



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Deborah Jowitt interview transcripts

1974-2003

(S) *MGZMD 548

Processed by Nathan Evans in 2021.

Summary

Creator: Jowitt, Deborah

Title: Deborah Jowitt interview transcripts

Date: 1974-2003

Size: 1.68 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Donated by Deborah Jowitt in 2014.

Abstract: Deborah Jowitt (1934-) is an American dance critic and author. The Deborah Jowitt interview transcripts, dated 1974 to 2003, contain transcripts of interviews for her 2004 book, *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*.

Preferred citation: Deborah Jowitt interview transcripts, (S) *MGZMD 548. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Nathan Evans in 2021.

Creator History

Deborah Jowitt is an American dance critic and author. Born on February 8, 1934 in California, she began her career as a dancer in 1953 before transitioning to criticism by the mid-1960s. Jowitt is best known for her dance column in *The Village Voice*, which ran from 1967 to 2011 and mostly featured reviews of New York City performances.

Her biography of Jerome Robbins, *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*, was published by Simon and Schuster in August 2004. Robbins (1918-1998) was a choreographer, dancer, theater producer, and director whose choreography for dance companies such as the New York City Ballet, as well as Broadway productions, earned him international renown. Jowitt was approached by Robbins' estate to write the book and was granted unrestricted access to his papers held at the New York Public Library. She also interviewed colleagues and acquaintances of Robbins from throughout his career, many of whom she knew from her decades in the dance community. The book was largely well-

received by critics for providing an insightful and comprehensive overview of Robbins' life.

In addition to writing, Jowitt has taught, lectured, and conducted workshops at numerous institutions worldwide, including the Dance Department at New York University's Tisch School of Arts since 1975. She resides in New York City as of 2021.

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains transcripts of interviews for Deborah Jowitt's 2004 book, *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*. The majority of interviews are conducted by Jowitt from 1999 to 2003. Interviewees include dancers, actors, choreographers, writers, composers, directors, producers, administrators, and teachers who worked with Robbins. Notable interview subjects include Mikhail Baryshnikov, Annabelle Lyon, Patricia McBride, Donald Sadler, and Violette Verdy. Jowitt's notes, both in the margins and on separate sheets of paper, accompany some transcripts. Her husband Murray Ralph contributes to a few of her interviews.

Additionally, there are interviews by writers and educators Charles France, Kenneth Geist, Deborah Quilter, and Nancy Reynolds with people who knew Robbins; these date primarily from 1974 and the 1980s. Three transcripts of events and talks relating to Robbins are also included.

The interviews touch on people's experiences with Robbins, especially at the American Ballet Theatre, New York City Ballet, and Joffrey Ballet. Interviews also focus on Robbins' Broadway productions from the 1950s and 1960s.

Arrangement: Arranged alphabetically by interview subject.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet -- 20th century
Choreographers
Dance critics
Dancers
Musicals
Theatrical producers and directors

Occupations

Critics.
Dancers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Interviews

Names

Geist, Kenneth L.
Jowitt, Deborah
Reynolds, Nancy, 1938-
Robbins, Jerome

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Abbott, George 1983 September 15
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 1 f. 2 Alvarez, Anita 1999 December 7
- b. 1 f. 3 Baryshnikov, Mikhail 2002 April 4
- b. 1 f. 4 Bean, David 1999 July 29
- b. 1 f. 5 Bigelow, Edward 2001 June 12
- b. 1 f. 6 Boal, Peter 2002 November 14
- b. 1 f. 7 Bolender, Todd 1974 April 22
Interviewed by Nancy Reynolds.
- b. 1 f. 8 Bolender, Todd 2000 April 7
- b. 1 f. 9 Calegari, Maria and Bart Cook 2000 February 6
- b. 1 f. 10 Castelli, Victor and Christine Redpath 2000 July 18
- b. 1 f. 11 Chakiris, George 2000 March 13
- b. 1 f. 12 Clifford, John 1983 May 24
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 1 f. 13 Coates, Emily 2000 September 29
- b. 1 f. 14 Conrad, Chris 1999 May 23
- b. 1 f. 15 Dale, Grover 2000 April 5
- b. 1 f. 16 Daniels, Danny
- b. 1 f. 17 Eckl, Shirley 1999 July 14
- b. 1 f. 18 Feld, Eliot and Damian Woetzel 2001 January 29
From "A Creative Dialogue" seminar at the New York State Theatre, moderated by Peter Martins.
- b. 1 f. 19 Fosse, Bob 1983 May 16
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 1 f. 20 Freedman, Gerald 2000 May 12
- b. 1 f. 21 Frohlich, Jean-Pierre 1999 April 6
- b. 1 f. 22 Fuller, Larry 2002 October 1
- b. 1 f. 23 Glass, Philip 1984 April 15
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 1 f. 24 Golden, Miriam
- b. 2 f. 1 Grauer, Rhoda 2000 October 29
- b. 2 f. 2 Green, Martin 1999 March 15
- b. 2 f. 3 Guare, John 2000 August 16
- b. 2 f. 4 Guest, Ann Hutchinson
- b. 2 f. 5 Harnick, Sheldon 1983 July 23
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 2 f. 6 Horgan, Barbara 2003 March 11
- b. 2 f. 7 Karnilova, Maria Memorial Tribute 2001 November 12
Speakers include Alicia Alonso, George S. Irving, Katherine Irving, John Kander, Anna Kisselgoff, Donald Sadler, and Theodore Tyberg.
- b. 2 f. 8 Keene, Christopher 1984 May 8
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.

- b. 2 f. 9 Keller, Neel 2000 February 2
- b. 2 f. 10 Koessel, Mike 1999 March 16
- b. 2 f. 11 Kopit, Arthur 2002 September 15
- b. 2 f. 12 Kristin, Karen 2000 February
- b. 2 f. 13 La Fosse, Robert 1999 May 29
- b. 2 f. 14 Laurents, Arthur 2000 June 12
- b. 2 f. 15 Lee, Sandra 1999 June 28
- b. 2 f. 16 Lyon, Annabelle 1999 October 29
- b. 2 f. 17 Martin, Erin 1999 March 19
- b. 2 f. 18 Martins, Peter 2002 May 14
- b. 2 f. 19 McBride, Patricia 1974
Interviewed by Nancy Reynolds.
- b. 2 f. 20 McBride, Patricia 2002 May 6
- b. 3 f. 1 Meehan, Brian 1999 March 4
- b. 3 f. 2 Merlin, Joanna 2001 February 6
- b. 3 f. 3 Mitchell, James 2000 June 29
- b. 3 f. 4 Mooney, Adrian 2003 February 2
- b. 3 f. 5 Moore, Jim 1999 May 29
- b. 3 f. 6 Mosher, Gregory 2003 May 5
- b. 3 f. 7 New York Historical Society Symposium 1999 May 24
Jean-Pierre Frohlich and Heléne Alexopoulos in conversation.
- b. 3 f. 8 Osato, Sono 1999 April 22
- b. 3 f. 9 Pendleton, Austin 1983 September 9
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 3 f. 10 Peters, Delia 1999 October 7
- b. 3 f. 11 Primus, Barry 2001 January 12-15
- b. 3 f. 12 Ragnarsson, Magnus 2000 April 24
- b. 3 f. 13 Redpath, Christine 1999 July
- b. 3 f. 14 Reed, Janet 1999 October-November
- b. 3 f. 15 Sadler, Donald 1999 June 1
- b. 3 f. 16 Saland, Stephanie 1999 November 8
- b. 3 f. 17 Schabel, Peter 2001 October
Interviewed by Deborah Quilter.
- b. 4 f. 1 Silverman, Bob 2001 May 21
- b. 4 f. 2 Sondheim, Stephen 2000 August 3
- b. 4 f. 3 Sorrin, Ellen 2002 May 15
- b. 4 f. 4 Stern, Dan 1999 April 5
- b. 4 f. 5 Stone, Tom 2002 September 17
- b. 4 f. 6 Tallchief, Maria 1974
Interviewed by Nancy Reynolds.
- b. 4 f. 7 Tipton, Jennifer 2003 March 18
- b. 4 f. 8 Towbin, Beryl 1999 June 10

- b. 4 f. 9 Trikonis, Gina 1999 April 28
- b. 4 f. 10 Verdy, Violette 1974
Interviewed by Charles France.
- b. 4 f. 11 Verdy, Violette 2002 March 27
- b. 4 f. 12 Verdy, Violette and Dominique Delouche 2002 March 26
- b. 4 f. 13 Villella, Edward 2003 January 2
- b. 4 f. 14 Weslow, William 2000 January 18
- b. 4 f. 15 Wilson, Robert 2001 February 14
- b. 4 f. 16 Wishy, Joe 1984 January 17
Interviewed by Kenneth Geist.
- b. 4 f. 17 Wright, Elaine 1999 July 29