



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Nathaniel Tileston photographs

1964-2019

*MGZEB 22-0021

Processed by Heather Halliday in 2022.

Summary

Creator: Tileston, Nathaniel

Title: Nathaniel Tileston photographs

Date: 1964-2019

Size: 18.71 linear feet (36 boxes)

Source: The collection of photographs was a gift from Susan Tileston and John Eide in 2021.

Abstract: Nathaniel Tileston (1942-2019) was an American photographer of dance and performance art. The Nathaniel Tileston photographs date from 1964 to 2019, and represent his unusually concentrated career photographing experimental dance and theater performances in New York City and Chicago from the late 1960s through 1982. The collection includes his freelance assignment files, which hold photographic prints, contact sheets, slides, transparencies, and negatives; some early student work; and some exhibition prints.

Preferred citation: Nathaniel Tileston photographs, *MGZEB 22-0021. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Heather Halliday in 2022.

Creator History

Nathaniel Tileston was an American photographer noted for his documentation of dance performances in New York City in the 1970s and 1980s. Tileston, who was born in 1942 in Greenfield, Massachusetts, graduated from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, before studying photography at the Art Institute of Chicago.

In the early 1970s, Tileston moved to New York City and began working for the prominent theater and dance photographer, Martha Swope. By the mid-1970s, Tileston was working independently as a professional freelance photographer covering dance and theater, especially the more experimental works of the downtown scene, publishing his images regularly in the *Soho Weekly News*, and

occasionally in the *New York Times*, *Performance Art Journal*, and *The Village Voice*. His photographs were exhibited at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in 1978 to 1979 and are held in the permanent collection of the Whitney Museum of Art.

In 1982, Tileston effectively curtailed his dance and theater photography career when he and his wife Susan moved to Nova Scotia, Canada to run a bed and breakfast inn. The couple were active members of the local arts community in Nova Scotia and Tileston accepted occasional freelance photography assignments from the Parks Canada Agency. Tileston died in 2019.

Scope and Content Note

The Nathaniel Tileston photographs represent Tileston's unusually concentrated career photographing experimental dance and theater performances in New York City and Chicago from the late 1960s through 1982. The collection includes his freelance assignment files, a box of exhibition prints, and some early student work.

The freelance assignment files comprise the bulk of the collection. Images in these files depict dancers and choreographers in live performance or rehearsal, often in Off-Broadway theaters, Soho lofts, gallery spaces, and other alternative performance venues. A small number of portraits of dancers and other cultural figures are also included. Among the many prominent choreographers and dancers featured are: David Gordon, Lucinda Childs, Douglas Dunn, Trisha Brown, William Dunas, Deborah Hay, Sara Rudner, Sylvia Palacios Whitman, Risa Jaroslow, and Meredith Monk. Of particular note is Tileston's extensive coverage of the Chicago production of *Hair* at the Shubert Theatre in 1969 and 1970, which includes auditions, rehearsals, the first photo call, and subsequent performances. Most assignment files hold a mix of 8 x 10-inch black-and-white photographic prints, contact sheets, slides, transparencies, and negatives. Plentiful handwritten notes about performance events and technical details of the shoot accompany these files. Printed promotional material occasionally appears in assignment files, as well.

Exhibition prints, which are found in Box 19, date from 1976 to 1981 and represent Tileston's favorite selections from his prime working years in New York City. These 11 x 14-inch black-and-white prints are usually labeled and many are matted. Some of these images may have been featured in the "Alternative Gestures: Another Look at Dance Photography" exhibition at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center that ran in the winter of 1978-1979.

The collection also includes some scattered work Tileston likely created as an art student, such as a large file on the Green Bay and Western Railroad shot in 1968. A significant quantity of negatives, dating from 1964-1970, are housed separately from assignment files and are only minimally labeled. These negatives can be found in Boxes 32 to 36 and are arranged roughly chronologically. Some uncut, unsorted, and unlabeled rolls of transparencies comprise most of the scant color work in the collection. These miscellaneous transparencies are found in Boxes 25 to 31.

Arrangement: The Nathaniel Tileston photographs are primarily arranged alphabetically by folder title, which is usually a personal name, title of a performance, or a publication title. A smaller section of miscellaneous prints, minimally labeled negatives and unsorted, unlabeled transparencies follows the alphabetical run.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Color slides
Contact sheets
Negatives (photographs)
Photographic prints
Transparencies

Subjects

Dance -- Photographs
Performance art

Occupations

Photographers.

Names

Brown, Trisha, 1936-2017
Childs, Lucinda
Dunas, William
Dunn, Douglas, 1942-
Eginton, Meg
Gordon, David, 1936-
Hay, Deborah, 1941-
Jaroslow, Risa
Monk, Meredith
Rudner, Sara
Self, Jim, 1954-
Tileston, Nathaniel
Whitman, Sylvia Palacios

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 American Ballet Theatre 1981 May 18
- b. 1 f. 2-3 Asian American Dance Company 1979-1980
- b. 1 f. 4 Australian Indigenous People 1981 July 22
- b. 1 f. 5-6 *Bag Lady* 1979-1980
- b. 17 f. 1 Banz Wedding 1969 October
Negatives and handwritten notes.
- b. 1 f. 7-8 Bethel, Pepsi 1974, 1981
- b. 1 f. 9 Boyce, Johanna 1979 October 16
- b. 1 f. 10 Campbell, Charles 1973 May 1
Capoeira
- b. 20 f. 1-3 1979 July
35mm color slides.
- b. 1 f. 11 1980 November 9
Symphony Space.
- b. 1 f. 12 Capoeira of Bahia 1980 September 18
- b. 18 f. 1 Caprioli, Cristina 1999 May
Childs, Lucinda
- b. 18 f. 2 1978 October
The Kitchen.
- b. 2 f. 1 With Jon Gibson 1981 December 9
- b. 2 f. 2 Comfort, Jane 1980 December 3
Dance Theater Workshop.
- b. 2 f. 3 Coronado, José 1977 January 22
- b. 2 f. 4 Dance Text Flash Festival 1981 May 8
P.S.1.
- b. 2 f. 5 Dance Theatre of Harlem 1981
Scheherazade.
- b. 2 f. 6 Dance Umbrella 1979
- b. 2 f. 7 Davis, Chuck 1974
Dunas, William
- b. 2 f. 8 Children's Crusade 1972
- b. 2 f. 9 *Sightseeing* 1976 March 21
- b. 3 f. 1 1977 February 12
- b. 3 f. 2 Ambrose Arts 1977 April
- b. 3 f. 3-4 *Feathers* 1978
Includes a performance at The Kitchen on 1978 December 12.
- b. 3 f. 5 The Isle of Wright 1978 December 12
- b. 3 f. 6 Westbeth Theatre Center 1980 Spring
- b. 3 f. 7 Paula Cooper Gallery 1981 February 12
Dunn, Douglas

Dunn, Douglas (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 8 1976-1981
 - b. 4 f. 1-6
- b. 5 f. 1-2, 4, 6
- b. 18 f. 5
 - b. 18 f. 4 Connecticut 1977 May
 - b. 5 f. 5 *Echo* 1980 April 21
The Kitchen
 - b. 18 f. 3 *In Performance at the Diplomat* 1977 April 25
 - b. 5 f. 3 Museum of Modern Art Solo 1979 July
- b. 3 f. 9-10 Rehearsal Portraits 1977 June-July
- b. 5 f. 7-8 Eginton, Meg 1981
Includes two performances.
 - b. 5 f. 9-10 Ensemble Studio Theatre 1976-1977
Includes *The Soft Touch*.
- b. 19 f. 1-2 Exhibition Prints 1976-1981
Large prints, some matted, most labeled; subjects include: Douglas Dunn, Lucinda Childs, Trisha Brown, Bill T. Jones, Sylvia Whitman Palacios, and Twyla Tharp.
- b. 5 f. 11 Fenley, Molissa 1980
 - b. 6 f. 1 Foreman, Richard 1977 December
 - b. 6 f. 2 Forti, Simone 1979 April 24
 - b. 6 f. 3 Germaine, Diane 1978 November 8
 - b. 6 f. 4 Gladstein, Deborah 1980 December
 - b. 6 f. 5 *Gloria* 1981 June 25
Royal Ballet.
- b. 6 f. 6-8 Gordon, David 1981-1982
- b. 18 f. 6 Green Bay and Western Railroad 1968 May
See Box 32 for negatives.
 - b. 23 f. 2 *Hair* 1969
Chicago production at Shubert Theatre; includes auditions, rehearsals and first photo call. See Boxes 34 and 35 for negatives.
 - b. 6 f. 9 Hay, Deborah 1980 July 31
 - b. 7 f. 1 Hayman-Chaffey, Susana 1980 January 6
 - b. 7 f. 2 Hutchins, Jeane circa 1981
- b. 7 f. 3-4 International Center of Photography 1976
- b. 7 f. 5-6 Jaroslow, Risa 1979-1980
 - b. 7 f. 7 Jem Records 1976 October 23
 - b. 7 f. 8 Jones, Jeff 1974 August
 - b. 7 f. 9 *Kate/Blvd* 1977 December 19
- b. 8 f. 1-2 King, Kenneth 1979-1980
- b. 8 f. 3 Kraus, Lisa and Sally Silvers 1981 May
 - b. 8 f. 4 Kroesen, Jill 1979, May 27
 - b. 8 f. 5 Lubar, Cindy 1980 April 30
- b. 8 f. 6-7 Lusby, David 1978-1980
- b. 9 f. 1 Makarova and Company 1980 September 24
 - b. 9 f. 2 Maldwyn 1976 August

- b. 9 f. 3 Manheim, Kate 1977 December 16
- b. 9 f. 4 *The Midnight Visitor* 1981 December
- b. 9 f. 5 Miller, Tim 1982 February 9
- b. 9 f. 6 Monk, Meredith 1976-1979
- b. 18 f. 7 Includes *Recent Ruins*.
- Movement Research
 - b. 9 f. 7 Benefit 1980
 - b. 17 f. 2 *Movement Research Performance Journal* 2018
Issue #51.
 - b. 9 f. 8 Nagy, Ivan 1978 August 30
 - b. 9 f. 9 Neighborhood Playhouse 1976 November 23
 - b. 10 f. 1 Neumann, Fred 1981
 - b. 10 f. 2 New Choreographers 1978 June 11
 - b. 10 f. 3 New York University 1974 March 9
 - b. 10 f. 4 Newman, Rosalind 1980 December 9
 - b. 10 f. 5 Osberg, Susan circa 1980
 - b. 10 f. 6 *Our Father* 1980 November 17
 - b. 10 f. 7 Pasquale, Liz 1981
 - b. 17 f. 3 Performance Art Article 2014
Photocopy of "You Had to Be There (Sorta)" by David Levine published in *Parkett*.
 - b. 10 f. 8 Performance Garage 1981 April 29
 - b. 10 f. 9 Perron, Wendy 1981 March 4
 - b. 10 f. 10 Philadanco 1978 July 27
 - b. 11 f. 1 Raison, Bertrand 1980 June
 - b. 11 f. 2 Reigenborn, Garry 1981
 - b. 11 f. 3 Reitz, Dana 1980 March 19
 - b. 11 f. 4 Rethorst, Susan 1980 December 17
 - b. 11 f. 5 Rinker, Kenneth 1981 October
 - b. 11 f. 6 Robbe-Grillet 1976 December 4
 - b. 11 f. 7-10 Rudner, Sara 1977-1981, 2013
 - b. 12 f. 1-2 Self, Jim 1980-1982
 - b. 18 f. 8 *Selma* 1981 October 20
 - b. 12 f. 3 The Shaliko Company 1975-1976
Woyzeck.
 - b. 12 f. 4-5 Sherman, Stuart 1977-1981
 - b. 13 f. 1-2
 - b. 13 f. 3 Simons, Ton 1982 January
The Kitchen.
 - b. 13 f. 4 Smead, John 1976 September 30
Cigarette
Soho Weekly News

Soho Weekly News (cont.)

- b. 21 1975-1982
- b. 22 f. 3 8x10 inch black-and-white prints. Subjects include: Rosalind Newman, Simone Forti, Meredith Monk, Lucinda Childs, David Gordon, Ping Chong, Ellen Webb, William Dunas, Kenneth Rinker, Wendy Perron, Eiko and Komo, Robert Kovich, Blondell Cummings, Jane Comfort, Kazuo Ohno, Gail Conrad, Jill Kroesen, Dianne McIntyre, David Woodbury, Meg Eginton, Alice Farley, Sara Rudner, Trisha Brown, Karole Armitage, Sylvia Whitman Palacios, Andrew De Groat, Douglas Dunn, Dana Reitz, Kimi Okada, Diane Jacobwitz, and Peggy Harper.
- b. 23 f. 3 Contact Sheets 1975-1982
- b. 14 f. 9 Asia Society: Bali 1981 May 31
- b. 13 f. 10 *Battery* 1976 June 17
- b. 13 f. 5 Brooklyn Culture Auction 1976 March 6
- b. 14 f. 6 Douglas Crase circa 1980
- b. 13 f. 7 Jack Heifner 1976 May 27
- b. 14 f. 8 Kathakali 1981 April 28
- b. 14 f. 7 Laurie Colwin 1981 February
- b. 13 f. 6 *Lesson of the Master* 1976 March 23
- b. 14 f. 2 Mrs. Loesser 1976 August
- b. 13 f. 12 *Neon Rainbow* 1976 June 26
- b. 14 f. 4 Rudy Danzig 1976 October 26
- b. 13 f. 8 *SkyLaunch* 1976 June 12
- b. 13 f. 11 Spring Fairbank 1976 June 24
- b. 14 f. 5 Stein Reading 1976 December 31
At Paula Cooper Gallery; ran through 1977 January 1.
- b. 13 f. 13 Structuralism Theatre 1976 July 10
- b. 13 f. 9 Tessie O'Shea 1976 June 13
- b. 14 f. 1 *Wildflowers* 1976 July 14
- b. 14 f. 3 Women's Interest 1976 October 21
- b. 14 f. 10 Susan + Willy 1981 June 12
- b. 14 f. 11 Symphony Space 1980 October 8
- b. 14 f. 12-13 The Talking Band 1978 December
Includes *Work Song* and *The Kalevalla*.
- b. 15 f. 1 Tanaka, Min 1980 November 14
- b. 15 f. 2 Taylor, Paul 1981 October 6
- b. 15 f. 3 Temple University 1979 December 5
- b. 15 f. 4 Teton, Gail 1982 January 6
- b. 15 f. 5 Tolle, Roger 1980 November 11
- b. 15 f. 6 Ton + Ellen 1981 May 14
- b. 16 f. 1 Tryom Electronic Chess Computer 1981 July
- b. 16 f. 2-3 Vermont, Skye 1976-1977
Includes *Solitaire* and *Spore*.
- b. 16 f. 4 Vislocky, Dorothy 1976 April 22
- b. 16 f. 5 Webb, Ellen 1980-1981
- b. 16 f. 6 Wiener, Nina 1980 October 5
- b. 16 f. 7-9 Whitman, Sylvia Palacios 1979-1980

- b. 22 f. 4 **Whitney Museum of Art** circa 1981-1982
8x10 inch black-and-white prints. Subjects include: Douglas Crase, Ping Chong, Laurie Colwin, William Dunas, David Gordon, Grethe Holby, Marjorie Gamsso, and Charles Moulton.
- b. 16 f. 10 **Woodbury, David** 1981 June 2
- b. 16 f. 11 **Y Pants** 1980
Miscellaneous Prints
 - b. 24 **1974-1982**
 - b. 22 f. 1 8x10 inch black-and-white prints. Subjects include: Senta Driver, Laura Dean, Douglas Dunn, Sara Rudner, Risa Jaroslow, Jon Gibson, Paul Taylor, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Gail Teton, Kenneth King, Deborah Hay, Rosalind Newman, Gail Conrad, Andrew De Groat, Kay Mazzo, Dana Reitz, Johanna Boyce, Sam Costa, Diane Germaine, Charles Moulton, Daniel Lewis, Sharon Kinney, Meg Harper, Becky Arnold, Louis Falco, Cheryl Sutton, Nina Wiener, Jean-Pierre Bonnegoux, Patricia McBride, Satoru Shimazaki, Toby Armour, Jack Moore, Kathy Duncan, Barbara Roan, Murry Louis, Kathy Posin, Paul Draper, and Glenna Hamm.
 - b. 22 f. 2 **circa 2010s**
8x10 inch black-and-white prints depicting an unlabeled performance or rehearsal.
 - b. 23 f. 1 **Contact Sheets** circa 1976 - circa 1982
Unlabeled 8x10 inch black-and-white prints.
Miscellaneous Transparencies circa 1980
Unsorted, unlabelled 35mm and 120mm transparencies.
 - b. 20 f. 4 **35mm**
 - b. 26-27
 - b. 25 **120mm**
 - b. 28-31 Box 25 includes: Sylvia Palacios Whitman, David Gordon, and Merce Cunningham.
- Negatives**
 - b. 32-33 **1964-1970**
 - b. 34-35 ***Hair*** 1969-1970
A Chicago production of *Hair* at the Shubert Theatre.