



## The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

### **Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection**

1934 - 1965

\*MGZEB 18-2791

The finding aid for the Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection is a conflation of multiple gift inventories created by Arnold Eagle and given to the library. Processed by Tara D. Strongosky, 2018.

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Eagle, Arnold

**Title:** Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection

**Date:** 1934 - 1965

**Size:** 17.55 linear feet (24 boxes)

**Source:** The New York Public Library acquired the Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection through multiple gifts from the creator, Arnold Eagle, from 1988 through 1990.

**Abstract:** The Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection documents national and international ballet companies from 1934 through 1965. Formats include photographic prints, black and white negatives, color transparencies, and contact sheets. There are also three scrapbooks of contact sheets of the Royal Danish Ballet. Dance companies well represented in the collection are the Royal Danish Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet Company, and the Martha Graham Dance Company.

**Preferred citation:** Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection, \*MGZEB 18-2791. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** The finding aid for the Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection is a conflation of multiple gift inventories created by Arnold Eagle and given to the library. Processed by Tara D. Strongosky, 2018.

### **Creator History**

Arnold Eagle was a Hungarian born-American photographer and cinematographer. Born in Budapest in 1909, at age 20 he immigrated to the United States with his parents. While living in Brooklyn in the early 1930s, he discovered photography which led to a job as a photo retoucher. In 1932 he joined the Film and Photo League (FPL) to promote radical social change. Though not documented in this collection, his work with the FPL became some of his best known socially concerned documentary photographs of the 1930s and 1940s. Some of his most significant photographs depict the Jewish

community of the Lower East Side in New York City, the slum conditions of tenement buildings, and the elevated subway trains of New York City.

Eagle also had a long career photographing dance companies both nationally and internationally. For over 30 years, he documented companies such as the Joffrey Ballet Company, the Sophie Maslow Dance Company, and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Of his many years spent in the dance world, he photographed the Martha Graham Dance Company for over a decade beginning in 1944.

His most notable and prolific body of dance photography, however, is the documentation of the Royal Danish Ballet. He was commissioned and invited by the Danish government and Columbia Artists Management to photograph the contemporary activities of the Company. Eagle flew to Copenhagen with seven cameras, dozens of lenses, and hundreds of rolls of film to immerse himself in the life of the dancers, both on and off stage. He photographed everything from the janitors of the Royal Theatre to the departure of the last dancer during rehearsal.

In addition to his professional photography career, Eagle was a professor of photography at the New School of Social Research from 1955 until shortly before his death in 1992. He also at various times gave courses at New York University to which many of his colleagues came for advanced study.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Arnold Eagle dance photograph collection documents national and international dance companies from the years 1934 through 1965. The collection is arranged by format into three series: photographic prints, negatives and transparencies, and contact print scrapbooks. Subseries are then arranged alphabetically.

The prints series consists of black and white prints of varying sizes, ranging from 8" x 10" to 16" x 20". Most of the photographs are unmounted, with the larger sizes mounted on illustration board. The prints include New York City Ballet rehearsals, portraits and studio shots of the José Limón Dance company, and performances by the Dudley-Maslow-Bales Trio. Among the dozen companies represented, there is an emphasis on the Joffrey Ballet, the Martha Graham Dance Company, and the Royal Danish Ballet. Individual dancers such as Harriette Ann Gray and Mary-Averett Seelye are also documented during some of their most well known performances.

The negatives and transparencies series includes a variety of both black and white and color film including 120mm, 4" x 5" transparencies, large format 8" x 10" negatives, and 35mm. About a dozen dance companies are represented with a majority of the series made up by the Joffrey Ballet, the Martha Graham Dance Company, and the Royal Danish Ballet. Niche dance ensembles such as dancers from Bali, Calypso dancers, and the Yemen Dance Group were also documented by Eagle in this collection.

Lastly, three unbound contact print scrapbooks feature a selection of negatives printed from Royal Danish Ballet negatives. Many of these contact prints served as a pool from which Eagle selected to enlarge and were subsequently exhibited in New York City. The scrapbooks are annotated by Eagle with names of companies, performances, and dancers.

## **Key Terms**

**Subjects**

Ballet

Modern dance -- New York (State) -- New York

Performing arts

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Negatives (photographs)

Photographic prints

Transparencies

**Occupations**

Photographers

**Names**

Bruhn, Erik, 1928-1986

Eagle, Arnold

Gray, Harriette Ann

Maslow, Sophie

Joffrey Ballet

Jose\_ Limo\_n Dance Company

Kongelige Danske ballet

Martha Graham Dance Company

Merce Cunningham Dance Company

New York City Ballet

Te'a\_\ron "'Inbal"

## Container List

### Series I: Prints 1944 - 1965 (15 boxes 11.09 linear feet)

The prints series is separated into two subseries, companies and individuals, with files subsequently arranged alphabetically. The series encompasses a wide range of print sizes from 5" x 7" up to 16" x 20". The mounted photographs in the collection were exhibited in New York City sometime during the 1960s or 1970s in an exhibition which focused on Eagle's photographs of the Royal Danish Ballet. While the collection emphasizes Eagle's work documenting the Royal Danish Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet Company, and Martha Graham's company, he also made prints of niche and lesser known dance companies such as the Inbal Dance Theater of Israel and the Dudley-Maslow-Bales Trio.

#### Subseries A: Companies 1944 - 1965

- b. 1 f. 1 Calypso dance companies  
Dudley-Maslow-Bales Trio
- b. 1 f. 2 *Partisan Journey*
- b. 1 f. 3 *Seabourne*
- b. 1 f. 4 Inbal Dance Theater 1952  
Joffrey Ballet Company 1954 - 1965
- b. 1 f. 5-6 *La Fille Mal Gardée*
- b. 1 f. 7-8 *Gamelan* 1962
- b. 1 f. 9-10 Gerald Arpino rehearsal 1962
- b. 1 f. 11-12 *Incubus* 1962
- b. 1 f. 13-14 *Olympics*
- b. 1 f. 15-16 *Pas des Déesses* 1954
- b. 1 f. 17-18 *Sea Shadow* 1962
- b. 2 f. 1-2 *Viva Vivaldi* 1965
- b. 2 f. 3 Contact prints
- b. 2 f. 4-5 José Greco Dance Company  
Includes contact prints.  
José Limón Dance Company 1954
- b. 2 f. 6-7 *The Moor's Pavane* 1954  
Includes contact prints.
- b. 2 f. 8-9 Portraits and studio shots 1954
- b. 3 f. 1-3 Martha Graham Dance Company 1944 - 1958
- b. 3 f. 4 *Alceste*
- b. 3 f. 5-6 *Appalachian Spring* 1944 - 1945
- b. 3 f. 7 *Filming of Appalachian Spring by Nathan Kroll* 1958 June
- b. 4 f. 1 Includes contact prints.
- b. 4 f. 2 *Canticle for Innocent Comedians*
- b. 4 f. 3-5 *Clytemnestra*  
Includes contact prints.
- b. 4 f. 6 *Dark Meadow*
- b. 4 f. 7 *Deaths and Entrances* 1944
- b. 4 f. 8 *Embattled Garden*
- b. 4 f. 9 *Every Soul is a Circus* 1945

Series I: Prints (cont.)

Subseries A: Companies (cont.)

Martha Graham Dance Company (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 10      *Herodiade* 1945
- b. 5 f. 1-3     *Letters to the World*
- b. 5 f. 4     *Night Journey*
- b. 5 f. 5-6     *Punch and the Judy* 1945 - 1946  
                  Includes contact prints.
- b. 5 f. 7     *Seraphic Dialogue*
- b. 5 f. 8     Portraits
- b. 5 f. 9     Unidentified performances
- b. 6 f. 1-2     Merce Cunningham Dance Company 1957  
                  Includes contact prints.
- b. 6 f. 3     New York City Ballet rehearsal contact prints
- Royal Danish Ballet
- b. 6 f. 4     Andersen, Ruth
- b. 6 f. 5     Andersen, Verner
- b. 20 f. 1      *Ballet de la Jeunesse*
- b. 20 f. 2      *Blood Wedding*
- b. 13 f. 1      *Carmen*
- b. 20 f. 3
- b. 6 f. 6      *Chopiniana*
- b. 13 f. 2
- b. 20 f. 4
- b. 6 f. 7      *Coppélia*
- b. 13 f. 3-4
- b. 14 f. 1
- b. 20 f. 5     *Don Quixote*
- b. 6 f. 8      *Dream Pictures*
- b. 14 f. 2
- b. 20 f. 6      *Fanfare*
- b. 20 f. 7      *Flower Festival in Genzano*
- b. 20 f. 8      *Giselle*
- b. 6 f. 9      *Graduation Ball*
- b. 14 f. 3
- b. 20 f. 9
- b. 14 f. 5     *Konservatoriet*
- b. 20 f. 10     *Miss Julie*
- b. 14 f. 6     *Moon Reindeer*
- b. 20 f. 11
- b. 6 f. 10     *Napoli*
- b. 14 f. 7
- b. 20 f. 12
- b. 21 f. 1     *Peter and the Wolf*
- b. 6 f. 11     *Petrouchka*
- b. 15 f. 1
- b. 6 f. 12     Ralov, Kirsten
- b. 6 f. 13     *Romeo and Juliet*
- b. 15 f. 2-3
- b. 16 f. 1
- b. 21 f. 2
- b. 16 f. 2     *Serenade*
- b. 21 f. 3

Series I: Prints (cont.)  
 Subseries A: Companies (cont.)  
 Royal Danish Ballet (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 14      *Simone, Kirsten*
- b. 6 f. 15      *La Sonnambula*
- b. 16 f. 3
- b. 6 f. 16      *Swan Lake*
- b. 6 f. 17      *La Sylphide*
- b. 16 f. 4
- b. 21 f. 4
- b. 21 f. 5      *Symphony in C*
- b. 6 f. 18      *The Whims of Cupid and the Ballet Master*
- b. 17 f. 1
- b. 21 f. 6
- b. 17 f. 2      *Backstage*
- b. 21 f. 7
- b. 7 f. 1      *Dancers about town*  
 Candid photographs of dancers outside of the ballet studio, at home, and around town.
- b. 17 f. 3      *Individual dancers*
- b. 21 f. 8
- b. 7 f. 2      *Rehearsals*
- b. 18 f. 1-2
- b. 21 f. 9
- b. 18 f. 3      *Non-dance prints*
- b. 7 f. 3      *Unidentified performances*
- Sophie Maslow Dance Company*
- b. 7 f. 4-5      *Anniversary*  
 Includes contact prints.
- b. 7 f. 6      *Llanto*
- b. 7 f. 7-8      *Prologue*  
 Includes contact prints.
- b. 7 f. 8      *Prologue contact prints*
- b. 7 f. 9      *Scarlatti Sonata*
- b. 7 f. 10      *The Village I Knew*

Subseries B: Individuals 1960

- b. 7 f. 11      *Bruhn, Erik*  
 The dancer performing at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in Brooklyn, New York.
- b. 7 f. 12      *Dudley, Jane*  
 The dancer in *Harmonica Breakdown*.
- b. 7 f. 13      *Gray, Harriette Ann 1960*  
 The dancer performing at the Perry-Mansfield Theater in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- b. 7 f. 14      *Seelye, Mary-Averett 1960*  
 The dancer performing *Dance Poetry* in Washington, D.C.
- b. 7 f. 15      *Unidentified prints*

**Series II: Negatives and transparencies 1954 - 1965 (6 boxes 2.84 linear feet)**

The second series includes a vast variety of film formats including black and white and color 35mm film, black and white 120mm film, 4" x 5" color transparencies, and 8" x 10" large format black and white negatives. The negatives/transparencies are separated into two subseries, companies and individuals. The files are then arranged alphabetically. The majority of the photographs are of the Joffrey Ballet Company, the Martha Graham Dance Company, and the Royal Danish Ballet. Many of the negatives included were used to produce the prints which are present in this collection.

Subseries A: Companies 1954 - 1965

Series II: Negatives and transparencies (cont.)  
Subseries A: Companies (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 1 Bali dance companies
- b. 8 f. 2 Calypso dance companies
- b. 8 f. 3 Jacob's Pillow Dance 1955
- Joffrey Ballet
- b. 8 f. 4 *La Fille Mal Gardée*
- b. 8 f. 5 *Gamelan* 1962
- b. 8 f. 6 *Incubus* 1962
- b. 8 f. 7 *Olympics*
- b. 8 f. 8 *Pas des Déesses* 1954
- b. 8 f. 9 *Sea Shadow* 1962
- b. 8 f. 10 *Viva Vivaldi* 1965
- b. 8 f. 11 Rehearsals
- b. 8 f. 12 José Greco Dance Company
- b. 8 f. 13 José Limón Dance Company
- b. 8 f. 14 Portraits
- Martha Graham Dance Company 1958 - 1960
- b. 8 f. 15 *Alceste*
- b. 9 f. 1 *Appalachian Spring*
- b. 9 f. 2 *Filming of Appalachian Spring by Nathan Kroll* 1958 June
- b. 9 f. 3 *Canticle for Innocent Comedians*
- b. 9 f. 4 *Cave of the Heart*
- b. 9 f. 5 *Clytemnestra*
- b. 9 f. 6 *Dark Meadow*
- b. 9 f. 7 *Deaths and Entrances*
- b. 9 f. 8 *Embattled Garden* 1960
- b. 9 f. 9 *Every Soul is a Circus*
- b. 9 f. 10 *Herodiade*
- b. 9 f. 11 *Letter to the World*
- b. 9 f. 12 *Night Journey*
- b. 10 f. 1 *Punch and the Judy*
- b. 10 f. 2 *Seraphic Dialogue*
- b. 10 f. 3 Classes
- b. 10 f. 4 Dancer portraits
- b. 10 f. 5 Merce Cunningham Dance Company 1957
- b. 10 f. 6 New York City Ballet rehearsals
- Royal Danish Ballet
- b. 10 f. 7 Bruhn, Erik
- b. 19 f. 1 *Carmen*
- b. 10 f. 8 *Coppélia*
- b. 19 f. 2
- b. 10 f. 9 *Dream Pictures*
- b. 10 f. 10 *Graduation Ball*

Series II: Negatives and transparencies (cont.)

Subseries A: Companies (cont.)

Royal Danish Ballet (cont.)

- b. 19 f. 3      *Konservatoriet*
- b. 10 f. 11     Larsen, Bjorn
- b. 19 f. 4      *Miss Julie*
- b. 19 f. 5      *Moon Reindeer*
- b. 10 f. 12     *Napoli*
- b. 19 f. 6
- b. 10 f. 13     Nielsen, Niels Bjorn
- b. 10 f. 14     *Petrouchka*
- b. 10 f. 15     *Romeo and Juliet*
- b. 19 f. 7
- b. 19 f. 8      *Serenade*
- b. 10 f. 16     Simone, Kirsten
- b. 10 f. 17     *La Sonnambula*
- b. 19 f. 9
- b. 10 f. 18     *La Sylphide*
- b. 19 f. 10
- b. 19 f. 11     *The Whims of Cupid and the Ballet Master*
- b. 10 f. 19     Backstage
- b. 10 f. 20     Dancers about town  
                  Candid photographs of dancers outside of the ballet studio, at home, and around town.
- b. 10 f. 21     Rehearsals
- b. 10 f. 22-23   Unidentified performances
- b. 11 f. 1-5
- b. 12 f. 1      Sophie Maslow Dance Company
- b. 12 f. 2      Yemen Dance Group

Subseries B: Individuals 1960

- b. 12 f. 3      Bennett, Isadora and Richard Pleasant
- b. 12 f. 4      Gray, Harriette Ann 1960  
                  The dancer performing at the Perry-Mansfield Theater in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- b. 12 f. 5      Seelye, Mary-Averett 1960  
                  The dancer performing *Dance in Poetry* in Washington, D.C.
- b. 12 f. 6      Unidentified negatives and transparencies

b. 22-24      Series III: Contact print scrapbooks (3 boxes 3.63 linear feet)

This series consists of three scrapbooks assembled by Eagle which contain a selection of Royal Danish Ballet contact prints produced from black and white 120mm negatives. The pages are annotated by the photographer with notes for selection and identification of performance titles, dancer names, and dates.