

The New York Public Library
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the

Dick Feldman collection of Orlando Furioso production files

1969-1970

*T-Mss 2000-040

Compiled by David A. Olson, New York University/Palmer School of Library and Information Science,
2014, March 2013

Summary

Creator: Feldman, Dick

Title: Dick Feldman collection of Orlando Furioso production files, 1969-1970

Size: .67 linear foot (2 boxes)

Source: Gift of Dick Feldman, 2000.

Abstract: The collection contains Dick Feldman's documentation of the play *Orlando Furioso*, which took place in Bryant Park in New York in 1970. Feldman was the president of the Orlando Theatrical Company, Inc., which produced the show. The collection contains corporate documents, photographs, slides, set design plans, artifacts, and clippings documenting critical and popular reaction to the show.

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

Copyright information: For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Division.

Preferred citation: Dick Feldman collection of Orlando Furioso production files, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: The materials came to the Library in envelopes but lacked collection-wide order. Existing groupings and descriptions, where present, were retained when materials were rehoused in archival folders, and additional description was added.

Creator history

Dick Feldman was president of The Orlando Theatrical Company, Inc., a company formed to bring the play *Orlando Furioso* to New York in 1970. The play was staged by Luca Ronconi and performed by the Teatro Libero di Roma. It was shown in several European cities before coming to the United States. The play was adapted from Lodovico Ariosto's 16th century epic poem of the same name by Edoardo Sanguineti.

The play was originally to be held on Pier 86 in Chelsea, as a part of Mayor Lindsay's plan to repurpose portions of the waterfront for cultural activity. This proposal was met with picketing from the International Longshoremen's Association, which preferred to see renewal of shipping on the piers. Ultimately, the play was moved to Bryant Park, where it would be performed under a specially constructed "bubble."

Orlando Furioso opened on November 4, 1970. The play was noted for its frenetic action that removed physical boundaries between stage and spectator, with actors even being suspended above the audience at times. Critical and public reaction was strongly divided, with some viewers feeling the play was spectacle without substance and others seeing it as fast-paced fun.

Scope and content note

The collection contains documentation of the 1970 New York City production of the play *Orlando Furioso* collected by Dick Feldman, the president of the Orlando Theatrical Company, Inc. It contains corporate documents of the Orlando Theatrical Company, Inc., photographs, the architectural plans for Bryant Park, artifacts, and clippings.

Photographs comprise the largest part of the collection. These are mostly shots taken during the play by professional photographers and intended for publicity, and they illustrate the play's action and stagecraft. Photographers include Martha Swope, Ugo Mulas, and Ivan Farkas. Also included are actor head shots and travel pictures. Additional formats present include negatives, slides, and contact sheets.

Several folders of clippings document media portrayal of the play throughout its duration. These document all aspects of the play, from the dispute with the International Longshoremen's Association, to the critical and public reception, to news items about the actors.

The Orlando Theatrical Company's seal punch and two corporate moveable-type blocks were separated to the T-Cabinet, Billy Rose Theater Division. Please contact reference staff for access to these items.

Materials are in English and Italian.

Arrangement

Folders are arranged alphabetically.

Key terms

Subjects

Italian drama -- 20th century
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York

Places

Bryant Park (New York, N.Y.)

Names

Ariosto, Lodovico, 1474-1533 -- Orlando Furioso
Feldman, Dick
Ronconi, Luca, 1933-
Teatro Libero di Roma

Special formats

Photographs
Site plans

Container list

- b.2 f.1 City Plans--Bryant Park and Legend, 1970
- b.1 f.1-3 Clippings, 1970
 - b.1 f.4 Clippings and Articles--Performances in Europe, 1969-1970
 - b.1 f.5 Corporate Documents--The Orlando Theatrical Company, Inc., 1970
 - b.1 f.6 Opening and Closing Speeches of *Orlando Furioso* in Translation, 1970
- Photographs
 - b.1 f.7-10 General, circa 1970
 - b.2 f.2-5 General, circa 1970
 - b.1 f.11 European Performances--Photocopies, 1970
 - b.2 f.9 Publicity Shots, circa 1970
 - b.2 f.6-8 Swope, Martha, et al., 1970
- b.1 f.12-13 Script, undated
 - b.2 f.10 Slides--Performance, circa 1970
 - b.1 f.14 Stock Certificates, circa 1970