

ATLANTA BALLET.
Atlanta Ballet collection, 1929-1984

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Atlanta Ballet.
Title: Atlanta Ballet collection, 1929-1984
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 634
Extent: 4 linear feet (9 boxes) and 1 oversized papers box (OP)
Abstract: Collection of materials of the Atlanta Ballet, including the personal papers of founder, Dorothy Alexander, but primarily composed of printed and promotional material.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Source

Gift, 1983.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Atlanta Ballet collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by E.L.E., 1985.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Dorothy Moses Alexander (1904-1986) was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1904 to Mina Thibadeau (d. 1914) and Francis Hamilton Moses (d. 1919). She began to study dance when she was eight years old, and before she reached the age of eighteen she was teaching dance to the children of Atlanta friends. In 1921 she opened the Dorothy Alexander School of Dance. While performing with her own company, the Dorothy Alexander Dance Concert Group which she and her students formed in 1929, Alexander continued to study and to teach and choreograph. She taught at and attended the University of Georgia and Oglethorpe University where she completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1930. Alexander's dance group, known as the Dorothy Alexander Dance Art Group throughout the 1930s, was renamed the Atlanta Civic Ballet in 1941. Merging with the Atlanta Municipal Theater in 1967, the company dropped the word "civic" from its name and became the Atlanta Ballet. The school which had continued since its founding by Dorothy Alexander became the Atlanta School of Ballet, the official school of the company.

Alexander performed until 1947 and taught until 1958 when Merrilee Smith, her partner and co-owner in the school since 1945, took over those duties. In 1962, Dorothy Alexander retired as the artistic director of the company and Robert Barnett, who had been a principal dancer with the company since 1958, was named her successor and the administrative director of the school. In 1968, Alexander, who had become ill, sold her share in the school to Barnett who made Merrilee Smith its director.

Dorothy Alexander is recognized as the matriarch of dance in Atlanta and of regional ballet in the United States. She was instrumental in the development of the Southeastern Regional Ballet Association (SERBA), and the Atlanta Civic Ballet hosted the first regional dance festival in 1955. The formation of the National Association for Regional Ballet (NARB) in which Alexander was also very much involved came shortly after SERBA's organization. Among the other awards presented to Dorothy Alexander over the years are the Atlanta Woman of the Year in the Arts (1947), the Dance Magazine's National Award (1960), and the Capezio Award (1981).

Scope and Content Note

The material in this collection was a gift of Dorothy Alexander, founder of the Atlanta Ballet. Although it includes personal papers of the donor and original records of the company the bulk of the collection is printed and promotional material. Earliest items are programs dated 1929, the latest are news articles dated 1984, but the collection bulks during the period 1955-1975. It is divided into three series, the largest of which (Series I, boxes 1-7) pertains directly to the organization and activities of the Atlanta Ballet, 1929-1984. In this series are files the company's original records, followed by the programs, material related to the Decatur and Apprentice companies and information concerning several ballet productions. Promotional material published by the Atlanta Ballet, press material and material related to the Atlanta School of Ballet follows. One box of photographs (box 7) ca. 1930-1975, completes the series.

The second series in the collection contains personal correspondence, biographical material, and articles and monographs pertaining to Dorothy Alexander, as well as articles written by her. The final series (Series III), most of which is promotional and press material, concerns the

history and organization of the regional ballet associations of the United States, particularly the Southeastern Ballet Association and the National Association for regional Ballet.

Arrangement Note

Organized into 3 series: (1) Atlanta Ballet (Atlanta Civic Ballet), (2) Dorothy Alexander papers, and (3) Regional ballet associations.

Description of Series

[Series 1: Atlanta Ballet, 1929-1984](#)

[Series 2: Dorothy Alexander papers, 1931-1984](#)

[Series 3: Regional ballet associations, 1955-1981](#)

Series 1
Atlanta Ballet, 1929-1984
Boxes 1 - 7; OP1

Arrangement Note

Arranged in alphabetical order by subject

Organizational Records; Programs, 1929-1956

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Application for Exemption of Admission's Tax, 1953
1	2	Certificate of incorporation, 1955
1	3	Company contracts, 1957-1958
1	4	Financial statements, 1974-1975, 1979-1981
1	5	Long range planning commission reports, 1979-1980
1	6	Rules, regulations, and by-laws, circa1941-circa1965
1	7	Restated and amended rules, regulations and by-laws; standards of procedures, 1980, undated
1	8	Organizational chart, undated
1	9	Board members handbook
1	10	Grant application to Atlanta Board of Education, undated
1	11	Correspondence, 1956, 1964, 1972
1	12	Publications, 1956-1981
1	13	History and fact sheet, 1964, 1966
1	14	Atlanta Ballet Guild, 1975-1976
1	15	Atlanta Ballet Alumnae Guild, 1974, 1981
1	16	Programs, 1929-1956
1	17	Programs, 1929-1956
1	18	Programs, 1929-1956
2	-	Programs, 1957-1972
3	1	Programs, 1973-1978
3	2	Programs, 1979-1981
3	3	Programs, 1982-1983
3	4	Programs, undated
3	5	Decatur Company of the Atlanta Ballet Company, 1954-1961
3	6	Apprentice Company, 1973
3	7	Scripts and scrip notes, 1960, 1968
3	8	Costume designs, undated
3	9	Related miscellaneous material, 1958, 1961, 1964, 1977
3	10	Promotional material and invitations, 1936
3	11	Promotional material and invitations, 1954-1955; 1957-1959
3	12	Promotional material and invitations, 1960s-1980s

- 3 13 Promotional material and invitations, 1960s-1980s
- 3 14 Promotional material and invitations, 1960s-1980s
- 3 15 Promotional material and invitations, undated

Press material, biographical and institutional information

- 4 1 Press material, 1930s-1980s
- 4 2 Press material, 1930s-1980s
- 4 3 Press material, 1930s-1980s
- 4 4 Press material, 1930s-1980s
- 4 5 Press material which includes Atlanta Ballet, circa 1942-1979
- 4 6 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 7 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 8 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 9 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 10 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 11 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 12 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 13 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 4 14 Articles and clippings, 1932; 1948-1974
- 5 1 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 2 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 3 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 4 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 5 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 6 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 7 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 9 Articles and clippings, 1975-1982, 1990
- 5 9 Article and clippings, foreign, 1959
- 5 10 Biographical information about Atlanta Ballet Members 1941-1984
- 5 11 Atlanta Ballet Dancers, 1929-1990
- 5 12 Atlanta Memorial Arts Center and Atlanta Municipal Theater press material, news releases, 1962-1969
- 5 13 Atlanta Municipal Theater: Press kit and brochure, 1968-1969
- 5 14 Atlanta Memorial Arts Center: Press kit and brochure, 1968-1969
- 5 15 Atlanta Memorial Arts Center-public relations material, 1968
- 5 16 Atlanta School of Ballet-course of study, circa 1950
- 5 17 Atlanta School of Ballet-general information
- 5 18 Atlanta School of Ballet-general information
- 6 1 Atlanta School of Ballet-recital program, 1947-1977
- 6 2 Atlanta School of Ballet-recital program, 1947-1977

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| 6 | 3 | Atlanta School of Ballet-recital program, 1947-1977 |
| 6 | 4 | Atlanta School of Ballet-recital notes, scripts, circa 1960s |
| 6 | 5 | Atlanta School of Ballet-press material-1968-1978 |
| 6 | 6 | Atlanta School of Ballet-stationery, undated; blank application forms |
| 6 | 7 | Atlanta School of Ballet-information on other schools, circa 1963-1973 |
| OP1 | 1 | Atlanta Ballet-broadsides, circa 1981, undated; NEA/SAF, 1979, 3 items |
| OP1 | 1 | Nutcracker Ballet [Atlanta production] coloring book, 1977, 1 item |

Photographs

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|---|---|------------------------------|
| 7 | 7 | Photographs, circa 1930-1975 |
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Series 2
Dorothy Alexander papers, 1931-1984
Box 8

Box	Folder	Content
8	1	Correspondence, 1955-1956 (formation of the Southeastern Regional Ballet Association)
8	2	Correspondence, 1972 (regarding New York Times article)
8	3	Correspondence, 1979-1983 (personal)
8	4	Material on proposed film (WGTV), no date
8	5	Collected miscellaneous materials, 1936-1980
8	6	Collected miscellaneous materials, "Some Landmarks in American Dance," by Isadora Bennett, no date
8	7	Awards and recognition, 1980-1981
8	8	Publications list, [1931-1975]
8	9	Articles by Alexander, 1931, 1933
8	10	Articles about Alexander, 1948-1984
8	11	Articles about Alexander, 1948-1984
8	12	Printed material about Alexander, 1955, 1959, 1963, 1971
8	13	Collected materials by and about Doris Hering, 1964, 1981
8	14	Draft transcript of interview of Alexander by Doris Hering, 1976

Series 3
Regional ballet associations, 1955-1981
Box 9

Box	Folder	Content
9	1	Southeastern Regional Ballet Association, 1955-1981
9	2	Southeastern Regional Ballet Association, 1955-1981
9	3	Southeastern Regional Ballet Association, 1955-1981
9	4	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	5	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	6	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	7	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	8	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	9	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	10	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	11	National Association for Regional Ballet, 1961-1981
9	12	Other regional ballet associations, 1961, 1966, 1970
9	13	General information, circa 1961-1977
