Summary

Creator: Hurok Attractions, Inc. (New York, N.Y.)

Title: Hurok Attractions, Inc. records

Date: 1906-1974 [bulk 1959-1964]

Size: 2.81 linear feet (8 boxes)

Source: Unknown.

Abstract: The Hurok Attractions, Inc. records (1906-1974) document several mid-20th-century international tours arranged by the independent booking and promotion agency spearheaded by dance impresario Sol Hurok. The collection contains publicity, press, and ephemera materials for the 1961 and 1964 tours of the Leningrad Kirov Ballet; photographic materials from the tours of Kirov and other companies between 1949 and 1964; and candid and publicity photographs depicting Sol Hurok and his friends, family, associates, audiences, and clients.

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/ssa/requesting-archival-materials

Conditions Governing Access:
Library policy of photography and photocopying will apply.

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Processing note: Compiled by Brynn White, CUNY Queens College 2014, 2013
Creator History
Independent booking and promotion agency Hurok Attractions, Inc. was founded by Sol Hurok (1888-1974). Early in his career, the Ukrainian émigré represented established dancers and musicians, including Anna Pavlova, Isadora Duncan, Arthur Rubenstein, Martha Graham, and Marian Anderson. Following four national tours by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in the 1930s, he emerged as the leading presenter of ballet in America. The tour of the Sadler Wells Ballet (later renamed the Royal Ballet) in 1949 inaugurated a series of international bookings and publicity campaigns in which Hurok Attractions specialized.

Subsequent to the Soviet-American cultural exchange of 1958, Hurok regularly traveled to Moscow for contract negotiations with the Ministry of Culture. As a result, the Moiseyev Folk Dance Ensemble and Bolshoi Ballet toured North America every few seasons over the next several years. Based off these successful tours, Hurok arranged 1961 and 1964 tours of Russia’s oldest dance company, the Leningrad Kirov Ballet (formerly the Maryinsky Ballet), and Rudolf Nureyev’s 1963 debut with the Royal Ballet.

Hurok sold the company in 1969 but continued to work until his death in 1974.


Scope and Content Note

The bulk of the collection documents the 1961 and 1964 tours of the Leningrad Kirov Ballet. Correspondence between the Hurok Attractions publicity director Martin Feinstein and members of the press, including advance copies of articles, are interspersed throughout the Kirov materials. The publicity files contain press releases, internal memos, specification forms for local promoters and venues, itineraries, press lists, ticket order forms, ad sales correspondence, and cast and crew lists. Performer biography and program note drafts, including an extensive history of the Kirov Ballet by Vera Krasovskaya, are annotated. A 1974 press release announces the restructuring of company personnel following Hurok’s death. The press clippings contain American, French, and British newspaper and magazine coverage of the 1961 and 1964 Kirov international tours. The ephemera files feature programs, flyers, postcards, commemorative booklets and souvenirs from Kirov performances and tours in the United States, England, and the Soviet Union.

The dance company photographic materials primarily showcase the Kirov ballet tour. Works depicted include Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Raymonda, Cinderella, and Giselle, with featured dancers Natalia Makarova, Vladilen Semenov, and Irina Kolpakova. Many of the master prints, slides, and negatives are captioned, or can be identified using an accompanying index. Other companies featured are the Bolshoi Ballet, Massed Pipers and Regimental Band of the Scots Guards, and the Royal Ballet.

The general publicity photographs are portraits, publicity stills, and candid shots of Sol Hurok traveling around the world, accepting awards, attending parties and special events, and posing with associates, friends and family. Hurok does not appear in some images, which showcase prominent figures and large audiences in attendance of Hurok Attractions events. An extensive file of portraits of the Orchestra
National Francais musical director Jean Martinon also appears. Many photographs are captioned with subject, photographer, and date; some have correspondence attached.

Materials are in English and Russian.

**Arrangement:** The collection is arranged into three groups: Leningrad Kirov Ballet tours, Dance Company Publicity Photographs, and General Publicity Photographs.

**Key Terms**

**Subjects**
Ballet companies -- Soviet Union  
Dance -- United States -- 20th century  
Performing Arts -- Public relations

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**
Clippings  
Fliers (printed matter)  
Negatives  
Photographs  
Slides  
Souvenir programs

**Occupations**
Dancers -- Promoters

**Names**
Hurok, Sol, 1888-1974
Container List

Leningrad Kirov Ballet Tours
  b. 1 f. 1-4  Ephemera 1961-1964
  b. 1 f. 5-6  Press Clippings 1961-1964
  b. 2 f. 1-12 Press Clippings 1961-1964
  b. 2 f. 13  Publicity 1961-1964
  b. 3 f. 1-3  Publicity 1961-1964

Photographs
  Dance Companies
    b. 3 f. 4  Indexes 1961-1964
  b. 3 f. 5-6  Kirov Ballet 1961-1964
  b. 4 f. 1  Kirov Ballet 1961-1964
    b. 6  Kirov Ballet 1961-1964
  b. 7  Kirov Ballet and Other Companies 1949-1967
  b. 4 f. 2-21  Publicity 1909-1974
  b. 5 f. 1-6  Publicity 1906-1972
  b. 8 f. 1-2  Publicity 1935-1960