



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Natalie Riley collection of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo records

1945-2008 [bulk 1945-1967]

(S) *MGZMD 429

Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016.

Summary

Creator: Riley, Natalie

Title: Natalie Riley collection of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo records

Date: 1945-2008 [bulk 1945-1967]

Size: .21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Donated by Barbara Rassel, 2013.

Abstract: The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo ballet company was formed in 1938. Sergei Denham directed the company and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo School in New York City until 1967, when both the dance company and the school dissolved. The records contain correspondence from Denham, newspaper clippings, a copy of the company's certificate of incorporation and assorted promotional material.

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Preferred citation: Natalie Riley collection of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo records, (S) *MGZMD 429. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016.

Creator History

The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo ballet company was formed in 1938, following protracted legal and artistic battles among René Blum, Leonide Massine, and Colonel Wassily de Basil, who had previously worked together in several ballet companies under variations of the Ballets Russes name. Sergei Denham, an early financial backer of the new company, first served as its president in 1938, then later as its director. In the company's early years, choreographers Leonide Massine and George Balanchine worked with it and many influential dancers, composers, and designers worked with the company over the course of its existence. It staged shows throughout the United States. In 1956, Denham took over the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo School in New York City, which operated until 1967, when the dance company also dissolved.

Scope and Content Note

Natalie Riley was an administrator for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo School. This collection contains records relating to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo dance company and to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo School kept by Riley. The bulk of the dance company records consist of correspondence between Sergei Denham and Riley, relating to creative concerns such as costumes and casting, and relating to administrative details such as payroll and contracts. A file of newspaper clippings on the dance company and a copy of its certificate of incorporation are also included. School records include brochures, schedules, programs, and other promotional material.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet companies
Dance schools

Names

Denham, Sergei, 1896-1970.
Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo
Ballets russes