

Guide to Minsky's Burlesque Records

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Minsky, Harold
Title:	Minsky's Burlesque Records
ID:	MS-00290
Date [inclusive]:	1922-1978
Physical Description:	11.95 Cubic Feet (27 boxes)
Physical Description:	10.84 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Minsky's Burlesque Records (1922-1978) contain scripts, publicity, photographs, financial records, payroll records, sheet music, newspaper clippings, contracts, and correspondence. Also included are the personal papers of noted burlesque producer Harold Minsky, who was known for creating the "family burlesque" style of entertainment and for introducing the topless showgirl to Las Vegas, Nevada at the Dunes Hotel in 1957.

Preferred Citation Note

Minsky's Burlesque Records, 1922-1978. MS-00290. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Background

Harold Minsky (1915-1977) began producing the burlesque shows he called "follies" at New York City's Gaiety Theatre in 1934. While popular with European immigrants more familiar with risqué performances, *The New York Times* criticized the shows as being "dirtier" than burlesque. In 1943, Mayor La Guardia ordered all burlesque theaters closed in New York. Minsky, through his attorney Morris Ernst, demanded a "just cause" hearing to reopen his theatre, but after months of litigation the ban was upheld by the Supreme Court and Minsky was forced to declare bankruptcy. Undaunted by this setback, he moved his shows to such places as Chicago, Illinois; Hollywood, California; Miami, Florida; Newark, New Jersey; and Cincinnati, Ohio, introducing "family style" burlesque and "ladies day" to entice women to attend.

After introducing burlesque to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1957 at the Dunes Hotel, Minsky produced shows at the Thunderbird, Aladdin, Silver Slipper, Fremont, and Frontier hotels. A book published in 1960 based on

the stage productions, titled *The Night They Raided Minsky's* was followed by a motion picture of the same name in 1967.

Successful in the 1950s and 1960s, the popularity of burlesque declined in the 1970s. Harold Minsky died on December 25, 1977, shortly after his last show at the Fremont Hotel in Las Vegas closed. His wife, Patricia, kept the show alive in other American cities until 1978, when the last Minsky's Burlesque was performed for the public.

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Scope and Contents Note

Minsky's Burlesque Records (1922-1978) contain scripts, publicity, photographs, financial records, payroll records, sheet music, newspaper clippings, contracts, and correspondence. Also included are the personal papers of noted burlesque producer Harold Minsky who was known for creating the "family burlesque" style of entertainment and for introducing the topless showgirl to Las Vegas, Nevada at the Dunes Hotel in 1957.

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Arrangement

The materials are arranged into three series:

Series I. General records and papers, 1922-1978;

Series II. Hotel records, 1953-1978;

Series III. Sheet music, undated.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research, with the exception of materials that are restricted to protect personally identifiable information. Restrictions are noted at the file level of this inventory and will be open for research use January 1, 2051.

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

Materials were donated from 1978 to 1982 by Patricia Minsky Shapiro; accession number 87-97.

Processing Note

Collection was processed in 1996 by Joyce Marshall. In 2017 Joyce Moore revised and enhanced the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards. In 2018, as part of an archival backlog project, Melise Leech rehoused part of the collection and updated the finding aid to bring it into compliance with current professional standards.

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Related Materials

Separation Note

Some of the photographs from this acquisition were removed from the collection and placed in Harold Minsky Photographs, 1957-1977. PH-00075. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Related Collections

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

Donn Arden Papers, 1918-1994. MS-00425. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Dunes Hotel Records, 1955-1992. MS-00328. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Mida Mae Dick Papers, 1945-1986. MS-00259. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Names and Subjects

- Burlesque (Theater) -- United States -- Biography
- Showgirls -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Showgirls
- Show business - Nevada -Las Vegas
- Entertainers
- Entertainment -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Photographs
- Fremont Hotel (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- Dunes Hotel and Country Club (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- Aladdin Hotel and Casino

Collection Inventory

Series I: General records and papers, 1922-1978

Physical Description: 0.46 Cubic Feet (1 box)

Scope and Contents Note: The general records and papers series (1922-1978) contains newspaper articles dating from 1922, tracing the rise of burlesque in New York City, New York. This series also includes correspondence and papers about Harold Minsky and Eddie Lynch, his manager for many years, published articles about the various Minsky shows, photographs of showgirls, and rehearsal photographs for a show in New York City in 1964. Also included are book sale correspondence for *The Night They Raided Minsky's* and promotional information on the motion picture of the same name, production cost receipts, bills, payroll receipts, profit and loss statements, and costume designs and prices.

Arrangement: Material is arranged in rough alphabetical order.

Title/Description	Containers	
Lahr, Bert, obituary clippings, undated	box 1	folder 1
Bills, receipts, payroll receipts, 1975-1977	box 1	folder 2-4
Minsky, Ava, correspondence, 1959-1976	box 1	folder 5
Production cost receipts, 1971-1973	box 1	folder 6
Costume designs and prices, 1962	box 1	folder 7
Lynch, Eddie papers, undated	box 1	folder 8
Lynch, Eddie, photographs, undated	box 1	folder 9
General correspondence, 1959-1972	box 1	folder 10
Newspaper clippings, 1922-1942	box 1	folder 11
Newspaper clippings, Patricia Minsky, 1978	box 1	folder 12

The Night They Raided Minsky's, book correspondence, 1955-1969	box 1	folder 13
The Night They Raided Minsky's, movie correspondence, 1964	box 1	folder 14
Patavia, Incorporated, Profit and loss statements, 1969-1978	box 1	folder 15
Photographs		
Lili St. Cyr, undated	box 1	folder 16
Dunes Hotel showgirls, undated	box 1	folder 17
Show rehearsal, New York City, New York, 1964	box 1	folder 18
Published articles, undated	box 1	folder 19
Publicity articles, undated	box 1	folder 20

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Series II: Hotel records, 1953-1978

Physical Description: 3.68 Cubic Feet (6 boxes)

Scope and Contents Note: The hotel records series (1953-1978) includes papers, contracts, correspondence, publicity, and newspaper clippings. There are show cost breakdowns and commissions, program order forms, a list of engagements, and income tax records. The Associated Guild of Variety Actors (AGVA) is represented through correspondence, retroactive pay to employees, labor agreements, welfare fund, rules and regulations and a lawsuit against the Nevada Resort Association from 1972. Also included are payroll sheets from the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas and the Condado Beach Hotel in Puerto Rico from 1969 to 1973, and a dictionary titled *The Language of Show Biz*, and corresponding contracts.

Arrangement: Material is arranged alphabetically.

Title/Description	Containers	
General hotel records, 1958-1978		
Adams Theater show, undated	box 2	folder 1
Aladdin Hotel contracts, 1968-1972	box 2	folder 2-6
Aladdin Hotel show cost breakdown, 1969-1971	box 2	folder 7
Aladdin Hotel commissions, 1968-1972	box 2	folder 8
Aladdin Hotel correspondence, 1968-1972	box 2	folder 9
Aladdin Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1969-1971	box 2	folder 10
Cal-Neva Lodge contract, 1966	box 2	folder 11
Chateau De Ville Theater contracts, 1976	box 2	folder 12
Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable information and will be open for research use on January 1, 2051.		
Chateau De Ville Theater correspondence and papers, 1975-1976	box 2	folder 13
Chateau De Ville Theater publicity and newspaper clippings, undated	box 2	folder 14

Condado Beach Hotel contracts, 1969-1970	box 2	folder 15
Condado Beach Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1969-1971	box 2	folder 16
Condado Beach Hotel correspondence and papers, 1970-1971	box 2	folder 17
Condado Beach Hotel bankruptcy and claims, 1971-1974	box 2	folder 18
Dallas and Chicago contracts and correspondence, 1975-1977	box 3	folder 1
Dallas and Chicago payroll and receipts, 1978	box 3	folder 2
Dunes Hotel contracts and accounting, 1958-1959	box 3	folder 3
Dunes Hotel newspaper clippings, 1957-1958	box 3	folder 4
Edgewater Beach Hotel contracts, 1967	box 3	folder 5
Edgewater Beach Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 3	folder 6
Elmwood Casino contracts, 1973	box 3	folder 7
Elmwood Casino publicity and newspaper clippings, 1973	box 3	folder 8
Fairmont Hotel contracts and correspondence, 1976-1977	box 3	folder 9
Fairmont Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1977	box 3	folder 10
Foreign Tours correspondence, 1976-1977	box 3	folder 11
Fontainebleau contracts, 1973	box 3	folder 12
Fontainebleau publicity and newspaper clippings, 1977	box 3	folder 13
Fremont Hotel contracts, 1972-1973	box 3	folder 14
Fremont Hotel correspondence, 1973-1975	box 3	folder 15
Fremont Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1973	box 3	folder 16
Gaiety Theater closing, 1970	box 3	folder 17
Hyatt Hotel correspondence, 1974-1977	box 3	folder 18
International Theater contracts, 1964	box 3	folder 19
International Theater publicity and newspaper clippings, 1962, 1964	box 3	folder 20
Latin Casino contracts, 1967	box 3	folder 21
Latin Casino publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 3	folder 22
List of engagements, undated	box 3	folder 23
Lookout House contracts, 1971-1972	box 3	folder 24
Lookout House publicity and newspaper clippings, 1971	box 3	folder 25
Manor House contracts, 1964	box 3	folder 26
Melody Tent contracts, publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 3	folder 27
Mineola Theater contracts and correspondence, 1966-1967	box 3	folder 28

Mineola Theater publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 3	folder 29
Miscellaneous publicity, correspondence and releases, 1964-1971	box 4	folder 1
Miscellaneous locations contracts and correspondence, 1957- 1973	box 4	folder 2
Music Circus contracts and accounting, 1967	box 4	folder 3
Music Circus publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 4	folder 4
Music Fair contracts, 1972	box 4	folder 5
Music Fair, Martha Raye appearance, 1972	box 4	folder 6
Music Fair publicity and newspaper clippings, 1961, 1967	box 4	folder 7
New York Hilton, Newark, and New Frontier publicity and newspaper clippings, 1975	box 4	folder 8
Palladium Hollywood publicity and newspaper clippings, 1969-1976	box 4	folder 9
Playboy Hotel contracts, 1969-1976	box 4	folder 10
Playboy Hotel correspondence and papers, 1969-1975	box 4	folder 11
Playboy Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1969, 1971-1974	box 4	folder 12
Program orders from Rydell Publishing, 1967	box 4	folder 13
Riverside Rialto publicity and newspaper clippings, 1961	box 4	folder 14
Scotsman, Sherman House, and Shoreman Americana publicity and newspaper clippings, 1970-1974	box 4	folder 15
Shubert Theater contracts and correspondence, 1967	box 4	folder 16
Silver Slipper Hotel contracts, 1965-1966,1968	box 4	folder 17
Silver Slipper Hotel publicity and newspaper clippings, 1965-1968	box 4	folder 18
Thunderbird Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada contracts, correspondence, and accounting, 1968	box 4	folder 19
Thunderbird Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada publicity and newspaper clippings, 1967	box 4	folder 20
Thunderbird Hotel, Grand Rapids, Michigan publicity and newspaper clippings, 1975	box 4	folder 21
Winchester Town House publicity and newspaper clippings, 1964	box 4	folder 22
Legal materials, 1953-1973		
AGVA correspondence, undated	box 5	folder 1
AGVA rules and regulations, 1967-1969	box 5	folder 2
AGVA retroactive pay to employees, 1969	box 5	folder 3
AGVA labor agreements, 1971	box 5	folder 4
AGVA welfare fund, 1970-1972	box 5	folder 5

AGVA vs. Nevada Resort Association, 1972	box 5	folder 6
Income tax records, 1953-1958	box 5	folder 7
Minsky trademark legal registration, 1972-1973	box 5	folder 8
Minsky trademark legal correspondence, 1972-1973	box 5	folder 9
Minsky trademark request to produce, 1972-1973	box 5	folder 10
Minsky trademark copyright violation, 1972-1973	box 5	folder 11
Minsky trademark complaint and settlement, 1972-1973	box 5	folder 12
Publications, 1972-1973		
The Language of Show Biz- a Dictionary, undated	box 06	
The Language of Show Biz- a Dictionary: contracts, 1972	box 06	
Payroll sheets, 1968-1973		
Bank reconciliations, 1971-1972	box 7	folder 1
Bank reconciliations, 1972-1973	box 7	folder 2
Payroll sheets, Aladdin Hotel, 1969	box 7	folder 3
Payroll sheets, Aladdin Hotel, 1970	box 7	folder 4
Payroll recap sheets, Aladdin Hotel, 1970	box 7	folder 5
Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable information and will be open for research use on January 1, 2045.		
Payroll sheets, Condado Beach Hotel, 1969-1970	box 7	folder 6
Payroll recap sheets, Condado Beach Hotel, 1970	box 7	folder 7
Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable information and will be open for research use on January 1, 2045.		
Payroll, 1969-1970	box 7	folder 8
Payroll sheets, rehearsal, 1970	box 7	folder 9
Payroll sheets, Thunderbird, 1968	box 7	folder 10
Payroll recap sheets, Thunderbird, 1968	box 7	folder 11
Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable information and will be open for research use on January 1, 2043.		
Payroll sheets, Sherman Hotel, 1970	box 7	folder 12
Payroll sheets, Shubert Theater, 1970	box 7	folder 13

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Series III: Sheet music, undated

Physical Description: 9.19 Cubic Feet (20 boxes)

Scope and Contents Note: The sheet music series is composed entirely of undated sheet music related to shows performed by Minsky's Burlesque, with a focus on the original show at the Dunes Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. The bulk of the materials is hand-copied orchestral scores, many annotated with conductor and musician notes.

Arrangement: Music is arranged alphabetically by title.

Title/Description	Containers
Sheet music A-B, undated	box 8
Sheet music B, undated	box 9
Sheet music C, undated	box 10
Sheet music C, undated	box 11
Sheet music D-E, undated	box 12
Sheet music D-E, undated	box 13
Sheet music F, undated	box 14
Sheet music F-G, undated	box 15
Sheet music G-I, undated	box 16
Sheet music I-K, undated	box 17
Sheet music L, undated	box 18
Sheet music L-M, undated	box 19
Sheet music M, undated	box 20
Sheet music N, undated	box 21
Sheet music O-P, undated	box 22
Sheet music P-S, undated	box 23
Sheet music S, undated	box 24
Sheet music S-T, undated	box 25
Sheet music U-W, undated	box 26
Sheet music W-Z, undated	box 27
Restricted material	box 28

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