



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

John Gruen papers

1970-1984

(S) *MGZMD 335

Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013

Summary

Creator: Gruen, John

Title: John Gruen papers

Date: 1970-1984

Size: .84 linear feet (2 boxes)

Source: Donated by John Gruen, 1984.

Abstract: John Gruen is an American biographer, photographer, and writer and critic on the arts, particularly dance. The John Gruen papers document Gruen's writing career from 1970 to 1984. The collection contains correspondence, articles written by Gruen, and research material and notes relating to two of his books, Erik Bruhn: Danseur Noble (1979), and The World's Great Ballets (1981).

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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Preferred citation: John Gruen papers, (S) *MGZMD 335. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013 Original order and folder titles were maintained.

Creator History

John Gruen is an American biographer, photographer, and writer and critic on the arts, particularly dance. He has written several books, including The World's Great Ballets: La fille mal gardee to Davidsbundlertanze (1981), and biographies on Erik Bruhn, Keith Haring, and Gian Carlo Menotti. He

has written for the New York Times, the New York Herald Tribune, Vogue, and New York magazine. He wrote and was senior editor for Dance Magazine. John Gruen is also a photographer.

Scope and Content Note

The John Gruen papers document Gruen's writing career from 1970 to 1984. The collection contains correspondence, articles written by Gruen, and research material and notes relating to two of his books, Erik Bruhn: Danseur Noble (1979), and The World's Great Ballets (1981).

The collection contains carbon copies of articles and reviews written by Gruen for various periodicals, mostly for Dance Magazine and the New York Times. The articles are arranged by people and subjects. People files are arranged alphabetically by last name of dancer or choreographer. The subject files examine topics, such as conducting and music, as well as specific performances and companies, such as the Nutcracker and the American Ballet Theater. Gruen annotated the articles with the title and dates of the publication, and the subject or person that the article covers. Articles written for After Dark magazine are separated from the people and subject files, and cover various dance figures including Merce Cunningham, Twyla Tharp, and Rudolph Nureyev.

Correspondence is professional in nature, and relates to Gruen's articles and to two of his books, Erik Bruhn: Danseur Noble (1979), and The World's Great Ballets (1981). Letters and contracts pertaining to The Great Artists of the Dance series, a 1977 event that took place at City Hall and consisted of interviews with dancers, are also present. Topics of correspondence include arranging interviews with dancers, the use of quotations and photographs for his books, Gruen's promotional tours, and fan letters. Among the several correspondents are editorial managers of periodicals, public relations managers, and theater directors.

Research notes consist of typewritten notes and drafts of articles that Gruen wrote for Dance Magazine and for various interviews. Handwritten and typewritten drafts and notes for two of his books, Erik Bruhn: Danseur Noble (1979), and The World's Great Ballets, are present.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged in three categories: Articles, Correspondence, and Research Material.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Articles
Correspondence
Drafts (documents)
Research notes

Occupations

Critics

Subjects

Dance -- United States

Names

Bruhn, Erik, 1928-1986

Container List

Articles

People

- b. 1 f. 1 A-F 1975-1984
- b. 1 f. 2-3 G-N 1970-1984
- b. 1 f. 4 P-Z 1974-1984
- b. 2 f. 1-2 Subjects 1974-1984
- b. 2 f. 3 *After Dark Articles* 1976-1982
- b. 2 f. 4-7 Correspondence 1975-1984
- b. 2 f. 8-12 Research Notes 1972-1984