



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Carolina de los Reyes collection

1950-1999

(S) *MGZMD 559

Processed by Emily P. Dunne in 2022.

Summary

Creator: de los Reyes, Carolina (dancer)

Title: Carolina de los Reyes collection

Date: 1950-1999

Size: 0.88 linear feet (3 boxes)

Source: Donated to the New York Public Library by Carolina de los Reyes in 2021.

Abstract: Carolina de los Reyes is a flamenco dancer best known for her work with José Greco's Spanish Ballet. The collection contains press and photographs related to Reyes' dance career, as well as recordings of Reyes' performances, and pieces of her flamenco costume. The collection documents her career as a flamenco dancer in Spain, and her time touring the world with the José Greco company in the 1950s and 1960s.

Conditions Governing Access:

Inquiries regarding audio and moving image materials in the collection may be directed to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division (dance@nypl.org). Audio and moving image materials will be subject to preservation assessment and migration prior to access.

Preferred citation: Carolina de los Reyes collection, (S) *MGZMD 559. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: Multiple languages

Processing note: Processed by Emily P. Dunne in 2022.

Creator History

Carolina de los Reyes was a flamenco practitioner and eventually a principal dancer for José Greco's Spanish Ballet. Reyes was born in the United States, likely California, in the early 1940s. She later moved with her family to New York City, where she spent her childhood. In the early 1960s, Reyes

developed an interest in flamenco dance while studying at Columbia University. She decided to travel to Spain, developing her technique by performing in nightclubs. José Greco saw her dancing in a cafe in Madrid and invited her to join him as one of his "gypsy dancers."

Reyes occasionally used the stage names "Carol" or "Coral" and cultivated an identity of a "gypsy" dancer. However, this persona was more related to her identity as an independent, traveling artist and passionate dancer than to any ethnic background as a Romani person. Nonetheless, Reyes was often described in the press as the "The Great Gypsy dancer direct from New York."

She studied philosophy and language at Columbia University before falling in love with flamenco dancing, dropping out of school, and moving to Spain. Some reports indicate that Reyes dreamed of becoming a bullfighter before beginning her dance career; she was a pupil of the Mexican bullfighter Carlos Arruza, until an injury ended her career aspirations as a matador.

After joining José Greco's Spanish Ballet, Reyes performed worldwide with the group, including a performance in South Africa in 1964. She appeared in films and was a popular figure, often appearing in contemporary newspapers as part of the nightclub scene. Richard Avedon photographed her, and her curls are said to have inspired Salvador Dali's mustache.

Another article in the collection states that Reyes left the Greco company with her husband, Manolo Barón, a guitarist with the Greco group, in 1967. Reyes and Barón planned to tour the Caribbean islands with cantaor (flamenco singer) Bernardo Laso.

Reyes retired from flamenco and lives in New York.

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains press materials and files related to Reyes' performances, including press, photographs, recordings of Reyes dancing, and pieces of her flamenco costume.

The collection contains two binders of press clippings about Reyes' dance career and one binder of photographs of Reyes' performances, many of which were with José Greco. A program from a 1962 José Greco performance featuring "Coral" Reyes, includes a short biographic note about Reyes. Two magazines from the 1960s, *Sabado Grafico* and *Die Brandway*, are included. A tourist brochure about Spain features an image of Reyes in a flamenco dance pose.

Many articles from the collection describe Reyes' life before moving to Spain and her experience as a flamenco dancer and include newspapers from Spain, South Africa, and the United States. These articles include some questionable information about Reyes' upbringing, especially in descriptions of the dancer as a member of José Greco's dance group. Reyes is often described as a "gypsy," and the fact that she spent most of her adolescence in New York City is often excluded from José Greco's performance programs. However, many articles, highlight that Reyes left university in America to become a flamenco dancer in Spain.

There are photographs of Reyes, which include images of her performing on stage as well as traveling with the José Greco company and with her husband, Manolo Barón.

Three video recordings are present and are titled "Flamenco show," "dancing... with José," and "Carolina - Flamenco."

The collection also contains pieces of Reyes' flamenco costume, including a white lace dress, white flamenco shoes with tacks tipped into the heels and toes, a pair of her earrings, a shawl, and castanets. The earrings in this collection strongly resemble the earrings featured in many photographs of Reyes, including several featured in the periodicals and photographs in the collection.

This collection also provides many examples of how flamenco dance was reported in newspapers in America and Spain in the 1950s and 1960s. Beyond adopting the term "gypsy dancers," Reyes, Greco, and other flamenco performers are primarily described by their bodies and are labeled as "fiery," "passionate," or even "magical." The popular media narrative of Reyes' career fixates on her shift from an American student to a dancer in Spain, and reporters covered their descriptions with particularly stereotypical tropes of Latin culture, and its people.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings (information artifacts)
Filmed performances
Photographs
Video recordings

Subjects

Dance -- Spain -- History
Flamenco

Occupations

Dancers.

Geographic Names

Spain -- Social life and customs

Names

de los Reyes, Carolina (dancer)
Greco, Jose_

Container List

Press

- b. 1 f. 1 **1958-1968**
- b. 2 f. 1 Articles in English and Spanish.
- b. 1 f. 2 **José Greco Company 1963-1965**
- b. 2 f. 2 Includes a program from a José Greco performance.
Articles in English and Spanish.
- b. 1 f. 3 **Spain 1958-1963**
Includes a tourist brochure for the southern coast of Spain, which includes a photograph of Reyes dancing.
Articles in English and Spanish.
- b. 1 f. 4 **Madrid 1961-1965**
Articles in English and Spanish.
- b. 1 f. 5 **South Africa 1963-1964**
Articles in Afrikaans.
- b. 1 f. 6 **America 1965**
- b. 1 f. 7 **London 1968**
- b. 1 f. 8-9 **Photographs 1950s-1960s**

Performances

Includes three performances identified and numbered in order as: [1] Flamenco Show, 1998, [2] Dancing by Carolina, 1990s, [3] Carolina - Flamenco [3], 1992.

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- b. 1 f. 10 **Notes 1990s**
Descriptive notes about each performance that were inserted with original recordings.

Flamenco Costume

Flamenco costume material available by appointment only.

- b. 3 **Accessories 1950s-1960s**
Includes a pair of Reyes' earrings that resemble a pair she wears in several photographs in the collection, a pair of shoes, and other accessories for her flamenco costume.