

Kenneth Royal Murdoch:

A Preliminary Inventory of His Papers in the Manuscript Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Murdoch, Royal, 1898-1981
Title:	Kenneth Royal Murdoch Papers
Dates:	1940-1982
Extent:	12 boxes, 1 oversize folder (5.04 linear feet)
Abstract:	The papers of poet Kenneth Royal Murdoch contain handwritten and typescript drafts of prose and poetry, children's stories, plays, extensive correspondence, and personal material.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-04994
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition:	Gift, 2005 (Gift no. 12451)
Processed by:	Hope Rider and Liz Murray, 2005
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Scope and Contents

The papers of poet Kenneth Royal Murdoch contain handwritten and typescript drafts of prose and poetry, children's stories, plays, extensive correspondence, and personal material. Although his works were published under the name Royal Murdoch, he was known to his friends and family as "Kenneth," the name he also employed in his correspondence. The collection is organized in three series: I. Works, 1941-1982; II. Correspondence, 1940-1981; and III. Personal.

The works in Series I. include drafts of three published books: *The Disrobing: Sex and Satire* (edited and published posthumously by Winston Leyland of Gay Sunshine Press, 1982), *Gargantua's Mouth* (1946), and *New Friends of Mother Goose* (1958). Also present are drafts of an unfinished novel "Letters to Xenophon Ho," as well as numerous poems and playscripts. Ideas and sketches for works can be found in numerous notebooks and notes on various subjects.

Series II. Correspondence, 1940-1981, bound in date order by Murdoch, contains incoming and outgoing letters, primarily typed transcriptions of personal correspondence. Correspondents include Murdoch's mother Mary Snyder, sister Sadie Woodhead, friends such as Winston Leyland, Stavros Mannesis, Felice Picano, Cyril Sloane, and Edward Watkins; and fellow poets including Peter Dent, Marianne Moore, and André Spire. Loose materials from the bound volumes, such as original letters, photographs, and personal papers, are foldered separately and follow the bound letters.

The personal material in Series III. includes promotional blurbs for works by Murdoch, Spanish vocabulary aides, "Poems and Prose, 1954-1974" by David Malberg, diplomas from high school and college, photographs, and cancelled stamps.

Books and personal effects received with the collection were transferred to appropriate departments within the Ransom Center. The material is in good condition with the exception of fragile drafts of "The Letters to Xenophon Ho" that were photocopied to facilitate access without using the original draft pages.

Series I. Works, 1941-1982

"Assassination," poem typescripts	Box 1 Folder 1-3
"A Bus-About: Journal of a Journey, 1965, or (You Should Travel Around)," handwritten notebooks	Folder 4-5
Children's stories, typescripts, 1941 and n.d.	Folder 6
"Coda: Last Diary," handwritten and typed, May 1980	Folder 7
<i>The Disrobing: Sex and Satire</i> (1982)	Folder
Bound typescript titled "The Disrobing: Poems of Sex and Satire"; with associated material	Folder 8
Bound carbon typescript, additional typescript pages for final draft, associated material, and correspondence, 1979-1981	Box 2 Folder 1-2
"For Rent: A Back Bedroom," playscripts	Folder 3-4
<i>Gargantua's Mouth</i> (1946), review clippings	Folder 5
"Gus," prose, handwritten partial draft	Folder 6
"The Gypsy," playscript drafts with handwritten corrections	Folder 7-8
"Letters to Xenophon Ho," unfinished novel, 1970s	Folder
Parts I-IV, typescripts	Folder 9-11
Part V, typescript	Box 3 Folder 1
Typescript fragments	Folder 2

Typescript fragments, photocopies of (fragile) originals, prepared for research use	Folder 3-5
Typescript fragments, originals (please request photocopies, folders 3-5, for research use)	Folder 6-7
Bound typescript	Box 4 Folder 1
<i>New Friends of Mother Goose</i> (1958), bound typescript	Folder 2
Notebooks, handwritten	Folder 3-6
Notes, various subjects	Box 5 Folder 1-3
"The Old Woman and the Happy House," playscripts, draft fragments	Folder 4-8
Poems, typescript and handwritten drafts	Folder 9-10
Poetry submission notecards	Folder 11
"Stuffed Attic: 1977," poems, bound typescript	Folder 12
"Vale Means Farewell," typescript fragment	Box 6 Folder 1
"The Visiting Uncles," playscripts and draft fragments	Folder 2-4
Various works, manuscript draft fragments, typed and handwritten	Folder 5-6

Series II. Correspondence, 1940-1981

1940-1942	Box 6 Folder 7-8
1941	Folder 9-10
1943-1952	Box 7 Folder 1-2
1953-1954	Folder 3-4
1955-1957	Folder 5
1955-1957, cont'd	Box 8 Folder 1
1958-1962	Folder 2-3
1963-1965	Folder 4-5
1966-1967	Folder 6-7
1968-1969	Box 9 Folder 1-2
1970-1971	Folder 3-4
1972-1973	Folder 5
1974	Box 10 Folder 1-2
1975	Folder 3-4
1976	Folder 5-6
1977	Box 11 Folder 1-2
1978-1979	Folder 3-4
1979-1981	Box 12 Folder 1-2
Various, unbound, 1940-1980	Folder 3-4

Series III. Personal

Book plates with quotes re Murdoch

**Box 12 Folder
5**

Latin to Spanish vocabulary list, carbon typescript and Spanish vocabulary notebook

**Folder
6-7**

Malberg, David, "Poems and Prose, 1954-1974"

Folder 8

Personal, notes and printed material (*oversize diploma removed to oversize file folder)

**Folder
9***

Photographs

Folder 10

Stamps, cancelled

Folder 11