

# Guide to the Edward Gordon Craig Collection

GEN MSS 433



by Kathryn Rawdon and Beinecke Staff

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** GEN MSS 433

**CREATOR:** Craig, Edward Gordon, 1872-1966

**TITLE:** Edward Gordon Craig collection

**DATES:** 1905-1963

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1.05 linear feet (4 boxes) + 2 portfolios

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** This finding aid encompasses accessions of single manuscripts and small groups of manuscripts and other papers, by or pertaining to Edward Gordon Craig, acquired by the library from a variety of sources. [Series I, Hamill and Barker Purchase](#) (1912-1958), contains letters from a variety of correspondents to Craig's friend Ewald Junge, who also collected Craig material. The letters include five folders of letters from Craig, and notes on Craig's collection of his own personal papers. [Series II, Materials from Other Sources](#) (1905-1963), includes an annotated copy of Craig's autobiography, *Index to the Story of My Days*, with clippings, photographs and proofs of woodcuts laid in, and letters, notes and a specimen page removed from the volume and foldered; one letter from Craig to Theodore Sizer accompanied by a small etching; two woodcuts by Craig inscribed to Haldane and Mabel Macfall; forty photographs relating to Craig's scenic models for the 1912 Moscow Art Theatre production of *Hamlet*; and prospectus, dummy, first proof and revised proof with corrections of Craig's book *Towards a New Theatre*.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.craig>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.craig>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Ongoing collection of documents acquired by gift and purchase from various sources. Source information is recorded on the folders. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Portfolio folders 31-34: Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Edward Gordon Craig Collection is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

Edward Gordon Craig Collection. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

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### Processing Information

This finding aid is updated periodically to account for new materials that have been added to the collection. The date of the most recent update is noted on the title page. For information on material that may have been acquired for the collection since the last update, please consult the Public Service Desk.

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## EDWARD GORDON CRAIG, 1872-1966

Edward Gordon Craig was born in England on 16 January 1872, the son of the actress Ellen Terry and the architect E. W. (Edward William) Godwin. In 1878, at the age of six, he made his first stage appearance in a production of *Olivia*, by W. G. Wills. He studied at Southfield Park and Bradfield College, and was a member of Henry Irving's theater company at the Lyceum Theatre in London beginning in 1889.

In 1893, Craig married May Gibson, and moved from London to Uxbridge. Under the influence of the artists James Ferrier Pryde and William Nicholson, he learned the art of wood-engraving, and began his career as a graphic designer. In 1893 he directed and designed his first stage production: Alfred de Musset's *On ne badine pas avec l'amour*. Around this time he also published a magazine, *The Page*, consisting mostly of his own engravings, and in 1899 published a book of woodcuts with accompanying verses entitled *Gordon Craig's Book of Penny Toys*.

Craig's career as a stage designer continued to evolve as he collaborated with Martin Shaw in 1901 and 1902 productions of *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Mask of Love* and other plays. In 1904 Craig traveled to Berlin to work with the Lessing Theatre, and in 1905 he published his most famous essay, *The Art of the Theatre*, which was later expanded and republished as *On the Art of the Theatre*. In Germany he met the dancer Isadora Duncan, with whom he had a brief but intense affair, ending in 1906. Duncan persuaded the theater producer Konstantin Stanislavsky to invite Craig to Moscow, and there he designed an important 1912

production of *Hamlet*. In 1913, Craig fulfilled a longtime dream by founding his School for the Art of the Theatre in the Arena Goldoni in Florence; however, it closed shortly thereafter at the outbreak of World War I.

Over his long career Craig became known as an important innovator in theater design, popularizing a modern, minimalist style in contrast to the more extravagant style of his mother's age, and his writings, artwork and design had an enormous impact on twentieth-century theater. His publications include the theatrical periodical *The Mask* (1908-1929), and the books *Books and Theatres* (1925), *Ellen Terry and Her Secret Self* (1931), *Nothing, or, the Bookplate* (1924), *The Theatre - Advancing* (1919) and his autobiography, *Index to the Story of My Days* (1957). He spent the last years of his life in the south of France, and died there in 1966.

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## Scope and Contents

This finding aid encompasses accessions of single manuscripts and small groups of manuscripts and other papers, by or pertaining to Edward Gordon Craig, acquired by the library from a variety of sources. [Series I, Hamill and Barker Purchase](#) (1912-1958), contains letters from a variety of correspondents to Craig's friend Ewald Junge, who also collected Craig material. The letters include five folders of letters from Craig, and notes on Craig's collection of his own personal papers. [Series II, Materials from Other Sources](#) (1905-1963), includes an annotated copy of Craig's autobiography, *Index to the Story of My Days*, with clippings, photographs and proofs of woodcuts laid in, and letters, notes and a specimen page removed from the volume and foldered; one letter from Craig to Theodore Sizer accompanied by a small etching; two woodcuts by Craig inscribed to Haldane and Mabel Macfall; forty photographs relating to Craig's scenic models for the 1912 Moscow Art Theatre production of *Hamlet*; and prospectus, dummy, first proof and revised proof with corrections of Craig's book *Towards a New Theatre*.

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## Arrangement

Organized into two series: I. Hamill and Barker Purchase, 1912-1958. II. Materials from Other Sources, 1905-1963.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Hamill and Barker Purchase, 1912-1958

*0.3 linear feet (.75 boxes)*

Purchased from Hamill and Barker on the Library Associates Fund, 1969

#### LETTERS TO EWALD JUNGE

b. 1, f. 1	British Broadcasting Corporation	1949
b. 1, f. 2	Beerbohm, Max	1954 Jul 28
b. 1, f. 3	British Council	1952
b. 1, f. 4	Browne, E. Martin (Elliott Martin)	1949-56
b. 1, f. 5-9	Craig, Edward Gordon Includes: Letter to EGC from Lawrence Irving, 15 October 1957	1953-58
b. 1, f. 10	Fitzgerald, Desmond	1951
b. 1, f. 11	Harling, Robert	[1948]
b. 1, f. 12	Heinemann (Firm)	1952 Jul 28
b. 1, f. 13	Irving, Laurence	1952
b. 1, f. 14	Nicoll, Allardyce	1948 Jan 20
b. 1, f. 15	Shaw, Martin	[1952 Jan 15]
b. 1, f. 16	Old Vic Theatre (London, England)	1948-51
b. 1, f. 17	Unesco	1947 Oct 15
b. 1, f. 18	University of California	1955
b. 1, f. 19	Victoria and Albert Museum	1948-51
b. 1, f. 20	Whitworth, Geoffrey	1912-48

#### OTHER PAPERS

b. 1, f. 21	"Notes on Mr. Gordon Craig's Personal Collection at St. Germain," typescript	1940 Jan
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**Series II: Materials from Other Sources, 1905-1963***0.5 linear feet (2.25 boxes)*

Acquired by gift or purchase from various sources, as indicated on individual folders

MATERIALS REMOVED FROM *INDEX TO THE STORY OF MY DAYS*

## Letters to Edward Gordon Craig

b. 1, f. 22	Blair, Frederika	1958 Dec 3
b. 1, f. 23	Hoover, Gene Boardman	1958 Jan 18
b. 1, f. 24	Hulton Press Ltd	1955, 1957
Other Papers		
b. 1, f. 25	Notes and clippings	1905-63, n.d.
b. 1, f. 26	Specimen page for "Gordon Craig's Memoirs"	1955

## OTHER MATERIALS

b. 1, f. 27	ALS from EGC to Theodore Sizer Includes: Penny etching by EGC, 1922	1924 May 25
b. 2, f. 28	<i>Index to the Story of My Days</i> , printed volume, Hulton Press, London Includes: Extensive annotations by EGC, clippings, proofs of woodcuts, photographs of EGC (1905), Dixton Manor House (n.d.), and the Theatre Royal (1954)	1957
b. port, f. 29	Woodcut entitled "Hunger" Inscribed to Haldane Macfall and Mabel Macfall	1908
b. port, f. 30	Woodcut of a skeleton Inscribed to Haldane Macfall	1925
b. 3, f. 35-39	Black-and-white photographs made by Craig of his scenic models for the Stanislavsky and Craig production of <i>Hamlet</i> at the Moscow Art Theatre (1912)  Includes: Photograph of Craig with scenic model in his garden; two photographs of an actor in costume for <i>Hamlet</i> and one of a staff member standing beside a scenic model; and two photographs of Craig's office.	[1909-11], undated
b. 4, f. 40-45	Prospectus, dummy, first proof and revised proof with corrections of <i>Towards a New Theatre</i> ; with typed letter, signed, dated 1913 February 13, from Dent & Sons, Publisher, to Craig regarding proofs.	1912-1913

## Restricted Fragile

*(1 portfolio)*

Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. port, f. 31      Box 1, folder 7

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b. port, f. 32      Box 1, folder 9

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b. port, f. 33      Box 1, folder 20

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b. port, f. 34      Box 1, folder 25

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## **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.

### **Subjects**

Set designers -- United States  
Set designers -- United States  
Theater -- Production and direction  
Theaters -- Stage-setting and scenery

### **Genres / Formats**

Etchings (prints)  
Photographs  
Woodcuts (prints)

### **Names**

Craig, Edward Gordon, 1872-1966  
Craig, Edward Gordon, 1872-1966 (Towards a new theatre)  
Junge, Ewald  
Macfall, Haldane, 1860-1928  
Macfall, Mabel

### **Corporate Body**

Moskovskii khudozhestvennyi akademicheskii teatr