



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Norman Maen Papers

1961-1996

Compiled by Heather Lember, 2015.

Summary

Creator: Maen, Norman, 1932-2008

Title: Norman Maen Papers

Date: 1961-1996

Size: 2.28 linear feet (4 boxes, 6 oversized folders)

Source: Gift of Domy Reiter-Soffer, 2013

Abstract: Norman Maen (1932-2008) was a choreographer, director, and dancer from Ballymena, Northern Ireland. The Norman Maen papers date from 1961 to 1996 and include choreographic notes, correspondence, photographs, programs, and reviews of Maen's work in film, television, and the stage.

Conditions Governing Use: The author/creator retains copyright of materials. For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Dance Division at dance@nypl.org.

Preferred citation: Norman Maen Papers, (S) *MGZMD 434. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Heather Lember, 2015.

Creator History

Norman Maen was born in Ballymena, Northern Ireland in 1932. He began his career in Ireland, performing traditional Irish dance with Patricia Mulholland's Irish Ballet Company in Belfast. Maen moved to Vancouver Canada in the 1950s, where he landed the role of Og in the musical *Finian's Rainbow*. Soon after, he launched his television career performing with the Alan Lund Dancers as part of a weekly CBC series in Toronto.

In 1961, Maen moved to New York City, and began training with the choreographer Jack Cole as the principal dancer in the Broadway production of *Donnybrook*. In 1962, Maen moved back to Europe to begin his choreographic and directorial career. He started his own dance troupe and worked on productions of *The Fantasticks*, *Sir Buccaneer*, *Vanity Fair*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *Man of Magic*, and *Cinderella*.

In 1966, Maen made his film debut as the choreographer for Jacques Demy's, *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, where he worked with Gene Kelly, Catherine Deneuve, Danielle Darrieux, George Chakiris, and Françoise Dorléac.

In 1969, Maen was hired as a choreographer on the television variety series, *This is Tom Jones*, where he collaborated with performers such as Liza Minnelli, Caterina Valente, Petula Clark, and Eydie Gormé. In 1971, Maen won an Emmy for his work on the series, becoming the first British choreographer to receive the award. *This is Tom Jones* ended in 1972, but Maen continued to work in television, choreographing a number of television specials with Julie Andrews, Petula Clark, Steve Lawrence, John Curry, Stanley Baxter, and Rita Moreno. He was also employed as a choreographer on *The Muppet Show* from 1976 to 1980, and was awarded the Golden Rose of Montreux for his choreography on the televised dance special, *Dizzy Feet* in 1982.

Beginning in 1974, Maen was hired as stage director for the Children's Royal Variety Show and the Royal Command Performances, which he directed until 1991. He also choreographed and directed galas for the Queen's 80th and 90th birthday celebrations. Maen continued to choreograph and direct both television and stage performances during this time including, *Thomas and the King*, *John Curry's Theatre of Skating*, *Irene*, and *Hallelujah Hollywood*.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of correspondence, photographs, reviews, and programs chronicling the choreographic, dance, and directorial career of Norman Maen. Materials are grouped together by production title, which includes clippings of reviews, theatre programs, rehearsal and promotional photographs, and choreographic notes.

The majority of Maen's correspondence is comprised of letters from performers and television executives with whom he collaborated over the years. Maen also retained notes from the British Royal family praising his performances, and a 1970 letter from the National Academy of television arts and sciences notifying Maen of his Emmy nomination for *This is Tom Jones*. There is less formal correspondence included in the form of handwritten cards and notes from the dancers in pieces Maen directed or choreographed.

The photographs depict film, television, and theatre productions of which Maen was director or choreographer, as well as performances where he was a dancer. Most of the uncaptioned photographs portray rehearsals, but there are also individual headshots of both Maen and performers he directed. Some of these photographs also include personal notes addressed to Maen. Some of the performers represented are Rita Moreno, Juliet Prowse, Caterina Valente, and Ethel Merman.

The majority of the captioned photographs illustrate Maen's work on the screen, which contains images of Maen accepting the 1971 Emmy award for his choreographic work in *This is Tom Jones*, and a large collection of photographs from rehearsals for both *This is Tom Jones* and the 1967 film, *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. Maen is pictured alongside such performers as George Chakiris, John Curry, Danielle Darrieux, Catherine Deneuve, Françoise Dorléac, Tom Jones, Gene Kelly, Liza Minnelli, and film director, Jacques Demy.

The productions files include choreographic notes, photographs, programs, and reviews from throughout Maen's career as both a choreographer and director in theatre and television. The choreographic notes, which feature Maen's handwritten notes and instructions, are for a 1968 BBC

television production of *The Merry Widow*. Also with Maen's papers is a television camera script for the 1990 production, *A Royal Birthday Gala*, which was broadcast from the London Palladium.

The collection also contains programs from throughout Maen's career. There are programs for the annual Royal Variety Performances at the Theatre Royal in London, *Aladdin*, *Cinderella*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *The Man of Magic*, *Irene*, and *Some Like it Hot*.

The reviews are of Maen's work as both a choreographer and director in theatre and television. Among the performances reviewed are *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, *Donnybrook*, *The Fantasticks*, *Hallelujah Hollywood*, *Man of Magic*, *Irene*, *Sir Buccaneer*, and, *Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme from this Moment On*.

Arrangement: Materials are arranged alphabetically by production title. Captioned photographs are listed with their corresponding production. Correspondence and uncaptioned photographs are arranged chronologically.

Key Terms

Occupations

Choreographers

Dancers

Musical theater producers and directors

Subjects

Choreography

Dance

Variety shows (Television programs)

Geographic Names

City of London (England)

Ireland

Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)

Toronto (Ont.)

Vancouver (B.C.)

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings

Correspondence

Photographs

Theater programs

Names

Chakiris, George

Darrieux, Danielle, 1917-

Demy, Jacques

Deneuve, Catherine, 1943-

Dorle_ac, Franc_oise

Kelly, Gene, 1938-

Minnelli, Liza

Container List

Correspondence

b. 1 f. 1-6 1970-1996

Photographs

b. 3 f. 11 1960-1966

b. 4 f. 1-9 1966-1980

o. 4 Juliet Prowse 1978
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.

Productions

b. 1 f. 7 *Aladdin* 1967

b. 1 f. 8 *Bolshi Ballet* 1963

b. 1 f. 9 *Carrie* 1963

b. 1 f. 10-11 The Children's Royal Variety Performance 1987-1990

b. 1 f. 12 *Cinderella* 1985-1986

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort

o. 3 Françoise Dorléac Photograph 1965
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.

b. 1 f. 13 Programs and Reviews 1966-1967

b. 3 f. 12-13 Rehearsal Photographs 1966

b. 1 f. 14 *Donnybrook* 1961-1983

b. 1 f. 15 *Europgraph* 1979

b. 1 f. 16 *The Fantasticks* 1964

b. 1 f. 17 *Finian's Rainbow* 1964

b. 1 f. 18 *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* 1965

b. 1 f. 19 *Hallelujah Hollywood* 1973-1974

b. 1 f. 20 *Irene* 1976-1978

John Curry's Theatre of Skating

b. 1 f. 21 1976-1978

o. 5 Photograph 1976
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.

b. 1 f. 22 *Liz* 1968

b. 2 f. 1 *The Man of Magic* 1966

o. 6 *The Merry Widow* 1968
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.

b. 2 f. 2 *Mr. and Mrs.* 1968

b. 2 f. 3 *A Night of One Hundred Stars* 1990

b. 2 f. 4 *Queen Passionella and the Sleeping Beauty* 1969

b. 2 f. 5 *The Roy Castle Show* 1974

b. 2 f. 6 *Roisin Dubh* 1962

b. 2 f. 7-9 A Royal Birthday Gala 1986-1990
Royal Command Performance

Productions (cont.)

Royal Command Performance (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 10-12 1979-1982
- b. 3 f. 1-3 1983-1986
- b. 4 f. 10-13 Photographs 1974-1992
 - o. 1 Photographs 1974-1992
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.
 - o. 2 Photographs 1974-1992
Located in Dance cage - flat file 262.
- b. 3 f. 4 *Sir Buccaneer* 1964
- b. 3 f. 5 *Some Like it Hot* 1991
- b. 3 f. 6 *Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme From this Moment On* 1977
- b. 4 f. 3-4 *This is Tom Jones* 1969-1971
- b. 3 f. 7 *Thomas and the King* 1975
- b. 3 f. 8 *Tommy Steele* 1973-1990
- b. 3 f. 9 *The Traveling Music Show* 1978
- b. 3 f. 10 *Vanity Fair* 1962