Guide to the Dale Harris Papers, 1939-1995

(S) *MGZMD 201

Jerome Robbins Dance Division
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, New York

Contact Information
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
Jerome Robbins Dance Division
40 Lincoln Center Plaza
New York, New York 10023-7498
Phone: 212/870-1657
Email: dance@nypl.org
Web address: http://www.nypl.org/research/lpa/dan/danHarris.html

Processed by: Cynthia Tobar
Date Completed: May 2008

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Descriptive Summary

<table>
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<th>Title:</th>
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<td>Collection ID:</td>
<td>(S) *MGZMD 201</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creator:</td>
<td>Harris, Dale</td>
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<td>Extent:</td>
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Abstract

Dale Harris was a preeminent dance critic who lectured on a wide variety of topics including ballet, cultural history, and opera. The collection consists of correspondence, lectures, articles, photographs, programs, contracts, legal records, notes, and clippings.

Administrative Information

Access

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

Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

Preferred Citation

Dale Harris Papers, (S) *MGZMD 201, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Custodial History

The Dale Harris Papers were donated to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division in 1997 by the estate of Dale Harris.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and cataloged in 2008.


Biographical Note

Stanley Dale Harris, born on November 16, 1928 in the U.K., was a prolific writer and arts lecturer who wrote on a wide variety of subjects including literature, opera, art, and dance history, fostering a reputation as the preeminent dance critic at the Wall Street Journal and a music critic for The Washington Post. A popular lecturer on ballet, cultural history, and opera, Harris lectured for several preeminent cultural institutions, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the San Francisco Opera Guild. An active member of the dance-critic community, he also served as the President of the Dance Critics Association and the General Editor of the Da Capo Dance Reprint Series during the 1980s.

Harris received his Doctorate in 1965 and his undergraduate degree from Harvard University in 1958 after emigrating from his native England. In the 1960s and 1970s, he taught English Literature at Harvard and Stanford University, and later moved on to teach Dance History at New York University and English Literature at Sarah Lawrence College. In the early 1970s, Harris ultimately settled at Cooper Union where he taught Art History and Humanities courses for 21 years. He also held various public lectures at Princeton University, the Smithsonian Institution, the San Francisco Opera Guild, and Christie’s on a number of cultural and art historical topics from the 1970s to the 1990s.

In addition to teaching, Harris wrote for numerous magazines, newspapers, and specialized journals. His publications include articles and reviews in Ballet Review, Ballet News, Dancing Times, The Guardian, San Francisco Chronicle, New York Times Book Review, a number of articles for newspapers including the New York Times, the London Observer, he also wrote dance and music entries for the Encyclopedia of Dance and Ballet. Dale Harris worked as an arts critic for several television and radio stations, such as WHRB, the Harvard student radio station. Catalog advertisements for sets of CD's and tapes based on his opera talks, which became best sellers at the Metropolitan Opera, are found in this collection. Harris also wrote a novel Home Fires Burning, which is not present in this collection.

Dale Harris died of complications from AIDS on March 14, 1996.

Sources:

Scope and Content Note

The Dale Harris Papers consist of correspondence, lectures, articles, reviews, photographs, programs, contracts, legal records, notes, and clippings that document his career as a dance critic and lecturer from the late 1960s through the mid-1990s. The Correspondence series contains not only incoming letters but copies of his responses. This gives a wonderfully detailed look at some aspects of his professional writing career. The Personal Papers series includes programs, itineraries, and photographs from his various worldwide travels.

The Professional Papers documents Harris’ work as a contributing writer for *Architectural Digest* and his time as General Editor for Da Capo’s Dance Reprint Series, as well as his tenured professorships at both Sarah Lawrence College and Cooper Union. The Articles series contains various pieces Harris wrote on prominent dancers, particularly Sergei Diaghilev, Fred Astaire, Anna Pavlova, Vaslav Nijinsky, and Margot Fonteyn. The Subject Files and Clippings series includes information on topics of interest or research value, particularly relating to dance performances of which Harris reviewed or lectured such as those of Merce Cunningham and Twyla Tharp. This collection contains no information about his home and family life.

Organization

The collection is organized into seven series. They are:

- Series I: Correspondence, 1967-1996; undated
- Series II: Personal Papers, 1966-1995; undated
- Series III: General Professional Papers, 1975-1995; undated
- Series IV: Articles, 1969-1995; undated
- Series V: Lectures, 1963-1995; undated
- Series VI: Dance Subject Files, 1930s-1990s; undated
- Series VII: Clippings, 1966-1992; undated
Series Descriptions

Series I: Correspondence, 1967-1996; undated .5 box
Alphabetical
The majority of the correspondence is of a professional nature, discussing issues relating to conferences, publications, teaching positions, or speaking engagements, though many letters are to people in the field who were friends as well as colleagues and thus offer some personal references within them. Highlights include a letter from Romola Nijinsky and correspondence from David Vaughan. Please note that small amounts of correspondence can also be found in individual files in the Articles, Lectures, or Subject Files series.

Series II: Personal Papers, 1966-1995; undated 1.5 boxes
Alphabetical
This series documents Harris' personal life including biographical materials, legal documents, an appointment calendar, travel brochures, and programs relating to seminars or lectures he attended. It also includes invitations to special events and photographs, often of his cultural trips abroad. Some gala invitations and memorabilia can also be found in this series.

Series III: General Professional Papers, 1975-1995; undated 1 box
Alphabetical
This series includes resume material, photographs, meeting minutes, student rosters of classes Harris taught at Cooper Union, material relating to Harris’ time as the General Editor of the DaCapo Dance Reprint series, guides, and material regarding his application for tenure at Sarah Lawrence College. Please note that small amounts of contracts and business materials can also be found in the Articles series.

Series IV: Articles, 1969-1995; undated 4 boxes
Alphabetical by publication title
This series consists of handwritten, typescript, and published versions of many of Harris’ articles, book reviews, obituaries of major dance figures, along with research materials and notes which document the evolution of the pieces and the ideas motivating their creation. It also contains correspondence from editors regarding his submissions. Some highlights include an interview Harris conducted with Rudolf Nureyev for Dance in America, performance review articles for The New York Times, Ballet Review and Performing Arts, obituaries, unpublished chapter entries for the Concise History of Ballet and Modern Dance, and entries for the Dictionary Catalog of Dance, as well as book reviews.
Series V: Lectures, 1963-1995; undated 8 boxes

Alphabetical

This series includes handwritten notes, brochures, and programs relating to seminars or lectures while he was a professor at Sarah Lawrence College, Stanford University, New York University, and as a lecturer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Series VI: Dance Subject Files, 1930s-1990s; undated 4 boxes

Alphabetical

This series is comprised of clippings, press releases, promotional materials, and publications collected by Harris for his personal use and reference. The materials are arranged in alphabetical order and focus on subjects or persons of interest to Harris, mainly within the disciplines of dance. He may have compiled the files as research for his own writing and teaching.

Series VII: Clippings, 1966-1992; undated 1 box

Chronological

The clippings are predominantly dance and music reviews. There are also some travel features as well as art reviews.
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<td>Wood, Katherine, 1989</td>
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Series II: Personal Papers, 1966-1995; undated

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<td>Across Asia Minor: From Damascus to Istanbul brochure, 1995</td>
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<td>American Federation of Arts: Russia's Cultural Heritage program and itinerary, 1988</td>
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<td>Around the World: Cityscapes and Open Spaces brochure, 1989</td>
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<td>Art Tour of Russia: White Nights Festival brochure, 1986</td>
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<td>Autographed Press Kit of Maya Plisetskaya, 1987</td>
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<td>Ballet Memorabilia exhibition catalogue, Skidmore College, 1966</td>
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<td>Color photographs of Moscow landmarks, undated. Includes: Harris' notes.</td>
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43 Edinburgh International Festival itinerary, 1989
44 Egypt Seminar brochure, 1990
45 The Elbe: Crossroads of Europe brochure, 1993
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Includes: Brochures, itineraries, maps, factsheets, and correspondence.
47 An Evening of Denishawn flyer, Marymount Manhattan Theater, 1977
48 Frau ohne Schatten program, San Francisco Opera, 1976
49-50 Gala performance programs, Metropolitan Opera, 1984-1986
51 Gala Performance to Save the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library program, 1972
52 Gangivecchio, Italy brochure, undated

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53 Genius of Italy brochure, 1993
54 Heinrich Vogeler Museum, Worpswede Germany brochure, 1990

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55 The Heritage Society brochure, undated
56 Historic Preservation in England: Two Weeks at Oxford brochure, 1989
57 Istanbul to the Aegean Sea brochure, 1990
58 Journey of Odysseus: Retracing the Odyssey Through the Ancient Mediterranean brochure, 1993
59 Journey to Classical Lands: Italy, Greece, and the Greek Islands brochure, 1995

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1 Last Iron Architecture in SoHo guide, undated
2 Legal records regarding Harris’ 1968 London car accident, 1968-1970
3 Leningrad brochures, 1990
4 Leningrad: City of the Arts brochure, 1990
5 Marin Arts Council: Preliminary itinerary for Russian Arts Tour, 1986
6 Mediterranean Cruise brochures, 1989-1991
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8 Music Critics Association newsletter, 1991
9 Netherlands factsheet, undated
10 The New Harmony Atheneum, New Harmony, Ind., brochure, 1980
11 The North of England brochure, 1990

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12 Northern Italy brochure and contact information, 1990
13 Opera de Paris Garnier Official Tour program, 1993
14 Osterreichische TheatreMuseum, Wien, Vienna, brochure, undated

In German.
15 Prague tour information, 1991
16 Russia: A Cultural Odyssey, 1989

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17 Itinerary and Traveler's Handbook
18 Russia tour information, 1983-1990

Contains: Photographs, postcards, stamps, itinerary, and visa information.
19 Russia: Some Useful Books bibliography, undated

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20 Russian form, undated
21 Russian tour maps and guides, 1981; undated
22 Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century European maps, undated
23 Sotheby's in Moscow: Auction and Seminar program, 1988
24 Sotheby's Ten Day Trip to Russia pamphlet, 1986
25 Splendors of Russia: Kremlins, Monasteries, and Palaces, brochure, 1989
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26 Spring and Opera in New York itinerary, 1995
27 St. Petersburg, Russia tour information, transmittals, 1995
28 Sweden tour information, undated
   Includes: brochures and factsheets.
29 The Treasures of Northern France brochure, 1995
30 Turkey tour information, 1989-1993
   Includes: Itinerary and map.
31 Ukraine cruise brochure, 1993
32 Venice to Barcelona cruise brochure, 1993
33 Venice to Istanbul cruise brochure, 1993
34 The World of Art book catalogue, 1995
35 Zivili Dance Company 20th Anniversary concert program, 1994
   Includes: Press release and clipping.

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2 Color photographs of interiors and exteriors of homes in Abramtsevo, Russia
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3 Color photographs of trips to Yusupov Palace in St. Petersburg, Russia
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6 Biograph Entertainment, Master list of films, 1992
7 Calder Dance Guides subjects, 1982-1983
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   Submitted by Harris while being considered for tenure.
9 Class schedules, 1994-1995
10 Curriculum vitae, undated
11 List of Videos, Visual Resources Collection, 1994
12 Minutes, Planning Committee Meeting, 1991
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14 Student Guide to Policies, undated
15 Student Register, 1990-1991
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18 Trip to Venice, 1994-1995
   Includes: Correspondence, clippings, brochures, and itinerary.
19 DaCapo Dance Reprint Series, Work as General Editor, 1976-1978
   Includes: Lists, clippings, notes, and correspondence.
20 Enjoying Opera audio tape advertisements, 1995; undated
21 Memorandum: Distribution of Ballet Review, 1980
22 Resources for the Dance Historian: A Selected List of Bibliographies Published Since 1960, 1979
   Compiled by Susan Au.
23 Sarah Lawrence Tenure, 1975
   Includes: Correspondence, insurance policy records, and clippings.

Series IV: Articles, 1969-1995; undated

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2   Dancers, Avenue, 1984
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3  Ailey Revelations: The Company's Season, Dance Magazine, 1973
4  Frederick Ashton's "Dream" is a Statement About Life, Dance News, 1969
5-6  Ballet News, 1979-1984

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7  Balanchine's "Chopiniana", undated
8  The Ballets Russes of Sergei Diaghilev, 1983
9  Fonteyn: The Making of a Legend, undated
10  Concise History of Ballet and Modern Dance Book chapters, 1979-1981
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11  Interview with Rudolf Nureyev, undated
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12  Nureyev and The Joffrey Ballet, 1980
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13  New York Newsletter, 1978
14  The Royal Ballet of Today and Yesterday, 1969
15  Preface to The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky by Alfred Adler, undated
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16  Articles for Dictionary Catalog of the Dance Collection, 1982
17  Articles for Diversion, 1980-1982
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2-4  Articles for Handbuch des MusikTheaters, 1981-1983
5  KUSC - Los Angeles Classical Radio notes, undated
6  The Royal Ballet, Musical America, 1980
7  A 747 of One's Own: New York to Paris in Solitary Splendor, 1979
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10  Balanchine's Ballerinas: Conversations with the Muses, 1984
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14  Cole Porter: His Songs Defined a Decade, 1973
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25  Seen by Hindsight, 1976
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7 1 Ballet's Bad Boy: Morris' Daring Danced Opera, 1989
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3 San Francisco Ballet: A Company to See, 1978
4 Edward Gorey: A Taste for the Terrible, SoHo Arts, 1978

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5 Admirable Intentions, undated
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8 A New Cuisine in...London?, 1972
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10 Public Art Private Lives, 1972
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12 America on Its Toes, Town and Country, 1988

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13 Balanchine's Ballerinas, undated
14 La Bayadere, undated
15 Dance: San Francisco Ballet, undated
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16 The dancer as superstar, undated
17 Exhibition notes for a Sarah Lawrence student exhibit, undated
18 Fifty Years of Serenade, 1984
19 Gautier on Dance, undated
20 Gelsey Kirkland at Convent Garden, 1980
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21 Homebase, undated
22 Nureyev and ABT, 1987
23 Records, undated
24 Rudolf Nureyev, Wonderful Dancer? Great Star, undated
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25 Royal Exchange, undated
26 Russian Ballet, undated
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27 Skin-deep Bravado, undated
28 The Split Personality of Richard Rodgers, undated
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30 Till Eulenspiegel, undated
31-32 Twyla Tharp, undated
33 Week in View, undated
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36 Entries on Diaghilev for World of Art, 1976-1978

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2 19th Century Cultural Crisis, undated
3 Alfred Hitchcock, undated
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7 Austrian Art, undated
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2-4 Berlin: The Twenties, 1986-1987
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5 The Bloomsbury Group and Anti-Bloomsbury, 1973-1975
   At Sarah Lawrence.
6 British Drama, Shaw to Present, 1971-1973
7 Dance lectures, undated
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10 Dutch Painting, undated
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5 Renaissance Art, 1987-1989
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6 Romantic Ballet, 1974
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6 Venice: Italian Renaissance, undated
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7 Victorian England, undated
13 1 Vienna, undated
   At Cooper Union.
2 Vienna: Architecture, undated
   Includes: Maps, notes, and brochures.
3 Vienna: Literature, undated
   Includes: brochures, and clippings.
4 Vienna: The End of the Illusion, 1984-1986
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Includes: Surveys, student quizzes and exams, clippings, maps, and correspondence.

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_William Morris to the Nineties_, 1980-1983
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2 _The Age of Diaghilev_, undated
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3 _The Age of Diaghilev: A Synthesis of the Arts_, 1982
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4 _The Age of Napoleon_, 1990

5 _Architecture of Adolf Loos_, 1987
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6-8
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9 _Asilomar 32 Conference, General Session II_, 1982
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10 Balanchine, Tharp, and Romantic Ballet seminars, 1982
At Florida State University.

11 _Ballet Imperial: From Versailles to St. Petersburg and Beyond_, 1984
At the Houston Seminar.

12 _Ballets Made for the Diaghilev Ballets Russes_, 1979
At the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

13 _Ballets Suedois_, 1995
For a symposium sponsored by the Dance Critics Association held at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

14 _Un Ballo en Maschera_, 1995
At the Metropolitan Opera.

15 _La Belle Epoque: Paris at the Turn of the Century_, 1984
At the Smithsonian Museum.

At Christie's.

17 _Classicism: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow_, 1987
At the Houston Seminar.

18 _Crossed Stars: Artistic Sources and Social Conflict in the Ballet “Romeo and Juliet,”_ 1994
At the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum.

19 _Culture and 19th Century Nationalism_, 1989
At Seattle Opera.

20 _Cunningham on Camera: Opening Night Tribute_, undated
At the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

21 _Designs for the Theatre and Ballet_, undated
At the Grey Art Gallery, New York University.

22 _Diaghilev and the Synthesis of the Arts_, 1981
At the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

23 _The Diaghilev Era_, 1981
At the Dominican College of San Raphael.

24 _The Diaghilev Era I and II_, 1984

25 _Die Meistersinger Seminar_, 1993
At the Wagner Society of New York.

26 Don Carlos Symposium, 1993
At Seattle Opera.

27 _Edwardian Sunset: Britain from 1901-1914_, 1982
At the Smithsonian Institute.

28 _Egyptomania_ at AIDA Symposium, 1992
At Seattle Opera.

29 _Exploring the Heritage: Wagner in the Last 100 Years_, 1983
At New York University.
30 Faust and the Moral World of Wagner's Ring, 1990
   At the Metropolitan Opera Guild.
31 February Film Festival in Dance History, undated
   At Five Colleges.
32 Five Great Dancers Series, 1980
   At the 92nd Street Y.
33 Four Great Dancers, 1982
   At UC Berkeley.
34 From Score to Stage: Singers and Conductors, 1982
   At the 92nd Street Y.
35 George Balanchine: St. Petersburg to New York, 1982
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36 German Opera, undated
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37 The Girl of the Golden West, 1991
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38 Glimmerglass Opera lecture,
   Includes: Invitation and correspondence.
39 Grandeur, Elegance, and Frivolity, undated
   Includes: Notes and syllabus.
40 Henri de Toulouse Lautrec: The Belle Epoque, 1986
   At the Princeton Club.
41 The Heritage of Opera, 1978
   At the Sunnyvale Community Center.
42 A History of Wagnerian Singers, 1989
   At UCLA.
43 Hitler and the Architects, 1993
   At the 96 Street Branch, New York Public Library.
44 Jenufa, 1986
   At the San Francisco Opera Guild.
45 Khovanscheina, 1984
   At the Junior League of San Francisco.
46 Opera as a Visual Art, OPERA America's 24th Annual Conference, 1993
   At Seattle Opera.
47 Kristen Flagstad lecture, 1995
   At the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum.
48-49 Late Victorian Architecture in Britain, 1981; undated
   At the Copper-Hewitt Museum.
50 L'Incoronazione di Poppea, 1975
   At the San Francisco Opera.

   At Barnard.
5 Metropolitan Opera Lecture Series, 1990-1994
6 Modernism in 20th Century Dance, 1987
   At Miami-Dade Community College.
7 Mozart: From Salzburg to Amadeus, 1991
   At Darien Community Association.
8 The Newport Symposium, 1994-1996
9 Opera for Everyone, 1979
   At the Bronxville Adult School.
Dale Harris Papers

10 Opera Lecture Series, Metropolitan Opera Guild, 1983-1990
   *Reconception of Modernism*, 1994
      At Princeton University.
11 *Ring Lectures*, 1993
      At the Wagner Society of New York.
12 Ring Symposium on Opera, 1991-1995
      At Seattle Opera.
13 *The Rite of Spring at 75*, 1987
      At the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
14 *Russian Nationalism and Diaghilev*, undated
      At Florida State University.
15 *Sergei Diaghilev: Animator of the Arts*, 1985; undated
      At Castle Howard, England, undated
16 Diaghilev Symposium at Oberlin College, 1985
17 *Sophisticates Abroad*, 1994
      At the Corcoran Gallery of Art.
18 *The Splendors of St. Petersburg*, 1989
19 *Symposium on Stuart Davis*, 1987
      At the Whitney Museum of Art.
20 *Thais*, 1976
      At the San Francisco Opera.
21 *The Theater of Illusion: Scenic Transformations from Diaghilev to Robert Wilson*, 1985
      At the Maryland Institute College of Art.
22 *Turn of the Century Vienna*, 1984
      At the Walters Art Gallery.
23 *The Twilight of the Romanovs: Russia in the Silver Age*, 1995
      At the Darien Community Association.
24 *Two by Two: Partnering and Pas de Deux*, 1987
      At the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
25 *War and Peace Symposium*, 1989-1994; undated
      At Seattle Opera.
26 *Werther*, 1975
      At the San Francisco Opera.
27 *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: His Life and Times*, 1991
      At the Smithsonian Museum.
28 *The World of Art*, undated
      At Trinity College.
29 *The World of Napoleon*, 1990
      At the Wagner Society of America.
30 *Wozzeck*, 1988
      At the L.A. Music Center Opera League.
31

**Series VI: Dance Subject Files, 1930s-1990s; undated**

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<td>Includes: Typescripts, brochures, drafts, and correspondence. Notable items include two postcards sent to Harris by Cunningham.</td>
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Dale Harris Papers

Includes: Typescripts and notes.

5-6

M, 1970s-1990s; undated

Includes: Typescripts, brochures, drafts, programs, and correspondence.

19 1

New York City Ballet, 1970s

Includes: Photograph, notes, clippings and copy of Balanchine's Last Will and Testament.

2 2

Jerome Robbins, 1980-1986; undated

3-4

Twyla Tharp, 1970s-1990s; undated

Includes: Typescripts, brochures, drafts, programs, and correspondence by Tharp.

5

T-Z, 1970s-1990s

Series VII: Clippings, 1966-1992; undated

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