

# **Emma Josephine Brazier theater and opera scrapbooks**

**Ms. Coll. 1149**

**Finding aid prepared by Kelin Baldrige.**

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2015 November 16

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Creator</b>	Brazier, Emma Josephine, 1867-1953
<b>Title</b>	Emma Josephine Brazier theater and opera scrapbooks
<b>Call number</b>	Ms. Coll. 1149
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1858-1918
<b>Extent</b>	0.75 linear feet (3 boxes)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language Note</b>	Primarily English, some French.
<b>Abstract</b>	Emma Josephine Brazier (1867-1953) was a Philadelphian who followed the theater and opera scene. Her scrapbooks consist of three volumes that contain playbills, theater and opera advertisements, and actors' photographs and cards from 19th century and early 20th century in Philadelphia and New York City.

**Cite as:**

Emma Josephine Brazier theater and opera scrapbooks, 1858-1918, Ms. Coll. 1149, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

## Biography/History

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Emma Josephine Brazier was born on August 15, 1867 to Joseph Harrison and Ellen Kemball Bartol Brazier. She, her parents, and her brother lived in Philadelphia where her father was employed by the jewelry firm, J.E. Caldwell & Co. of Philadelphia. Her brother, Henry Bartol Brazier, appears to have been an inventor of automobile components.

Little is known of Emma Josephine Brazier except that she was apparently an ardent fan of theater and opera. She appears to have attended many plays and operas in Philadelphia and New York and to have followed the actors and actresses closely. She may have traveled to Europe in 1909. There is no indication that she ever married. She died in Massachusetts on November 14, 1953, at the age of 86.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Emma Josephine Brazier theater and opera scrapbooks consists of three volumes that date between 1858 and 1918. They contain playbills and advertisements from theaters and opera houses primarily in Philadelphia and New York, as well as cards and photographs of the actors and actresses that performed in them.

"The Stage 1" scrapbook primarily focuses on Philadelphia theater in the mid 19th century. Several theaters are highlighted in this series of newspaper clippings and playbills, including Wheatley and Clark's Arch Street Theater, Wallack's Theatre, Laura Keene's Theater, and Walnut Street Theater. In addition to information on the theaters themselves are several cabinet cards with actors' photographs and names. These actors include Emma Taylor, John Drew, John Sleeper Clark, Laura Keene, William Wheatley, and Edwin Booth. Researchers should be aware that many of the playbills in this volume date from before Emma Josephine Brazier's birth. However, it is clear by construction that the volume was not compiled until the late 1890s or even the early 1900s.

The second scrapbook, which is untitled, primarily focuses on opera in Philadelphia and New York City, with an emphasis on its relationship with opera in London and Paris and dates from 1884 to 1909. It houses dozens of photographs of opera singers, including Marcella Sembrich, Emil Fischer, Marie Van Zandt, Zelig de Lussan, Emma Nevada, Emma Eames, Victor Maurel, and Nellie Melba. It also contains numerous playbills from the Metropolitan Opera, an opera house in which all of the above listed singers performed. In addition to that commonality, these singers all spent part of their careers in either London or Paris as well as in either Philadelphia or New York City. One letter addressed to Emma Josephine Brazier indicates that she dined with Dr. R. and Emma Nevada Palmer in 1895.

The final scrapbook's spine reads "Dayl's Company," however, it is almost certain that it should read "Daly's Company." This volume, dating from 1883 to 1918, contains information on both opera houses and theaters in Philadelphia and New York City. Of note is the extensive information on Augustin Daly, his funeral, and the dismantling of his house. Daly, a playwright, opened a successful theater in New York City in 1879. Many of the most notable actors and actresses of the time attributed their success to Daly,

including John Drew Jr., Maurice Barrymore, and Fanny Davenport. This volume contains many playbills with a penciled notation, "Daly's Company." In addition, researchers will find many photographs and a fair amount of published information on Mary Anderson, Fanny Davenport, John Drew, George Grossman, Marie Jansen, Clara Morris, Cora Potter, Ada Rehan, Vesta Tilley, and Francis Wilson. This volume includes two letters to Emma Josephine Brazier, one from Ada Rehan thanking her for flowers, and one, dated 1918, from an unidentified writer thanking her for an evening.

All three of these volumes contain playbills and advertisements from theaters and opera houses; clippings from newspapers, magazines, and theatrical publications; collectible cards from theaters; and cabinet cards (some of which are hand-colored and a few of which are signed by the actors or actresses). In many cases, information about a specific actor or actress is grouped together, so that a researcher may find photographs, clippings, biographical sketches, and even writings by actors or actresses on several adjacent pages.

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## **Administrative Information**

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### **Access Restrictions**

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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**CORPORATE NAME(S)**

- Academy of Music (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- Arch Street Theatre (Philadelphia, Pa.).
- Chestnut Street Theatre (Philadelphia, Pa.)
- Walnut Street Theatre (Philadelphia, Pa.)

#### **FORM/GENRE(S)**

- Cabinet photographs
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Scrapbooks

#### **SUBJECT(S)**

- Actors
- Musical theater
- Opera
- Theater--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--19th century
- Theater--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--20th century
- Theater--United States--19th century
- Theater--United States--20th century

## Collection Inventory

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	Box
"The Stage 1," theater scrapbook, 1858-1902.	1
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Opera scrapbook, 1884-1909.	2
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"Dayl's Company," (should probably be "Daly's Company"), theater and opera scrapbook, 1883-1918.	3