

## **Appendix 1**

### **Society for Theatre Research Survey: Theatre and Oral History**

The Society for Theatre Research have asked me to look into the range and scope of oral history projects focused on theatre and performance, current, recent and planned, to guide them in formulating policy and allocating future resources in this area. The STR would also like to encourage members' awareness of and promote existing oral history resources in the area of theatre (including carnival, performance art, circus, street performance etc). I have been given your name as someone interested or active in this area and would be very grateful if you could fill in the following Questionnaire for each oral history project you have conducted and return it as a Microsoft Word or RTF attachment to me at [secroft@btinternet.com](mailto:secroft@btinternet.com). Additional information such as listings of interviewees may also be attached. Information gathered will be compiled as a report for the STR committee and a digest of it will be published on the STR web site. If you know of others who should receive this questionnaire, please pass this information on or send me their contact details. We are also keen to hear of earlier projects and recordings including material in earlier formats such as reel-to-reel recordings. A copy of the questionnaire is also available at [www.susan.croft.btinternet.com](http://www.susan.croft.btinternet.com) along with information on the project *Unfinished Histories: Recording the History of Alternative Theatre*, the oral history project I jointly run. Many thanks for your help and participation.

Dr Susan Croft

#### **AIMS, STRUCTURE AND SCOPE OF PROJECT**

Name and role of respondent

What is the name of your project? e.g. British Stage Design since 1945

What are its aims, policies or purpose? What was the impetus for the project?

When did it start and, where relevant, finish? Is it a continuing project or of limited duration?

How many individuals are involved in running the project/ conducting interviews etc? Key individuals involved (and roles)

Are they paid or voluntary? Do they have training in oral history?

How is the project funded?

How is the project managed? e.g within a University Department, by a Company Limited by Guarantee, by a Theatre, Voluntary Organisation / Charity.

## INTERVIEWS

In what format are interviews recorded? e.g. on video (mini DV, VHS etc), on audio: in digital formats such as WAV or MP3 files, on audio cassette etc

How are interviewees selected and located?

What is the running time of interviews?

Who holds copyright in the interviews? Do interviewees sign a form assigning rights?

Where are interviews held? Are they accessible to the public? In what format? Please give contact details /web link for Collection if possible.

Do you create transcripts of interviews, lists of topics covered or other indexes of detailed content?

Are the interviews catalogued?

Do you have future plans for the project or the interviews?

Have the materials formed the basis for any specific publications, exhibitions, conferences, radio or television programmes or performances or are there future plans for this?

Do you have a web site? Would you be interested in having information on your project (and web links where relevant) listed on a joint web site, possibly run by the STR?

Would you be interested in being part of a listserv/ emailing list/forum where future information on new oral history interviews and projects, best practice etc. could be added and shared?

Is there any further information you would like to add?

**Please attach a list of interviewees if possible with approx. interview running times and any other relevant material.** If you would prefer to send this in hard copy please send details to: Dr Susan Croft, Oral History Survey, The Society for Theatre Research, c/o The National Theatre Archive, 83-101 The Cut, London SE1 8LL.

We are also interested to hear of relevant interviews that may have been done for other purposes than oral history e.g. journalism, academic studies, that owners would be prepared at some point to lodge in public domain for long-term accessibility.

Many thanks for your participation

Susan Croft

## Appendix 2: Key National Collections

### 1. National Sound Archive, British Library

The National Sound Archive has not undertaken its own specific projects on oral history and theatre, apart from Life Histories: an Oral History of British Theatre Design in conjunction with Wimbledon School of Art. However it advises on a range of projects both through Rob Perks Head of Oral history and Steve Cleary, Curator of Drama and Literature including many of those listed above and houses copies of many. Among earlier materials held by the NSA are collections from the African Writers Club interviewing many African playwrights including Efu Sutherland and Chinua Achebe and the Bow Dialogues from the late sixties where Glenda Jackson, Janet Suzman, Laurence Olivier, Michael Denison and others discussed issues including theatre censorship, stage morality, religion etc with the Rector of St Mary-Le-Bow Church. <http://sounds.bl.uk/Default.aspx> to search.

Other collections include:

#### **Oral history: performing arts and music**

[http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/ohist/ohcoll/ohperf/performing\\_arts.html](http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/ohist/ohcoll/ohperf/performing_arts.html)

The British Library Sound Archive holds many oral history collections covering a cross-section of those involved in the performing arts. Projects and collections include recordings with those involved in theatre, the circus, opera, ballet and jazz.

### Theatre

- [Oral History of British Theatre Design](#) (C1173), a collaborative project between National Life Stories and Wimbledon College of Art (University of the Arts London) charts the developments in post-war British theatre design.
- The Legacy of the English Stage Company (C1316), a National Life Stories project sponsored by the John Hodgson Theatre Research Trust, covers the careers of theatre directors associated at some time with the Royal Court Theatre, London.
- Unfinished Histories (C1322) is a collaboration between Jessica Higgs of In Tandem Theatre Company and Susan Croft, documenting British alternative theatre from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s through oral history interviews and the collecting of archival documents. The initial strand focuses on 'Women's Theatre - 1970s and 1980s'
- Pascal Theatre Company: Mothers and Daughters – A Jewish Archive (C1242) is a collection of 50 interviews with Jewish women of various ages and cultural backgrounds recorded by the Pascal Theatre Company as part of a film and exhibition project 'Jewish mothers and daughters: a personal history of the 20th century through 50 Jewish women's lives', in collaboration with the London Jewish Cultural Centre.

- The Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford Interviews (C35) were recorded with retired and working members of the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford, Warwickshire in 1982 and aimed to depict a picture of the life of the theatre within living memory.
- An interview with Athene Seyler, president of RADA and of the Theatrical Ladies Guild, is included in the National Life Stories project [Leaders of National Life](#) (C408).
- The NSA: General (C465) collection includes interviews with theatre designers Jocelyn Herbert and Tanya Moiseiwitsch.
- For other relevant material and live recordings and performances see the [drama audio and video collections](#).
- The Theatre Archive Project was a five-year collaborative project between the British Library and Sheffield University, and funded by the AHRC, to reinvestigate British Theatre history between 1948 and 1967. For more information, visit the [Theatre Archive Project](#) homepage.

### Opera and ballet

- The Royal Opera House Sound Archive (C915) comprises 146 interviews with people involved in the Royal Opera House Development Project 1997-1999. Interviewees cover the spectrum of ROH employees and range from backstage technical staff, to dancers, patrons, the archivist, Chief Executive and Balletshoe Mistress.
- The Verdi Oral History Project (C1063) is a series of interviews with singers, conductors, music staff and musicians carried out by Jon Tolansky for the Royal Opera House Verdi Centenary Project 2001.
- The Dame Adeline Genee recording (C645) is an interview recorded in 1965 with Dame Adeline Genee, ballerina at The London Empire Theatre, 1897-1907.
- Glyndebourne Oral History Project (C511) includes interviews with many of the people associated with Glyndebourne, including Ian Wallace, Peter Gellhorn and Robert Ponsonby.
- An Interview with mezzo-soprano Nancy Evans is included in the National Life Stories project Leaders of National Life (C408).

### Performance

- Oral History of the Circus (C966) features interviews with circus performers, members of the old circus families and others who recall a circus industry and way of life now long passed. There is also an interview with magician Don Ricardo within the NSA: General (C465) collection.
- The Vicinus Music Hall Interviews (C486) were conducted by Martha Vicinus of the University of Michigan during the summers of 1974-1975, with British music hall performers, many recorded at Brinsworth House, a retirement home for performers.

## Music

- Oral History of Jazz in Britain (C122) is a collection featuring specially commissioned interviews with musicians, authors and broadcasters from the beginning to the present day. Selected interviews are available for higher education users on the [Archival Sound Recordings \(ASR\)](#) project under the content package 'Oral History of Jazz in Britain'.
- For other relevant material and live recordings and performances see the Sound Archive's [world and traditional music](#), [classical](#) and [pop](#) collections.

## Related recordings

- The British Council Oral History collection (C1083) is a collection funded by the British Council and co-ordinated by the British Council Association Oral History Project, covers the careers of prominent employees of the British Council.
- For oral history collections relating to arts, crafts, theatre design, fashion, and photography, see [visual arts and crafts](#).  
[http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/ohist/ohcoll/ohperf/performing\\_arts.html](http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/sound/ohist/ohcoll/ohperf/performing_arts.html)

## 2. V&A Theatre Collections

For detailed listings see:

[http://www.vam.ac.uk/files/file\\_upload/44751\\_file.pdf](http://www.vam.ac.uk/files/file_upload/44751_file.pdf). Also see detailed information in Survey and lists of those interviews relating to:

- ABTT oral history project
- Blackgrounds / Blackstage
- Interviews conducted for exhibition use – contact Jill Evans