COMMUNITY UPDATES

Stories From the Apollo Theater Oral History Project

It’s no secret that the Apollo Theater is a legend in pop culture and music. But on its 75th anniversary, the Apollo set out to capture its own story. The Apollo Theater Oral History Project, which is available for public viewing at Columbia’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library, recorded the theater’s history through interviews with legends like Smokey Robinson; as well as managers; industry moguls; and many others.

The project was a collaborative effort. In the early 2000s, the Apollo reenvisioned itself as a renewed center for arts, music, and culture. This included capturing its past in an oral history archive, with the support of the Columbia Center for Oral History. The archive’s success inspired the theater to start a program to teach oral history to local students.

To visit the archive at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, you can book an advance appointment on the library website. Government-issued photo identification is required upon your first visit.

Learn more about the archive and how you can access the library at neighbors.columbia.edu/apollo-theater.

Josefina Báez: The Dominican-York Icon’s Archive

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Joséfina Báez: The Dominican-York Icon’s Archive

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det. Storyteller. Dancer. Dramatist. Writer. Teacher. Director. Performance Artist. These words just scratch the surface of Joséfina Báez, the Dominican-York icon, whose archive was recently acquired by the Latino Arts and Activisms Collection and is available at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Báez, who immigrated to New York from the Dominican Republic, has spent her artistic life transforming the inner and outer identities of migrants into public explorations of language, culture, and community. Upper Manhattan has been a key part of her work and has shown her work in Harlem, Washington Heights, and Inwood.

Learn more about Báez’s trailblazing life and accomplishments, and her collection at neighbors.columbia.edu/josefina-baez.