The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the
Jeanne Hays Beaman papers
1920-1990
(S) *MGZMD 376

Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2014

Summary

Creator: Beaman, Jeanne Hays

Title: Jeanne Hays Beaman papers

Date: 1920-1990

Size: 1.34 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Gift of Jeanne Hays Beaman, 2004

Abstract: Jeanne Hays Beaman is a dancer, choreographer, and teacher. The Jeanne Hays Beaman papers hold computer dance research material, arts organization files, photographs, programs, awards, correspondence, and scrapbooks.

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Processing note: Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2014

Creator History

Jeanne Hays Beaman is a dancer, choreographer, and teacher. Born in San Francisco, she had her first professional appearance dancing under Michel Fokine at the Hollywood Bowl in 1929. Beaman studied with Adolph Bolm, May O'Donnell, and Martha Graham. In 1938, she attended the Bennington School of the Dance, and then joined the San Francisco Opera Ballet, where she danced from 1938 to 1940. In 1942 she received an M.A. in Physical Education at Mills College. As a choreographer, Beaman created three nationally released ballets for the television network WQED in Pittsburgh. She also choreographed dances for the Redlands Bowl in California from 1953 to 1955.

Beaman was a pioneer with dance and technology, choreographing several pieces using computer software. She also published several articles about the use of computer technology in dance including "Computer Dance" for Impulse magazine in 1965. She taught at the University of Pittsburgh from 1961

to 1975, and was a founder of the American College Dance Festival Association and the Pittsburgh Dance Council. She was the dance coordinator for the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation (1975-1978), dance evaluator for the New England Foundation for the Arts (1979-1982), and a member of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (1986-1992).

Scope and Content Note

The Jeanne Hays Beaman papers hold computer dance research material, arts organization files, photographs, programs, awards, correspondence, and scrapbooks. Computer dance research materials consist of correspondence with colleagues, programs, notes, articles, and her unpublished book The Workbook for Computer-Generated Choreography, which was a collaboration with computer specialist Dale Isner. All materials reflect Beaman's interest in using computers for artistic expression, and include correspondence with individuals from IBM and other companies in the developing field of arts technology. There are a few sample printouts from choreographic software programs, but there are no full examples of choreography.

Arts organization files hold correspondence and conference materials from the American College Dance Festival Association, the American Dance Guild, the Pittsburgh Dance Council, and the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation. The Massachusetts Arts and Humanities files include correspondence and photographs detailing a 1978 Merce Cunningham Dance Company residency in local schools.

Scrapbooks hold clippings and programs documenting Beaman's early dance training and career (1920-1940) as well as photographs from a 1974 Anna Halprin workshop in Pittsburgh. Later items were occasionally pasted into the early career scrapbook. Some of these additions date from the 1970s. Photographs are limited and document workshops and performances primarily from 1960 to 1975. Of note is a mounted set of images from Beaman's computer-choreographed dance Cluster at the Center (1969). Awards hold honor certificates and ceremony programs. Correspondence is primarily personal cards. A file on Bennington School of the Dance holds reunion information as well as a copy of an interview given by Beaman in 1979 about her year at the school.

Audio visual material consists of a WQED broadcast ballet and a computer dance presentation from 1973. Audio visual materials may be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Arrangement: Alphabetical by file type.

Key Terms

Subjects
Dance -- Study and teaching
Dance and technology
Modern dance

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Scrapbooks

Container List

b. 1 f. 1-8	Arts Organizations 1973-1990
b. 1 f. 9	Awards 1961-1973
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b. 3	Early Career 1920-1940
b. 4	Anna Halprin Workshop 1974