



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Maria Bonfanti Collection

1867-1960

(S) *MGZMC-Res. 30

Processed by Nancy M. Shawcross.

Summary

Creator: Bonfanti, Maria, 1847-1921

Title: Maria Bonfanti Collection

Date: 1867-1960

Size: 91 items 33 folders

Source: Gift. Gwendolyn Ruddel. Material received: 1965.

Abstract: Maria Bonfanti (1847-1921), an Italian born and trained ballerina, toured the United States and Europe with great success between 1869 and 1894. She also danced as prima ballerina of the Metropolitan Opera, New York, from 1885-1886 and maintained a ballet school in New York following her retirement. This collection, a gift of Miss Bonfanti's granddaughter, Gwendolyn Ruddel, consists primarily of personal and business correspondence, contracts, programs, playbills and sheet music (hand-written copies, specially compiled and arranged for Miss Bonfanti's performances). It also includes posters for performances featuring Miss Bonfanti; a photo scrapbook (*MGZEB-Res, Bonfanti, Maria); and a clippings scrapbook (*MGZRS-Res, Bonfanti, Maria). These items span nearly all of Miss Bonfanti's active career and document her impact on American dance and American theatre.

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>

Conditions Governing Access:

Permission of Miss Ruddel d. 1983

Preferred citation: Marie Bonafantí Collection, (S)*MGZMC-Res 30, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Language of the Material: In English (mostly), French, and Italian English

Processing note: Processed by Nancy M. Shawcross.

Creator History

Maria Bonfanti (1847-1921), an Italian born and trained ballerina, toured the United States and Europe with great success between 1869 and 1894. She also danced as prima ballerina of the Metropolitan Opera, New York, from 1885-1886 and maintained a ballet school in New York following her retirement.

Scope and Content Note

This collection, a gift of Miss Bonfanti's granddaughter, Gwendolyn Ruddel, consists primarily of personal and business correspondence, contracts, programs, playbills and sheet music (hand-written copies, specially compiled and arranged for Miss Bonfanti's performances). It also includes posters for performances featuring Miss Bonfanti; a photo scrapbook (*MGZEB-Res, Bonfanti, Maria); and a clippings scrapbook (*MGZRS-Res, Bonfanti, Maria). These items span nearly all of Miss Bonfanti's active career and document her impact on American dance and American theatre.

Arrangement: The Collection is divided into five series: I. Correspondence II. Business Correspondence III. Programs and Playbills IV. Periodicals and Booklets V. Sheet Music

Key Terms

Titles

Gift of Gwendolyn Ruddell

Subjects

Manuscripts -- Collections

Names

Bonfanti, Maria, 1847-1921

Container List

- I. Correspondence
 - f. 1 Correspondence. To Maria Bonfanti
- II. Business Correspondence
 - f. 2 Business Correspondence. 1867-1877
 - f. 3 Business Correspondence. 1878-1879
 - f. 4 Business Correspondence. 1880-1890
- III. Programs & Playbills
 - f. 5 Programs & Playbills. 1869-1870
 - f. 6 Programs & Playbills. 1871-1882
 - f. 7 Programs & Playbills. 1886-1887
- IV. Periodicals & Booklets
 - f. 8 Periodicals & Booklets. Miscellaneous
- V. Sheet Music
 - f. 9-33 Sheet Music. Miscellaneous