Welcome to an Encyclopedia of Women of Theatre

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Welcome to the Encyclopedia of Women of Theatre. This site is intended to provide you with basic information about women of theatre throughout the world prior to 1900. It is primarily focused on dramatic performances, what is sometimes referred to as “legitimate theatre,” and is not meant as a comprehensive analysis of operas, ballets, and other divertissements. Though some opera singers and an operatic performance or two may be included, the focus for that performer will be on her dramatic work. Currently, the site has 7400+ names.
 Each actress’ entry will include as much basic information as possible:First namePredominant last nameBirth dateDeath dateOccupation, i.e., actress, playwright, manager, costumer, and/or teacherCountry of originCentury of most of her workBrief biographyList of plays with part performed and year of performance.Bibliography There are two types of searches: basic and advanced. In the basic search, use one word at a time. In the advanced search, multiple variables may be applied in the various fields. On the advanced page, designate the use of all the variables together or separately with the button near the top of the page.One of the more difficult aspects of putting together Encyclopedia of Women of Theatre is discerning who is referred to in a program when only the last name is given. Therefore, to err on the side of caution, a separate entry is created when needed so there may be multiple entries of a “Miss Taylor” referring to the same person who performed at different theaters. Until information is found to clarify her identity, the separate entries will remain. Some actresses used different stage names throughout their career. The predominant name is used for their “last name,” and others are included in their biography. By typing in the name you wish to find, the database will list those actresses with that name wherever listed. The biography section is brief, giving only basic information about an actress and not meant to be a comprehensive life history. The bibliography, on the other hand, is intended to contain any literary resource that references that actress for further study. I have not included websites in the bibliography due to the ethereal nature of the internet but have a separate button to links to sites that might be useful. Also included is a collection of play titles as listed under their plays. By typing in any part of the name of a play, the database will compile a list of women who have performed in that play at one time or another. This would be helpful for the performance history of many plays. As this is an ongoing project, any information that you may have about a given performer would be greatly appreciated. Using the contact information, please feel free to email me what you have. I hope you find the Women of Theatre useful in your research efforts concerning the incredible role that women have had in the history of theatre. If you have problems, dissatisfaction with the site, additional comments or suggestions for using this site, please e-mail me at administrator@womenoftheatre.com .
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