

ARCHIVE STAGE, SCREEN, TELEVISION AND RADIO MEMORABILIA

STEINBECK AND THE STAGE

Steinbeck's interest in the theater can be traced back as early as 1932, when he attempted a "practice play" entitled, "The Wizard." Written in a student composition book, his first wife, Carol rescued the manuscript from the trash, where Steinbeck had discarded it. The work was never published. The author's interest in the theater continued throughout his life; he composed stagescripts from three of his works: *Of Mice and Men*, *The Moon Is Down*, and *Burning Bright*, but never considered himself a successful playwright. The first staged reading of a Steinbeck work, *Of Mice and Men*, was on May 21, 1937 at the Green Street Theater in San Francisco. The production, never attended by Steinbeck (as he felt it was only an experiment), ran for sixteen weekend performances, and bore little resemblance to the anticipated production scheduled to open on Broadway in the fall of that same year.

Since the Green Street Production, adaptations of other Steinbeck novels and short stories have been performed throughout the world, including: *Tortilla Flat*, *The Pearl*, *East of Eden*, *The Long Valley*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Once There Was A War*, *Cannery Row*, and *Travels With Charley*.

Important stage-related items within the collection include, scripts and director's notebooks for the stage adaptations for *Of Mice and Men*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *East of Eden*; various theatrical programs and playbills, including the 1937 program from *Of Mice and Men* at the Green Street Theater in San Francisco; American and foreign theatrical posters, and theater playbills.

PLAYBILLS

Playbills are usually smaller cards used to promote theatrical performances. The Center has examples of playbills for the 1942 performances of *The Moon Is Down* at the Martin Beck Theater, the National Theater's *The Grapes of Wrath*, and the 1984 performances of *Burning Bright*.

STEINBECK AND FILM

Much of Steinbeck's success in Hollywood was due to the ability of such famed directors as John Ford, Elia Kazan, and Louis Milestone, to translate the author's literary vision to the screen. The author knew his work would be changed, but made efforts to work within the Hollywood system that he disliked. Nominated for at least twenty Academy Awards the majority of film adaptations of Steinbeck's works were critical and financial successes.

Items relating to motion pictures based on Steinbeck works within the collection include, original American and foreign-release film posters; the cutting continuity film script for *The Red Pony*; original scripts for *Viva Zapata!* and *The Grapes of Wrath*; exhibitor campaign booklets for *East of Eden* and *The Grapes of Wrath*; film premiere tickets and handbills; movie tie-in edition books; publicity stills, and other promotional items relating to Steinbeck films.

Theatrical release films adapted from Steinbeck works include:

OF MICE AND MEN (1939)

Screenplay by Eugene Solow, adapted from the John Steinbeck novel and play.

Directed and produced by Lewis Milestone; Musical score by Aaron Copland; Photography by Norbet Brodine

United Artists

Nominated for five Academy Awards including, Norbert Brodine for cinematography; Aaron Copland for scoring the music and for writing the original score; Hal Roach for outstanding production; and Hal Roach Sound Department, Elmer A. Raguse, Sound Director for best sound recording.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH (1940)

Screenplay by Nunnally Johnson, adapted from the novel by John Steinbeck; Musical score by Alfred Newman; Directed by John Ford; Photography by Gregg Toland; Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck

Twentieth Century-Fox

Nominated for seven Academy Awards including, Henry Fonda for best actor; Jane Darwell for actress in a supporting role; John Ford for director; Robert E. Simpson for film editing; 20th Century-Fox for outstanding production; 20th Century-Fox Studio Sound Department, E. H. Hansen, Sound Director for sound recording; and Nunnally Johnson for writing the screenplay. Two awards were presented: Jane Darwell for Actress in a supporting role and John Ford for directing.

THE FORGOTTEN VILLAGE (1941)

Story and screenplay by John Steinbeck; Music by Hanns Eisler; Photography by Alexander Hackensmid; Narrated by Burgess Meredith; Produced and Directed by Herbert Kline

An Arthur Mayer-Joseph Burstyn release.

TORTILLA FLAT (1942)

Screenplay by John Lee Mahin and Benjamin Glazer, based on the novel by John Steinbeck; Directed by Victor Fleming; Produced by Sam Zimbalist

MGM

Nominated for one Academy Award, Frank Morgan for an actor in a supporting role

THE MOON IS DOWN (1943)

Screenplay by Nunnally Johnson, based on the novel by John Steinbeck; Directed by Irving Pichel; Photography by Arthur Miller; Produced by Nunnally Johnson

Twentieth Century Fox

LIFEBOAT (1944)

Screenplay by Jo Sweling, from a story by John Steinbeck; Directed by Alfred Hitchcock; Produced by Kenneth Macgowan

Twentieth Century-Fox

Nominated for three Academy Awards including, Glen MacWilliams for cinematography; Alfred Hitchcock for directing; and John Steinbeck for writing the original motion picture story.

A MEDAL FOR BENNY (1945)

Screenplay by Frank Butler, from a story by John Steinbeck and Jack Wagner; Directed by Irving Pichel; Produced by Paul Jones

Paramount

Nominated for two Academy Awards including, J. Carrol Naish for actor in a supporting role; and for John Steinbeck and Jack Wagner for writing the original motion picture story.

THE PEARL

Screenplay by John Steinbeck, Emilio Fernandez, and Jack Wagner; Directed by Emilio Fernandez; Photography by Gabriel Figueroa; Produced by Oscar Danugers
RKO

THE RED PONY (1949)

Screenplay by John Steinbeck; Music by Aaron Copland; Photography by Tony Gaudio; Directed and produced by Lewis Milestone
Republic

VIVA ZAPATA! (1952)

Screenplay by John Steinbeck; Directed by Elia Kazan; Photography by Joe MacDonald; Music by Alex North; Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck
Twentieth Century-Fox
Nominated for six Academy Awards including, Marlon Brando for best actor, Anthony Quinn for actor in a supporting role; Lyle Wheeler, and Leland Fuller for art direction; Alex North for the musical score; Thomas Little and Claude Carpenter for the set decoration, and John Steinbeck for story and screenplay. One award was presented: Anthony Quinn for actor in a supporting role.

EAST OF EDEN (1955)

Screenplay by Paul Osborn, based on the novel by John Steinbeck; Music by Lawrence Rosenthal; Directed by Elia Kazan; Photography by Ted McCord
Warner Brothers
Nominated for four Academy Awards including, James Dean for best actor; Jo Van Fleet for actress in a supporting role, Elia Kazan for directing, and Paul Osborn for writing the original screenplay. One award was presented: Jo Van Fleet for actress in a supporting role.

THE WAYWARD BUS (1957)

Screenplay by Ivan Moffat, based on the novel by John Steinbeck; Directed by Victor Vicas; Produced by Charles Brackett
Twentieth Century-Fox

FLIGHT (1961)

Screenplay by Barnaby Conrad, adapted from the short story by John Steinbeck; Produced by Barnaby Conrad; Music written and performed by Laurindo Almeida; Photography by Verne Carlson
Directed by Louis Bispo

CANNERY ROW (1982)

Screenplay by David S. Ward, based on Steinbeck's novel and on Sweet Thursday; Directed by David S. Ward; Produced by Michael Phillips; Music by Jack Nitzche; Photography by Sven Nyquist
MGM

OF MICE AND MEN (1992)

Screenplay by Horton Foote; Directed by Gary Sinese; Produced by Russ Smith and Gary Sinese; Music by Mark Isham; Photography by Kenneth MacMillan
MGM