Guide to the
Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane collection
1947-2013
(S) *MGZMD 433
Compiled by Diana Bertolini, 2016.

Summary

Creator: Briane, Mirielle

Title: Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane collection

Date: 1947-2013

Size: 2.26 linear feet (1 box, 2 volumes)

Source: Donated by Oleg Briansky, 2016.

Abstract: Oleg Briansky (1929-) is a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and artistic director, born in Belgium to Russian parents. Mireille Briane is a French dancer, choreographer, teacher, and artistic director. Both have worked in the United States since 1963. The Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane collection (1947-2013) consists of photographs, programs, loose clippings, scrapbooks, and video recordings.

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 Diana Bertolini, 2016.

Creator History
Oleg Briansky (1929-) is a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and artistic director. Briansky was born to Russian parents in Brussels on November 9, 1929. He was trained with the Vaganova Method, and studied with such masters as Leonide Katchourowsky, Victor Gsovsky, Madame Rousanne, Boris
Kniaseff, and Vera Volkova. He made his professional debut in Brussels in 1945, and in 1946 joined the Ballets des Champs-Elysées in Paris. Over the next few years, his career flourished and he performed as a principal dancer at the London Festival Ballet, the New York Metropolitan Ballet, the Munich Opera Ballet, the Teatro Colon of Buenos Aires, the Royal Opera House in Antwerp, and the Chicago Opera Ballet.

Mireille Briane was born in Paris and began training as a dancer at the Paris Opera at the age of 8. By the time she was 16 she was a principal dancer at the Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux. She was soon dancing at the Ballets des Champs-Elysées, the Ballets de Paris, the Chicago Opera Ballet, and the London Festival Ballet.

Briansky and Briane met when they were both dancers at Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, and they were married in 1953. During the 1950s and 1960s they often performed together in international tours in North and South America. In 1963 they settled in New York City, and in 1965 they co-founded the Briansky Saratoga Ballet Center, a professionally oriented summer dance program in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Briane taught at the School of American Ballet, Alvin Ailey Dance Center, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Ballet de Rio de Janeiro, and Universal Ballet Academy. She also directed a series of children’s ballets for Radio Télévision Française and created a year-long series of educational ballet programs for the Indépendant Television Network in Britain.

Briansky taught for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the School of American Ballet, the Teatro Communale in Florence, Danceworks in London, the Conservatoire National de Musique de Paris, the Universal Ballet Company in Seoul, the Teatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro, and Rosella Hightower’s Centre de Danse Classique in Cannes. Briansky supervised the dances for the Academy Award-nominated documentary The Children of Theatre Street (1978).

From 1990 to 1991, Briansky was associate director of the Universal Ballet Academy in Washington, D.C. He received the 1994 Nijinsky Award for his ballet, Scheherazade. He was also a panelist for the New York State Council on the Arts and a juror for the Prix de Lausanne International Ballet Competition. Briansky and Briane served as artistic directors of the Ballet Guild of the Lehigh Valley from 1994 to 2006.

In 2008, the Russian filmmaker Yelena Demikovsky made a documentary about the lives and careers of Briansky and Briane, Happy to Be So... In 2015 Briansky and Briane were awarded Mark DeGarmo Dance’s “Educational Visionary” Lifetime Achievement Award, as “visionaries who have promoted innovation in education through the arts.”

Scope and Content Note
The majority of the Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane collection consists of photographs documenting the productions Briansky and Briane performed in or choreographed in France, England, South America, and the United States. The photographs are annotated with information on the dancers and location of each production. These are arranged alphabetically by production title. There are also headshots, backstage and rehearsal shots, personal photographs, and photographs of special events. Also included is an annotated copy of Irène Lidova’s 1953 publication, 17 Visages de la Danse Française.

Briansky and Briane’s careers as dancers and teachers are further documented with one folder of
programs. There are programs from two exhibitions at the Saratoga Ballet Center: *Ballet Memorabilia*, which Biansky and Briane organized with Lucien Mars in 1966 and from the 40th Anniversary Celebration of the organization, now the Briansky Saratoga Ballet Center. There are also programs from the 1978 film, *The Children of Theatre Street* for which Briansky supervised dance sequences; and from the Universal Ballet Academy, where Briansky and Briane worked as associate director and assistant associate director. A flyer for a screening of *Happy to Be So*, the documentary about Briansky and Briane, is also included.

Publicity materials contain two scrapbooks of newspaper clippings documenting Briansky's career 1952 to 1954, when he was primarily dancing in London. One scrapbook includes notes to Briansky from Anton Dolin and Tamara Toumanova. There are a few loose clippings and a 2006 issue of the magazine *Dance Teacher*, which featured a cover story on Briansky and Briane.

This collection includes filmed performances of ballets and other dance works choreographed by Briansky, as well as *Happy to Be So...*, a documentary about Briansky and Briane.

**Arrangement**: The Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane collection is divided into the following categories: Photographs, Programs, Publicity Materials, and Video Recordings.

**Key Terms**

**Occupations**
Arts administrators
Choreographers
Dance teachers
Dancers

**Subjects**
Ballet -- United States
Ballet -- United States -- History -- 20th century
Dance -- England -- History -- 20th century
Dance -- France -- History -- 20th century
Dance -- Photographs
Dance -- Production and direction -- Study and teaching
Dance -- Technique
Dance programs

**Names**
Briansky, Oleg
Container List

Photographs 1947-1989
Productions 1951-1980s

b. 1 f. 1  Adagio 1962
b. 1 f. 2  Aurora's Wedding 1955, 1956
b. 1 f. 3  Autumn 1960, 1963
b. 1 f. 4  Ballerina 1949
b. 1 f. 5  Blue Danube 1950, 1953
b. 1 f. 6  Chaises Musicales 1950
b. 1 f. 7  Checkmate 1958
b. 1 f. 8  The Devil's Bride 1947
b. 1 f. 9  Don Quixote 1955, 1959
b. 1 f. 10  Esmerelda 1953, 1961
b. 1 f. 11  Francesca da Rimini 1959
b. 1 f. 12  Giselle 1955
b. 1 f. 13  Grand Finale 1980s
b. 1 f. 14  Idylle 1954
b. 1 f. 15  The Merry Widow 1955
b. 1 f. 16  Napoli 1962
b. 1 f. 17  The Nutcracker 1950s, 1963, 1966
b. 1 f. 18  Peter and the Wolfe 1970s
b. 1 f. 19  Pieces Brilliantes late 1950s
b. 1 f. 20  Rendez-Vous 1959
b. 1 f. 21  Revenge 1955
b. 1 f. 22  Ribbon Dance 1950s
b. 1 f. 23  Roman Centurion 1959
b. 1 f. 24  Romeo and Juliet 1961
b. 1 f. 25  Samson and Dalilah 1966
b. 1 f. 26  Scheherazade 1950s
b. 1 f. 27  Showcase Piece - Mireille Briane 1961
b. 1 f. 28  Snow Maiden 1961
b. 1 f. 29  Soirée 1955, 1956
b. 1 f. 30  Swan Lake 1950s, 1961
b. 1 f. 31  Les Sylphides 1956
b. 1 f. 32  Sylvia 1957
b. 1 f. 33  Symphonic Impressions 1951
b. 1 f. 34  Water Music 1959
b. 1 f. 35  Backstage and Rehearsal Shots 1956-1970s
b. 1 f. 36  Headshots 1952
Photographs (cont.)

Other Photographs (cont.)

b. 1 f. 37  Personal Photographs 1950s
b. 1 f. 38  Publicity Shots 1947, 1952
b. 1 f. 39  Special Events 1975-1989
  Teaching
b. 1 f. 40  Mireille Briane 1969-1970s
b. 1 f. 41  Oleg Briansky 1970s-1980s
b. 1 f. 42  *17 Visages de la Danse Française by Irène Lidova* 1953
  A French book consisting of photographs and brief biographies of prominent French dancers, including Briansky.
  
  Inscribed by the author to an unknown recipient. Briansky's entry is annotated in Russian.

b. 1 f. 43  Programs 1956-2008
b. 1 f. 44  Publicity Materials 1952-2013
  Loose Clippings and Magazine 1955, 1976, 2006
  Scrapbooks - Newspaper Clipings
  v. 1  1952-1953
    Includes notes to Briansky from Anton Dolin and Tamara Toumanova.
  v. 2  1953-1954
  Video Recordings 1991-2008
    Choreographed by Briansky; With Devon Carney and Kin Pauley.
    
    Unavailable pending digitization

    *Happy to Be So... - Documentary about Oleg Briansky and Mireille Briane* 2008
    Directed by Yelena Demikovsky.
    
    Unavailable pending digitization

    *Jeux D'Enfants* 1996 May 25
    Choreographed by Briansky.
    
    Unavailable pending digitization

    *Scheherazade - Memphis Concert Ballet* 1991 October 27
    Choreographed by Briansky.
    
    Unavailable pending digitization
Video Recordings (cont.)

Student Performance - Saratoga Ballet Theatre, Bernnhard Theatre 2005 July 23
Choreographed by Briansky.

Unavailable pending digitization