



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Richard Beard papers

1930-1995

(S) *MGZMD 410

Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2014

Summary

Creator: Beard, Richard

Title: Richard Beard papers

Date: 1930-1995

Size: 4.09 linear feet (3 boxes, 4 volumes)

Source: Donated by Robert James Wood II, 2012.

Abstract: Richard "Dick" Beard was a ballet dancer and choreographer. The Richard Beard papers contain programs, photographs, correspondence, and scrapbooks.

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Creator History

Richard "Dick" Beard (1926-2009) was a ballet dancer and choreographer. His first professional appearance was with Ballet International in 1944. After a brief period at Ballet International, Beard was recruited for the Ballet Theatre by Antony Tudor where he created the role of the Bridegroom in Tudor's ballet *Undertow* in 1945. Other solo roles included Paris in Tudor and Eugene Berman's *Romeo and Juliet* and a role in Jerome Robbins' *Facsimile*.

Following the closure of Ballet Theater, Beard was invited to join Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein's new group, Ballet Society. In 1948 Ballet Society became the New York City Ballet and Beard remained as a founding member.

After Beard's departure from the New York City Ballet, he appeared as a dancer on the *Your Show of Shows* television series and toured the U.S. with the Cabots, a dance trio cabaret act. The Cabots

(Beard, Frank Sabella and Marion Saunders) also spent a year performing in Paris in the 1960s. In the 1960s and 1970s, Beard created choreography for major television musical series starring Dinah Shore, Danny Kaye and Julie Andrews as well as television specials for Cher, Mitzi Gaynor, and Doris Day. He retired in Los Angeles and remained there until his death in 2009.

Scope and Content Note

The Richard Beard papers contain programs, photographs, correspondence, and scrapbooks. Photographs include individual promotional shots of Beard and the Cabots, as well as photographs of dancers from the New York City Ballet. Personal snapshots document his travels to England and France in 1960. There are also photographs of retired dancers in the 1970s and 1980s at various events in Los Angeles, including Alicia Markova and Tatiana Riabouchinska. Programs consist of Ballet International and Ballet Theatre performances in which Beard appeared, as well as the Cabots' tours and various anniversary galas and memorial services.

Scrapbooks consist of one volume documenting the touring career of the Cabots with programs, photographs, and clippings; a Ballet Theatre European tour scrapbook holding personal snapshots (1946); and an early dance career volume with clippings, postcards, and photographs dating 1945 to 1948. The Ballet Theatre tour scrapbook documents the backstage life of the dancers as well as their outside activities as they toured various cities. There are also three scrapbooks with a mix of materials ranging from childhood photographs of Beard to clippings about dancers he has worked with, autographed portraits of notable dancers, and obituaries. These materials date from the early 1930s to 1975.

Correspondence is limited and consists of an undated letter from Beard to his mother and a few postcards from friends and family. There are also two letters from Thamar (Tamara) Karsavina to Cyril Beaumont dated 1914 which were collected by Beard, possibly to be included in one of his dance scrapbooks.

Arrangement: Alphabetical by file type.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet -- 20th century
Choreographers -- United States
Dance -- Television

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Scrapbooks

Names

Ballet Theatre (New York, N.Y.)

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence 1943-2001
- b. 1 f. 2 Karsavina, Tamar 1914
- b. 1 f. 3-7 Photographs 1944-1985
- b. 3 f. 1-2 Photographs 1944-1985
- Programs
- b. 1 f. 8-9 1944-1954
- b. 2 f. 1-3 1960-1995
- Scrapbooks
- Ballet Theatre
- b. 3 f. 3 1945-1948
 - Also includes some Ballet International and Ballet Society material.
- v. 1 1946
 - European tour.
- b. 3 f. 4 The Cabots 1950-1954
- Dance
- v. 2 1943-1974
 - Town and Country covers, newspaper articles, programs, ballet dancer postcards and photographs, and some Ballet Society photographs.
- v. 3 1950-1975
 - Dance and ballet photographs, Beard in costume, obituaries, work papers, postcards, and notes.
- v. 4 Personal 1949
 - Images of ship travel, also includes photographs of Frank Sabella in Florida.