



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Kenneth King papers

1964-1981

(S) *MGZMD 70

Processed by Henley Haslam.

Summary

Creator: King, Kenneth, 1948-

Title: Kenneth King papers

Date: 1964-1981

Size: 8 document boxes 118 folders, 907 items

Source: Gift of Kenneth King. Received: January 1982.

Abstract: These papers of Kenneth King cover his professional career as a writer, postmodern dancer and choreographer for the years 1964-1981. The most important part of the collection is the documentation of the danceworks and productions created by King, even though the depth of documentation is not the same for each work. There is also an extensive assortment of articles and sections of books by or about King.

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>

Preferred citation: King, Kenneth. Papers, (S) *MGZMD 70, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Henley Haslam.

Creator History

Kenneth King is an American postmodern dancer-choreographer and writer who was born in Freeport, New York on January 11, 1943. He received a B.A. in religion and philosophy from Antioch College in 1965. King studied dance at the Martha Graham School, Ballet Arts, and with Merce Cunningham, Paul Sanasardo, Mia Slavenska, and Syvilla Fort. His first New York dance was presented in 1964, with the

title *cup/saucer/two dancers/radio*; it has been called the first "Pop Art" dance. He has since presented a variety of multimedia, pure dance, and dance theater works at such places as Judson Church, St. Mark's Poetry Project and Danspace, The Kitchen, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Autumn Festival in Paris. His works often incorporate videotapes, films, projections, music, and word-texts. He has written original voice and word scores and texts for some of his danceworks. King has received fellowships and grants from such organizations as the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Creative Artists Public Service Program, and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. King has lectured, taught, and/or performed at universities throughout the United States, including New York University, University of Maryland, University of Wisconsin/Madison, Trinity College and C.W. Post College. King was one of the 7 postmodern choreographers included in *Making Dances*, the 1980 film by Michael Blackwood. *Space City* was a 1981 film choreographed and performed by King with film-makers Robyn Brentano and Andrew Horn. He has also appeared in underground movies by Gregory Markopoulos, Andy Warhol, and Jeff Norwalk. King's books include a published limited edition of *Time Capsule*, and two unpublished manuscripts. His writings have appeared in magazines, journals, and books such as *Ballet Review*, *Eddy*, *Paris Review*, *Young American Writers*, and *The New Art*. In his dance works and writings, Kenneth King has used numerous aliases such as Zora Aster Zash, Pontease Tyak, Patrick Duncan, Mater Harry, and Sergei Alexandrovitch. At present, King is working on two manuscripts, *DANCING WORDS* and *FOUR APPRECIATIONS* (Nietzsche, Susanne K. Langer, Merce Cunningham and Maria-Theresa Duncan).

Scope and Content Note

These papers of Kenneth King cover his professional career as a writer, postmodern dancer and choreographer for the years 1964-1981. The most important part of the collection is the documentation of the danceworks and productions created by King, even though the depth of documentation is not the same for each work. There is also an extensive assortment of articles and sections of books by or about King.

Arrangement: The collection is divided into the following series: I. Correspondence [218 items] II. Danceworks, Productions, Performances [251 items] III. Films [21 items] IV. Workshops, Teaching [59 items] V. Grants, Funding [180 items] VI. Publications [35 items] VII. Contracts [7 items] VIII. "Memorabilia" [29 items] IX. "Other Artists Reference" [74 items] X. Miscellany [33 items]

Key Terms

Titles

Gift of Kenneth King

Subjects

Manuscripts -- Collections

Names

King, Kenneth, 1948-

De Groat, Andrew

Langer, Susanne Katherina Knauth, 1895-

Maria-Theresa, 1896-1987

Wilson, Ann, 1950-

Wilson, Robert, 1941-

Container List

I. Correspondence

The Correspondence Series is arranged alphabetically by correspondent, with individual folders for those with more than 1 item of correspondence. Items within the folders are arranged chronologically. These groups are followed by a subseries relating to performances, and a subseries relating to an article by Arlene Croce in the *New Yorker*. However, there is correspondence throughout the collection, especially in the folders pertaining to danceworks and productions.

- b. 1 f. 1 Banes, Sally (10 Items)
- b. 1 f. 2 Cunningham, Merce (3 Items)
- b. 1 f. 3 de Groat, Andy (15 Items)
- b. 1 f. 4 Dean, Laura (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 5 Duncan, Maria Theresa (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 Dunn, Judith (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 7 Gamso, Marjorie (3 Items)
- b. 1 f. 8 Hendricks, Jon (5 Items)
- b. 1 f. 9 Jowitt, Deborah (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 10 Kaufman, Edgar (3 Items)
- b. 1 f. 11 King, Kenneth (15 Items)
- b. 1 f. 12 Kostelanetz, Richard (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 13 Langer, Susanne and Leonard (4 Items)
- b. 1 f. 14 Lloyd, Alan (4 Items)
- b. 1 f. 15 Lubar, Cindy (11 Items)
- b. 1 f. 16 Mayer, Daniel (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 17 Monk, Meredith (11 Items)
- b. 1 f. 18 Perron, Wendy (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 19 Poetry Project [Padgett, Waldman, Holman] (6 Items)
- b. 1 f. 20 Ray, Kathy (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 21-22 Wilson, Ann (22 Items)
- b. 1 f. 23 Wilson, Robert (19 Items)
- b. 2 f. 24 A-G (12 Items)
includes 1 item each for the following:
 - b. 2 f. 24 Bishop, Gordon
 - b. 2 f. 24 Brentano, Robyn
 - b. 2 f. 24 Brown, John
 - b. 2 f. 24 Dennis, Charles
 - b. 2 f. 24 Dunas, William
 - b. 2 f. 24 Duncan, Jeff
 - b. 2 f. 24 Dunn, Douglas
 - b. 2 f. 24 Farber, Viola
 - b. 2 f. 24 Feketekuty, Reka
 - b. 2 f. 24 Garcia, Rev. David A.

I. Correspondence (cont.)

A-G (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 24 Gordon, J.M.
- b. 2 f. 24 Greenfield, Lois
- b. 2 f. 25 H-N (10 Items)
includes 1 item each for the following:
 - b. 2 f. 25 Horton, Arnold
 - b. 2 f. 25 Hosie, Joe
 - b. 2 f. 25 Howell, John
 - b. 2 f. 25 Hutton, Scott [Pope Hassle]
 - b. 2 f. 25 Lewis, Melinda
 - b. 2 f. 25 Luthy, Elaine
 - b. 2 f. 25 McGrory, Mary
 - b. 2 f. 25 MacLow, Jackson
 - b. 2 f. 25 Miller, Tim
 - b. 2 f. 25 Nilsson, Judy
- b. 2 f. 26 O-Z (12 Items)
includes 1 item each for the following:
 - b. 2 f. 26 Owen, Maureen
 - b. 2 f. 26 Pesle, Benedicte
 - b. 2 f. 26 Rainer, Yvonne
 - b. 2 f. 26 Robbins, Jerome
 - b. 2 f. 26 Ruiz, Pierre
 - b. 2 f. 26 Slovin, Rochelle
 - b. 2 f. 26 Sollins, Susan
 - b. 2 f. 26 Univ. of Baltimore Students [Smith, Cohee, Lee]
 - b. 2 f. 26 von Nickern, Lillian
 - b. 2 f. 26 White, David
 - b. 2 f. 26 Wong, Mel

Relating to Performances

- b. 2 f. 27 Paris 1973 - (11 Items)
- b. 2 f. 28 1976-1979 (8 Items)
- b. 2 f. 29 1980-1981 (16 Items)
- b. 2 f. 30 *Relating to "Croce Affair"/New Yorker* (2 Items)
[see also articles: "Slowly Then...", fol.#98, "R.E.:Croce...", fol.#99]

II. Danceworks, Productions, Performances

The Danceworks, Productions Series is arranged alphabetically by the title of the works. The quantity of material on each work varies; the documentation can contain texts for the dances, drawings and diagrams, production notes, lighting designs, research material, correspondence relating to the production, and promotional material such as press releases and flyers. The Performances subseries is arranged chronologically and contains correspondence, texts, and flyers for specific performances.

A. Danceworks

- b. 2 f. 31-32 BATTERY (23 Items)
- b. 2 f. 33 Chicago 1975 (2 Items)

II. Danceworks, Productions, Performances (cont.)

A. Danceworks (cont.)

BATTERY (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 114 Original Poster Designs (2 Items)
= oversize box
- b. 2 f. 34 Carrier Pigeon (3 Items)
- b. 2 f. 35 (cele((CERE))bration: PROBElems & SOULutions (4 Items)
- b. 2 f. 36 Projections (3 Items)
- b. 2 f. 37 Dance S(p)ell (1 Item)
- b. 2 f. 38 *High Noon [Nietzsche]* (15 Items)
- b. 2 f. 39 INADMISSLEABLE EVIDENTDANCE (9 Items)
- b. 2 f. 40 A Show (2 Items)
- b. 2 f. 41 Labyrinth (12 Items)
[see also Ray, Cathy, fol.#20]
- b. 2 f. 42 Metagexis (5 Items)
- b. 2 f. 43 The Phenomenology of Movement (5 Items)
- b. 2 f. 44 The Phi Project (2 Items)
- b. 2 f. 45 Praxiomatics (2 Items)
- b. 2 f. 46 Print Out (1 Item)
- b. 2 f. 47 RAdeoA.C.tiv(ID)ty (14 Items)
- b. 2 f. 48 Simultimeless Action (5 Items)
- b. 2 f. 49-50 Telaxic Synapsulator (6 Items)
- b. 3 f. 51 Time Capsule (4 Items)
- Ultimate Exposé
- b. 3 f. 52 Script, Production (9 Items)
- b. 3 f. 53 Scenario, Designs (12 Items)
- b. 3 f. 54 Reference Material (30 Items)
- b. 3 f. 55 Expenses (7 Items)
- b. 8 f. 115 Original Poster Designs (2 Items)
= oversize box
- b. 8 f. 116-118 Designs for Projections (9 Items)
= oversize box
- WOR(L)D (T)RAID
- b. 3 f. 56 Part I - Word Raid 1978 (5 Items)
- b. 3 f. 57 1978-1979 (8 Items)
- b. 3 f. 58 Research Material (20 Items)
[see also articles: "Word Raid", fol.#90, *Text-Sound Text*,fol.#103]
- B. Performances
- b. 3 f. 59 Special Events, NYU 1969 (1 Item)
- b. 3 f. 60 Master Work in a Midnight Service 1970 (1 Item)
- b. 3 f. 61 Butler's Lives of the Saints 1978 (2 Items)
- b. 3 f. 62 Brooklyn Academy of Music 1978 (21 Items)
- b. 3 f. 63 The Kitchen 1979 (4 Items)

III. Films

The Films Series is arranged alphabetically by title of the film and contains some correspondence. The *Space City* folder contains a proposal, textscript, and scenario.

III. Films (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 64 *The Illiac Passion [Markopoulos]* (1 Item)
- b. 3 f. 64 *Making Dances [Blackwood]* (6 Items)
- Space City
- b. 3 f. 65 Proposal, Correspondence (7 Items)
- b. 3 f. 66 Textscript, Scenario (7 Items)

IV. Workshops, Teaching

The Workshops, Teaching Series is arranged chronologically. It contains correspondence, letters of recommendation, critiques by students, biographies of students, rosters, notes and schedules.

- b. 4 f. 67 1977 (17 Items)
- b. 4 f. 68 1978 (13 Items)
- b. 4 f. 69 1979 (5 Items)
- b. 4 f. 70 Dance Alliance, New Haven 1980 (14 Items)
- b. 4 f. 71 American Dance Festival 1981 (10 Items)

V. Grants, Funding

The Grants, Funding Series is arranged alphabetically by name of the organization, and items are arranged chronologically within the folders. The series contains applications, contracts, correspondence and press releases. There is also biographical information in some applications. The Transmedia file includes Kenneth King's resume and lists the dates of many of his works.

- b. 4 f. 72-76 Comprehensive Employment and Training Act [CETA] 1977-1980 (77 Items)
- b. 4 f. 77-79 Cultural Council Foundation: Creative Artists Public Service Program [CAPS] 1971-1979 (32 Items)
- b. 4 f. 80-83 Guggenheim Memorial Foundation 1974-1981 (53 Items)
- b. 4 f. 84 National Endowment for the Arts 1975-1976 (5 Items)
- b. 4 f. 85 Miscellaneous 1975-1978 (10 Items)
- b. 5 f. 86 Transmedia Kinectrics [brochure copy] (3 Items)

VI. Publications

The Publications Series is arranged chronologically and is divided into three subseries: articles and essays by King, articles and essays with mention of or about King, and books with sections by or about King.

A. Articles/Essays by Kenneth King

- b. 5 f. 87 "*Toward a Trans-literal and trans-technical dance-theater*", *The New Art (Gregory Battock)* 1966 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 87 "*Correspondence*"-*Letter from King/Zash to Arlene Croce, Ballet Review, vol. 2, no. 4* 1968 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 88 "*Pardon My Leak*" by King/Zash Eddy Winter 1975-76 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 88 "*Metagexis (excerpts)*", *Eddy* Spring-Summer 1976 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 89 "*Don't Blow My C-O-V-E-R*" by King/Zash Eddy Winter 1977 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 89 "*The Dancing Philosopher*", *Semiotexte, vol. III, no. 1* 1978 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 90 "*Word Raid*" *Paris Review, #76* Fall 1979 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 90 "*The Future of Machine*", *File, vol. 4, no. 4* Fall 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 91 "Vision Dancing: Maria Theresa Duncan and the Heritage of Isadora Duncan: An Appreciation" 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 91 "*Plurality Pieces: Re:Experiences...*" *Film Culture* n.d. (1 Item)

B. Articles/Essays with mention of or about Kenneth King

VI. Publications (cont.)

B. Articles/Essays with mention of or about Kenneth King (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 92 *"Winterbranch...and hundreds of years" by Cecily Dell, Dance Scope* Spring 1965 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 92 *"Far Beyond the Far Out:some experimental choreographers" by Cecily Dell, Dance Scope* 1965 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 92 *"Making it New - Meredith Monk and Kenneth King" by Constance Poster, Ballet Review, vol. 1, no.6* 1967 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 93 *"New Dance /Criticism: is it whatever you say it is?" by Nancy Moore, Dance Magazine* 1974 Apr. (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 93 "Dance, Mesmex and the Future" - Discussion, King with Edith Stephano, *Art Artists* 1974 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 94 *"Siegel's Notebook, 3 October 1973...on Kenneth King" by Marcia B. Siegel, Eddy* 1974 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 94 Excerpts from Reviews 1964-1974 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 94 *"Add Some More Cornstarch, Or The Plot Thickens, Yvonne Rainer's Work 1961-73" by Daryl Chin, Dance Scope* 1975 (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 94 *"World Capital of Dance:New York Has Its Biggest Season Ever" by Marcia B. Siegel, New York**"World Capital of Dance:New York Has Its Biggest Season Ever" by Marcia B. Siegel, New York* 1975 Nov. (1 Item)
- b. 5 f. 95 *"Kenneth King:Dancer/Choreographer" by John Howell, Interview with King, Performing Arts Journal* Fall 1978 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 96 Artists Project: Cultural Council Foundation 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 97 The List 1977, 1978, 1980 (4 Items)
- b. 6 f. 98 *"Intermedia Festival" Live: Performance Art #3* 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 98 *"Slowly Then the History of Them Comes Out" by Arlene Croce, New Yorker* 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 99 *"R.E.:Croce: Letters from Yvonne Rainer, Meredith Monk, Kenneth King", Live: Performance Art #4* 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 99 "People in Motion" by Carol Berge n.d. (1 Item)

C. Books with sections by or about Kenneth King

- b. 6 f. 100 *The New American Cinema, Battcock, pp. 116-124* 1967 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 100 *The Rise and Fall and Rise of Modern Dance, McDonagh* 1970 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 101 *Marmelade Me, Johnston, 1971 pp. 119-121* (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 101 *Experimental Dance, Percival* 1971 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 102 *Terpsichore in Sneakers, Banes, [draft with corrections by King]* 1980 (1 Item)
- b. 6 f. 103 *Text-Sound Texts, [Word Raid] Kostelanetz, pp. 251-257* 1980 (1 Item)

b. 7 f. 104 VII. Contracts (7 Items)

The Contracts Series is arranged chronologically.

- b. 7 f. 104 7 contracts

VIII. "Memorabilia"

The "Memorabilia" Series carries the heading given by King and he divided the material into two subseries. The contents include correspondence, flyers, notes, articles, clippings and programs.

- b. 7 f. 105 Paris 1973 (24 Items)
- b. 7 f. 106 Miscellaneous (5 Items)

IX. "Other Artists Reference"

The "Other Artists Reference" Series, also named by King, contains programs and flyers and is divided into annotated and unannotated groups.

- b. 7 f. 107 Programs and Flyers [annotated] (18 Items)
- b. 7 f. 108-109 Programs and Flyers (56 Items)

X. Miscellany

The Miscellany Series contains some of King's notes and memos, newsletters, a few xeroxes of photographs, and some writings of Barbara Hoffman.

- b. 7 f. 110 King - Notes and Memos (6 Items)
- b. 7 f. 111 Newsletters (11 Items)
- b. 7 f. 111 American Dance Guild 1979
- b. 7 f. 111 Payday News [CAPS] 1980
- b. 7 f. 111 Pentacle 1980-1981
- b. 7 f. 111 Poetry Project 1975, 1979-1981
- b. 7 f. 112 Xeroxes of Photos (5 Items)
- b. 7 f. 113 Writings of Barbara Hoffman 1976 (11 Items)