



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

American Ballet Theatre photographs

1920-1992

*MGZEB 21-0034

Processed by Emily P. Dunne in 2021

Summary

Creator: American Ballet Theatre

Title: American Ballet Theatre photographs

Date: 1920-1992

Size: 3.33 linear feet (9 boxes)

Source: Unknown.

Abstract: The American Ballet Theatre is a dance company that stages new and classic ballets. The collection holds both headshots of dancers and candid photographs of the company on their international tours. The collection primarily depicts the 1940s through the 1980s, the tenure of principal dancer and co-director Lucia Chase.

Preferred citation: American Ballet Theatre photographs, *MGZEB 21-0034. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Emily P. Dunne in 2021

Related Materials:

American Ballet Theatre records, 1936-ca. 1967. Jerome Robbins Dance Division | (S) *MGZMD 49

Creator History

The American Ballet Theatre was founded in 1939, based in New York City. Originally called Ballet Theatre, the company changed its name to American Ballet Theatre in the summer of 1957 after returning from a European tour. The company tours the United States annually and often also performs internationally. Performing both classic and new works, the American Ballet Theatre is dedicated to expanding the world of ballet to the widest possible audience.

Lucia Chase (b. 1897) was one of the founding members and principal dancers for the Ballet Theatre, retiring from the stage in 1960 but assuming the role of the company's co-director until 1980. Chase encouraged the work of many young choreographers, including Jerome Robbins and Michael Kidd, and was intimately involved with developing the talents of dancers in the company. Under Chase's direction, the American Ballet Theatre thrived both artistically and financially. She danced in the company into her 70s and served as a strong administrator, raising funds during tight financial support for dance. Chase died in New York City in 1986.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains photographs and copy negatives of dancers in the American Ballet Theatre (previously Ballet Theater) from the 1940s through the 1980s, with the bulk of materials dating from 1949 until 1987. Most of the photographs are straightforward headshots, occasionally with the dancer wearing a specific costume from a production. These images were likely for press purposes, rather than documentation of an individual performance. Some of the dancers included in the collection include Erik Bruhn, Cynthia Gregory, Ruth Ann Koesun, John Kriza, Elaine Kudo and others. There are some specific performances documented including *Coppelia*, *Great Galloping Gottschalk* and *Napoli Divertissements*.

Several different photographers and photo studios are represented in the collection, including Fred Fehl, Kenn Duncan, Sue Markin, Maurice Seymour, and Martha Swope. In addition to headshots, there are several publicity photographs and more candid images of the company on their international tours from 1949 until 1968. These photographs depict both the dancers' performances and shots exploring the cities they are visiting.

A large part of the collection is related to the principal ballerina, and later co-director Lucia Chase. This includes photographs of the dancer herself as well as headshots of ballet dancers from the 1920s and 1930s, several of which are autographed and inscribed to Chase.

The collection is arranged into photographs of individual dancers and performers arranged alphabetically by last name and photographs of the company's tours, arranged chronologically. Their international tours include trips to South America, Japan and throughout cities in Europe.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet companies -- Photographs
Ballet dancers
Dance -- 20th century

Occupations

Dancers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Negatives (photographs)
Photographs

Names

Chase, Lucia, 1897-1986

Koesun, Ruth Ann
American Ballet Theatre
Ballet Theatre (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

Dancers and Performances

- b. 1 f. 1 **Correspondence 1947-1992**
- b. 1 f. 2 **A 1940s-1960s**
- b. 7 f. 1 Includes: Alicia Alonso; Fernando Alonso; Jeanne Armin; Irene Apinee; Sonia Arova; Estelle Aza.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Balough-Bettis 1940s-1989**
- b. 7 f. 2 Includes: Buddy Balough; Irina Baronova; Mikhail Baryshnikov; Pina Bausch; Valerie Bettis.
- b. 1 f. 4 **Birkmeyer-Busch 1950s-1980s**
- b. 7 f. 3 Includes: Michael Birkmeyer; Patrick Bissell; Nai Bonet; Susan Borree; Paolo Bortoluzzi; Eric Braun; Peter Breuer; Karena Brock; Kelly Brown; Dave Brubeck; Erik Bruhn; Fernando Bujones; Mary Burr; Christine Busch.
- b. 1 f. 5 **Carow-Caton 1940s-1970s**
- b. 7 f. 4 Includes: Joseph Carow; Elisabeth Carroll; William Carter; Edward Caton.
- b. 1 f. 6-7 **Chase, Lucia 1920s-1986**
- b. 7 f. 5 Includes some snapshots taken by and of Chase, some during the Mexico Tour in 1941 through 1942.
- b. 1 f. 8 **Colin-Curry 1920s-1976**
- b. 7 f. 6 Includes: Justin Colin; David Coll; Warren Conover; Karen Conrad; *Coppelia*; Richard Cragun; John Curry.
- b. 2 f. 1 **D 1940s-1980s**
- b. 7 f. 7 Elanor D'Antuono; George de la Peña; Gemze de Lappe; Lisa de Ribere; Michael Denard; Charles Dillingham; Scott Douglas; Patrick Dupond.
- b. 2 f. 2 **E 1940s-1980s**
- b. 7 f. 8 Includes: Han Ebbelaar; André Eglevsky; Kristine Elliott; Ellen Everett.
- b. 2 f. 3 **Fernandez-Gregory 1940s-1980s**
- b. 7 f. 9 Includes: Royes Fernandez; Patrick Flynn; Jean-Charles Gil; Nanette Glushak; Vladimir Gelvan; Alexander Godunov; Choo San Goh; *Great Galloping Gottschalk*; Cynthia Gregory.
- b. 8 f. 1
- b. 2 f. 4 **H 1940s-1980s**
- b. 8 f. 2 Includes: John Hambleton; Melissa Hayden; Alina Hernandez; Kim Highton; Rosella Hightower; Lise Houlton.
- b. 2 f. 5 **Kage-Kivit 1940s-1980s**
- b. 8 f. 3 Includes: Jonas Kage; Nora Kaye; Chrisa Keramidas; Dominique Khalfouni; Nora Kimball; Gelsey Kirkland; Ted Kivit.
- b. 2 f. 6 **Koesun, Ruth Ann 1949-1969**
- b. 8 f. 4
- b. 3 f. 1 **Koon-Kraft 1940s-1980s**
- b. 8 f. 5 Includes: Alpheus Koon; Ellen Kraft.
- b. 3 f. 2 **Kriza, John 1941-1966**
- b. 8 f. 6
- b. 3 f. 3 **Kudo, Elaine 1980s**
- b. 8 f. 7
- b. 3 f. 4 **Lander-Muradoff 1938-1989**
- b. 8 f. 8 Includes: Toni Lander; Keith Lee; Liz Lerman; David Lichine; Natalia Makarova; Charles Maple; Oliver Matz; Ruth Mayer; John Meehan; Jolinda Menendez; Yoko Morishita; Grant Muradoff.
- b. 3 f. 5 **Nahat-Romanoff 1950s-1980s**
- b. 9 f. 1 Includes: Dennis Nahat; *Napoli Divertissements*; Pamela Nearhoof; Rudolf Nureyev; Terry Orr; Gregory Osborne; Ronald Perry; John Prinz; Dimitri Romanoff.

Dancers and Performances (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 6 Scheepers-Young 1940s-1980s
- b. 9 f. 2 Includes: Martin Scheepers; Christine Spizzo; Carla Stallings; Frank Smith; Anne Spelman; Marianna Tcherkassky; Clark Tippet; John Turjoman; Martine Van Hamel; Georgina Vidal; Edward Villella; Amnon V'Tamar; Charles Ward; Diana Weber; Patricia Wilde; Sallie Wilson; Rebecca Wright; Gale Young.
- b. 3 f. 7 Set and Costume Designs 1940s-1980s
- b. 3 f. 8 Headshots Inscribed to Lucia Chase 1926-1935
- b. 4 f. 1 Unidentified Performances 1940s-1980s

Tours

- b. 4 f. 2 Mexico 1941-1942
- b. 4 f. 3 Europe 1949-1950
- b. 4 f. 4 Wiesbaden, Germany 1950
- b. 4 f. 5 San Francisco, California 1953
- b. 4 f. 6 South America 1956
- b. 4 f. 7-8 Europe 1956-1957
- b. 5 f. 1-2 General 1957
- b. 5 f. 3 Warsaw, Poland 1958
- b. 5 f. 4 Paris, France 1958
- b. 9 f. 3
- b. 5 f. 5 Europe 1958
- b. 5 f. 6 New York Public Library Reception 1960 February 3
- b. 9 f. 4
- b. 5 f. 7 Moscow, Russia 1960
- b. 5 f. 8 Moyiseyev Company 1961 April 30
- b. 5 f. 9 Kirov Reception 1961 October 21
- b. 9 f. 5
- b. 5 f. 10 South America 1964
- b. 6 f. 1 Japan 1968
- b. 6 f. 2 Unidentified 1940s-1960s