

A Guide to the School of Theatre and Dance Records, 1930-2011 (bulk 1981-1993) UA 0045

School of Theatre and Dance Records

1930-2011



Title Statement

A Guide to the School of Theatre and Dance Records, 1930-2011 (bulk 1981-1993) UA 0045

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Publication Statement

Publisher: James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

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MSC 1706
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Telephone: (540) 568-3612
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URL: <https://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/>



June 2018

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-09-24 17:04:44 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

UA 0045

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/503

Unit Date

1930-2011

Unit Date

1981-1993

Language

English

Abstract

The School of Theatre and Dance Records, 1930-2011 (bulk 1981-1993) consists of playbills, programs and curriculum brochures relating to theatre and dance performances at and sponsored by James Madison University

Creator

James Madison University. School of Theatre and Dance

Extent

0.32 cubic feet 4 folders

Repository

Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University Libraries

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

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Acquisition Information

Formerly housed as Vertical Files in Special Collections, labeled Dance, Theatre, and Drama - Guest Performances.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], School of Theatre and Dance Records, 1930-2011 (bulk 1981-1993), UA 0045, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Admin History

Theatre at James Madison University was initially an extracurricular activity, with the Stratford Players serving as the most popular student drama club. In 1966, the Department of Speech and Drama was established and in the following year, 1967, the Latimer-Shaeffer Theatre opened in the Duke Fine Arts Center (now Duke Hall). The theatre was named after former theatre director and Stratford Players advisor, Mary Latimer Cordner and former music faculty Edna T. Shaeffer. In 1973, Thomas H. Arthur was hired at Madison College to transform the theatre program from an extracurricular activity into a college department. Arthur soon hired Allen Lyndrup, Thomas L. King, Pam Johnson, Phil S. Grayson and Roger Hall as faculty members. Arthur and King worked together to construct and establish the Wampler Experimental Theatre, also known as Theatre II, in 1974, which gave a home to productions written and directed by students.

In 1977 King, Arthur, and Grayson requested permission to develop a new theatre program in addition to Theatre II. Through a partnership with Food Service, the Dinner Theatre was established in Gibbons Hall to provide summer patrons with a buffet followed by a play featuring students and professional performers. The Dinner Theatre soon became a popular summer activity in Harrisonburg, drawing theatre-goers from around Virginia. The Dinner Theatre also provided prospective students and families, along with summer session students, with summer entertainment. In 1978 the Dinner Theatre sent a troupe to Italy and Germany to perform for the USO and by its second season the program became fully professional, welcoming JMU faculty, staff, students, and non-JMU personnel to contribute to the Dinner Theatre. According to Arthur, "[The Dinner Theatre] was very important to the growth of theater and dance [at JMU] because it gave us greater visibility." The Dinner Theatre ultimately ran for 17 years, ending in 1993.

In 1986, the Department of Theatre and Dance was formed in the College of Fine Arts, now the College of Arts and Letters. It remained in the College until 2015 when the establishment of the College of Visual and Performing Arts was approved. Today, the School of Theatre and Dance focuses on training and educating

artists, scholars, and teachers in the traditions and current practices of dance, theatre, and musical theatre. The School puts on around thirty performances a year, including four theatre and three dance productions during their main stage season.

Scope and Content

The School of Theatre and Dance Records, 1930-2011 (bulk 1981-1993) consists of playbills, programs and curriculum brochures relating to theatre and dance performances at and sponsored by James Madison University. Some early items are dated before the School of Theatre and Dance was officially established. The collection includes items from the State Teachers College at Harrisonburg, Madison College, and James Madison University. Several clubs and theatre companies are mentioned throughout, including, but not limited to: The Madison College Modern Dance Club, the Repertory Touring Company of JMU, the Shenandoah Shakespeare Express, the Coburn Players, the Margaret Webster Shakespeare Company, the National Players, the Barter Theatre, and the Hedgerow Theatre.

Related Material

Edna T. Shaeffer Retirement Letters, 1940, 1956, SC 0061 Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Stratford Players Records, 1920-1983, UA 0029, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Student Theatre Productions Collection, 1912-1966, UA 0046, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Virginia Theatre & New Virginia Theatre Playbills, 1914-1924, SC 0080, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Keywords

Theater programs

Playbills

Brochures

Dance -- Study and teaching (Higher)

Theater -- Study and teaching (Higher)

James Madison University. School of Theatre and Dance

James Madison University. Department of Theatre and Dance

James Madison University. Center for Dance and Theatre

James Madison University -- History

Madison College -- History

State Teachers College at Harrisonburg (Harrisonburg, Va.) -- History

Bibliography

James Madison University. "JMU Centennial Celebration - JMU Dinner Theatre." jmu.edu. <http://www.jmu.edu/centennialcelebration/dinnertheatre.shtml>. Accessed June 5, 2018. James Madison University. "Theatre and Dance Overview." jmu.edu. <https://www.jmu.edu/theatredance/about/index.shtml>. Accessed June 5, 2018. James Madison University. "JMU Centennial Celebration - The Stratford Players." jmu.edu <https://www.jmu.edu/centennialcelebration/stratford.shtml>. Accessed June 5, 2018.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged alphabetically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Dance**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/7797**Unit Date** 1930-2006, undated**Unit Date** 1984-1988**Mixed Materials [1000898313]** 1 (box)**Container** 1 (folder)**Language** English**Dinner Theatre Programs and Playbills****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/7798**Unit Date** 1981-1993, undated**Mixed Materials [1000898313]** 1 (box)**Container** 2 (folder)**Theatre****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/7799**Unit Date** circa 1988-2011, undated**Mixed Materials [1000898313]** 1 (box)**Container** 3 (folder)**Theatre - Guest Performances****Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival_objects/7800**Unit Date** 1930-1967, undated**Mixed Materials [1000898313]** 1 (box)**Container** 4 (folder)