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Mary Sue Jones
Papers, 1931-1992
Bulk: 1949-1992

Collection 009a

28 boxes (14 linear feet)

Acquisition: Donated by Diane and Don Malouf and the Birkhead family

Access: Open for Research.

Processed by: Gwynedd Cannan, November 1993; Inventory revised by Brandy Harris, 2005

Biographical Note

Actress, director, and designer Mary Sue Birkhead Fridge Jones was born on August 24, 1930 in Carthage, Missouri. She entered Baylor University in 1948 as an art student but eventually found her way to the Theater Department under Paul Baker. She received a Master's in Drama in 1955 from Baylor. Mary Sue began student teaching in 1954 and became an integral part of the Paul Baker teaching team. She taught acting and design at Baylor and later followed Baker in his move to Trinity University, where she was an assistant professor.

Mary Sue was present at the founding of the Dallas Theater Center in 1959 and was made assistant director of the facility. She starred in many Dallas Theater Center productions, winning Dallas's Billy Award in 1963 as best actress for her performance in *Sister*. Some of her other starring roles at the Dallas Theater Center were in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Medea*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. She was costume and set designer for *Julius Caesar*, *Journey to Jefferson*, *Macbeth* and *Marat-Sade* to mention only a few. In the 1980s, Baker promoted Mary Sue to associate artistic director and then co-artistic director. Baker, forced to resign from the Dallas Theater Center by the Board of Trustees in 1982, picked Mary Sue as his successor. The Board appointed her interim artistic director until Adrian Hall was hired to fill the position in 1983. Mary Sue then moved to Santa Fe as artist in residence at the College of Santa Fe, where she taught acting and directed at the Greer Garson Theater Center. In 1988, she was made a full time faculty member of the college.

Mary Sue's first marriage was to Roy Fridge, an artist who also created posters for the Dallas Theater Center. Mary Sue divorced Fridge on January 23, 1964 after a long separation. She married Preston Jones on September 7, 1964. Mary Sue Jones died in Santa Fe June 27, 1992.

Scope and Contents

Mary Sue's papers are divided into two series: 1. Texas records; 2. New Mexico records. They span the years from 1931 to 1992 with most of the material dating from the 1960s through the 1980s. Contained here are class notes, scripts, set designs, costume designs, playbills, letters, photographs, records, audiotapes, reports, clippings, magazines, articles, awards, school records, yearbooks, scrapbooks, personal effects, and mementos. The Texas series contains three subseries: Education and Teaching; Acting, Design, and Directing; and Dallas Theater Center Administration.

The first subseries of the Texas files presents information on Mary Sue's education at Baylor University and her teaching of acting and design at both Baylor and Trinity Universities. The second offers a good deal of information on Mary Sue's career as actor, director, and designer at the Dallas Theater Center. The third subseries covers Mary Sue's work as assistant artistic director to Paul Baker and is especially informative on the state of affairs during the transfer of the directorship at the Dallas Theater Center from Paul Baker to Adrian Hall.

The New Mexico series is arranged into four subseries: Teaching and Directing, Paul Baker Festival, Production and Script Files, and Personal. The first subseries provides information on Mary Sue's work as artist-in-residence, and later as a faculty member at the College of Santa Fe. The second centers on the career of Paul Baker, especially at the Dallas Theater Center, and documents the 1990 festival organized by his former students to honor him. The third subseries is Mary Sue's collection of scripts or production files including many of the plays performed at the Dallas Theater Center. The fourth contains material on Mary Sue's private life and non-theatrical interests, such as her baby book, gardening, and decoration ideas for her Santa Fe home.

Series Descriptions

Series I: Texas records, 1949-1983, n.d.

Boxes 1-14

The first subseries, Education and Training, contains Mary Sue's yearbooks, class notes, and her thesis from her years at Baylor University, where she gained her undergraduate and masters degrees in drama. Also included are slides of the 1952 trip to Paris made by the Baylor Drama students with Paul Baker.

The next subseries, Acting, Design, and Directing Career, contains records, audiotapes, photographs, slides, posters, letters, scripts, set designs and costume designs. The material documents Mary Sue's career as an actor, designer and director at Baylor University and at the Dallas Theater Center. There are photographs of her performances, recordings of *Hamlet* and her Speak 4 Trio group, and original drawings of her set and costume designs. There are also examples of her first husband Roy Fridge's art work, including the posters he designed for the Dallas Theater Center's productions, and some examples of the artwork of set designer Virgil Beavers.

Mary Sue Jones had been with Paul Baker since the inception of the Dallas Theater Center and at the time of his forced retirement she was appointed interim artistic director. The third subseries, Dallas Theater Center Administration, contains administrative files from the executive committee and search committee as well as budgets, planning files, memos, clippings, correspondence, contracts, and playbills. Here is found good documentation of Mary Sue's stint as Interim Artistic Director in 1982, including her plans for the redirection of the theater, and clippings and memos relating to the search for the new director which resulted in the hiring of Adrian Hall.

Series II: New Mexico records, 1931-1992, n.d.

Boxes 14-28

Mary Sue Jones left the Dallas Theater Center in 1983 and joined the College of Santa Fe as artist in residence. She taught and directed at the Greer Garson Theater Center becoming a full time faculty member at the College of Santa Fe in 1988. The first subseries, Teaching and Directing, contains class notes, student theses, reviews of College productions, and notes on faculty and college administration. Besides her own theater work, Mary Sue continued to manage the rights to Preston's plays and to promote his memory and the production of his works. In this series, there are clippings about Preston as well as material on the Dallas Theater Center Endowment Fund set up in his memory.

Mary Sue Jones met Paul Baker as a student at Baylor University, and she went on to work closely with him as a member of his core group of artist-teachers until his forced retirement from the Dallas Theater Center in 1982. Afterwards, she continued to keep in touch with her mentor, inviting him to Santa Fe to oversee a production of Preston Jones' *The Last Meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia*

in 1985, while at the same time organizing a tribute to him. She also took a prominent part in the 1990 Paul Baker festival in Waco, "Second Harvest." The second subseries, Paul Baker Festival Files, contains newspaper clippings, programs, and letters, much of which focuses on Baker's career and theatrical influence.

The next subseries, Script and Production Files, contains Mary Sue's collection of scripts, articles and research material on stage productions. Many of the scripts are annotated with remarks on interpretation and stage directions. A good number of these plays were performed at the Dallas Theater Center. They are arranged alphabetically by title.

The final subseries, entitled Personal, presents aspects of Mary Sue's life from her birth in Carthage, Missouri, through her marriage to and divorce from the sculptor Roy Barto Fridge, her life with Preston at the Dallas Theater Center, her widowhood in Santa Fe, to her death in 1992. Present are her baby book, school records, divorce papers, awards, photographs, letters, clippings, and notices on her death. Her clippings files contain information on matters that were of particular interest to her, such as gardening, the Dallas Theater Center, Preston Jones, home decoration, birds and wildlife, etc.

Container List

Box Folder

Series I: Texas Records, 1949-1983, n.d.

Education and Teaching, 1949-1983, n.d.

- | | | |
|---|-----|---|
| 1 | 1 | Baylor University yearbook, 1949 |
| | 2 | Baylor University yearbook, 1951 |
| | 3 | Baylor University yearbook, 1952 |
| | 4 | Class notes, n.d. |
| 2 | 1 | Class notes, n.d. |
| | 2 | Baylor thesis, rough draft |
| | 3 | Note cards relating to thesis |
| | 4-5 | Copy of thesis |
| | 6 | Baylor <i>Othello</i> Notes, Experimental Summer, two
notebooks |
| | 7 | "Façade," music by William Walton, words by
Edith Sitwell |
| | 8 | Class notes—Europe, map of Paris with
handwritten notes |
| | 9 | Slides of 1950s trip to Europe |
| | 10 | Acting Notes, 1953, 1955, n.d. |
| 3 | 1 | Class notes, 1955-1957 |
| | 2 | Class notes, 1958, n.d. |
| | 3 | Class notes, n.d. |
| | 4 | Class notes, 1960 |
| | 5 | Class notes, n.d. |
| | 6 | Class notes, 1962, n.d. |
| | 7 | Articles on the creative process in <i>The Journal of
the American Association of University Women</i> ,
March 1954; <i>Scientific American</i> , September
1958; and "The Creative Mind at Work," article
by Paul Baker |
| 4 | 1 | Acting class syllabi, 1962, 1963, 1976, n.d. |
| | 2 | Acting class notes, n.d. |
| | 3 | Design class notes, n.d. |
| | 4 | Dallas Theater Center material and notes, 1962-1963,
1969, n.d. |
| | 5 | Notes, "The Polite World of the Eighteenth
Century," n.d. |
| | 6 | Notes, <i>Henry V</i> , n.d. |

Box Folder

Series I: Texas Records, continued

Education and Teaching, continued

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| 4 | 7 | Notes and various Shakespeare scenes, n.d. |
| | 8 | Acting class scenes, character analysis worksheet,
1979, n.d. |
| | 9 | Class notes, n.d. |
| | 10 | "Symbols" class material and articles, 1972-1973 |
| | 11 | "Symbols" class, assignments and notes, 1973 |
| 5 | 1 | Scholarship materials, 1974-1976 |
| | 2-3 | Readings and notes, n.d. |
| | 4 | Design class, syllabus, handouts, and notes, 1974-
1975, 1977, n.d. |
| | 5 | Design class, syllabus, handouts, and notes, n.d. |
| | 6 | Directing class, student papers, 1981-1982 |
| | 7 | Directing class, student papers, 1983, n.d. |

Acting, Design, and Directing Career, 1955-1973, n.d.

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|---|-----|--|
| | 8-9 | <i>Hamlet</i> recording (1957), Speak 4 Trio (1959) script
and reel-to-reel tapes of <i>Impressions of Christmas</i> |
| 6 | 1-2 | Speak 4 Trio cassette and reel-to-reel tapes, n.d. |
| | 3 | Slides, Roy and Mary Sue Fridge, Roy Fridge's art |
| | 4 | Roy Fridge's art, watercolors, n.d. |
| | 5 | Roy Fridge's art, watercolor and sketches, n.d. |
| | 6-7 | Photos, Mary Sue Jones, Baylor and DTC, 1955-1969 |
| 7 | 1 | Photos, Mary Sue and Preston Jones, n.d. |
| | 2 | Dallas Theater Center programs and informational
pamphlets, 1960-1961 |
| | 3 | Posters, photos and slides, Mary Sue and Preston
Jones in DTC productions, n.d. |
| | 4 | Photos, Mary Sue Jones in DTC productions, n.d. |
| | 5-6 | <i>Sister</i> , play by Glenn Allen Smith, script with
handwritten notes, 1962-1963 |
| | 7 | Correspondence with Mr. Harry Buckwitz, Director
Staedtische Buehnen, Frankfurt Am Main,
Germany concerning <i>Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> ,
1966-1967 |
| | 8 | Slides of set and costume designs, n.d. |

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Series I: Texas Records, continued

Acting, Design, and Directing Career, continued

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| 7 | 9 | Set and costume designs, n.d. |
| | 10 | Souvenir collection of costume designs for <i>The Tempest</i> , 1965 |
| 8 | 1 | Set designs, sketches and watercolors, n.d. |
| | 2 | Photocopy of <i>Hospitals of Paris</i> , pages 69-91 |
| | 3 | Notes on <i>Seagull</i> , 1970-1971 |
| | 4 | Scholarship Award for Creative Greatness, Mary Sue and Preston Jones, April 7, 1971 |
| | 5 | <i>Summer and Smoke</i> directing notes, framed program, 1972-1973 |

Dallas Theater Center Administration, [1963-1983], Bulk 1973-1983, n.d.

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| | 6-9 | Dallas Theater Center Board and Executive committee, budget committee reports, correspondence, memos, award and scholarship information, and board meeting reports, 1973-1976 |
| 9 | 1 | Dallas Theater Center Company, correspondence and operations information, 1975-1976 |
| | 2 | Copy of "Executive Summary," November 1977, and DTC "Report on Examinations of Financial Statements and Supplemental Data for the years ended August 31, 1977 and 1976," includes other relevant documents |
| | 3 | Trinity University position, includes search committee report, resumes, and correspondence, 1977 |
| | 4 | DTC Feasibility Study Report, 1977 |
| | 5 | Pamphlets, 1977-1978, and letter from Audrey Wood to Hal Willis of Hal Willis Productions, April 2, 1980 |
| | 6 | Various committee reports, 1978 |
| | 7 | Clippings and correspondence, 1980-1982 |
| | 8 | Clippings, 1982 |
| | 9 | Clippings and correspondence, 1980, 1983 |

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Series I: Texas Records, continued

Dallas Theater Center Administration, continued

10	1	News stories about Mary Sue's friends and acquaintances, 1980
	2	Actors and agents, list developed for production of <i>War and Peace</i>
	3	Directing class, syllabus and reading list
	4	Women in Theater, conference information
	2	Texas Foundation for Women's Resources, "Texas Women: A Celebration of History," Gala Opening, May 9, 1981, notes, programs, schedule of events, set designs, and script
	6	Mary Sue Jones personal file, correspondence and addresses, 1981-1983
	7	Al Milano projects, memos and clippings, 1982-1983
	8	Dallas Theater Center business, 1982, n.d.
	9	DTC crisis, Spring 1982, clippings, articles, memos, and remarks by Paul Baker
	10-11	Budget Information, 1982-1983
11	1	Lawyers, thank-you letters, business cards, 1982
	2	Congratulatory letters and cards, 1982-1983
	3	<i>Dallas</i> and <i>Theater Crafts</i> magazines, 1982-1983, Trinity University Graduate Bulletin, 1982-1983
	4	Articles about Ed Herrmann, 1983
	5	Articles about Adrian Hall's 1983 selection as Paul Baker's successor
	6	Memos, photographs, and clippings relating to Adrian Hall, 1983, n.d.
	7	Mary Sue Jones in <i>Ladybug</i> , <i>Ladybug Fly Away Home</i> , performed at the American College Theatre Festival, programs, correspondence, and clippings, 1980
	8	Correspondence, requests for letters of recommendation, 1982-1983
	9-10	Playbills, 1963-1983
	11	Articles, clippings, and information about other theaters, 1982-1983
12	1	Theater articles, clippings, information, research, 1982-1983

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Series I: Texas Records, continued

Dallas Theater Center Administration, continued

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| 12 | 2 | Clippings and articles about Jones, the DTC, and teaching methods, 1982-1983 |
| | 3 | Theater Communications Group national conference information folders, 1980, 1982 |
| | 4-7 | 1982-1983 Dallas Theater Center season, correspondence, schedules of events, budget information, press releases, newspaper articles, class schedules, memos, grant applications, and meeting minutes |
| 13 | 1 | DTC Employee Handbook, Copy of 1983 NEA Challenge Grant Proposal, memos, Executive Committee meeting minutes |
| | 2 | Correspondence, clippings, Finance Committee agenda, photos, 1983 |
| | 2 | Correspondence, Finance Committee documents, Mary Sue's resume, budgets for shows, phone directory, 1982-1983 |
| | 4 | DTC correspondence, 1983 |
| | 5 | New Students Guide (Fall 1982), DTC Handbook (1982), DTC Budget (1981-1982) |
| | 6 | Contracts, drafts, 1982-1983 |
| | 7 | Speeches and correspondence, 1981-1983 |
| | 8-9 | Green Room chats, correspondence, notes, and articles, 1983, n.d. |
| 14 | 1 | Press release contacts, 1982-1983 |
| | 2-3 | Interim Artistic Director, 1982-1983 |
| | 4-6 | Budget, 1982-1983 |

Series II: New Mexico Records, 1931-1992, n.d.

Teaching and Directing, 1982-1992, n.d.

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| 7 | Clippings, playbills, photos, 1982-1986 |
| 8 | Greer Garson Theater Center Department of Performing Arts student handbook, n.d. |

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Series II: New Mexico Records, continued

Teaching and Directing, continued

15	1	Sanderson, Barb, "Professional Theatre Graduate Programs: The Students' Eye View," Masters Thesis, 7 August 1983
	2	Hofland, John, "Relating Right Brain Research to the Design Process," Masters Thesis, 7 August 1983
	3	Clippings, research, photos, 1984-1985, n.d.
	4	Dallas Theater Center Endowment Fund, 1986-1987
	5	Acting class notes, n.d.
	3	Performing Class notes, Fall 1984, Notebook I
	4	Performing Class Notes, Fall 1984, Notebook II
	5	Acting IV, class notes, Fall 1986
16	1	Acting class notes, n.d.
	2	Performance Studies / Acting IV, class notes, 1987
	3	Performance Studies / Acting IV, class notes, 1988
	4	Acting I and Audition notes, Spring 1988
	5	Acting I and Playwriting, Spring 1989
	6	Class notes, n.d.
17	1	Performance Studies / Acting IV, class notes, 1989
	2-3	Class notes, n.d.
	4	Speech / Performance Studies, class notes, Fall 1984, Notebook II
	5	Acting I and Playwriting, class notes, Spring 1987
	6	Mary Sue Jones' notes and observations about Performance Studies Class, 1991
18	1	Auditions Training, Spring 1990
	2	Performance Studies / Acting IV, Fall 1990
	3	Resume information, school memos
	4	Acting I and Playwriting, Spring 1991
	5	Acting class notes, n.d.
	6	Performance Studies, class notes, Fall 1991
	7	Performance Studies, class notes, n.d.
19	1	Performance Studies, final scenes, Fall 1991 video
	2	Performing Arts Faculty, 1992

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Series II: New Mexico Records, continued

Paul Baker Festival Files, 1983-1986, 1990-1991.

- 19 3 Clippings, Dallas Theater Center, Paul Baker, and
Adrian Hall, 1983-1986
4 Paul Baker Festival mailing list, February 27, 1990
5-6 Second Harvest, Paul Baker Festival, clippings,
correspondence, maps, speeches, articles, August
1990

- 20 1 *The Paul Baker Theater: A Photo History*, 1991

Script and Production Files, 1977, 1980, 1987, n.d.

- 2 *And a Nightingale Sang*, by Cecil P. Taylor, script
and prop list
3 *As I lay Dying*, by William Faulkner, adapted for
Baylor Theater production by Robert L. Flynn
(Preston Jones' copy)
4 *A Bug in Her Ear (La Puce A L'oreille)*, by Georges
Feydeau, tr. G. B. Shaw (Preston Jones' copy)
5 *Children of a Lesser God*, by Mark Medoff, last
revision June 13, 1980
6-7 *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller, script, background
information, and notes
7 *Curious in LA*, by Glenn Allen Smith (Preston
Jones' copy)
- 21 1 *A Different Drummer*, Gene McKinney (Preston
Jones' copy)
2 *The Dining Room*, by A.R. Gurney, Jr.
3 *Door Play*, by Sallie Baker Laurie, 1977
4 *Door Play*, by Sallie Baker Laurie, script with
handwritten notes
5-7 *The Dresser*, by Ronald Harwood, script and notes
- 22 1 *Firekeeper*, by Mark Medoff (Preston Jones' copy)
2 *Fuse*, by Sally Netzel
3 *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare
4 *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, as arranged by
Paul Baker and staff
5 *Hay Fever*, by Noel Coward

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Series II: New Mexico Records, continued

Script and Production Files, continued

22	6	<i>A Home Away From</i> , by Glenn Allen Smith
	7	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> , by Federico Garcia Lorca, maps, notes, and research
	8	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i> , by Federico Garcia Lorca, script
23	1	<i>House of Blue Leaves</i> , by John Guare, script and notes
	2	<i>House of Blue Leaves</i> , by John Guare, script
	3	<i>Importance of Being Ernest</i> , by Oscar Wilde, script and notes
	4	<i>Importance of Being Ernest</i> , by Oscar Wilde, thank-you cards, notes, and research
	5	<i>Jack Ruby, All American</i> , by Paul Baker & John Logan (Preston Jones' copy)
	6-9	<i>Journey to Jefferson</i> , a staged dramatization of William Faulkner's <i>As I Lay Dying</i> adapted by Robert L. Flynn, scripts
24	1	<i>LuAnn Hampton Laverty Oberlander</i> , by Preston Jones, script and notes
	2	<i>Our Town</i> , by Thornton Wilder, script and notes
	3	<i>Our Town</i> , by Thornton Wilder, notes
	4	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i> , by Robert Bolt, script, notes, and research
	5	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i> , by Robert Bolt, script
	6	<i>Of Time and the River</i> , by Tom Wolfe, adapted by Baylor Theater
	7	<i>Picnic</i> , by William Inge, script, notes, and research
25	1	<i>Puppet Makers</i> , by Norman D. Schultz
	2	<i>Sam: A Play Based on the Life and Imagination of Mark Twain</i> , by Sally Netzel
	3-4	<i>Sadie's Kitchen</i> , by Bonnie Beardsley, script and correspondence with the author, 1987
	5	<i>Sister</i> , by Glenn Allen Smith (Preston Jones' copy)
	6	<i>Sister</i> , by Glenn Allen Smith
	7	<i>Summer and Smoke</i> , by Tennessee Williams

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Series II: New Mexico Records, continued

Script and Production Files, continued

- 26 1 *Summer and Smoke*, by Tennessee Williams,
script, notes and research
2 *Writes and Wrongs*, John Francis, public television
program that aired in August 1987

Personal, 1931-1992, n.d.

- 3 Baby book and National Honor Society
membership card, 1931-1941, n.d.
4 Divorce papers and correspondence with Roy
Fridge, 1962-1964
5 Family photos, clippings, mementos, 1964-1966, n.d.
6 Awards, photos, memorabilia, [1961-1992]
7 Preston Jones New Play Symposium,
correspondence, press releases, 1984-1985
8 Personal correspondence, programs, 1977-1983
9 Personal correspondence, copy of speech made at
New Mexico Repertory opening, 1982-1984
10 Personal correspondence, clippings, 1984
- 27 1 Personal correspondence, 1985-1986
2 Address book, n.d.
3-5 Clippings file, Gardening, includes hand-drawn
garden design by Mary Sue Jones
6 Clippings file, Investments
7 Clippings file, The Theater
8 Clippings file, DTC
9 Dallas Children's Theater, Board of Trustees
meeting and budget information, 1985
10 Clippings file, Preston Jones' plays
11 Clippings file, Mary Sue Jones
12 Clippings file, Paul Baker and Adrian Hall
13 Clippings file, Fashion and Jewelry
14 Clippings file, Health
- 28 1 Clippings file, Automobiles
2 Clippings file, Antiques/Crafts/Miscellaneous
3 Clippings file, Travel
4 Food mail-order catalogs
5 Mail-order catalogs and clippings, lamps

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Series II: New Mexico Records, continued

Personal, continued

28	6	Clippings and catalogs, fabric and textiles
	7	Handwritten notes, n.d.
	8	Articles from <i>The New Yorker</i>
	9	Clippings file, New Mexico
	10	Clippings file, Travel, Furniture, Appliances, and Real Estate Investment
	11	Clippings file, Pets, Career Information, research for Preston's plays
	12	Obituaries for Mary Sue Jones, 1992