



Guide to the Lorraine Hansberry Theater Collection, 1959-1964

This collection guide was produced in **December 2021**.

This PDF version was created on **April 2, 2026**.

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

411 Chapel Drive

Duke University

Durham 27708

askRL@duke.edu

URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

Table of Contents

Summary	3
Background	4
Arrangement	4
Administrative Information	4
Related Materials	5
Names and Subjects	6
Collection Inventory	6

Summary

Collection Title:

Lorraine Hansberry theater collection, 1959-1964

Source:

John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

Abstract:

Playwright Lorraine Hansberry (May 19, 1930 - January 12, 1965) was born in Chicago, Illinois, and was the first Black woman to have a play performed on Broadway. Collection contains four items: a theater program and issue of Playbill magazine for Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, and a theater program and issue of Playbill magazine for Hansberry's *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*. Acquired as part of the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture.

Extent:

0.1 Linear Feet

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.11963

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1pm93>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Lorraine Hansberry Theater Collection, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Background

Scope and Content

Collection contains four items: a theater program and issue of Playbill magazine for *A Raisin in the Sun*, and a theater program and issue of Playbill magazine for *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*.

Biographical/Historical

Playwright Lorraine Hansberry (May 19, 1930 - January 12, 1965) was born in Chicago, Illinois, and was the first Black woman to have a play performed on Broadway. Her best known work, the play *A Raisin in the Sun*, highlights the lives of Black Americans living under racial segregation in Chicago. The play won the New York Drama Critic's Circle Award, making Hansberry the youngest American, the first woman, and the first Black American to win the award. She was politically active in the Civil Rights movement advocating for social change and speaking against the oppression of Black Americans. Hansberry passed away from pancreatic cancer at the age of 34.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Theater programs are arranged chronologically.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library

411 Chapel Drive
Duke University
Durham 27708
askRL@duke.edu

URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Acquisition Information

The Lorraine Hansberry Theater Collection was received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a purchase in 2021.

Processing Information

Processed by Leah Tams, December 2021.

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2021-0155.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Material

Researchers may also be interested in the following collections outside of Duke:

Lorraine Hansberry papers, 1947-1988 at the New York Public Library: <https://archives.nypl.org/scm/20931>.

Richard Hoffman - Lorraine Hansberry collection at the University of Delaware: <https://library.udel.edu/special/findaids/view?docId=ead/mss0508.xml;tab=print>.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Names and Subjects

- African American theater
- Theater programs
- African American women
- Hansberry, Lorraine, 1930-1965
- John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

Collection Inventory

"A Raisin in the Sun" Playbill magazine, 1959 March 23	Folder 1
"A Raisin in the Sun" theater program, 1959 August 4	Folder 1
"Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window" Playbill magazine, 1964 October 27	Folder 1

Scope and Contents

Includes a ticket stub from the performance.

"The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window" theater program, circa 1964	Folder 1
---	----------