

Sherman Krellberg Papers

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Prepared by Laura J. Kells

Collection Summary

Title: Sherman Krellberg Papers

Span Dates: 1919-1989

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1931-1970)

ID No.: MSS58768

Creator: Krellberg, Sherman, 1892-1979

Extent: 11,000 items ; 43 containers plus 6 oversize ; 18.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: Motion picture and theatrical producer and film distributor. Correspondence, memoranda, scripts, dialog sheets, reports, financial and legal records, and promotional material pertaining chiefly to Krellberg's career as an independent film distributor and producer of feature films, serials, and theatrical productions.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Adams, Joey, 1911-1999.

Baker, Josephine, 1906-1975.

Krellberg, Sherman, 1892-1979.

Lang, Fritz, 1890-1976.

Lugosi, Bela, 1882-1956.

Oysher, Moishe.

Rogers, Budd.

Rogers, Ginger, 1911-1995.

Organizations

Principal Film Exchange.

Subjects

B films.

Cassidy, Hopalong (Fictitious character)

Dogs in motion pictures.

Feature films.

Film serials.

Motion pictures--Distribution.

Theater.

Occupations

Businessmen.

Motion picture producers.

Theatrical producers.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Sherman Krellberg, motion picture and theatrical producer and film distributor, were donated to the Library of Congress by his wife, Mildred Krellberg, in 1979. A small addition was received from Louis B. Marino, Warner Brothers Television Distribution, in 1990.

Processing History

The Sherman Krellberg Papers were processed in 1995. The finding aid was revised in 2009.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Some photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Motion picture stills have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Sherman Krellberg Papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Sherman Krellberg is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Sherman Krellberg are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Sherman Krellberg Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1892	Born
1911	Graduated New York Law School, New York, N.Y.
1931	Founded Regal Talking Pictures Corp.
1932	Established Regal Distributing Corp.
1933	Founded Principal Film Exchange
1935	Produced motion picture serial, <i>The Lost City</i>
circa 1938-1941	Owned Belmont Theatre, New York, N.Y.
circa 1941	Established Goodwill Pictures Corp.
1954	Married Mildred Kraus
1955	Formed Budsam Distributing Co. with Budd Rogers
1959	Formed theatrical investment group, Theatre Securities Syndicate Produced play, <i>The Pink Jungle</i> , starring Ginger Rogers
1962	Formed Ultra Pictures Corp. with Budd Rogers
1964	Produced stage show, <i>Josephine Baker and her Company</i>

1966	Established Goodwill Systems Exchanges
1979, Jan. 10	Died, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Sherman Samuel Krellberg (1892-1979) span the period circa 1919-1989, with the bulk of the material dating from 1931 to 1970, and document his long career as an independent film distributor and producer of feature films, serials, and theatrical productions. Sherman Krellberg's father operated a nickelodeon on the Lower East Side of New York City in the early part of the twentieth century. Krellberg first became an attorney, but ultimately joined in the family business. His papers are organized into three series: [Office Files](#), [Financial Papers](#), and [Oversize](#).

The [Office Files](#) series comprises most of the Krellberg Papers and contains records from the companies and ventures he formed and undertook in the course of his career, including the Amusement Securities Corporation, Filmcraft, Goodwill Pictures Corporation, Goodwill Systems Exchanges, Krellbar Pictures Corporation, Principal Film Exchange, Regal Distributing Corporation, Regal Talking Pictures Corporation, Theatre Securities Syndicate, Ultra Film Distributors, and Ultra Pictures Corporation. The longest lasting of these companies was Principal Film Exchange. Records in the Office Files illustrate the technical and financial aspects of making and distributing films. Appearing throughout the papers is Budd Rogers, with whom Krellberg had a variety of working relationships, including a partnership in Ultra Pictures Corporation. Krellberg's career, spanning over sixty years, was not always a financial success. There are past due bills and demands for tax payments throughout the collection, as well as evidence that in 1968 Krellberg declared bankruptcy.

A main portion of Krellberg's business involved the distribution of second feature or "B" movies and serials. In a films section of the Office Files are records relating to six films featuring the singing cowboy Hopalong Cassidy, including translations of the dialog into Spanish and Portuguese for distribution in foreign markets. Krellberg also distributed pictures featuring Lightning the Marvel Dog and Kazan the Wonder Dog, both billed as sons of Rin Tin Tin. There is also extensive material on *Singing in the Dark*, starring Moishe Oysher and Joey Adams. In addition, there are files relating to *White Zombie* starring Bela Lugosi and the American releases of the Fritz Lang films, *The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse* and *M*. Other files relate to serials featuring the characters Ace Drummond, Buck Rogers, and Flash Gordon. In addition, there is material on *The Lost City*, which Krellberg produced, and the earliest work documented in the collection, the 1919 silent serial *The Fatal Fortune*.

Krellberg also produced stage plays, particularly in the 1950s. Theatrical productions represented in the collection include *The Fifth Season* and *The Pink Jungle*, which starred Ginger Rogers and closed in 1959 before reaching Broadway. Krellberg produced the 1964 stage show *Josephine Baker and Her Company*, which appeared on Broadway and toured the country for several months. The financial details of the Josephine Baker tour are well documented.

Also contained in the [Office Files](#) is a group of scripts and treatments, many of which were never produced. These include manuscripts from the 1960s and 1970s which Krellberg purchased from Bryanston Films. The scripts range widely in subject matter, including "Hard to be a Jew" by Sholom Aleichem, 1931, "Promises Written on Water" by Sylvester E. Stallone, 1970, and an undated musical stage play "The Count of Ten" by William Penzner, slated to be directed by Busby Berkeley.

The [Financial Papers](#) series includes ledger books and bank records relating to Krellberg's companies. There are also ledgers on RKO and Universal films which Krellberg distributed through his companies. Several of these ledgers, particularly the ledgers for the Principal Film Exchange, document the distribution of films to theaters in New York and New Jersey.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in three series:

- [Office Files, circa 1919-1989](#)
- [Financial Papers, 1929-1977](#)
- [Oversize, circa 1937-1967](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-36

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Correspondence, memoranda, reports, scripts, dialog sheets, contracts, distribution agreements, pressbooks and other promotional material, vouchers, and related records.

Arranged alphabetically by name of company, person, type of material, or name of project and chronologically therein.

BOX 37-43

Financial Papers, 1929-1977

Ledger books, banking records, brokers statements, and related financial records.

Arranged alphabetically by name of company and type of material and chronologically therein.

BOX OV 1-OV 6

Oversize, circa 1937-1967

Pressbooks, promotional material, story boards, and ledgers.

Arranged and described according to the series, folders, and boxes from which the items were removed.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-36	Office Files, circa 1919-1989 Correspondence, memoranda, reports, scripts, dialog sheets, contracts, distribution agreements, pressbooks and other promotional material, vouchers, and related records. Arranged alphabetically by name of company, person, type of material, or name of project and chronologically therein.
BOX 1	Amusement Securities Corp., 1925, 1932-1939, 1945 (2 folders) Attorneys Enselman, Isidor, 1953-1956 Sulken, Herman, 1949-1963 Bank of America, London, England, 1953-1958 Belmont Theatre, New York, N.Y., 1937-1941, undated Exclusive Films, Ltd., 1953-1959, undated (4 folders)
BOX 2	(3 folders) Family material, 1931-1940 Filmcraft, Inc. Agreements, 1949-1953, undated (2 folders) American Trading Association, 1949-1953 (2 folders) Embassy Pictures Corp., 1949-1954, undated
BOX 3	International Film Distributors, 1949-1953 Jaslow, Jack, 1950-1951, undated Miscellany, 1949-1955, undated Films <i>Angkor</i> , 1934-1936, 1946, undated <i>City of Lost Men</i> , (alternate title, <i>The Lost City</i> , feature version), 1935-1937, 1957, undated (2 folders) <i>Come Back to Erin</i> , 1940 <i>A Day in Court</i> , 1963, 1971, undated Dog pictures Agreements, 1935-1947 <i>Fighting Fury</i> , circa 1934 <i>Man's Best Friend</i> , 1934-1937, undated <i>Thunderbolt</i> , 1935, undated <i>When Lightning Strikes</i> , 1934, undated
BOX 4	<i>Enemies of the Law</i> , 1931-1932, undated <i>Escape from Terror</i> , 1957-1961 <i>Fatal Desire</i> , 1963, undated <i>The Fighting Lady</i> , circa 1935

	<p><i>Forty Thousand Horsemen</i>, 1941-1949, undated (2 folders)</p> <p><i>Get That Venus!</i>, undated</p> <p><i>Hollywood Hoodlum</i>, (alternate title, <i>Hollywood Mystery</i>), 1934, 1946, undated</p> <p>Hopalong Cassidy pictures</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>Bar 20 Rides Again</i>, 1935-1936</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>Call of the Prairie</i>, 1936</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>The Eagles Brood</i>, 1935, undated</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>Heart of the West</i>, 1936</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>Hopalong Cassidy Enters</i>, 1935</p>
BOX 5	<p style="padding-left: 2em;"><i>Three on the Trail</i>, 1936</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Various related material, 1935-1950, 1971, undated (5 folders)</p> <p><i>I Conquer the Sea</i>, circa 1936</p> <p><i>Knickerbocker Holiday</i>, 1938-1944, 1956, 1966, 1971</p> <p><i>The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse</i>, 1940-1947, undated (3 folders)</p> <p><i>Love on the Dole</i>, undated</p> <p><i>M</i>, 1932, 1941-1947, undated</p>
BOX 6	<p><i>Marriage Forbidden</i>, (also released as <i>Damaged Goods</i>), circa 1937-1938, 1977, undated <u><i>See also Oversize</i></u></p> <p><i>Mars Attacks the World</i> (Flash Gordon feature), 1977-1978, undated</p> <p><i>Meet John Doe</i>, 1941-1956, 1962-1977, undated <u><i>See also Oversize</i></u> (3 folders)</p> <p><i>The Mutiny of the Elsinore</i>, 1938-1947, 1957, undated <u><i>See also Oversize</i></u> (2 folders)</p> <p><i>The Passion of Joan of Arc</i>, circa 1928</p> <p><i>Planet Outlaws</i>, (Buck Rogers feature), circa 1939, undated <u><i>See also Oversize</i></u> (2 folders)</p> <p><i>Revolt of the Zombies</i>, circa 1936</p> <p><i>Rocket Ship</i>, (Flash Gordon feature), undated <u><i>See also Oversize</i></u></p> <p><i>Should a Doctor Tell</i>, 1931-1932</p>
BOX 7	<p><i>Singing in the Dark</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Budsam Distributing Co., 1955-1965 <u><i>See also Container 38, same heading</i></u> (5 folders)</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Miscellany, 1955, undated</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">Principal Film Exchange, 1955-1958, undated (2 folders)</p> <p><i>Story of a Cheat</i>, (alternate title, <i>Confessions of a Cheat</i>), 1942, 1974, undated</p> <p><i>Story of Michael Flagherty</i>, 1941</p> <p><i>Two Nights with Cleopatra</i>, 1963, undated</p>
BOX 8	<p><i>Vienna Waltzes</i>, circa 1952</p> <p><i>White Zombie</i>, 1932-1947, 1967-1978, undated (2 folders)</p> <p><i>Wolves of the Underworld</i>, undated</p> <p>Flamingo Films, 1949-1954</p> <p>Friars Club, 1959, 1974-1977</p>

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Container

Contents

	Goodwill Pictures Corp.
	Adelphi Films, 1953-1958, undated
	American and Foreign Trade Corp., 1966
	Barnett International Forwarders, 1953-1957, 1965
	Davis, Jack, 1953-1958, undated
	Forest Export Corp., 1951-1956, undated
	Gilliams and Rubin, 1949-1957
	Guffanti Film Laboratories, 1955-1957
BOX 9	Kay Film Exchanges, 1949-1961 (6 folders)
	Manson Distributing Corp., 1966
	Miscellany, 1946-1969, undated
BOX 10	National Screen Service Corp., 1953-1960 (2 folders)
	Office leases, 1961-1963
	Pat Patterson Productions, 1953-1960 (2 folders)
	Rosen, David, 1953-1960 (2 folders)
	Tower Pictures Co., 1949-1952
	Variety Film Distributors, 1947, 1953-1956
BOX 11	Goodwill Systems Exchanges, 1966-1970, undated (5 folders)
	Insurance, 1949-1956, undated
	Krellbar Pictures Corp., 1927, undated
	Lawrence of Arabia, Inc., 1935, 1942, undated
	Letterhead, undated
	Library of Congress Copyright Office, 1961-1977, undated Miscellany, 1969-1973, undated
	Melotone Corp. of America, 1929
	Miscellany, 1928-1942, 1949-1979, 1989, undated (2 folders)
BOX 12	Motion Picture Pioneers, 1940-1957, 1976
	Motion Pictures for Television, Inc., 1951-1961 (3 folders)
	Moviellab, Inc., 1962-1975, undated
	Pathé-America Distributing Co., 1961-1963, undated (3 folders)
BOX 13	(7 folders)
BOX 14	Principal Film Exchange Banner Productions, Tarzan films distribution, 1958-1963 (2 folders)
	Brandt Theatres, New York, N.Y., 1963-1964, undated
	Censor board, 1932-1964, undated (2 folders)
	Dominant Pictures Corp., 1959-1960

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Container

Contents

	Film Bookers, Inc. 1963-1964
	Film distribution, 1956-1971, undated (6 folders)
	I.F.E. Releasing Corp., 1957-1959, undated
	Loews, Inc., 1959-1963, undated
BOX 15	Miscellany, 1953-1978, undated
	Museum of Modern Art, New York, N.Y., 1968-1969
	National Labor Relations Board, 1951, undated
	RKO Radio Pictures <i>See also Container 41, same heading</i>
	Miscellany, 1957-1967, undated (6 folders)
BOX 16	(3 folders)
	Weekly reports
	Apr. 1957-Oct. 1958 (4 folders)
BOX 17	Nov. 1958-Sept. 1964 (7 folders)
BOX 18	Oct. 1964-Dec. 1967 (4 folders)
	Shorts, 1956-1965, undated
	Sydney B. Weill Co., 1949-1952, undated
	Tri-State Theatre Service, 1963-1964
	United States military, 1950-1964, undated (2 folders)
	Universal Pictures Co., 1961-1964
	Veterans Administration, 1959-1962
	Walkill Prison, Walkill, N.Y., 1962-1963
BOX 19	Promotional material, 1950, undated <i>See also Oversize</i>
	Rank Film Laboratories, 1966-1973, undated
	Regal Distributing Corp., 1932-1939, 1945
	Regal Talking Pictures Corp., 1931
	Scripts and treatments
	1931-1967 (7 folders)
BOX 20	1969-1972 (7 folders)
BOX 21	1973 (7 folders)
BOX 22	1974-1977 (5 folders)
	Undated (2 folders)
BOX 23	(10 folders)
BOX 24	(6 folders)
BOX 25	(5 folders)
	Serials
	<i>Ace Drummond</i> , circa 1936

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Container

Contents

	<i>Buck Rogers</i> , circa 1939, 1949-1956, undated <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders)
	<i>The Fatal Fortune</i> , circa 1919
	Flash Gordon <i>Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars</i> , 1938, undated (3 folders)
	Miscellany, circa 1940, 1949-1953, 1963-1964
BOX 26	<i>The Lost City</i> , 1934-1948, 1960, 1966, 1976-1978, undated (4 folders)
	<i>Tarzan, the Fearless</i> , 1933
	Various related material, 1948-1961, undated
	Terry, Paul, (Terrytoons), 1940, 1950-1957, undated
	Theater directory, 1963
	Theatre Securities Syndicate, 1944-1949, 1959, 1969, undated
BOX 27	Theatrical productions Falk, Sawyer, 1952-1960 <i>The Fifth Season</i> , 1951-1959, undated (6 folders)
	Her Majesty's Theatre, Montreal, Canada, 1953 <i>Josephine Baker and Her Company</i> Box office statements, 1964 Contracts and agreements, 1964, undated (3 folders)
BOX 28	Correspondence, 1964 Joback Productions, 1964-1966 <i>See also Container 39, same heading</i> Miscellany, 1964-1965, undated Press, 1964 Program and promotional material, 1964 Various bills, 1964-1965 Vouchers, 1964 (4 folders)
BOX 29	(7 folders)
BOX 30	(3 folders)
	<i>Julia, Jake, and Uncle Joe</i> , 1960, undated
	<i>Lunatics and Lovers</i> , 1955-1956
	Miscellaneous productions, 1939-1945, 1952-1962, undated
	<i>The Pink Jungle</i> <i>See also Container 39, The Pink Jungle Co.</i> Box office statements, 1959 Contracts, 1959, undated Correspondence, 1959-1960
BOX 31	Insurance, 1959-1960 Litigation and arbitration, 1959-1962 (2 folders) Miscellaneous expenses, 1959, undated Miscellany, 1959-1960, undated Payroll and taxes, 1959-1960, undated (3 folders)

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Container

Contents

	Program and press, 1959
	Script, 1959
	Settlement statements, 1959
	Theatre Securities Syndicate, 1959-1961
	Various bills, 1959-1961, undated
	(4 folders)
BOX 32	(7 folders)
	Shubert, Lee, 1953
	<i>Starcross Story</i> , circa 1952-1954
BOX 33	"They All Had Voices Like Diamonds" project, 1968, 1977, undated <i>See also Oversize</i>
	Ultra Film Distributors
	Miscellany, 1964-1967
	"Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar" project, 1964, undated
	(3 folders)
	"The War's Greatest Snafu Treasure Hunt" project, 1965-1973, undated
	Ultra Pictures Corp.
	Arthur J. Newman Film Co., 1963-1965
	Brown, Harry Joe, 1962-1966
	Brylawski, Fulton, 1962-1965
	Cavalcade Pictures, 1963-1964
BOX 34	Expenses, 1962-1964
	(5 folders)
	Independent Film Distributors, Inc., 1963-1966
	J.M.G. Film Co., 1963-1966
	Loew's Theatres, 1963-1964
	Masterpiece Pictures, 1963-1967
	Maton Films, 1963-1966
	(2 folders)
	Memoranda to all franchise holders, 1963-1965
BOX 35	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1962-1965
	Mid-America Drive-In Theatres, 1963
	Military motion picture services, 1963-1966
	Miscellany, 1962-1965
	Mutual Films, 1963-1966
	(2 folders)
	National Legion of Decency, 1963
	National Screen Service Corp., 1963-1965
	Paramount Pictures Corp., 1963-1966
	Principal Film Exchange, 1963-1966
	Realart Pictures of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1963-1964
	(2 folders)
	Seven Arts Associates Corp., 1963-1966
	Shuster, Harry, 1964-1966
	Titra Film Laboratories, 1962-1965
	United Detroit Theatres, Detroit, Mich., 1963
	United Producers Releasing Organization, 1963-1966
	(2 folders)

Office Files, circa 1919-1989

Container

Contents

BOX 36	Universal Pictures Co., 1963-1966 (2 folders) Weekly reports, 1963-1964 (5 folders) William Goldman Theatres, Philadelphia, Pa., 1963-1964
BOX 37-43	Financial Papers, 1929-1977 Ledger books, banking records, brokers statements, and related financial records. Arranged alphabetically by name of company and type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX 37	1025 Park Avenue Corp. Tax material, 1945-1948, undated (2 folders) Ledger, 1945-1948 <i>See Oversize</i> Amusement Securities Corp., 1932-1933 Banks Ledger sheets, 1957 Miscellany, 1929-1931, 1956-1958 Brokers statements Elbern, Florence, 1956-1957 Krellberg, Mildred, 1957 Krellberg, Sherman S., 1956-1957 (4 folders) Phillips, Mary J., 1956-1957
BOX 38	Budsam Distributing Co., 1955-1963 (2 folders) Goodwill Pictures Corp. Cash disbursements and receipts, 1951-1958 <i>See Oversize</i> General ledger, 1941-1954 (4 folders)
BOX 39	(1 folder) Goodwill Systems Exchanges, 1968, 1975-1977 Joback Productions, 1964 The Pink Jungle Co., 1959 Principal Film Exchange Accounts payable, 1934-1952 Cash disbursements, 1960-1965; purchases, 1952-1953; bank reconciliation, 1950-1958 <i>See Oversize</i> Cash receipts, 1952-1967 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 40	General ledger, 1950-1955 (2 folders) Journals, 1938-1948 (2 folders)
BOX 41	RKO Radio Pictures Accounts receivable, 1957-1968 Ledgers, 1954-1967 (3 folders) Taxes, 1933-38, 1974-1977

Financial Papers, 1929-1977

Container

Contents

BOX 42	Theatre ledgers, 1950-1964 (2 folders) Theatre Securities Syndicate, 1961 (2 folders) Ultra Pictures Corp., 1963-1964 Universal Pictures Co., 1964
BOX 43	Various companies Cash disbursements and receipts, 1939-1940 <i>See Oversize</i> Cash receipts and film distribution, 1944 <i>See Oversize</i> General ledgers, 1933-1941 (3 folders)
BOX OV 1-OV 6	Oversize, circa 1937-1967 Pressbooks, promotional material, story boards, and ledgers. Arranged and described according to the series, folders, and boxes from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	Office Files Films <i>Marriage Forbidden</i> , circa 1937 (Container 6) <i>Meet John Doe</i> , undated (Container 6) <i>The Mutiny of the Elsinore</i> , undated (Container 6) <i>Planet Outlaws</i> , undated (Container 6) <i>Rocket Ship</i> , undated (Container 6) Promotional material, undated (Container 19) Serials <i>Buck Rogers</i> , undated (Container 25)
BOX OV 2	"They All Had Voices Like Diamonds" project, undated (Container 33) Financial Papers 1025 Park Avenue Corp. Ledger, 1945-1948 (Container 37)
BOX OV 3	Goodwill Pictures Corp. Cash disbursements and receipts, 1951-1958 (Container 38) Principal Film Exchange Cash disbursements, 1960-1965; purchases, 1952-1953; bank reconciliation, 1950-1958 (Container 39)
BOX OV 4	Cash receipts, 1952-1967 (Container 39)
BOX OV 5	Various companies Cash disbursements and receipts, 1939-1940 (Container 43)
BOX OV 6	Cash receipts and film distribution, 1944 (Container 43)