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Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the
Igor Youskevitch papers
1944-1988 (bulk 1950-1966)
(S)*MGZMD 303

Compiled by Julia Lipkins, Pratt Institute, 2012, September 2012

Summary

Creator: Youskevitch, Igor, 1912-1994

Title: Igor Youskevitch papers, 1944-1988 (bulk 1950-1966)

Size: .21 linear foot (1 box)

Source: Donated by Maria Youskevitch, 2003.

Abstract: Igor Youskevitch (1912-1994), a principal dancer with the American Ballet Theatre and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, was known for his mastery of classical style. The collection documents forty-four years of Youskevitch's professional life through correspondence, performance programs, photographs and press clippings.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying and photography will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Copyright information: For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division (dance@nypl.org).

Preferred citation: Igor Youskevitch papers, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: The paper materials were previously grouped by document type (i.e., correspondence, performance programs, press clippings). This order has been retained and arranged alphabetically.

Related collections

David Libidins papers. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Sergei Denham records of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Creator history

Igor Youskevitch was born on March 13, 1912 near Kiev, Ukraine. In 1920, his family fled the Bolshevik Revolution and resettled in the former Yugoslavia. After graduating from high school in 1930, he studied engineering at Belgrade University. There he became involved in Sokol, the Slavic sports and gymnastics organization. At age 20, ballerina Xenia Grunt spotted Youskevitch at a gymnastics competition and urged him to consider a future in ballet. Youskevitch became Grunt's student shortly thereafter and debuted as her partner on stage in 1932.

Youskevitch went on to dance with Les Ballets de Paris, Woizikowski Ballet, and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. He married Anna Scarpova, a fellow dancer at Ballet Russe, in 1938. After many years of touring in the United States, he volunteered for the U.S. Navy and became an American citizen in 1944. He was discharged from military service two years later and returned to the stage as a member of the American Ballet Theater. In 1952, Gene Kelly recruited Youskevitch to co-star in his film *Invitation to the Dance*.

Youskevitch retired from the stage in 1962, but he continued to serve the dance community as a teacher and lecturer until the mid-1980s. He taught as a faculty member at the University of Texas in Austin and was a co-founder of the New York International Ballet Competition. Igor Youskevitch died in New York City on June 13, 1994.

Sources:

Anderson, Jack. "Igor Youskevitch, Master of Classical Ballet Style, Dies at 82." *The New York Times*, June 14, 1994.

"Igor Youskevitch." *Andros on Ballet*, 1999. Accessed September 16, 2012. http://michaelminn.net/andros/biographies/youskevitch_igor.

"Igor Youskevitch." *International Dictionary of Ballet*. Gale, 1993. *Gale Biography In Context*. Accessed September 16, 2012. <http://ic.galegroup.com>.

Scope and content note

The collection documents Igor Youskevitch's career as a dancer, teacher, and lecturer from 1944 to 1988 through correspondence, performance programs, photographs, and press clippings.

Photographs of Youskevitch on stage illustrate his mastery of classical style. The collection includes performance and press photographs from *Afternoon of a Faun*, *Carnival* (1959), *Giselle* (1958), *Invitation to the Dance* (1952), *Les Sylphides*, *Nutcracker*, *The Red Poppy*, and *Theme and Variations* (1955). Youskevitch discusses classical technique and training in his correspondence with members of the press, fans of ballet, and colleagues in the performing arts.

Additional books, interview transcripts, photographs, sound and video recordings related to Youskevitch can be found by conducting individual author, keyword, and subject searches for "Youskevitch, Igor" in the Library's catalog (www.nypl.org/catalog).

Arrangement

Alphabetical by document type.

Key terms

Subjects

Ballet

Names

Alonso, Alicia, 1921-

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Youskevitch, Igor, 1912-1994

Special formats

Fliers

Photographs

Programs

Container list

- b.1 f.1 Correspondence, 1956-1973, undated
- b.1 f.2-3 Performance Programs and Fliers, 1944-1988, undated
- b.1 f.4 Photographs, circa 1950-1966
- b.1 f.5 Photographs--Performances, circa 1952-1959
- b.1 f.6 Press Clippings, 1956-1973, undated