PERFORMANCE!

Newsletter of the SAA
Performing Arts Section

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COVER PHOTO: Art Farmer Quartet at New School, 1963: Overhead shot of the Art Farmer Quartet performing in The New School's courtyard during the Summer Arts Festival. According to publicity materials, the performance was titled, "Jazz Is Music," and featured Jim Hall. Access the full record in The New School Digital Archives. Photo: Paul Seligman

SUBMIT TO THE NEXT ISSUE OF PERFORMANCE! If you are working with performing arts collections, we want to hear about it! Please send your ideas to saaperformingartssection@gmail.com. We accept longer, more in-depth stories as well as shorter announcements.

Message from the Co-Chairs

Dear SAA Performing Arts Section Members,

We hope your year has been healthy and happy, personally and professionally.

We are already looking forward to our section meeting, which will be online this year. The Performing Arts Section is partnering with the SAA Web Archiving Section to have a very special joint meeting on Thursday, August 11th at 3PM ET/2PM CT/12PM PT. Mark your calendars! We are looking forward to providing an overview of both sections' activities this past year, and exploring the intersections between the performing arts, web archiving, and born digital records through your case studies. If you are interested in presenting your work (up to 10 minutes), please contact Cecily Marcus at cecily.marcus@mnhs.org.

We want to thank everyone who was able to join PAS for "Performance in the Archives", a roundtable discussion we hosted on Zoom on April 29th. A special thank you to our panelists Lynn Garafola, Jennie Scholick, Zachary Whittenburg, and Lela Sewell Williams, as well as our moderator Dr. Kathy Carbone. It was a great discussion and we are grateful to them for being generous with their time and insight.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Performance!*, featuring stories about The New School Summer Arts Festival; the launch of a podcast exploring the University of Maryland's Special Collections in Performing Arts; processing the archive of comedian Rusty Warren at the National Comedy Center; and the Michigan Dance Archives at Wayne State University's Reuther Library.

As always, if you have ideas for other projects that you would like to see the Section to pursue, or if you are interested in volunteering, please do not hesitate to contact any of us on the Steering Committee. We will be looking for a new PAS Co-Chair and Member of the Steering Committee. Please reach out to us and fill out the application form if you are interested in volunteering and getting involved with our work!

Cecily Marcus and Katalin Rac
Co-Chairs of the Performing Arts Section

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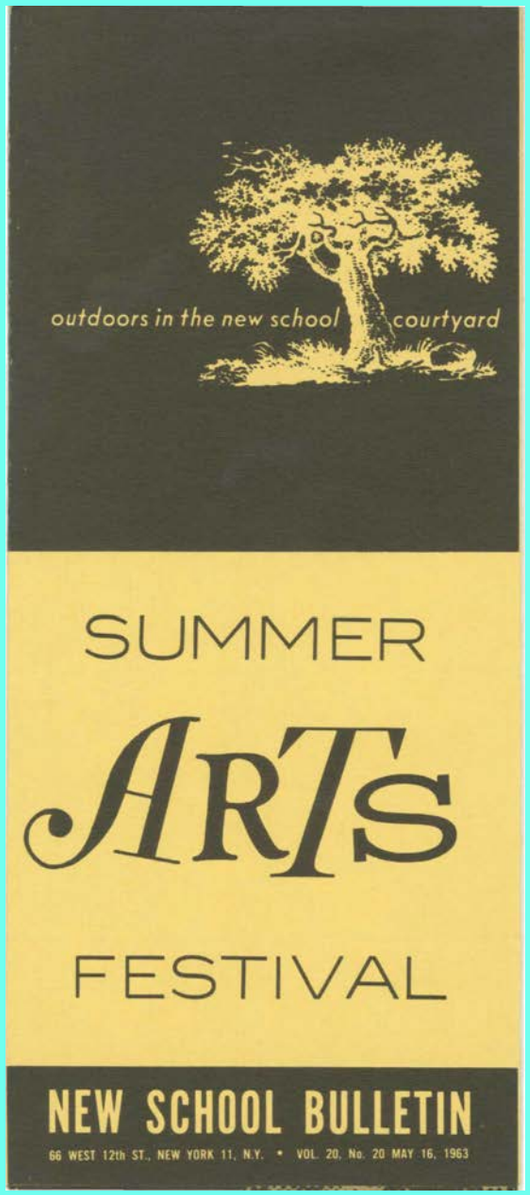
Researching the Diverse Greenwich Village Performing Arts Scene in the Sixties: The New School Summer Arts Festival

by Jason Adamo



It will come as no surprise to *Performance!* readers that audiovisual documentation of the performing arts often becomes divorced from textual records providing vital context for the creative process, event planning and promotion, and reception. The essay below chronicles New School Archives and Special Collections assistant Jason Adamo's ongoing research on the provenance of audio recordings of the Thelonious Monk Quartet made at our university in 1963. Staff learned of their existence in 2017 at New School-sponsored Thelonious Monk birthday celebration. We have since traced the original recordings of Monk playing and talking about jazz to the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, with access copies at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. Jason, a performer himself, has been using our institutional records to focus on the circumstances of the performance and talk in the broader environment of the university and Greenwich Village at a transformative moment in their intertwined histories.

The project began with a set of audio recordings of jazz legend Thelonious Monk in performance. The recordings were made in 1963 by W. Eugene Smith, a renowned photographer and New School instructor who lived in New York and became a chronicler of the New York jazz scene, making some 4,000 hours of recordings of musicians jamming in his loft on Sixth Avenue in the Flower District. These recordings are particularly relevant to The New School because they document a performance of the Monk Quartet held in the courtyard of The New School for Social Research's main buildings on West 12th Street in Greenwich Village as part of an inaugural summer arts festival. The New School Archives holds no audiovisual documentation from this event, but plenty of textual records and ephemera.

Above: Special issue of The New School Bulletin advertising an outdoor summer festival featuring jazz performances, poetry readings, lectures and film screenings held in The New School's courtyard connecting buildings on West 12th and West 13th Streets in Greenwich Village. Dated May 16, 1963. Graphic imagery depicts Isamu Noguchi's Garden Elements sculpture, which was installed in the courtyard. Access the full record in The New School Digital Archives.

The idea came up to explore the records of The New School Summer Arts Festival, research its origins and development, and create a post for The New School Histories website describing the Summer Arts Festival and perhaps incorporating clips of the jazz performance recordings made by Eugene Smith. This research revealed a significant snapshot of the cultural life of New York City in the early sixties.

The festival included a series of lecture and performances entitled "Jazz IS Music," which were televised on New York City's public television station Channel 13 and included introductions, complete with poster board visual aids, by Hall Overton, composer, jazz aficionado, and professor at The Juilliard School and the New School, as well as performances by Thelonious Monk, the Art Farmer Quartet, Sonny Rollins, the Horace Silver Quintet, and the Al Cohn and Zoot Sims Quartet. Overton's introductions offered analyses of jazz music from a theorist's point of view, which helped explain jazz to a broader audience. Parts of the Eugene Smith audio recordings of The Jazz Loft Project cataloged the New School performances and appeared in the documentary, The Jazz Loft According to W. Eugene Smith, which chronicles the relationship between Overton, Smith, Monk and the other jazz musicians that frequented the Sixth Avenue loft.

The jazz performances of the first Summer Arts Festival at The New School for Social Research in 1963 would be enough to yield plentiful research content for a blog post. The festival, however, encompassed not only jazz performances, but also featured folk music concerts, poetry readings, and previews of the 1964 season of Broadway and Off-Broadway shows. The poetry series included some of the most prominent poets of the New York School including Frank O'Hara, Kenneth Koch, Joseph Ceravolo, Frank Lima, David Shapiro, and Michael Benedikt.

Musician and Scholar Hall Overton Discussing Jazz Techniques with Art Farmer Quartet at The New School Summer Arts Festival, by Paul Seligman. 1963. Access the full record in The New School Digital Archives.

The folk music series included Odetta, the singer considered by many to be the voice of the civil rights movement of the early sixties; Oscar Brand, who was host of one of the longest-running radio shows in history; Brock Peters, the actor-singer who had appeared in films such as *Carmen Jones* (1954), *Porgy and Bess* (1959), and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962); Jean Redpath, the Scottish folk singer; and flamenco guitarist Anita Sheer. The Broadway preview included the creators of the musical *Bye Bye Birdie*, Lee Adams and Charles Strouse, who discussed their upcoming show *Golden Boy*, which opened in 1964.

How this program originally came about is a mystery; we have a brief proposal but few other records from the festival's organizer, Carole F. Schwartz, a theatrical and television producer and New School instructor. We do, however, have memoranda regarding noise complaints from the neighbors of The New School. The 1963 festival was repeated again in 1965, with additional folk singers, but with a chamber music series in place of the jazz sessions. Whether due to lack of funding, or noise complaints, the Summer Arts Festival did not continue past 1965.

It is because of Eugene Smith's obsession with capturing great jazz performances that we have a record of this event. Making these recordings known, and documenting the larger history of the Summer Arts Festival at The New School, will illuminate a vibrant and diverse cross-section of the arts scene of Greenwich Village in the early 1960s. For now, we must rely largely on paper files to reconstruct these performances.

Tickets for Thelonious Monk Quartet performance held in The New School's courtyard, as part of The New School Summer Arts Festival. Dated June 22, 1963. Access the full record in The New School Digital Archives.

***Jason Adamo** is an Assistant to the Librarian at The New School Archives and Special Collections. He graduated in 2020 from Mannes School of Music at The New School with a master's degree in music, and is also a bass-baritone opera singer.*

“Not a Quiet Place”: A New Podcast from the University of Maryland’s Special Collections in Performing Arts

SCPA Press Release

Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) at the University of Maryland (UMD) has released a new scripted podcast, Not a Quiet Place: Exploring Special Collections in Performing Arts.

Not a Quiet Place highlights SCPA’s archival collections and how they relate to current issues and trends in the performing arts. Hosted by archivist and musicologist Dr. Christina Taylor Gibson, this first season focuses on examining different aspects of wind band culture. Episodes explore the turn from the popular town band culture of the late 19th century to the esoteric wind band music of the late 20th century, the history of Historically Black College and University (HBCU) marching bands, the Minnesota Consortium for Black American Composers, and the science around COVID-19 mitigation in the performance setting as applied during the 2020-2021 academic year at UMD.

This season features interviews with composer David Holsinger; UMD band director Dr. Michael Votta; musicologists Dr. Fredara Mareva Hadley, Dr. Patrick Warfield, and Dr. Bryan Proksch; band director Dr. Stephen Cunningham; UMD students and composers Adrian B. Sims and Christen Holmes; and others. Delving into SCPA’s unique band research materials, archival interviews with band composer/conductors Vaclav Nelhybel and Karl King are also heard.

Rusty Warren: Women's Sexual Liberationist…and Comedian

by Ashley Senske

One amazing part of my work over the last several years as the Collection Coordinator at the National Comedy Center—the United States' official cultural institution dedicated to the art form of comedy—is that I have had opportunities to learn about some of American culture's most resonant influencers: comedians. Rusty Warren, coined the "Mother of Sexual Liberation," is no exception; with party record albums like "Knockers Up!" (a comedy album that deals with themes of sex) she began to pave the way for the future generations of "blue," or risqué, female comedians that we regularly see or hear on television today. Despite Warren's significant contributions, however, I had never heard of her.

Before Joan Rivers, Phyllis Diller, and Totie Fields, there was Rusty Warren. Warren's records were full of racy and suggestive material for their time, especially coming from the mind and mouth of a woman, making her story and legacy one that we are working hard to preserve and share at the National Comedy Center. Her material reached beyond the realm of entertainment, with "Knockers Up!" helping fuel the fires of the Women's Liberation Movement and encouraging the 1960s housewife to feel that she did have a voice. As one measure of its impact, "Knockers Up!" remained on the Billboard charts for more than three years and sold an estimated four to five million copies, even though it was never promoted in the mainstream and was denied radio airplay for its "salacious" content. Millions of people, including an entire generation of empowered women, were listening to what Warren had to say.

Rusty Warren in performance, National Comedy Center Archives.

Marquee of the Copa Atlanta nightclub featuring Rusty Warren and the Copa Lovelies, National Comedy Center Archives.

Rusty Warren's name was nearly hidden away from modern history by censors and a culture that feared her powerful voice. Since the arrival of her collection at the National Comedy Center in 2018, we have worked hard to make sure more and more people have the opportunity to discover her legacy and properly pay tribute to her.

The extent of the physical collection consists of photographs, publications, correspondence, comedic material, career ephemera, dimensional objects, and some wardrobe pieces. Raw creative materials, which are the focus of the Center's collecting strategy, are often where we get a "behind-the-curtains" look at the process of how comedians create and finesse the material that we all end up seeing and hearing as part of their performance. Within this particular collection, we have material like Warren's original sheet music for the songs she would often sing while accompanying herself on the piano, typed jokes and original song lyrics – including her signature "Knockers Up!" song – and personal handwritten notes documenting her creative process, like workshopping ideas on how to handle hecklers during her live performances.

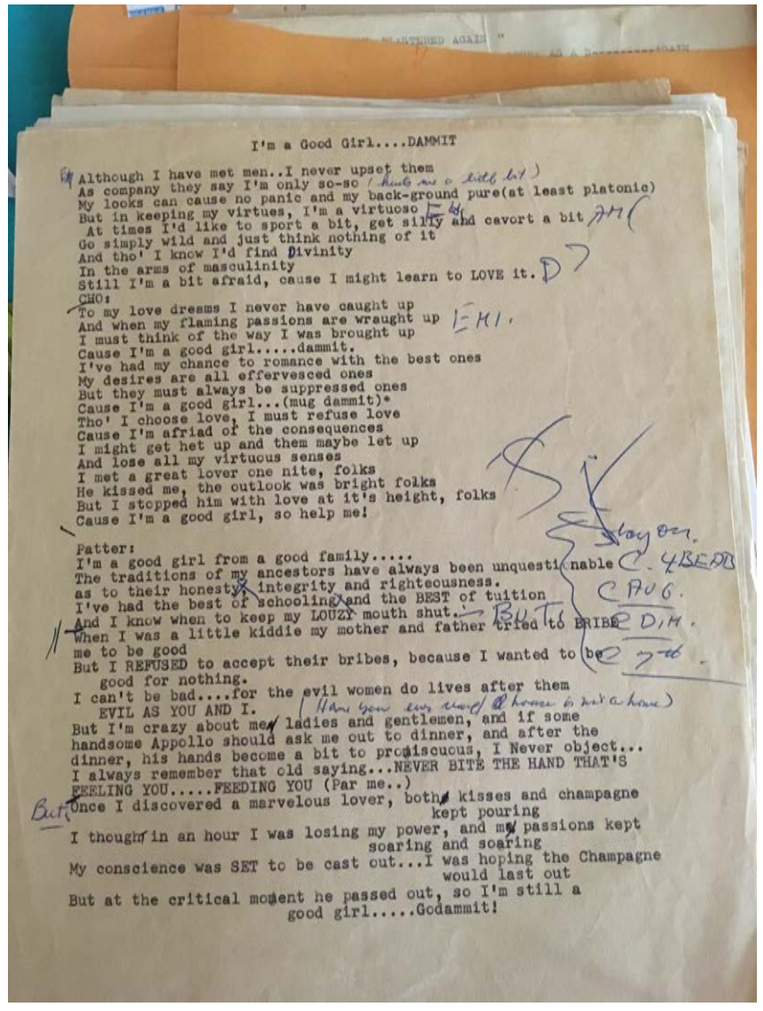
The archive also contains Warren's notes for routines such as "The Naughty Network," "Never Let the Same Dog Bite You Twice," and "I'm A Good Girl, Dammit!" as well as important records of her business savvy, like the 1957 contract she signed with The Pomp Room. It was at The Pomp Room that Warren began to delve into creating and recording her first comedy record album, which was released in 1959. Concurrently, she began implementing a new piece into her act, a form of an interactive "march" that involved her audience. Dubbed the "Knockers Up March," Rusty would encourage the ladies of the room to "march with their boobs held high" while she performed her song. This became such a huge hit with her audiences that it was used as the official title for her second comedy album, "Knockers Up!," which was released in 1960. By 1961, she received her first of many gold records, representing exceptional sales figures.

Within the National Comedy Center's galleries, Rusty Warren has a display in her honor in an exhibit space titled "The Blue Room," which consists of an entire floor dedicated solely to those comedians who fought for their right to free speech and defended their art, even when it was deemed too risqué, or "blue," by censors and critics. She is in the company of Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce, Moms Mabley, Redd Foxx, and so many other comedians who experienced censorship for their subject matter. Warren's display features a pantsuit from her "Knockers Up '76" album cover, photographs from her career, along with her original "Knockers Up!" sheet music and career ephemera, such as a promotional flyer emblazoned with: "Women's Sexual Liberationist: Rusty Warren."

The Rusty Warren Collection, donated by Rusty Warren and Liz Rizzo, serves as just one example of why preserving the story of comedy is important for understanding the evolution of not only the comedic art form itself, but also how our culture navigates discussion of historically "taboo" topics: like a woman's sexuality.

Selection of Rusty Warren albums on display at the National Comedy Center, Jamestown, NY.

Ashley Senske is the Collections Coordinator and Education Liaison at the National Comedy Center's Carl Reiner Department of Archives & Preservation. The archive collects and preserves materials that illuminate the history of comedy, and supports exhibit development, academic research, and educational outreach, all in support of the Center's mission to provide education on the comedic arts in the form of commentary and contextualization of its bodies of work, telling the vital story of comedy in America across all eras and genres of the art form.



I'm a Good Girl....DAMMIT

Although I have met men..I never upset them
As company they say I'm only so-so
My looks can cause no panic and my back-ground pure(at least platonic)
But in keeping my virtues, I'm a virtuoso
At times I'd like to sport a bit, get silly and cavort a bit
Go simply wild and just think nothing of it
And tho' I know I'd find divinity
In the arms of masculinity
Still I'm a bit afraid, cause I might learn to LOVE it.
CHO:
To my love dreams I never have caught up
And when my flaming passions are wrought up
I must think of the way I was brought up
Cause I'm a good girl.....dammit.
I've had my chance to romance with the best ones
My desires are all effervesced ones
But they must always be suppressed ones
Cause I'm a good girl...(mug dammit)*
Tho' I choose love, I must refuse love
Cause I'm afriad of the consequences
I might get het up and them maybe let up
And lose all my virtuous senses
I met a great lover one nite, folks
He kissed me, the outlook was bright folks
But I stopped him with love at it's height, folks
Cause I'm a good girl, so help me!

Patter:
I'm a good girl from a good family.....
The traditions of my ancestors have always been unquesti nable
as to their honesty, integrity and righteousness.
I've had the best of schooling and the BEST of tuition
And I know when to keep my LOUZY mouth shut.
When I was a little kiddie my mother and father tried to BRIBE
me to be good
But I REFUSED to accept their bribes, because I wanted to be
good for nothing.
I can't be bad....for the evil women do lives after them
EVIL AS YOU AND I.
But I'm crazy about men, ladies and gentlemen, and if some
handsome Appollo should ask me out to dinner, and after the
dinner, his hands become a bit to promiscuous, I Never object...
I always remember that old saying...NEVER BITE THE HAND THAT'S
FEEELING YOU.....FEEDING YOU (Par me..)
Once I discovered a marvelous lover, both kisses and champagne
kept pouring
I thought in an hour I was losing my power, and my passions kept
soaring and soaring
My conscience was SET to be cast out...I was hoping the Champagne
would last out
But at the critical moment he passed out, so I'm still a
good girl.....Godammit!

Lyrics to "I'm a Good Girl…DAMMIT" with hand-written annotations by Rusty Warren, National Comedy Center Archives.

Source citation for record sales: Inc, Nielsen Business Media (1963-10-05). Billboard. Nielsen Business Media, Inc.

The Michigan Dance Archives at Wayne State's Reuther Library

by Aimee Ergas

The Michigan Dance Archives (MDA) was established in 1994 “to acquire, preserve and make accessible materials from the rich heritage of Michigan dance.” The growth of the Archives has taken place mostly in the past few years, with the acquisition of the papers and audio-visual materials of several dancers and choreographers. We recently acquired the records of the Cecchetti Council of America, a national, membership-based dance education organization founded in 1939. The records include administrative documents, teaching materials, photos and audiovisual materials from the CCA national office as well as its branches across the US. We also added the personal papers of Debra White-Hunt, a celebrated dancer and dance educator from Detroit.

Image credits are on the following page (p. 10).

The MDA is a component of the performing arts resources of the Reuther Library, which include the collections of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit, the Detroit Recreation Department Dance Programs and the records of the Wayne State University Department of Dance. The Reuther Library's oral history collections also contain several interviews with prominent local dancers. Detailed information is available at our website: reuther.wayne.edu/node/14226

Aimee Ergas *is an archivist at the Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, at Wayne State University. Her main assignments are the Michigan Dance Archives and the Detroit Jewish Community Archives. She has also processed the personal papers of several notable figures such as Max M. Fisher, Judge Avern Cohn, and Millie Jeffrey.*

Image Credits:

Bottom left: Harriet Berg as "The Teeny Tiny Lady," c. 1950. From Michigan Dance Archives: Harriet Berg Papers, Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

Top right: Denise Szykula and Dennis East, 1981. From Michigan Dance Archives: Denise Szykula Papers, Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.