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Jerome Robbins Dance Division**

Guide to the

Claire de Robilant papers

1970-1983

(S)*MGZMD 316

Compiled by Allison Hughes, Palmer School of Library and Information Science, September 2013, July 2013

Summary

Creator: Robilant, Claire Hesslein de

Title: Claire de Robilant papers, 1970-1983

Size: .42 linear foot (1 box)

Source: Donated by Claire de Robilant, 1979 and 1982.

Abstract: Claire de Robilant was a dance historian and archivist. The Claire de Robilant papers include drafts of her unpublished book on the history of ballet in South America, typescripts of articles and other writings on ballet, documents related to her career as an archivist, and research files containing annotated photocopies of primary source documents.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying and photography will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Copyright information: Donor retains copyright of materials. For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

Preferred citation: Claire de Robilant papers, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Original order was maintained.

Creator history

Claire de Robilant was a dance historian and archivist. She was born in Wroclav, Poland, and lived in Germany, England, France, and Italy before emigrating to Chile in 1938 to flee the Nazis. In Chile, Robilant taught ballet, and worked as a dance critic and columnist for *La Nacion*, *The South Pacific Mail*, *Dance News*, and *Ballet Today*, in addition to producing radio and television programs on dance. In 1965, she amassed a Dance Archive and Library based in the Municipal Theatre of Santiago. Robilant was forced to flee Chile in 1975 under persecution from the Pinochet regime, moving to Australia briefly before settling in England. There she worked as a librarian and archivist at the London Contemporary Dance School and oversaw a dance research collection of books and archival material for the theater branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum. During this time, she also worked as a researcher and collaborator for a number of dance-related publications while writing her own history of ballet in South America.

Scope and content note

This collection contains two drafts of de Robilant's unpublished book on the history of ballet in South America, with the working titles *Background to Ballet in South America* and *The History of Ballet in Argentina and Chile from 1808 to 1975*. There are also typescripts of her articles on related topics: "A Short History of Ballet in Chile" and a biographical article on Elena Dmitrievna Poliakova, a Russian-trained ballerina who taught at the Chilean National Ballet. The collection holds editorial notes documenting her collaboration with Keith Money on a biography of ballerina Anna Pavlova. Alongside these writings are de Robilant's c.v. and a description of her collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. There is also a file of research material relating to the history of South American ballet, including annotated photocopies of 19th century dancer contracts, theater broadsides, and other primary source documents.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Key terms

Subjects

Dance -- History

Names

Robilant, Claire Hesslein de

Special formats

Manuscripts for publication

Research notes

Container list

- b.1 f.1 Articles and Other Writings, 1975-1983
- b.1 f.2-3 Background to *Ballet in South America*, 1983
- b.1 f.4-5 *The History of Ballet in Argentina and Chile from 1808 to 1975*, undated
- b.1 f.6 Research Files, ca.1970-1983