



MarymountManhattan

MMC.009: J. William Bordeau Papers

Finding Aid Prepared by Kathleen Daly, Elana Sara Weber, and Mary Brown
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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Summary Information | 3 |
| Biographical/Historical note | 4 |
| Scope and Contents note | 4 |
| Arrangement note | 5 |
| Administrative Information | 5 |
| Controlled Access Headings | 6 |
| Related Materials | 6 |
| Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note | 6 |
| Collection Inventory | 7 |

Summary of Information

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| Repository | Marymount Manhattan College |
| Title | J. William Bordeau Papers |
| Dates (inclusive) | 1959-2006 |
| Extent | 2.5 linear feet in four document boxes and one archival shoebox |
| Location note | MMC.009 is housed at the Thomas J. Shanahan Library, Marymount Manhattan College, 221 East 71 st Street, New York, New York 10021 |
| Language | English |
| Abstract | MMC.009 consists of the personal collection of J. William Bordeau, a professor of theatre (acting and directing) at Suffolk Community College in the mid-1960s and at Marymount Manhattan College from 1969 to 1999. Materials include clippings, correspondence, photographs, programs, promotional items, video of one production, and small amounts of other sorts of ephemera. The collection documents developments in Catholic higher education, education in the performing arts, and activism in the anti-Vietnam, LGBTQ+, and lower Manhattan communities. |

Preferred Citation note

J. William Bordeau Papers (MMC.009), Box x, Folder y, Photograph z (if applicable).

Biographical/Historical note:

J. William Bordeau was born in 1937 in Marquette, Michigan, to Raymond and Mary Ellen Bordeau, and grew up with a twin brother and a sister. He received his A.B. from Northern Michigan University and M.A. from the University of Michigan. In 1961 he accepted his first tenure track faculty job, teaching theatre at Suffolk Community College on New York's Long Island. While there he served as design consultant for the college's Shea Theatre. Marymount Manhattan College hired "Bill," as he was known throughout the college, in 1968 as an Assistant Professor of Communication Arts. He became an Associate Professor of Communication Arts in 1975, a Professor of Theatre in 1977, and retired as a professor *emeritus* in 1999. He developed the theatrical component of the college's performing arts program and oversaw construction of its theatre (named the Theresa Lang Theatre in 2005). Outside the college, he taught at Columbia University, Fordham University, Hunter College, and the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook, and worked in film, opera, and television. He served on boards for diverse organizations represented in his collection. While he lived in New York's Greenwich Village he worked with "Sweet Fourteen" to help revitalize Union Square. He died July 25, 2009. He bequeathed his body to Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center for research. In September 2010, Marymount Manhattan College renamed its black box theatre in his honor.

Scope and Contents note:

MMC.009 consists of the personal papers of a professor of theatre arts in the last half of the twentieth century. The papers also situate that life in developments in the institutions with which it was connected, and thus with trends in the larger world of higher education.

Bill Bordeau collected most of the papers in MMC.009 during his tenure as a professor of acting and directing at Marymount Manhattan College (MMC) from 1968 to 1999. When Bill joined the faculty, Marymount Manhattan was a Catholic college for women administered by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, a community of nuns with a special commitment to the advancement of women, and a particular definition of "advancement." Part of that definition was the preparation of women for professional work, and, at the time, most of Marymount's students aimed to teach. One nun, Sister Dymphna Leonard, R.S.H.M., interested herself in expanding students' opportunities in education, which led her to special education. Discovering the role of theatre in children's education, she then developed a children's theatre program at MMC. Sister Dymphna's interest in theatre fit with the R.S.H.M.'s aforementioned particular definition of "advancement." The nuns wanted students to develop holistically, both expressing themselves and seeing themselves in service to a community; they had long encouraged various sorts of theatrics as extra-curricular activities. Both the self-expression and the community aspects of the nuns' work supported MMC's increasing commitment to education in the theatre.

Bill developed the nuns' program into a new one that prepared students not for theatre as a part of education but for theatre as a profession in itself. When in 1973 MMC commenced construction of its Nugent Building, Bill became involved in the development of a theatre within the building. The Marymount Manhattan Theatre opened February 19, 1975; the importance of that event can be measured by the amount of material Bill saved from it. MMC initially derived

extra income from renting the theatre but rentals tapered off as students increasingly occupied the theatre most of the time.

At his death Bill was remembered mainly for his contributions to MMC, and therefore it was to MMC that his partner brought Bill’s papers for incorporation into the archives. Bill saved his records in clear plastic sleeves with black paper inside, allowing him to insert material on either side of the paper to create two pages of a scrapbook. The sleeves were fitted for three-ring binders, and filled eleven of them. This method allowed Bill to leaf through his collection, find what he wanted, pull it out for copying, and reinsert it. However, it was ill-suited to long-term storage and, accordingly, the binders were disassembled.

Rehousing the collection exposed a fuller picture of Bill’s life and career. It was discovered that Bill had saved memorabilia from his work at Suffolk County Community College, where he was also instrumental in the development of a performing arts space. Interspersed among the Suffolk County and MMC theatrical programs were programs from other places where Bill was involved in productions, and from performances where he was in the audience, adding to what is known about his career and his interests.

The binders also documented other aspects of Bill’s life, and, by extension, the history of the institutions for which he worked. Correspondence with MMC’s administration show what a small institution the college was. Most of Bill’s career coincided with the tenure of MMC’s President Colette Mahoney, R.S.H.M., and, instead of dealing with department and division chairs, Bill generally communicated directly with the president. Bill also saved memorabilia from his various interests. A folder of material from John Canemaker, Class of 1974, shows Bill’s role as a mentor. Both at Suffolk County and at MMC he presented multi-genre performances that reflected his opposition to the Vietnam War. Most interesting are materials he saved documenting 1960s and early 1970s LGBTQ+ history. By the end of Bill’s tenure there, MMC had an indigenous LGBTQ+ community. It is possible that this was another one of the ways Bill changed life at MMC.

Arrangement note

MMC.009 is arranged alphabetically by subject.

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access note

MMC.009 is open to researchers upon appointment

Conditions Governing Use note

MMC does not hold the copyright to all of the items in MMC.009. It is incumbent upon researchers to establish each item's copyright holds and to obtain permission(s) for publication.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The library received the contents of MMC.009 from Mary Fleischer, Ph.D., Professor of Theatre Arts and MMC and Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts and also Chair of the Division of Fine and Performing Arts (FAPA) during part of Bill's career.

Processing Information note

Mary Fleischer arranged for the transfer of Bill's papers to the library in the summer of 2018. During the fall of that year library volunteer Glenn Garfinkel scanned the collection in its original binders to preserve a sense of Bill's organization. During the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019, service learners from the Master of Library and Information Science program at Saint John's University in Queens helped to disassemble the binders and sort the material into an alphabetical subject file. Newspaper clippings were sequestered in their own folders and in sleeves within folders to retard acidification. Photographs were numbered and placed back to back in photo sleeves to protect them from excess light and to facilitate inventory control. Glenn Garfinkel and Elana Weber scanned the photographs, and Kathleen Daly and Elana Weber worked on the finding aid.

Controlled Access Headings

Genre(s)

- Drama |y twentieth century

Subject(s)

- Marymount Manhattan College
- Theater |z United States |x history |y twentieth century

Related Materials

MMC.002, Marymount Manhattan College Records.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note

Three Sony videotapes, model #V-30H, need to be accessed via helical scan videorecorders.

Collection Inventory

Box 1

1. 14th Street – Union Square Area Project, Undated
2. 100 Centre Street, 2002
3. Ailey, Alvin, 1976-1977
4. Ailey, Alvin, Newsclippings, 1976, Undated
5. Albee, Edward, *The American Dream + Zoo Story*, 1963
6. Albee, Edward, *The Sandbox*, and Eugene Ionesco, *The Bald Soprano*, Undated
7. Albee, Edward, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, 1963
8. Albee, Edward, *The Zoo Story* and *The American Dream*, and Samuel Beckett, *Waiting on Godot*, Friends Seminary Theatre Arts Classes, May 10-11, 1971
9. American Dance Foundation, MMC, August 17, 1975
10. American Musical and Dramatic Academy, 1976, 1978
11. Amarosa, Domenico, *Il Matrimonio Secreto*, MMC, December 20, 22, 1975
12. Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, Undated
13. Beckett, Samuel, *Waiting for Godot*, MMC, May 1-3, 8-10, 1975
14. Beckett, Samuel, Harold Pinter, Tennessee Williams, Rudy Perez, and Barbara Roan, MMC, December 11-12, 1969
15. Behan, Brendan, *The Hostage*, MMC, April 27-30, 1972
16. Besoyan, Rick, *Little Mary Sunshine*, MMC, November 29-December 2, 1975
17. Bicentennial Happening, MMC, 1976
18. Black Theatre, MMC, Undated
19. Bolton, Guy, Jerome Kern, and Schuyler Greene, *Very Good Eddie*, Booth Theatre, February, 1976
20. Bordeau, J. William, Chronological, January 30, 1967-January 12, 1977
21. Bordeau, J. William, Newsclippings, Undated
22. Bordeau, J. William, Portraits, Undated
23. Bordeau, J. William, *Reflections on War*, May 8-10, 1969
24. Bordeau, J. William, Writings, Undated
25. Bricasse, Leslie, and Anthony Newley, *The Roar of the Greasepaint—The Smell of the Crowd*, MMC, August 6-7, 1975
26. Canemaker, John, 1973-1974, 2006
27. Carlino, Lewis John, *Telemachus*
28. Catholic Actors Guild, November 1, 1975, 1976
29. City Scenes (William Hanley, *Mrs. Dolly Has a Lover*; Edward Albee, *The American Dream*; and W.H. Auden, et al., *City Scenes*), MMC, March 27-30, 1975
30. Composers and Choreographers Theatre, 1972-1973, Undated
31. Cryer, Gretchen, and Nancy Ford, *An Evening with Cryer and Ford*, MMC, Undated

Box 2

1. Dance Genesis, *Dance Genesis: In Concert Three Generations Salute Syvilla Fort*, Majestic Theatre, November 3, 1975
2. *Dancescope*, Fall/Winter, 1976, 1977
3. Dance Studio, London, 1976
4. Defeat of Space: A Dance Concert, Teacher's College Columbia University, Undated

5. Dodd, Dorothy, *Sir Roland and the Golden Star*, MMC and NYU, April 18-19, 25-26, 30, 1969
6. Don Redlich Dance Company, The, 1975
7. Drama Studio, The, London, Chronological, 1976
8. Euripides, *The Trojan Women*, MMC, May 7-9, 1970
9. Experimental Theatre, 1968
10. "Fashion as Fantasy," Rizzoli International Bookstore and Gallery, New York, December 21, 1975
11. "Fashion as Fantasy," Rizzoli International Bookstore and Gallery, Newsclippings, New York, December 21, 1975
12. Fink, Peter, Photography, 1976
13. Forest, Robert, Theatre Dedication, Marquette, Michigan, May 31, 1969
14. French Institute/Alliance Française, Undated
15. Frings, Keith, *Look Homeward, Angel*, MMC, April 3-7, 1973.
Photo 1 has additional metadata. On the front: "Barbara Malzacher." The back has further metadata: Ford's, 5'9", -blue-ash blonde, size- 7-8-9
16. García Lorca, Federico, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, MMC, November 19-20, 1969
17. Glass, Joanna, *Canadian Gothic and American Modern*, November 25-December 5, 1976
18. "Glory of Russian Costume, The," Metropolitan Museum of Art, December 24-31, 1976
19. Gilhooley, Jack, *The Elusive Angel*, 1978
20. Giraudoux, Jean, *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, Suffolk County Community College, 1962 or 1963
21. Handke, Peter, *A Sorrow Beyond Dreams*, Phoenix Theatre, MMC, February 8-20, 1977
22. Hanley, William, *Mrs. Dolly Has a Lover*, and Edward Albee, *The American Dream*, New Campus Theatre Group, Undated
23. Harris, Aurand, and Dorothy Dodd, *Androcles and the Lion*, MMC, 1971
24. Hoftiezer, Gaylord J., *The Golden Pear Tree*, MMC, April 13, 1976
25. Horowitz, Israel, *Morning*; Terrence McNally, *Noon*; Leonard Melfi, *Night*, Fordham Theatre, February 27, 1970
Newsclipping 3 has additional metadata. On the back: "The Fordham Ram, February 27, 1970"
Newsclipping 5 has additional metadata. On the back: "New York Post, February 21, 1970"
Newsclipping 6 has additional metadata. On the back: "Village Voice, February 19, 1970"
Photo 6 has additional metadata. On the back: "Please Credit Ira Gavrin"
Photo 8 has additional metadata. On the back: "Please Credit Ira Gavrin"
26. Hunter College, 1970-1971
27. Hyder, O. Quentin, M.D., Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy Encounter, The Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy Center, November 30, 1972-March 11, 1973
28. Isben, Henrik, *Hedda Gabler*, Cubiculo [Theatre], Undated
29. Ionesco, Eugene, *The Bald Prima Donna*, Prompt Book, 1977
30. Jacker, Corinne, *Later*, The Phoenix Theatre, January 11-28, 1979
31. Kirkwood, James Jr., Nicholas Dante, Marvin Hamlisch, and Edward Kleban, *A Chorus Line*, Shubert Theatre, Undated

32. Kopit, Arthur, *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling so Sad*, Suffolk, Islip Arts Theatre, Undated
33. L'Ensemble, 1976
34. Luce, Clark Booth, *The Women*, MMC, Undated
35. Magazine Clippings, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1976
36. Malcolm-King: Harlem College Extension, 1974
37. Mannes College of Music, Undated
38. Mariano Parra Spanish Dance Company, MMC, Undated
39. Martin, Judith, Paper Bag Players, MMC, 1978
40. Mary Anthony Dance Theatre, Undated
41. Marymount Manhattan College, Blueprints, 1973
42. Marymount Manhattan College, Clippings, Undated
43. Marymount Manhattan College, Courses, 1972-1975, Undated
44. Marymount Manhattan College, Creative Arts Therapy Day, October 21, 1974
45. Marymount Manhattan College, Department of Communication Arts, Undated
46. Marymount Manhattan College, Fundraising, 1975-1977, Undated
47. Marymount Manhattan College, Library Opening, December 14, 1974
48. Marymount Manhattan College, Motion Pictures, 1970-1972
49. Marymount Manhattan College, Nugent Building, 1972, 1974-1975
50. Marymount Manhattan College, Student Recruitment Publications, Undated

Box 3

1. Marymount Manhattan College, Theatre Dedication, February 19, 1975, Photographs
2. Marymount Manhattan College, Theatre Dedication, May 30, 1974-February 19, 1975
3. Marymount Manhattan College, Theatre Publicity, Undated
4. Marymount Manhattan College, Report of Operations, 1975-1977
5. Marymount Manhattan College, *The Music Project*, November 21, 1976
6. Marymount Manhattan College, Wilmington College, Marymount College, Tri-College Intersession, January 1974
7. Marymount Manhattan College, Women's Week, October 28-November 1, 1974
8. Mazière, Francis, *Fantastique Ile de Paques*, Undated
9. McCowen, Alec, *St. Mark's Gospel*, MMC, September 5-24, 1978
10. Menotti, Gian-Carlo, *The Telephone and the Medium*, Suffolk, Islip Arts Theatre, Undated
11. Miscellaneous, Undated
12. Moorman, H.J., *Christabel and Rubicon*, Olney Theatre, Olney, Maryland, September 14, 1969
13. New York City Youth Theatre Festival, May, 1976
14. Newsclippings, 1973-1976
15. Nimbus Dance Theatre Company, MMC, January 27-30, 1977
16. Norman, Marsha, *Getting Out*, October 19-November 5, 1978
17. O'Malley, Kevin, Undated
18. O'Morrison, Kevin, *Ladyhouse Blues*, MMC, October 28-31, November 2-7, 1976
19. Perez, Rudy, Newsclippings, May 12, 1971
20. Perez, Rudy, Rudy Perez Dance Theatre, MMC, October 31-November 2, 1975, May 26-29, 1976

21. Perez, Rudy, Lotpiece Day/Night [Event], MMC, October 16, 1971
22. Perez, Rudy, Open Site/Dance Event, MMC, April 12-14, 1973
23. Perez, Rudy, *Parallax*, MMC, Newsclippings, June 23, 1975
24. Perez, Rudy, 1972-1975, Undated
25. Phoenix Theatre, MMC, November 1976
26. *Preludes*, MMC, May 20-22, July-August, 1976
27. Utah Repertory Dance Theater at MMC, Undated
28. Richardson, Howard, and William Berney, *Dark of the Moon*, MMC, March 29-April 1, 1978

Box 4

1. Schwartz, Charles, *Nineteenth Year Composers Showcase*, Whitney Museum, November 19, 1975
2. *Seven by Seven*, MMC, Undated
3. Sherbill, Hazel, *Benedictus*, December 26-27, 1975
4. Simpson, N.F., *A Resounding Tinkle*; Saunders Lewis, *On the Train*; and Derek Walcott, *Malcochon*, Undated
5. Solaris Dance-Theatre, November 14, 1976
6. Solomones Company/Dance, The, MMC, 1977
7. Stimac, Anthony, Don Pippin, and Steve Brown, *The Cast Aways*, MMC, September 11-28, 1973
8. Suffolk Community College, Brochure, Undated
9. Suffolk Community College, Newsclippings, 1964-1967
10. Suffolk Community College, Speech and Theatre Festival, 2nd annual, Undated
11. Suffolk Community College, Summer Theatre, June 19-August 10, 1967
12. Suffolk Community College, Theatre, May 18, 1966, November 9, 1966
13. *Suffolkation*, Suffolk Community College, 1963, 1964
14. Temple University, Study Abroad "Theater and Communications in London" Program, 1976-1977
15. Theresa Lang Theatre, 30th Anniversary, including Stephen Sondheim, *Into the Woods*, 2005
16. Third World Coalition, MMC, Undated
17. Thurber, James, and Elliot Nugent, *The Male Animal*, Undated
18. "US" Productions, May 19, 1976
19. "Vatican Exhibition," Marymount Manhattan College, 1976
20. Verneuil, Louis, *Es Bleibt in der Familie*, MMC, Program, Undated
21. Walker, Julia, Undated
22. Williams, Tennessee, *Night of the Iguana*, Circle on the Square Theatre, New York, 1976-1977
23. Williams, Tennessee, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, 1959
24. Zindel, Paul, *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little*, MMC, May 6-9, 1976

Box 5

Three Sony videotapes "For helical scan video recorders," model #V-30H. Labels read: "270 meters, 1210 feet, 25 micron, 1.0 mil. polyester backing."