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Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Sarah Mann research material on Loie Fuller

1918-2009 [bulk 1975-1995]
*MGZMD 428

Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016.

Summary

Creator: Mann, Sarah

Title: Sarah Mann research material on Loie Fuller

Date: 1918-2009 [bulk 1975-1995]

Size: .21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Donated by Karen Cowan, 2012.

Abstract: Loie Fuller was an American dancer and choreographer known for innovative uses of theatrical lighting and costume who worked primarily in Paris. This research material was compiled by Sarah Mann, a historian in Fuller's hometown and pertains to Loie Fuller and Hinsdale / Fullersburg, Illinois. It includes Mann's manuscripts and published articles about Fuller, photocopied articles, and promotional material about the Fuller House Museum and the Hinsdale Historical Society.

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Processing note: Compiled by Heather Halliday, 2016. Unconfirmed birth/death dates of Sarah Mann: 1909-2001. Two audio cassettes inventoried and submitted for digitization.

Creator History

Sarah Mann was a local historian in Hinsdale, Illinois, who worked for the Hinsdale Historical Society and the Ben Fuller House Museum. Hinsdale, a suburb of Chicago, situated 16 miles west of the city limits, was founded by Ben Fuller as a small town named Fullersburg in 1851. Ben Fuller was the uncle of Loie Fuller. In her work as local historian, Mann gathered files of research material on Loie, whom she considered to be a colorful yet overlooked local character who had made an impact on culture at large.

Scope and Content Note

Born in 1862 in Fullersburg, Illinois, Loie Fuller was an American dancer and choreographer known for innovative uses of theatrical lighting and costume. After an early career in the United States first as a child actress, then in vaudeville and as a burlesque dancer, Fuller moved to Paris. There she delved into improvisational avant-garde dance performance techniques, inventing the "Serpentine Dance" and experimenting with early color gels and chemical salts for luminescent garments and lighting. She had an influence on other dancers of the period and upon early filmmakers, such as the Lumière brothers, who filmed an unidentified dancer performing a "Serpentine Dance" in 1896. She remained productive in Paris until her death in 1928.

The research material pertains to Loie Fuller and to the history of the town of Hinsdale / Fullersburg, Illinois. Files include Mann's manuscripts and published articles about Loie Fuller; photocopied articles and clippings about Loie Fuller; photographs of the Fuller family, Fullersburg, and of the Ben Fuller House; illustrations of Loie Fuller's costume and lighting designs; a script and audio tapes of a presentation prepared by the museum about Loie Fuller; booklets and other promotional material about the Fuller House Museum and the Hinsdale Historical Society.

Key Terms

Occupations
Dancers

Subjects
Serpentine dance

Names
Fuller, Loie, 1862-1928