

Guide to the Bella Malinka Papers, 1950-1993 and undated

(S) *MGZMD 143

Jerome Robbins Dance Division

**The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, New York**

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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Bella Malinka Papers
Collection ID:	(S) *MGZMD 143
Creator:	Malinka, Bella
Extent:	3 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository:	Jerome Robbins Dance Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Abstract

This collection documents the teaching career of Bella Malinka, dance educator, choreographer and dancer, who taught at New York's School of the Performing Arts from 1949 to 1981.

Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open to the public. Photocopying prohibited. Advance notice may be required.

Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

Preferred Citation

Bella Malinka Papers, (S) *MGZMD 143, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Custodial History

The Bella Malinka Papers were donated to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division in 1993 by Bella Malinka.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and cataloged in 2005.

Biographical Note

Educator, choreographer, and dancer Bella Malinka was born in the United States ca.1923. Little is known of her early life. She graduated from high school in 1940.

Malinka studied ballet with Anton Dolin, Leon Danelian, Bronislava Nijinska, and Edward Caton, among others. She also studied modern dance, theater dance, and ethnic dance with such dance notables as Hanya Holm, Agnes De Mille, Bhupesh Guha, Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus, and Frederico Rey.

As a dancer, Bella Malinka performed with a number of dance companies, including the Metropolitan Opera Touring Company under Lillian Moore, in Connecticut Opera Company's *Carmen* by Bizet (1944), and Toledo Civic Opera in *The New Moon* by Sigmund Romberg, and *Katinka* by Rudolf Friml, both in 1945. She toured with *Stage Door Follies* in the 1940s, as well as dancing in such operettas as *The Merry Widow* by Franz Lehár, *The Student Prince* by Sigmund Romberg, *Rose Marie* by Rudolf Friml and Herbert Stothart, and *The Firefly* by Rudolf Friml. She also danced with modern dancer Marie Marchowsky's company (1956), with Indian dancer Bhupesh Guha and Company, as well as in vaudeville, nightclubs, and for the USO.

Malinka taught at the June Taylor School in the late 1960s and was directress and teacher at Utah State University at Logan (1968-1969) and for the South Bronx Community Project at P.S. 5 (1967). She was a guest teacher for Katherine Dunham School of Dance in Haiti (1962), for Ballet Puertorriqueño (1966, 1978-1979), Ralou Manou in Athens, Greece (1978), and for Eliot Feld School of Ballet (1980). In summer, from 1973 to 1979, Bella Malinka taught master classes for Alfonso Figueroa's Birmingham, Alabama Civic Ballet (1973-1979).

Her ballets were also performed by Ballet Puertorriqueño (*Allegresse*, 1978-1979), and by R.M.T. (Regine Mont-Rosier Trouillot) School of Dance (*Mon Fils*, date unknown).

A faculty member at New York City's School of Performing Arts (later Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and the Arts) from its inception, Bella Malinka taught there from 1949 to 1981, eventually becoming Senior Ballet Teacher. She developed and taught a ballet survey course to all freshman dance students. Malinka choreographed annual student performances, numerous assemblies, and appearances ballet students made under the School of Performing Arts' auspices, such as the 1964 New York World's Fair, and the ballet *Union Maid*, performed to Woody Guthrie's music, for the United Federation of Teachers (1979).

She also presented lecture-demonstrations on various topics. One of these, *Young Dancers*, was broadcast on CBS TV in February 1961. Malinka wrote the script for and narrated the television program, as well as for the assembly version for the school.

At School of Performing Arts, with choreographer George Balanchine's permission, Bella Malinka staged his ballets *Serenade* (1960), *Pas de Neuf* (1957), and

Symphony in C (1958). She also choreographed *Dance Poem* (1950), *Ballade* (1953), and *Musical Chairs* (1955), all with music by Martin Dall. Malinka's *Allegresse* was premiered in 1957 and danced by Ramón Segarra, as one of his graduation roles at School of Performing Arts.

Other ballets include *Three Dances* (1956), *Archduke Variation* (1962), *Lyric Suite* (1963), *Les Arabesques* (1964), and *Bagatelles* (1966). Some of Bella Malinka's outstanding students include George De la Peña, Eliot Feld, Miguel Godreau, Christian Holder, Loida Iglesias, and Daniel Levins.

In the 1970s, she was also asked by the New York City Board of Education to review standards for licensing dance teachers. She left the High School of Performing Arts in 1981 having filed and won (on appeal) a grievance against Lydia Joel, Chairman of the Dance Department. Malinka wrote an article in 1983 on High School of Performing Arts for *Dance Magazine*, but it was never published.

Bella Malinka married and divorced composer Martin Dall, and has a son, Ivan Barry Dall II.

Scope and Content Note

The Bella Malinka Papers consist mostly of materials relating to her career as a teacher, most notably at the School of Performing Arts in New York City. These include correspondence, programs, student compositions and reports, yearbooks, teaching materials, clippings, a few photographs, administrative papers, designs for costumes, sets, and posters, and files of papers Malinka assembled relating to the grievance she filed with the Board of Education.

Papers relating to Bella Malinka's other professional activities include a Life Experience Credit Presentation she compiled, in order to increase her professional grade as a teacher for the Board of Education, as well as correspondence, programs, publicity materials, and ephemera on her teaching and choreographing activities outside the School of Performing Arts. With the exception of a few pieces of correspondence, there are no personal papers included in the collection.

Organization

The collection is organized in the following series:

- Series I: School of Performing Arts
 - Sub-series 1 - Dance Survey Course
 - Sub-series 2 - Grievance Papers
 - Sub-series 3 - General
- Series II: Other Professional Activities
 - Sub-series 1 - Life Experience Credit Presentation
 - Sub-series 2 - General
- Series III: Artwork

Series Descriptions

Series I: School of Performing Arts, 1950 – 1993 and undated

3 boxes

This series forms the bulk of the collection and includes Malinka's teaching materials, student reports, and booklets composed for the freshman Dance Survey Course she developed. There are also programs, yearbooks, and clippings on the dance students. Also included are her files of correspondence, notes, and documents relating to the grievance she filed with the Board of Education in 1981.

- Sub-series 1 – Dance Survey Course, ca. 1970 – 1979 and undated
- Sub-series 2 – Grievance Papers, 1971 – 1993 and undated
- Sub-series 3 – General, 1950 – 1981 and undated

Sub-series 1 – Dance Survey Course, ca. 1970 – 1979 and undated

1 box

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Topic

This series contains booklets made by Bella Malinka's students according to a format established by her, including illustrations of ballet positions in different techniques, and their opinions on topics such as what they gained from the course. Of particular note is a booklet made by Charlotte D'Amboise that contains several photos, including one of her as a young girl. There are also nutritional materials, such as published diets, student and teacher recipes, and an article by Carol Brock published in the *Daily News* in 1979, quoting Malinka.

Sub-series 2 – Grievance Papers, 1971 – 1993 and undated

5 folders

Arrangement: Chronological

This series contains correspondence, notes, documents, and Bella Malinka's comments concerning the grievance she brought in February 1981 against Lydia Joel, Dance Department Chairman, at School of Performing Arts. Malinka initially lost the grievance, but then won the Step II appeal in May 1981. The later papers consist of notes by Malinka.

Sub-series 3 – General, 1950 – 1981 and undated

1.75 boxes

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Topic

This series includes some correspondence, a few administrative papers, course materials such as syllabi, exams, and student reports and compositions, programs, yearbooks, an issue of *Montage '68* (the school literary magazine), and clippings.

Bella Malinka's notes for her lecture demonstrations, as well as her script for the CBS TV *Camera Three* demonstration broadcast in February 1961 can also be found in this series. Of particular note are the photos, costume sketches, and program for *Union Maid*, the ballet performed by students for Labor Heritage Week, United Federation of Teachers' Union Award Luncheon, December 16, 1979. Poster designs for annual dance concerts can be found in the Artwork series.

Series II: Other Professional Activities, 1956 – 1990

1 box

This series consists of the Life Experience Credit presentation material Bella Malinka compiled as the equivalent of an advanced degree, in order to improve her position level, as well as general materials. These range from a small amount of correspondence to the paper she prepared advocating separate licenses for ballet and modern dance teachers for the New York City Board of Education in 1982.

Sub-series 1 – Life Experience Credit Presentation, ca. 1981

Sub-series 2 – General, 1956 – 1990 and undated

Sub-series 1 – Life Experience Credit Presentation, ca. 1981

5 folders

Arrangement: By Book Number

This presentation, or, thesis, includes her resume, programs, and clippings about her own work, as well as her students' careers, a few photographs, letters, programs, and publicity materials related to her teaching and professional activities, and teaching materials. There is also some text written on several dance topics. Of particular note are two letters of recommendation from Walter Terry.

Sub-series 2 – General, 1956 – 1990 and undated

.5 boxes

Arrangement: Alphabetical by Topic

This series contains materials related to Bella Malinka's professional activities as guest teacher, choreographer, and program director for dance companies and summer programs, including Ballet Puertorriqueño, Birmingham (Alabama) Dance Seminar, Katherine Dunham School of Dance in Haiti, P.S. 5 Summer Modern Dance Program, Bronx, N.Y., R.M.T. School of Dance, and Utah State University Summer Dance Program. There are also a few pieces of correspondence to Bella Malinka from students and alumni, an unpublished article she wrote for *Dance Magazine* on School of Performing Arts, and a small number of miscellaneous clippings and notes on ballet.

Series III: Artwork, 1955 – 1973 and undated

1 box (16"x 20")

This series consists of designs, mostly for ballets, but also for sets, and posters for the annual concerts for the School of Performing Arts. Some costume designs are by Howard Hussey. There are also several unidentified movement sketches, drawings by Eustacia Paleias, a student, and a sketch pad, possibly belonging to Bella Malinka.

Costume sketches for *Union Maid*, a ballet performed by students of School of Performing Arts, can be found in Series I, Sub-series 3.

Box/Folder	Description
<u>Series I: School of Performing Arts, 1950 – 1993 and undated</u>	
Sub-series 1 – Dance Survey Course, ca. 1970 – 1979 and undated	
Box 1	
F. 1-2	Books, ca. 1970s (Includes materials from binder marked “Survey – Student Compositions” and unmarked binder with title pages signed “Tricia Scheurer;” contains illustrations, mostly by Eben Fitt, clippings, student comments regarding course, photo of Eddie Jordon; materials appear to be Malinka’s handouts.)
F. 3	Diet Material, 1976, 1978 and undated By Bella Malinka, 1978 and undated (Includes draft and published copy of <i>Daily News</i> article “Diet Keeps Them on Their Toes: How Dancers Keep Up with Nutrition” by Carol Brock, Jan. 3, 1979, in which Malinka is quoted; also includes her notes and handouts.)
F. 4	Published Diets, Recipes, and Tips, 1978 and undated Student Material, 1976 and undated
F. 5	Recipes, 1976 and undated
F. 6	Reports, 1976 and undated (Includes report by Shell Benjamin.)
F. 7	Student Report Books, 1974-1979 and undated A – C, 1974-1975 and undated
F. 8	D’Amboise, Charlotte, undated (Includes book by D’Amboise with photos of her dancing.)
F. 9	H – R, 1978 and undated
F. 10	W, 1979 and undated
F. 11	Z and Unidentified, undated (Includes two loose pages of illustrations of dance terms by unidentified students.)
F. 12	Teaching Material, undated (Includes excerpts from <i>On Your Toes</i> by Thalia Mara and material by Cyril W. Beaumont and Stanislaus Idzikowski.)
Sub-series 2 - Grievance, 1971 – 1993 and undated	
Box 2	
F. 1	1971-1979 (Includes correspondence, notes, documents, and Malinka’s comments regarding grievance she filed with N.Y. City Board of Education against Lydia Joel.)
F. 2	1980 1981 Jan. – 1981 Aug.
F. 3	Jan. – Mar. 14
F. 4	Mar. 16 – Aug.
F. 5	1983 – 1993 and undated
Sub-series 3 – General, 1950 – 1981 and undated	
F. 6	Correspondence, 1961 – 1979 and undated Administrative, 1961 – 1979 and undated (See also Grievance files.)
F. 7	From Students and Alumni, 1978, 1979, and undated (Includes several cards, notes, and letters thanking Malinka, as well as apprising her of their activities; also included is an envelope with Malinka’s comments.)
F. 8	Administrative Papers, 1967, 1970, and undated (Includes Teacher’s End-of-Term Report, Dance Survey Freshman Year Course Requirements, and notice re: Walter Terry radio interview.)
F. 9	Class Lists, undated
F. 10	Course Background Materials, 1976 and undated (Includes a copy of <i>Seeing Ballet: Material for the State Education Department</i> , Saratoga Performing Arts Center Student Program, New York City Ballet, 1967.)

Box/Folder	Description
F. 11	Exams, 1975 June and undated Lecture Demonstrations, 1961, 1968 – 1971, and undated
F. 12	1968 – 1971 and undated
F. 13	Undated (Includes lecture demonstration on “The Role of the Male Dancer in Ballet.”)
F. 14	<i>Camera Three</i> , 1961 Feb. 26 (Includes script for <i>Young Dancers</i> ; see also general Lecture Demonstration notes for assembly version of script.)
F. 15	<i>Montage</i> '68, ca. 1968 (Student literary magazine.)
F. 16	Performing Arts Dance Fund, Inc., Audit, 1980 July 14 (Includes Malinka’s notes.) Programs, 1950 – 1981 and undated
F. 17	1950 – 1959 (Includes several fliers; performers includes Anthony (Tony) Mordente, Arthur Mitchell, Cora Cahan, Marcia Haufrecht, Eleo Pomare, Dan Siretta (Sciretta), Ramon (Raymond) Segarra, and Dudley Williams.)
F. 18	1960-1965 (Performers includes Louis Falco, Baayork Lee, Laura Dean, Ben (Benjamin) Vereen, and Brooke Adams.)
F. 19	1966 – 1969 (Performers includes Christian Holder, Gary Chryst, Hector Mercado, Mari Kajiwara, Matthew Diamond, Dennis Diamond, and Socorro Santiago.)
F. 20	1970 – 1974 (Includes 25 th Anniversary Gala Benefit program, Apr. 28, 1974; performers include Jennifer Muller and Brenda Braxton.)
F. 21	1975 – 1981 and undated (Performers include Suzanne Vega.) Student Compositions, 1974 – 1980 and undated
Box 3	
F. 1	A-H
F. 2	J-W Student Reports, 1972 – 1980 and undated
F. 3	Senior Essays on <i>Serenade</i> by George Balanchine, 1972 and undated
F. 4	General, 1972 – 1980 and undated
F. 5	Syllabi, 1964, 1977, 1979, and undated (Includes one syllabus in fragile condition.) <i>Union Maid</i> (Ballet), 1979 Dec. – 1980 Jan.
F. 6	Performance, 1979 Dec. – 1980 Jan. (Includes program, clipping, music, and Malinka’s notes for Labor Heritage Week, United Federation of Teachers’ Teacher Union Award Luncheon, Dec. 16, 1979.)
F. 7	Photos, 1979 Dec. (Includes black and white performance photos and color informal snapshots.)
F. 8	Costume Sketches, 1979 Dec. (Includes pencil and watercolor sketches.) Yearbooks, 1952 – 1975
F. 9	1952 (Includes photocopied yearbook; students include Herb Gardner and Arthur Mitchell.)
F. 10	1961 (Includes <i>The Metropolis</i> , yearbook for Metropolitan Vocational High School; students include Janet Margolin and possibly Charlie (Charles) Smalls.)
F. 11	1967 (Includes inscription “From the Gang on the Fourth Floor;” students include Gary Chryst, Christian Holder, and Hector Mercado.)

Box/Folder	Description
F. 12	1975 (Includes Malinka's and several faculty members' signatures; students include Greg Burge and Ned Eisenberg.)
F. 13	Clippings, 1958 – 1979 and undated General, 1958 – 1979 and undated (Includes some incomplete clippings.)
F. 14	Famous Dance Alumni, 1974 and undated (Includes clippings on Eliot Feld and Arthur Mitchell.)
<u>Series II: Other Professional Activities, 1956 – 1990 and undated</u>	
Sub-series 1 – Life Experience Credit Presentation, ca. 1981	
Box 4	
F. 1-2	Books I and II, ca. 1981 (Includes Book I with Introduction and Resume, clippings, and programs for successful students' works, and primarily photocopies of letters of praise for Malinka's teaching; Folder 2 includes Books I and II, containing Malinka's classroom course work, independent study requirements, and her equivalent of a thesis; some materials in both folders date back to the 1940s.)
F. 3-4	Book II (Continued), ca. 1981 (Includes Book II containing Malinka's "thesis," photos of student performances, and materials relating to the "Teacher as an Instructor," "Teacher as Performer," "Samples of Repertoire," "Curriculum Development," and "Additional Research and Material;" some materials in Folder 3 dates back to the 1940s; in Folder 4 back to 1961.)
F. 5	Correspondence with Walter Terry re: Recommendation, 1980 May – 1980 July (Includes notes to and from Malinka relating to her Life Experience Credit Presentation.)
Sub-series 2 – General, 1956 – 1990 and undated	
F. 6	Correspondence – General, 1979, 1980, and undated (Includes four items from Darlene Dauth Haik, Lillian Moore, and Rachel D. Yocom with Gertrude Shurr.)
F. 7	Ballet Puertorriqueño, 1966, 1978 – 1979, and undated (Includes publicity materials, clippings, and note from Ramon Segarra; see also School of Performing Arts – Life Experience Presentation, Folder 1.)
F. 8	Birmingham Dance Seminar, 1973 – 1979, 1985 (Includes correspondence, brochures, and letter of agreement for teaching at Birmingham, Alabama summer program with Birmingham Civic Ballet.)
F. 9	<i>Dance Magazine</i> , 1983, 1990 (Includes proposed article written by Malinka (never published) and related correspondence; also includes letter only for second article written in 1990 by Malinka.) Dance Teacher Licensing Exam, 1969 – 1982 and undated
F. 10	Examination Assistant, 1969 – 1982 (Includes correspondence and sample test.)
F. 11	Test Development, 1974 – 1982 and undated (Includes correspondence and materials relating to standards.)
F. 12	John Barker School, 1971 and undated (Includes material on teaching Vaganova method and one page of notes by Malinka.)
F. 13	Katherine Dunham School of Dance (Haiti), 1962 July (Includes two clippings on Malinka's guest teaching.)
F. 14	1958 Dance Congress – <i>Sleeping Beauty</i> (Ballet) Act I, 1958 (Includes notation for <i>The Sixteenth Birthday</i> , Grand Pas d'Action and Variation of Aurora.)

Box/Folder	Description
F. 15	Programs, 1956, 1969, 1982, and undated (Includes programs for Marie Marchowsky and Company, with Malinka performing, Mar. 17, 1956, <i>Coppelia</i> , Brooklyn Academy of Music, Dec. 12, 1969, <i>Upstairs at O'Neal's</i> (Revue), 1982, and program fragment for Michael Vita, undated.)
F. 16	P.S. 5 Summer Modern Dance Program, 1967 July – 1967 Aug. (Includes flier, letter to parents, note and activities list for Bronx, N.Y. summer dance program which Malinka directed.)
F. 17	R.M.T. School of Dance, 1978 and undated (Includes programs for Regine Mont-Rosier Trouillot (R.M.T.) troupe; Malinka choreographed and did lighting design.)
F. 18	Utah State University Summer Dance Program, 1968, 1970 and undated (Includes notices of appointment, clippings, and schedule; see also Life Experience Credit Presentation, Folder 3.)
F. 19	Miscellaneous Papers and Clippings, 1979, 1980 and undated (Includes ballet quotations, two clippings on ballet, and costume notes with tutu pattern.)

Series III: Artwork, 1955 – 1973 and undated

Costume Designs for Ballets, 1955 – 1973 and undated

Box 5

F. 1	<i>Allegresse</i> , 1957 (Includes five designs by Howard Hussey; fragile condition.)
F. 2	<i>Ballade</i> , 1955 (Includes seven designs by Howard Hussey.)
F. 3	<i>Musical Chairs</i> , 1955 (Includes thirteen costume designs and three set designs by Howard Hussey.)
F. 4	<i>New Ballet</i> , undated (Includes three designs.)
F. 5	<i>The Nutcracker</i> , undated (Includes five costume designs.)
F. 6	<i>Prince Igor</i> , undated (Includes three costume designs.)
F. 7	<i>Romantic Suite</i> (?), undated (Includes one costume design.)
F. 8	<i>Serenade</i> , undated (Includes two costume designs.)
F. 9	<i>Swan Lake</i> , undated (Includes one costume design and five set designs.)
F. 10	<i>Symphony in C</i> , undated (Includes nine costume designs.)
	Unidentified, 1973 and undated
F. 11	1973 May 12 (Includes note to Malinka.)
F. 12-13	Undated (Includes eleven costume designs.)
F. 14	Movement Sketches, undated (Includes two sketches and four photocopies.)
F. 15	Paleias, Eustacia (Drawings), undated (Includes cartoons and drawings by student.)
	Poster Designs, School of Performing Arts Annual Concerts, undated
F. 16	<i>Swan Lake</i> (Ballet) Designs, undated (Includes poster designs possibly for <i>Swan Lake</i> .)
F. 17	Unidentified, undated
F. 18	Set Design (Unidentified), undated
F. 19	Sketch Pad, undated (Includes pad with costume design sketches and several loose papers, possibly belonging to Malinka.)