



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Alfredo Valente negatives

1934-1958

*MGZEB 19-561

Processed by Tara D. Strongosky, 2019.

Summary

Photographer: Valente, Alfredo

Title: Alfredo Valente negatives

Date: 1934-1958

Size: 7.67 linear feet (17 boxes)

Abstract: Alfredo Valente (1899-1973) was an Italian-born American photographer. Valente's trademark style was his portraits of costumed performers which used artistic camera angles and dramatic lighting. The Alfredo Valente negatives are comprised primarily of black and white negatives and some proofs created between 1934 through 1958. The majority of photographs are of American Ballet Theatre and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Other companies represented are Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre, Ballet for America, Ballet International, Jooss Ballet, and notable individual dancers such as La Argentinita, Katherine Dunham, and Ruth St. Denis.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

Conditions Governing Access:

Box 17 is closed for preservation purposes.

Conditions Governing Use: Some photographs are marked on their verso as strictly prohibited from being copied or exhibited as indicated by the photographer's stamp. All of these prints are proofs or unretouched photographs.

Preferred citation: Alfredo Valente negatives, *MGZEB 19-561. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Tara D. Strongosky, 2019.

Creator History

Alfredo Valente (1899-1973) was born in Calabria, Italy where he was trained as a fine artist. In 1927, he immigrated to the United States and began his photography career in New York City. In 1931, he became the photographer for experimental repertory company the Group Theater. Throughout the 1930s he was regularly published in magazines and newspapers including *Stage*, the preeminent periodical about Broadway. Valente's trademark style was his portraits of costumed performers which used artistic camera angles and dramatic lighting. In addition to portraiture, Valente documented numerous productions of American Ballet Theatre (then known as Ballet Theatre) during the company's formative years in the 1940s. He photographed some of Ballet Theatre's most prominent dancers, such as Harold Lang, John Kriza, Alicia Alonso, Nora Kaye, Vera Zorina, Igor Yousketvitch, Alicia Markova, Maria Tallchief, André Eglevsky, and Hugh Laing.

Scope and Content Note

The Alfredo Valente negatives consist primarily of black and white negatives and some proofs created between 1934 through 1958 of various ballet companies, those primarily being American Ballet Theatre and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. The collection is arranged alphabetically based on company with files identified by either production title or dancer name. Other companies represented include the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre, Ballet for America, Ballet International, Jooss Ballet, as well as individual dancers.

The collection's emphasis on American Ballet Theatre is due to Valente's extensive documentation during its formative years of the early to mid-1940s. The negatives in this collection include a variety of studio portrait sessions; production shots; and backstage, dressing room, and rehearsal images. Some of Ballet Theatre's most well-known productions and its principal dancers photographed include Hugh Laing, Nora Kaye, and Antony Tudor in *Dim Lustre*; John Kriza and Janet Reed in *Fancy Free*; Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin in *Firebird*; Violette Verdy and Erik Bruhn in *Miss Julie*; *Pillar of Fire*; and *Swan Lake*, featuring an array of Ballet Theatre's female principal dancers in the role of *Odette* throughout the years. Additionally, there are individual files of dancers such as Sono Osato, André Eglevsky, Jerome Robbins, and Igor Youskevitch among many others.

Simultaneously, Valente photographed the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in the early 1940s when choreographer Léonide Massine made many of his most famous works, including *Gaîté Parisienne*, *Rouge et Noir*, *Labyrinth*, and *Bacchanale*. The company's impressive roster was also photographed such as Alexandra Danilova, Tania Riabouchinskaya, Tamara Toumanova, Nana Gollner, Mia Slavenska, and Milada Mladova.

Notable individual performers included in the collection are La Argentinita, Katherine Dunham, Massie Patterson, and Ruth St. Denis. Valente also photographed noteworthy dance world figures such as Lincoln Kirstein, Michel Fokine and the families of Igor Youskevitch, Léonide Massine, and Nicholas Orloff.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet companies -- Photographs
Ballet dancers -- Photographs
Dance companies -- Photographs

Occupations

Dancers.
Photographers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Negatives (photographs)
Photographic prints

Names

Argentinita, 1898-1945 -- Photographs
Dunham, Katherine -- Photographs
St. Denis, Ruth, 1880-1968 -- Photographs
Valente, Alfredo
Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre -- Photographs
American Ballet Theatre -- Photographs
Ballet for America -- Photographs
Ballet International -- Photographs
Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo -- Photographs
Jooss European Ballet -- Photographs

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-2 Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre 1953 March-1953 September
American Ballet Theatre 1942-1958
- b. 1 f. 3 *Afternoon of a Faun*
- b. 1 f. 4-5 *Aleko* 1942 October-1945 October
Includes dancers Nora Kaye, André Eglevsky, and John Kriza.
- b. 1 f. 6 Alonso, Alicia 1944 April
- b. 1 f. 7 Antoine de Paris with dancers 1945
Backstage photographs of celebrity hairstylist Antoine de Paris with dancers of the American Ballet Theatre.
- b. 1 f. 8 *Le Baiser de la Fée*
Includes dancer Alicia Markova.
- b. 1 f. 9 Banks, Margaret
- b. 1 f. 10 *The Beloved*
- b. 1 f. 11 *Billy the Kid* 1948 March
- b. 2 f. 1-4 *Bluebeard* 1945 October
- b. 2 f. 5 *La Boutique Fantasque*
- b. 2 f. 6 Bruhn, Erik 1949-1957
- b. 2 f. 7-8 *Camille* 1946 September
Includes dancer Alicia Markova.
- b. 2 f. 9 *Capriccio Espagnol*
- b. 2 f. 10 *The Combat* 1957 May
- b. 2 f. 11 Conrad, Karen
- b. 3 f. 1 Dickson, Charles
- b. 3 f. 2-3 *Dim Lustre*
Includes dancers Hugh Laing, Nora Kaye, and Antony Tudor.
- b. 3 f. 4 *Don Domingo de Don Blas* 1942 October 1
Includes dancers Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin.
- b. 3 f. 5 *Don Quixote*
- b. 3 f. 6 Eckl, Shirley
- b. 3 f. 7 Eglevsky, André
- b. 3 f. 8 *Facsimile*
- b. 3 f. 9 *Fair at Sorochinsk*
- b. 3 f. 10 Fallis, Barbara
- b. 3 f. 11-12 *Fancy Free*
Includes dancers John Kriza and Janet Reed.
- b. 3 f. 13 Ferguson, Mildred
- b. 3 f. 14 *La Fille Mal Gardée* 1957 May
- b. 3 f. 15-16 *Firebird* 1945 October
Includes dancers Alicia Markova, Anton Dolin, Nora Kaye, and Dimitri Romanoff.
- b. 4 f. 1 *Gaîté Parisienne* 1944 December
- b. 4 f. 2 *Gala Performance*
- b. 4 f. 3 Gibson, Ian (portraits)

American Ballet Theatre (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 4-5 *Gift of the Magi*
Includes dancer Nora Kaye.
- b. 4 f. 6-7 *Giselle*
Includes dancers Alicia Markova and Eric Braun.
- b. 4 f. 8-11 *Graduation Ball*
Includes dancers Tatiana Riabouchinska and Janet Reed.
- b. 4 f. 12 *Graziana*
Includes dancers Nora Kaye, Alicia Alonso, and André Eglevsky.
- b. 4 f. 13-14 *Helen of Troy*
Includes dancers Margaret Banks and Maria Karnilova.
 - b. 5 f. 1 Hobi, Frank W
 - b. 5 f. 2 Hunt, Jean
 - b. 5 f. 3 *Interplay*
 - b. 5 f. 4 Kaye, Nora
 - b. 5 f. 5 Kriza, John
 - b. 5 f. 6 Laing, Hugh
 - b. 5 f. 7 Lang, Harold 1944 November
 - b. 5 f. 8 *Mademoiselle Angot*
Includes dancer Nora Kaye.
 - b. 5 f. 9 Markova, Alicia 1943 October-1952 July
- b. 5 f. 10-11 *Miss Julie* 1958 October
Includes dancers Violette Verdy and Erik Bruhn.
- b. 5 f. 12 *The Nutcracker* 1946 September
 - b. 6 f. 1 *On Stage!*
 - b. 6 f. 2 Osato, Sono 1945 February
 - b. 6 f. 3 *Pas de Dix* 1956 February
Includes dancers Maria Tallchief and André Eglevsky.
 - b. 6 f. 4 *Pas de Quatre*
 - b. 6 f. 5 *Les Patineurs*
Includes dancer John Kriza.
 - b. 6 f. 6 *Pillar of Fire*
- b. 6 f. 7-8 *Princess Aurora* 1947 September 11
 - b. 7 f. 1 Psota, Vania
 - b. 7 f. 2 Reed, Janet 1943 September 29
 - b. 7 f. 3 Reed, Richard
 - b. 7 f. 4 Robbins, Jerome
 - b. 7 f. 5 *Rodeo*
- b. 7 f. 6-7 *Romeo and Juliet*
Includes dancers Nora Kaye and Hugh Laing.
- b. 7 f. 8 *Romantic Age* 1942 October
Includes dancers John Kriza, Alicia Markova, and Karen Conrad.
- b. 7 f. 9 *Russian Soldier*
- b. 7 f. 10 Sabo, Rozsika
- b. 7 f. 11 *Sebastian*

- American Ballet Theatre (cont.)
- b. 7 f. 12 Semenoff, Simon
 - b. 7 f. 13 Slavenska, Mia and Igor Youskevitch
 - b. 7 f. 14 *Le Spectre de la Rose*
 - b. 7 f. 15-16 *Swan Lake* 1946 September
 - b. 8 f. 1 *Les Sylphides*
Includes dancer Alicia Markova.
 - b. 8 f. 2 *Tally Ho, or The Frail Quarry* 1947 September
 - b. 8 f. 3 *Theme and Variations*
 - b. 8 f. 4-5 *Undertow*
 - b. 8 f. 6 *Waltz Academy*
Includes dancer Janet Reed, Alicia Alonso, and Fernando Alonso.
 - b. 8 f. 7 *The Wanderer*
Includes dancers Vera Zorina and Anton Dolin.
 - b. 8 f. 8 Wilcox, Virginia
 - b. 8 f. 9-10 Youskevitch, Igor
Includes portraits of Youskevitch in his United States Navy uniform.
 - b. 8 f. 11 Youskevitch family
 - b. 8 f. 12 Dressing rooms 1942 October-1943 October
 - b. 8 f. 13 Rehearsals
 - b. 9 f. 1 Unidentified negatives
 - b. 9 f. 2 Ballet for America 1946 August-September
 - Ballet International 1944-1946
 - b. 9 f. 3 *Constantia* 1946 October
 - b. 9 f. 4 Essen, Viola 1944 November 21
 - b. 9 f. 5 *Mad Tristan* 1944 December
 - b. 9 f. 6 *The Mute Wife*
Includes dancers Antonia Cobos, George Skibine, and Francisco Moncion.
 - b. 9 f. 7 *Swan Lake*
 - b. 9 f. 8 Unidentified negatives circa 1944-1945
 - Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo 1942-1946
 - b. 9 f. 9 *Le Baiser de la Fée*
Includes dancers André Eglevsky and Alexandra Danilova.
 - b. 9 f. 10 *Bacchanale*
Costumes and sets designed by Salvador Dalí. Includes dancer Milada Mladova.
 - b. 9 f. 11-12 Baranova, Irina 1944 January-1945 August
 - b. 10 f. 1 *Bogatyri*
 - b. 10 f. 2 Bolender, Todd 1945 September
 - b. 10 f. 3 *Cain and Abel* 1946
 - b. 10 f. 4 *Capriccio Espagnol*
 - b. 10 f. 5 *Chopin Concerto* 1942 September 28
 - b. 10 f. 6 *Coppélia*
 - b. 10 f. 7-8 *Devil's Holiday*
Includes dancers Paul Petroff, Alexandra Danilova, Milada Mladova, and Marina Novikova.

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo (cont.)

- b. 10 f. 9 *Fantaisie Symphony* 1946 October
- b. 10 f. 10-11 *Gaîté Parisienne* 1942 October 13
- b. 10 f. 12 *Ghost Town*
- b. 11 f. 1-3 *Giselle*
Includes dancers Alicia Markova, Anton Dolin, Mia Slavenska, and Tamara Toumanova.
- b. 11 f. 4 Gollner, Nana
- b. 11 f. 5 Hightower, Rosella and André Eglevsky
- b. 11 f. 6 Krassovska, Natalie
- b. 11 f. 7 *Labyrinth*
Includes dancers Tamara Toumanova and Igor Youskevitch.
- b. 11 f. 8 *Magic Swan*
Includes dancers Tamara Toumanova and Igor Youskevitch.
- b. 11 f. 9 Massine family 1944 May 11
- b. 11 f. 10 Mdalova, Milada
- b. 11 f. 11 *The Mute Wife* 1946 October
- b. 11 f. 12 *The New Yorker*
- b. 11 f. 13 *The Nutcracker*
- b. 11 f. 14 Orloff family 1946
Portraits of Nicholas, Nina, and Shurik Orloff.
- b. 12 f. 1 *Paganini* 1946
- b. 12 f. 2 *Poker Game*
- b. 12 f. 3 *Prodigal Son*
- b. 12 f. 4 Riabouchinskaya, Tania 1945 August
- b. 12 f. 5 *Rouge et Noir*
Scenery and costumes by artist Henri Matisse.
- b. 12 f. 6 *Scheherazade*
- b. 12 f. 7 *Serenade*
- b. 12 f. 8 *Seventh Symphony*
- b. 12 f. 9-10 Slavenska, Mia
- b. 12 f. 11 Slavenska, Mia and Michel Panieff
- b. 13 f. 1-2 Toumanova, Tamara
- b. 13 f. 3 Vallon, Jeanne and André Eglevsky
- b. 13 f. 4 *Vienna, 1814*
- b. 13 f. 5 Zorina, Vera 1945 February 2
- b. 13 f. 6 Youskevitch, Anna
- b. 13 f. 7 Jooss Ballet
Individuals 1934-1956
- b. 13 f. 8 Adjemova, Sirena
- b. 13 f. 9-10 Amaya, Carmen 1956 June
- b. 14 f. 1-4 *La Argentinita* 1945 July 2
Includes the dancer in a production of *Pictures of Goya*.
- b. 14 f. 5 Cartier, Jacques 1934 October
- b. 14 f. 6 Deering, Jane

Individuals (cont.)

- b. 14 f. 7-9 **Dunham, Katherine** 1943 October 28
Includes the dancer in a production of *Tropical Revue*.
- b. 14 f. 10 **Fokine, Michel**
- b. 14 f. 11 **Kirstein, Lincoln** 1953 September
- b. 14 f. 12 **Linn, Bambi**
- b. 15 f. 1 **Patterson, Massie** 1952 December 18-1954 March
Includes the dancer in a production of *Calypso Carousel*.
- b. 15 f. 2 **Premice, Josephine** 1946 January 29
- b. 15 f. 3 **Reeves, Jeanne**
- b. 15 f. 4 **Ricarda, Ana**
- b. 15 f. 5 **St. Denis, Ruth**
- b. 15 f. 6-7 **Shankar, Uday and company**
- b. 15 f. 8-9 **Unidentified proofs**
- b. 16 f. 1-2
- b. 16 f. 3-6 **Unidentified negatives**
 - b. 17 Box 17 contains unidentified 35mm nitrate film.
Box 17 is closed for preservation purposes.