Jocelyn Vollmar Papers

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2021
Descriptive Summary
Title: Jocelyn Vollmar Papers
Dates: 1944-2004
Collection Number: 992.065 / 007.076
Creator/Collector: Vollmar, Jocelyn
Dates: 1944-2004
Creator/Collector: Christensen, Harold
Dates: 1904-1989
Creator/Collector: Christensen, William
Dates: 1909-1984
Creator/Collector: Christensen, Lew
Dates: 1909-1984
Extent: 1 Box. 1 linear foot.
Repository: Museum of Performance and Design, Performing Arts Library
San Francisco, California 94124
Abstract: Jocelyn Vollmar, born in 1925, was a ballerina who studied at the San Francisco Opera Ballet School and later joined the San Francisco Opera Ballet. She received all of her training from Harold, William, and Lew Christensen. In 1939, 1940, and 1944 respectively, she appeared in the original full-length American premiers of Coppelia, Swan Lake, and The Nutcracker, all by William Christensen. Vollmar officially joined the San Francisco Ballet in 1943 and became a soloist in 1947. Vollmar also went to New York and joined the New York City Ballet for two seasons, the American Ballet Theatre for two tours, and the Metropolitan Opera for a season. In 1950, she went to Europe for three and a half years upon being invited to join the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas in Paris. From 1954-1956, she was one of three leading ballerinas in the Borovansky Australian Ballet. She concluded her dancing career at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House. Vollmar also made contributions to ballet as a choreographer and teacher for San Francisco Ballet’s summer choreography workshops, the San Francisco Ballet School, and the Marin Civic Ballet. The collection includes newspaper and magazine clippings reviewing Jocelyn Vollmar’s career with San Francisco Ballet, Marquis de Cuevas Ballet in Paris and Borovansky Ballet in Australia, photographs of Vollmar in performance and on tour with the San Francisco Ballet and performance programs and souvenir programs for the San Francisco Ballet, as well as personal papers, a press kit, performance prospectus, a book of poems written by Vollmar, an invitation to a luncheon and tour itinerary.
Language of Material: English
Access
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Acquisition Information
The Jocelyn Vollmar Papers were donated to the Museum of Performance & Design by Jocelyn Vollmar in June of 1992 and on June 30, 2007.
Biography/Administrative History
Jocelyn Vollmar was born on November 25, 1925 in San Francisco and received her first ballet lessons from her mother, Wilma Wilkie, a former actress. Her father, a wholesale business executive, provided unstintingly for Jocelyn and her sister, Gale, during the difficult Depression years. In 1938 at age twelve, Jocelyn entered the then five year-old San Francisco Opera Ballet School. It became her immediate love and at seventeen she joined the fledgling company. She received all of her training from Harold, William, and Lew Christensen. In 1939, 1940, and 1944 respectively, she appeared in the original full-length American premiers of Coppelia, Swan Lake, and The Nutcracker, all by William Christensen. Vollmar officially joined the San Francisco Ballet in 1943 and became a soloist in 1947. This affiliation, along with dancing for the San Francisco Opera, did not constitute a full schedule of performing. For this reason, Vollmar went to New York and joined the New York City Ballet for two seasons, the American Ballet Theatre for two tours, and the Metropolitan Opera for a season. In 1950, she went to Europe to study for the summer but ended up staying for three and a half years upon being invited to join the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas in Paris. She there rose to the leading rank of “etoiel.” From 1954-1956, she was one of three leading ballerinas in the Borovansky Australian Ballet. Returning home, she appeared from 1956 through 1972 as prima ballerina of the San Francisco Ballet. She danced leading roles in numerous Christensen ballets, including Filling Station, Swan Lake, Beauty and the Beast, and Lady of Shalott. In December 1972, Vollmar concluded a thirty year career by dancing in the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in The Nutcracker. Thus she came full circle to her birthplace and to the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House - the scene of her debut and farewell. In addition to her long career as a performer, Vollmar also made contributions to ballet as a choreographer and teacher. Between 1960 and 1973, she choreographed eleven ballets for the San Francisco Ballet’s summer choreography workshops. The company also
performed one of her ballets, Figures in F, as part of its 1972 season. Upon her retirement from performing, Vollmar served as Assistant Director of the San Francisco Ballet School and then as a teacher and administrator for the Marin Civic Ballet until 2005.

**Scope and Content of Collection**
The Jocelyn Vollmar Papers chronicle the ballerina's rise to stardom and twenty year affiliation with the San Francisco Ballet. The collection includes newspaper and magazine clippings reviewing Jocelyn Vollmar’s career with San Francisco Ballet, Marquis de Cuevas Ballet in Paris and Borovansky Ballet in Australia, photographs of Vollmar in performance and on tour with the San Francisco Ballet and performance programs and souvenir programs for the San Francisco Ballet. The collection, in addition to these contents, contain personal papers, a press kit, performance prospectus, a book of poems written by Vollmar, an invitation to a luncheon and tour itinerary.

**Indexing Terms**
Ballerinas
Dance teachers
San Francisco Opera Ballet School
San Francisco Opera Ballet
New York City Ballet
American Ballet Theatre
Metropolitan Opera Ballet
Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas
Borovansky Australian Ballet
San Francisco War Memorial Opera House
Marin Civic Ballet

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