



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Hadassah collection of New Dance Group Studio, Inc. records

1944-1977 [bulk 1960-1977]

(S) *MGZMD 128

Compiled by Brynn White, CUNY Queens College 2014, 2013

Summary

Creator: Hadassah, 1909?-1992

Title: Hadassah collection of New Dance Group Studio, Inc. records

Date: 1944-1977 [bulk 1960-1977]

Size: 1.05 linear feet (3 boxes)

Source: Donated by Hadassah Epstein, 1992.

Abstract: The New Dance Group (NDG), founded in 1932, provided classes, scholarships, studio rentals, public performances, and support of new choreographic work to the New York City dance community. The Hadassah collection of New Dance Group Studio, Inc. records (1944-1977), assembled and annotated by longtime board and faculty member Hadassah, documents the activities and functions of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee following NDG's nonprofit incorporation in 1944. A selection of personal correspondence regarding Hadassah's dance career and outside affiliations is interspersed throughout.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult: <https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

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Preferred citation: Hadassah collection of New Dance Group Studio, Inc. records, (S) *MGZMD 128. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Brynn White, CUNY Queens College 2014, 2013 This collection was partially processed at an earlier date; received order was maintained.

Related Materials:

The Hadassah Papers, (S) *MGZMD 135. Jerome Robbins Dance Collection, The New York Public

Library for the Performing Arts.

Creator History

The New Dance Group (NDG), founded in 1932, maintained a decades-spanning reputation as a hub of the New York City dance scene through its provision of diverse professional and amateur classes, scholarships, studio rentals, public performances and festivals, and support of new choreographic work. It was chartered by the state of New York as the non-profit organization New Dance Group Studio, Inc. in 1944. NDG established permanent studios and rehearsal space at West 47th Street; upon the purchase of the building in 1952, NDG also formed the New Dance Group Presentations Corporation and instituted a Board of Directors. NDG, regarded as the first dance organization to open its doors to African-Americans, remained distinctly intercultural and interracial, and upon incorporation strived to maintain its low tuition rates and develop a diverse curriculum for professionals and amateurs. Jerusalem-born dancer Hadassah (1909-1992) was responsible for much of the ethnic choreographic works and classes at NDG, where she served as faculty and Board member. The Board faced attendance drops and financial challenges in the 1960s and 1970s. Change of personnel resulted in the resignation of many founding Board members in 1984. NDG operations closed permanently in 2009.

Sources: Burns, Mary and William Korff. "The New Dance Group history." *New Dance Group Gala Concert Journal* (1993): 8-9.

Phillips, Victoria. "New Dance Group (1932-2009)." *Dance Heritage Coalition: America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures* (2012).

Scope and Content Note

The Hadassah collection of New Dance Group Studio, Inc. records (1944-1974), assembled and annotated by longtime board and faculty member Hadassah, documents the activities and functions of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the New Dance Group Studios, Inc. (NDG). Subjects addressed are the day-to-day concerns and decisions involved in the operation of the school, studios, and organization at large. Issues discussed include curricula, publicity, fundraising, faculty, finances, tuition, scholarships, facilities, management, and performance planning. The collection is chiefly composed of meeting minutes, and additionally features memos, financial reports, certificates of incorporation, by-laws, fact sheets, class schedules, and correspondence - all copied and distributed to Board members for their information and reference. Select programs, press releases, brochures, and other distribution materials for the school and NDG performances are also present. A selection of personal correspondence relating to the dance career and outside affiliations of Hadassah - referred to by both her stage name and surname of Epstein - is interspersed throughout.

The earliest records document NDG's official incorporation into the non-profit New Dance Group Studio in 1944, followed by an examination of its relationship to the newly established corporate body New Dance Group Presentations, Inc. in 1953. The remainder of the collection records the deliberations of the Board and Executive Committee from 1962 - around the time of Hadassah's election to the Board of Directors - until 1977, a period marked by increased public outreach, limited public performances, new financial challenges, and considerable change and upheaval within the NDG community. References are made to the reports and meetings of NDG members, faculty, students, volunteers, and education and scholarship committees.

Items within the collection reflecting the Board's constant critical thinking, planning, and evaluation include a reorganization proposal generated in June 1967, resumes of meetings concerning conversion

to a profit-making stock corporation in 1969, and a study-report commissioned from the New York State Council on the Arts in 1973. Other significant NDG developments detailed within are the formation of repertory and children's performance companies, curricula targeting the deaf and disabled, and a course for high-school teachers approved by the New York Board of Education, a first for an independent dance school.

Arrangement: This collection is arranged into two groups: Board of Directors Records, organized chronologically, and Distribution Materials.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Brochures
Certificates of incorporation
Financial records
Memorandums
Minutes (administrative records)
Press releases
Programs (documents)

Occupations

Choreographers
Dance teachers
Dancers

Subjects

Dance -- Study and teaching

Names

New Dance Group (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

- | Board of Directors Records | |
|----------------------------|---|
| b. 1 f. 1-14 | 1944-1967 |
| b. 2 f. 1-9 | 1968-1974 |
| b. 3 f. 1-5 | 1975-1977, undated |
| b. 3 f. 6-7 | Distribution Materials 1959-1977, undated |