



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Deborah Hay papers

1978-2010

(S) *MGZMD 340

Compiled by Jennifer A. Ferretti, Pratt Institute, 2014, 2013

Summary

Creator: Hay, Deborah, 1941-

Title: Deborah Hay papers

Date: 1978-2010

Size: 1.51 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Donated by Deborah Hay, 2013

Abstract: Deborah Hay (b. 1941) is a choreographer, dancer, teacher, and one of the founding members of the avant-garde dance group Judson Dance Theater. Hay performed solo as well as with professional and non-professional dancers throughout her career. The Deborah Hay papers (1978-2010) feature biographical information, choreographic notations, clippings, newsletters, photographs, programs, and promotional materials that document Hay's career.

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>

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Processing note: Compiled by Jennifer A. Ferretti, Pratt Institute, 2014, 2013 Original order was maintained. Roughly half of this collection was processed by Deborah Hay's Dance Studio staff and by the archivists at Wesleyan University.

Creator History

Deborah Hay was born in Brooklyn, New York on December 18, 1941. After completing two years as a

dance major at Brooklyn College, Hay joined the Merce Cunningham Dance Company as a performer on a tour through Europe and Asia. Hay is an original member of the Judson Dance Theater, a group of avant-garde performers. By the mid-1960s, Hay began choreographing her own dances for large groups of trained and untrained dancers.

In 1976 Hay moved to Austin, Texas. For the next 15 years, she conducted the Playing Awake workshops where she worked with dancers of all levels for four months at a time to create new movement pieces. Focusing on her solo repertory, she performed *The Man Who Grew Common in Wisdom* and *Snakeskin's Girl* in 1986 and *Lamb at the Altar: The Story of Dance* (which is also the title of one of her books) in 1992, among other performances.

In 2000, dancer and choreographer Mikhail Baryshnikov commissioned Hay to create a work for his White Oak Dance Company, which included a duet for him and Hay. In 2000, Hay choreographed *PASTForward*, *Exit*, *Whizz*, and *Single Duet* for the company.

In 2004, Hay choreographed *The Match*, a quartet that premiered at Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery in New York City. Following the performances at Danspace, each performer began a solo adaptation of the quartet.

Scope and Content Note

The Deborah Hay papers (1978-2010) feature biographical information, choreographic notations, clippings, newsletters, photographs, programs, and promotional materials that document Hay's teaching and dance career. The collection is arranged by document type or production title.

The biographical information file includes an abstract of Hay's work, several lists documenting performances and awards, a bibliography, and letters of recommendation from academic institutions that hosted her for long or short-term teaching residencies. There is also information about her book, *Lamb at the Altar: The Story of a Dance* (Duke University Press, 1994).

The clippings include reviews and articles about Hay's work as well as articles by Hay. The teaching file includes promotional materials for workshops, lectures, and retreats. These two sections follow her career more generally. Similar materials can be found in the production files.

The productions files may include programs, photographs, clippings, newsletters, and promotional materials such as posters and fliers. The production files for the works *The Man Who Grew Common in Wisdom* and *Lamb at the Altar* contain choreographic notations.

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Research Collection holds video recordings of performances choreographed by Hay as well as interviews with Hay. Additional materials can be found by performing a keyword search for "Hay, Deborah" in the library's catalog.

Arrangement: The Deborah Hay papers are arranged by document type or production title. The collection is loosely arranged chronologically.

Key Terms

Subjects

Choreography and dance

Dance -- Education

Dance -- United States

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings

Photographs

Posters

Programs

Promotional materials

Reviews

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Biographical Materials
- b. 1 f. 2-3 Clippings and Promotional Materials
- Teaching
 - b. 1 f. 4 *Playing Awake* 1992-1996
 - b. 1 f. 5 1996-2010
 - b. 4 f. 1 1996-2010
 - b. 1 f. 6 *The Solo Performing Commissioning Project* 1998-2006
- Productions
 - b. 1 f. 7 1967-2004
 - b. 4 f. 2 1967-2004
 - b. 1 f. 8-9 1985-2007
 - b. 4 f. 3 1988-1991
 - b. 2 f. 1-14 1992-2005
 - b. 3 f. 1-9 2006-2010