

Guide to the Hote' Casella (Gladys Mathonican Miller) Collection 1946-1977

Collection Overview:

Date Range: 1946-1977

Creator: Casella, Hote' (Miller, Mathonican Gladys 1909-1990)

Extent: 1.5 linear feet

Abstract: The collection consists of one banker box of sheet music, and one clamshell box of photographs, promotional materials, press releases, newspaper clippings, concert programs, correspondence, a composition book of musical notations, and three aluminum core lacquer disc audio recordings.

Language of Materials: English, Italian, German, French, Cherokee

Repository: Tomaquag Museum

Collection Number: Ms. HC

Scope and Content: Hote' Casella, a Cherokee, was born Gladys Mathonican in San Angelo, Texas but moved to Los Angeles, California with her family as an infant and was raised there. A classically trained mezzo-soprano singer, who briefly studied at UCLA and Julliard, Hote' Casella performed Native American songs and stories for school groups and audiences throughout the United States and Europe from the 1940s until the early 1980s. This collection is an overview of her career including sheet music, a notebook, promotional items, press releases, newspaper articles, programs, correspondence, photographs, and lacquer disc recordings. In addition, there are promotional photographs and miscellaneous material from another Native performer named Anita de Frey, a Modoc from California that were found with the Hote' Casella material.

Arrangement: Chronologically and by type of material. Arranged into six series.

Series 1: Performance programs, promotional material, press releases, newspaper articles, correspondence

Series 2: Photographs

Series 3: Sheet music

Series 4: Aluminum-core lacquer disc audio recordings

Series 5: Miscellaneous

Series 6: Anita de Frey

Biographical/Historical Note: Hote' Casella (1909-1990) was a Native American cultural ambassador, educator, and performer. The youngest of seven children, she was born Gladys Mathonican in San Angelo, Texas on April 25, 1909 to (Andrew) John Mathonican (July 15, 1865-January 6, 1948) a billiards hall manager, and Marzella Carter (ca. 1868-May 20, 1937). Her father was a Cherokee, her mother of both Italian and Spanish ancestry. In the early 1920s, she moved with her parents and older sister to Los Angeles, California, where her father worked in the real estate business. She briefly lived in Hawaii in the

early 1940s. By 1946, she was living in New York on Park Avenue and was routinely performing throughout the United States and Europe. For nearly four decades, she traveled extensively, as newspaper articles found online provide a roadmap of her professional life. As a classically trained mezzo-soprano singer who studied at UCLA and Juilliard, her philosophy was to elevate Native American songs and stories to the level other folk songs and performances were enjoyed throughout the world.

Access & Use:

Access to Collection: Access to the collection is based upon staff availability and is by appointment only.

Use: Reproduction and use of materials may be subject to fees. The museum requests that a final copy of the publication or academic paper is donated to the museum upon completion of project.

Preferred Citation: Hote' Casella Collection, Tomaquag Museum Archives, Exeter, Rhode Island.

Contact Information:

Tomaquag Museum

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Administrative Information:

About the Collection:

Acquisition: Unknown; may have been donated by Hote' Casella upon her retirement

Processing Information: Rehoused March 2017, Inventory completed May 2017, Finding Aid Revised July, October and November 2017; Finalized April 2018

About the Finding Aid

Author: Anthony M. Belz, November 2017

Encoding: EAD

Descriptive Rules: DACS

Additional Information:

Inventory:

Series I: Performance programs, promotional material, press releases, newspaper articles, correspondence. Box 1

A collection of material from Hote' Casella's career, including programs from performances, promotional flyers from her agent, a compilation of press releases from newspapers and other publications.

Suffolk Museum at Stony Brook, Long Island, New York Friday, March 8, 1946 items	3
Red Cross Hospital Music Demonstration Program February 24, 1948	1 item
Halloran VA Hospital Program of Events and Newsletter April 26, 1948 items	2
Dorothea Dix Lawrence Variety Album Park Hotel Annex Auditorium August 17, 1949 item	1
New York Foundling Hospital Program no date (n.d.) item	1
The Round Table Club Dinner Tribute to Latin America Hotel Bradford NYC Apr 27 1949 item	1
A Folk Singer Without a Guitar New York Post February 8, 1962	1 item
Town Hall Program October 8, 1962	2 items
Indian Entertainers Highlight of NAIC Membership Drive Bismarck Tribune, ND December 6, 1963	1 item
The Tennessean, Nashville, Tennessee January 9, 1966	1 item
Cultural Program, Frederick Maryland, 1967	2 items
Noted Indian Soprano at Cranberry Festival Westerly Sun October 1, 1975	1 item
A Bicentennial Presentation Native American Cultural Heritage, 1976	1 item
Letter from Hote' Casella to Princess Red Wing February 26, 1977	1 item
Women Make Music The Brooklyn Museum November 20, 1977	1 item
Color Promotional Flyer	1 item
Quotes from Newspapers	2 items
Newspaper Articles	8 items
Poster	2 items
Promotional Mailer	101 items
From Teepee to Totem Pole Promotional Flyer/Ad 62 items	
Town Hall Programs	2 items
Connecticut Towns	1 item
Series II: Photographs Box 1	29 items

A set of professional black and white promotional photographs for publication in newspapers, programs and venues. Includes 5 color photographs from Hote' Casella's visit to the Tomaquag Museum. Also included is a publicity photograph signed by Victor Daniels aka Chief Thundercloud, the actor who first played Tonto in the Lone Ranger serials of the 1930s.

8 x 10 (1 signed on back)	18 items
11 x 14	3 items
10 x 14	3 items
3.5 x 3.5	5 items
8 x 10 Chief Thundercloud Autographed Publicity Shot	1 item

Series III: Sheet Music Box 2

A box full of a variety of pieces of sheet music from the early twentieth century; some with annotations. Includes a composition book with notations relating to some of the pieces of music in the collection.

Sheet Music	ca. 75 items
Composition Book w/notes and inserts (Box 1)	5 items
Books	2 items

Series IV: Lacquer Audio Recordings Box 3

Three aluminum core lacquer discs with six total sides of music recorded by Hote' Casella. Most of these songs have accompanying sheet music found in Series III.

Disc 1: Part 1 of 6 - "Sunrise Call" of "Echo Song" (Zuni)

Part 4 of 6 - "Love Song" (Navajo), "Happy Song", "Chi Li Neh Hay Meh", "In Her Birch Canoe" (Chippewa)

Disc 2: Part 3 of 6 - "Blanket Song" or "Wooing Song" (Zuni), "Sunset Song" (Zuni) "Indian Fire Drill Song" (Apache & Mohave)

Part 5 of 6 - "Eskimo Marriage Song" (Cree), "Moccasin Song" (Navajo), "Her Blanket" (Navajo), "Butterfly Dance" (Hopi)

Disc 3: Part 2 of 7 - "Lullaby" (Zuni) a. Incantation Upon a Sleeping Infant b. Invocation to the Sun God

Part 5 of 7 - "In Her Birch Canoe" (Chippewa), "Moccasin Song" (Navajo), "Her Blanket" (Navajo), "Butterfly Dance" (Hopi)

Series V: Miscellaneous

A collection of miscellaneous material found with what is clearly identified as belonging to Hote' Casella. (Unknown if most of this material related to the collection or not; could be Princess Red Wing's)

“Women Are Here to Stay” A New Concept for a Half Hour Filmed Television Series item	1
Television The Business Magazine of the Industry, NBC. June 1948 item	1
Cooper, Frank. Ocana of the Cherokee Hills. Frank Cooper, 1955. item	1
Bigler, Marguerite. Navajo Indians. Charles E. Merrill Books Columbus: OH, 1960	1 item
Star Spangled Ball. November 7, 1962	1 item
American Culture Studies Conference Levittown, NY November 29-December 3, 1971 item	1
Rhythmic Scenes number two by Harry Slocum Tordoff Ne-An-Tum (The Thinker) 1974 item	1
The Golden Days Reporter May-June 1975 (Princess Red Wing on cover) item	1
Architectural Digest December 1982 item	1
Prints of portraiture	3 items
Series VI: Anita de Frey	
Promotional photographs of Anita de Frey found with the Hote’ Casella photographs	29 items
-One print, two images	18 items
-One print, four images	9 items
-As a young woman, perhaps 1920s	1 item
-Outside at ceremony	1 item
New Jersey State Museum American Indian Customs and Dances January 27, 1957 items	2
Philosophical Research, New York City various clippings compiled and photocopied items	2
Philosophical Research, New York City program April 20, 1968	1 item