960s and 1970s, mostly programs of plays with which he was associated. Blessing's participation in National Playwrights Conferences for nearly twenty years, as well as articles and interviews by him are also present.

Awards, books, serials, and videotapes of performances received with the collection have been transferred to the appropriate custodial units within the Ransom Center.
Series I. Works

"Alive and Kicking," screenplay, with Phyllis Paullette and Jeanne Blake, draft; includes synopsis and revisions, 1 July 1993  
box 1  
folder 1

"Animals," play  
1978  
box 1  
folder 2-3

1980  
folder 4-5

"At the Post Office," photocopy of script, nd  
folder 6

"The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid," play  
1977  
box 1  
folder 7

Revisions, with research notes, 1981 and 1983  
box 2  
folder 1

Programs and reviews  
folder 2-3

Baseball series proposal, 1993  
folder 4

"Chesapeake," play  
1 July 1998  
box 2  
folder 5

2 Aug. 1998  
folder 6

23 Aug. 1998  
folder 7

Undated version  
folder 8

Programs and reviews  
box 3  
folder 1

"Cobb," play  
1987  
box 3  
folder 2

8 Feb 1989  
folder 3

July 1990  
folder 4

Programs and reviews  
folder 5-6
Blessing, Lee, 1949-

"Cooperstown," screenplay, typescript, undated

Shooting script, March-May, 1992

Programs and reviews

"Creative Writing," screenplay with J. Blake, first draft, includes related piece "Magic Time" [incomplete drafts], 15 April 1996

"Down the Road," play, revision, April 1991

French version

Programs and reviews

"Eleemosynary," play, revision, May 1986

Programs and reviews

"Fortinbras," play, revision, July 1991

Programs and reviews

Programs and reviews (cont'd)

"Going to St. Ives," play, draft, 30 July 1995

Programs and reviews

"Homicide: Life on the Street" television series, "Double Blind" episode, 1996

"Independence," play

One act, 1981

Two acts, 1983 and 1985

French text, "Independence, Iowa," 1985

Programs and reviews
Screenplay, with J. Blake, first draft, 7 Jan. 1996

Interscope project, with J. Blake

"Lake Street Extension," play, revision, Nov. 1992

Programs and reviews

"Live Soap--Minneapolis," with Sherry Kramer and John Richardson, play, programs and reviews, 1983

"Majorie," play, programs and reviews, 1984

"Milo's Arms," screenplay, with J. Blake, draft, Oct. 15

Oct. 31st draft

"A Nearly Perfect Weekend," play, 1986


Programs and reviews

"Nothing Sacred" television series, "Signs and Words" episode, shooting script, Nov.-Dec., 1997

"Oldtimers Game," play, nd

Programs and reviews

"Patient A," play, revision, Feb. 1993

Programs and reviews

"Picket Fences" television series, "Jupiter Himself" and "Upbrinings" episodes, 1995
"Push-ups," play, with Michael Robins and Alfred Harrison, script, programs and reviews, 1982

"The Rights," play, programs and reviews, ca. 1994

"Steal Big, Steal Little," screenplay in collaboration with others

20 Jan. 1994
22 Feb. 1994
12 May 1994
1 Nov. 1994
2 May 1995

"Summer in Clinton," play, 1981

"The Trial of Standing Bear," teleplay, revisions, 1984 and 1986

"Two of Hearts," screenplay with J. Blake, draft, 6 Oct. 1993

"Two Rooms," play, revision, Sept. 1989

Programs and reviews

Adaptation for television, first draft, Dec. 1990

"A Walk in the Woods," play

Script, ca. 1986
June 1986 revision
20 Dec. 1987
Yale Repertory Theatre copy, 20 Dec. 1987
28 Feb. 1988
German version
Russian/English version, 2 copies

Programs and reviews

Broadway, 1988

Foreign, 1990-92

La Jolla, 1987-89

London, 1988-89

PBS, 1989

Regional, 1987-91

Yale, 1987

"War of the Roses," play, 1984 and 1985

German version

Programs and reviews

"The Winning Streak," play

1 Dec. 1998

1999

1 Feb. 1999

1 Feb. 1999

7 May 1999

8 May 1999

Rewrites

Programs and reviews

Posters [removed to oversize flat file]

Slides of performances including "Independence," "Oldtimers Game," and "Two Rooms"
Blessing, Lee, 1949-

**Series II. Personal**

Minnetonka High School and Reed College, 1960s-70s

University of Iowa, Minnesota, and Illinois, 1970s


Conference, cont'd

Articles and interviews