



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Nancy Van Norman Baer papers**

1924-1998 [bulk 1982-1998]

(S) \*MGZMD 275

Collection arranged by subject, original folders retained where present. Slides rehoused.

## Summary

**Creator:** Baer, Nancy Van Norman

**Title:** Nancy Van Norman Baer papers

**Date:** 1924-1998 [bulk 1982-1998]

**Size:** 11.05 linear feet (26 boxes, 1 tube)

**Source:** Gift of Alan Baer, April 1999.

**Abstract:** Nancy Van Norman Baer, (1944-1998) was a curator of theater and dance for Moscow and San Francisco museums. The Nancy Van Norman Baer papers (1924-1998) document the research, planning, and execution of many of her dance and theater museum exhibitions.

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<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

### Conditions Governing Access:

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**Preferred citation:** Nancy Van Norman Baer papers, (S) \*MGZMD 275. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library

**Processing note:** Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2011. Collection arranged by subject, original folders retained where present. Slides rehoused.

## Creator History

Nancy Van Norman Baer, (1944-1998) was a curator of theater and dance for Moscow and San Francisco museums. Born in San Diego, California, Baer started dancing at age 6 and studied dance at Mills College and University of California, Berkeley. After dancing professionally with Northern California companies, she earned a master's degree in museum management from Lone Mountain College in San Francisco.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Baer curated major exhibitions on dancers Loie Fuller, Anna Pavlova and Bronislava Nijinska for the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum. She was particularly interested in the Russian avant-garde, spoke Russian and traveled to Russia several times. In 1991, one of her exhibitions, *Theater in Revolution: Russian Avant-Garde Stage Design, 1913-1935*, traveled to Los Angeles' Armand Hammer Museum of Art. In 1994, she curated the exhibition *Paris Seasons of the Ballets Russes* for the Museum of the Revolution in Moscow.

Baer was a consultant to the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum and assisted Irina Nijinska, the daughter of the dancer and choreographer Bronislava Nijinska, in restaging Nijinska's ballets. At the time of her death, Baer had been working on a book about the Ballets Russes and an exhibition on Vaslav Nijinsky.

## Scope and Content Note

The Nancy Van Norman Baer papers (1924-1998) document the research, planning, and execution of many of her dance and theater museum exhibitions. Her exhibition materials are primarily logistical, concerning the loan of art, different set ups within different venues, press, and opening parties. Baer's research material contains subject folders with secondary source research material as well as correspondence with historians, other curators, and in some cases the subject themselves.

## Key Terms

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Clippings  
Photographs  
Programs  
Slides

### Subjects

Dance -- History  
Theater -- History  
Theater -- Russia -- History -- 20th century

### Names

Nijinska, Bronislava, 1891-1972  
Ballet sue\_dois

## Container List

### Series I: Exhibitions 1985-1998

Series I contains the paperwork, correspondence, and other documents related to the logistical work behind mounting Baer's various exhibitions. The three exhibitions featured prominently in this series are *Paris Modern: The Swedish Ballet*, *La Nijinska: A Dancer's Legacy* and *Theatre in Revolution: Russian Avant-Garde Stage Design 1913-1935*. Exhibition files may contain correspondence, both with other institutions and with Baer's colleagues, plans and photographs of exhibits set up in various spaces, slides, press materials, clippings, posters, and letters of congratulations. Some of the files contain object lists, graphics, and funding and budgetary information. Alphabetical by exhibit title. 9 boxes.

This series also contains audio and video cassettes used for exhibitions - most created to be played during exhibitions, and some used for research purposes.

Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division. Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation and migration prior to access.

- b. 1 f. 1-5 *Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes 1909-1929* 1988-1989
- b. 1 f. 6 *Balanchine* 1993
- b. 2 f. 1 *Art of Russia* 1994
- b. 2 f. 2 *Baskt* 1989
- b. 2 f. 3 *The Christensen Brothers and the San Francisco Ballet* 1993
- b. 2 f. 4-7 *La Nijinska: A Dancer's Legacy* 1985-1986
- b. 3 f. 1-10 *La Nijinska: A Dancer's Legacy* 1985-1986
- b. 4 f. 1-2 *La Nijinska: A Dancer's Legacy* 1985-1986
- b. 4 f. 3-11 Nijinsky Exhibit (untitled) 2000
- b. 5 f. 1-2 *One Hundred Years of Russian Ballet, 1830-1930* 1990
- b. 5 f. 3-7 *Paris Modern: The Swedish Ballet* 1995-1998
- b. 6 f. 1-2 *Paris Modern: The Swedish Ballet* 1995-1998
- b. 26 f. 4 *Paris Modern: The Swedish Ballet* 1995-1998
- b. 6 f. 3-4 *Paris Seasons of the Ballets Russes* 1994
  - t. 1 Posters 1985-1995
- b. 7 f. 1 Potential Exhibits undated
- b. 7 f. 2 *Rouben Ter-Aruturian* undated
  - Theatre in Revolution: Russian Avant-Garde Stage Design 1913-1935* 1990-1992
- b. 7 f. 3 Bibliography 1990
- b. 7 f. 4-5 Correspondence 1990-1992
- b. 8 f. 1-3 Negatives 1990-1992
- b. 8 f. 4 Photographs 1990-1992
- b. 8 f. 5 Press 1990-1992
- b. 9 f. 1 Press 1990-1992
- b. 26 f. 5 Press 1990-1992
- b. 9 f. 2 Sales 1990-1992
- b. 9 f. 3-5 Slides 1990-1992

Series II: Research 1924-1998

Series II consists of research files kept by Baer while developing many of her projects. There are files concerning notable dancers and artists, including Henri Matisse, Leon Bakst, and Michel Fokine as well as research on other institutions and notes made in preparation for various lectures. The bulk of the documents are secondary sources. Folders may contain highlighted articles with notes, correspondence with other historians or curators, lists of biographical resources, and clippings. The material on Bronislava Nijinska is especially thorough. Baer used these files to produce her 1985 *La Nijinska* exhibit, and later used them again when assisting Nijinska's daughter Irina in recreating her dances for a modern ballet audience. A few files, such as those of Irina Nijinska and Tamara Toumanova, contain correspondence with the subject of the file. Baer was working on an exhibit on Vaslav Nijinsky at the time of her death and the beginning of her Nijinsky research files are contained within this series. Alphabetical by subject. 17 boxes.

- b. 10 f. 1 Aronson, Boris undated
- b. 10 f. 2 Auction Houses undated
- b. 10 f. 3 Bakhrushin, A. A undated
- b. 10 f. 4 Baker, Josephine undated
- b. 10 f. 5 Bakst, Leon undated
- b. 10 f. 6 Balanchine, George undated
- b. 10 f. 7-8 Ballets Suédois undated
- b. 11 f. 1-7 Ballets Suédois undated
- b. 12 f. 1-5 Ballets Suédois undated
  - b. 12 f. 6 Benois, Alexandre undated
  - b. 12 f. 7 Bilinsky, Boris undated
  - b. 12 f. 8 Bomberg, David undated
- b. 13 f. 1 Cabaret Performances undated
- b. 13 f. 2 Dance in Hollywood Film undated
- b. 26 f. 1-3 Dance Programs 1924-1960
  - Diaghilev, Sergi
    - b. 13 f. 3-6 General
    - b. 14 f. 1-5 General
    - By Work
      - b. 15 f. 1-2 *Le Chant du Rossignol* undated
      - b. 15 f. 3 *La Chatte* undated
      - b. 15 f. 4 *Choute* undated
      - b. 15 f. 5 *Le Coq D'Or* undated
      - b. 15 f. 6 *Les Contes Russes* undated
      - b. 15 f. 7 *Daphnis et Chloe* undated
      - b. 15 f. 8 *Le Feux De Artifice* undated
      - b. 15 f. 9 *Legende de Joseph* undated
      - b. 15 f. 10 *Liturgie* undated
      - b. 15 f. 11 *L'Oiseau du Feu* undated
      - b. 15 f. 12 *Parade* undated
      - b. 15 f. 13 *Pas D'Acier* undated
      - b. 15 f. 14-15 *Le Sacre du Printemps* undated

Series II: Research (cont.)

Diaghilev, Sergi (cont.)

By Work (cont.)

- b. 15 f. 16 *Sadko* undated
- b. 16 f. 1 *The Sleeping Beauty* undated
- b. 16 f. 2 *Till Eulenspiegel* undated
- b. 16 f. 3 *Triana and Espana* undated
- b. 16 f. 4 *Le Tricorne* undated
- b. 16 f. 5-7 Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco: Theatre and Dance Collection 1987-1998
- b. 16 f. 8-9 Fokine, Michel undated
- b. 16 f. 10 Goleizovsky, Kasian undated
- b. 16 f. 11 Kay, Barry undated
- b. 16 f. 12 Kirstein, Lincoln undated
- b. 16 f. 13 Larionov, Mikhail undated
- Lectures
  - b. 17 f. 1 Androgyny undated
  - b. 17 f. 2 "Dance and the Visual Arts" undated
  - b. 17 f. 3 Dance History undated
  - b. 17 f. 4 Degas undated
  - b. 17 f. 5 "Romantics to Rebels" undated
  - b. 17 f. 6 Lopukhov, Fedor undated
  - b. 17 f. 7 Markevitch, Igor undated
  - b. 17 f. 8 Massine, Leonide undated
  - b. 17 f. 9 Matisse, Henri undated
  - b. 17 f. 10 Meyerhold, Vsevolod undated
- Nijinska, Bronislava
  - b. 18 f. 1-4 General undated
  - b. 19 f. 1-4 General undated
  - b. 20 f. 1-2 General undated
- By Work
  - b. 20 f. 4 *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* undated
  - b. 20 f. 5 *Aurora's Wedding* undated
  - b. 20 f. 6 *Le Baiser de la Fee* undated
  - b. 20 f. 7-9 *Les Biches* undated
  - b. 20 f. 10 *Bolero* undated
  - b. 20 f. 11 *Brahams Variations* undated
  - b. 21 f. 1 *Les Cent Baisers* undated
  - b. 21 f. 2 *Le Chant de la Terre* undated
  - b. 21 f. 3 *Les Comédiens Jaloux* undated
  - b. 21 f. 4 *Danse Slaves et Tziganes* undated
  - b. 21 f. 5 *Etudes* undated
  - b. 21 f. 6 *Le Facheux* undated
  - b. 21 f. 7 *Fantasia* undated
  - b. 21 f. 8 *La Fille Mal Gardee* undated

Series II: Research (cont.)  
Nijinska, Bronislava (cont.)  
By Work (cont.)

- b. 21 f. 9 *Hamlet* undated
- b. 21 f. 10 *Harvest Time* undated
- b. 21 f. 11 *Hitch Your Wagon to a Star* undated
- b. 21 f. 12 *La Legende de Cracovie* undated
- b. 21 f. 13 *Mavra* undated
- b. 21 f. 14 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* undated
- b. 21 f. 15 *La Mille et Deuxieme Nuit* undated
- b. 21 f. 16-18 *Les Noces* undated
- b. 21 f. 19 *Nocturne* undated
- b. 21 f. 20 *Paysage Infantin* undated
- b. 21 f. 21 *La Princesse Cygne* undated
- b. 21 f. 22 *Le Renard* undated
- b. 21 f. 23 *Romeo and Juliet* undated
- b. 21 f. 24-25 *Rondo Capricioso* undated
- b. 21 f. 26 *Sadko* undated
- b. 21 f. 27 *Schumann Concerto* undated
- b. 21 f. 28 *The Snow Maiden* undated
- b. 21 f. 29 *Tales of Hoffman* undated
- b. 21 f. 30 *Les Tentations de la Bergere* undated
- b. 22 f. 1-2 *Le Train Bleu* undated
- b. 22 f. 3 *La Valse* undated
- b. 22 f. 4 *Variations* undated
- b. 22 f. 5 Nijinska, Irina 1982-1984
- b. 22 f. 6-7 Nijinsky, Vaslav undated
- b. 23 f. 1 Nijinsky, Vaslav undated
- b. 23 f. 2 Other Institutions undated
- b. 23 f. 3-5 Pavlova, Anna undated
- b. 24 f. 1 Raibov, S undated
- b. 24 f. 2 Roerich, Nicholas undated
- b. 24 f. 3 Rubinstein, Ida undated
- b. 24 f. 4 Russian Avant-Garde undated
- b. 24 f. 5 Russian Exchange undated
- b. 25 f. 1 San Francisco Ballet undated
- b. 25 f. 2 Slides - General undated
- b. 25 f. 3 Soudeikine, Serge undated
- b. 25 f. 4 Stowitts, Hubert undated
- b. 25 f. 5 Tchelitchew, Pavel undated
- b. 25 f. 6 Ter-Arutunian, Rouben undated
- b. 25 f. 7 Toumanova, Tamara undated
- b. 25 f. 8 Vakhtangov, Evgenii undated
- b. 25 f. 9 Vertes, Marcel undated

Series II: Research (cont.)

- b. 25 f. 10 Vesnin, Alexander undated
- b. 25 f. 11 Zack, Leon undated