Summary

Creator: Wong, Jadin

Title: Jadin Wong ephemera

Date: 1930-1996

Size: .25 linear feet. (1 box)

Abstract: Jadin Wong (1913- ), Chinese-American performer who grew up in California, began her career as a dancer, later becoming an actress, stand-up comic, and talent manager specializing in Asian artists. Born in Stockton, Calif., Jadin (sometimes spelled "Jadine") Wong got her start as a professional dancer with the San Francisco Opera Ballet. She gained greater renown as a performer at the Forbidden City nightclub in San Francisco, which lead to small film roles in the Charlie Chan and Mr. Moto series, musicals such as IRENE, and to the cover of Life magazine in 1940. During the war years, Jadin Wong entertained U.S. military personnel around the world. During the 1950s, she was cast in several Broadway shows, including THE KING I, THE WORLD OF SUSIE WONG, and FLOWER DRUM SONG. As the popularity of musicals waned, she became a stand-up comedian in the '60s, perhaps the first Asian woman to enter the field. In 1976, Ms. Wong opened a studio in New York and became a manager for Asian performers and models. The Jadin Wong ephemera spans approximately 1930-1996, and consists of clippings, photographs, programs, advertising materials, reviews, correspondence, etc. Seven folders consist of clippings and photocopies of clippings from articles about the career of Jadin Wong, including the Life magazine cover story of December 1940 devoted to the Forbidden City, San Francisco nightclub where Asian performers entertained a mostly white clientele. There is also material devoted to FORBIDDEN CITY, U.S.A., a 1989 documentary film devoted to the nightclub and its performers in which Jadin Wong appeared.

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

Creator History

Jadin Wong (1913- ), Chinese-American performer who grew up in California, began her career as a dancer, later becoming an actress, stand-up comic, and talent manager specializing in Asian artists. Born in Stockton, Calif., Jadin (sometimes spelled "Jadine") Wong got her start as a professional dancer with the San Francisco Opera Ballet. She gained greater renown as a performer at the Forbidden City nightclub in San Francisco, which lead to small film roles in the Charlie Chan and Mr. Moto series, musicals such as IRENE, and to the cover of Life magazine in 1940. During the war years, Jadin Wong entertained U.S. military personnel around the world. During the 1950s, she was cast in several Broadway shows, including THE KING & I, THE WORLD OF SUSIE WONG, and FLOWER DRUM SONG. As the popularity of musicals waned, she became a stand-up comedian in the '60s, perhaps the first Asian woman to enter the field. In 1976, Ms. Wong opened a studio in New York and became a manager for Asian performers and models.

Scope and Content Note

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Key Terms

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**
Advertisements
Clippings
Correspondence
Criticism
Handbills
Photographs
Programs

**Subjects**
Asian American women -- United States
Asians in motion pictures
Theatrical agents -- United States

**Names**
Wong, Jadin