



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive

1960-2010

(S) *MGZMD 302

Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2012

Summary

Creator: Baryshnikov, Mikhail, 1948-

Title: Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive

Date: 1960-2010

Size: 13.09 linear feet (34 boxes); 745.9 mb (245 computer files)

Source: Gift of Mikhail Baryshnikov, 2011

Abstract: Mikhail Baryshnikov (1948-) is a Russian-American dancer, choreographer and actor. The Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive holds awards, choreographer files, contracts, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, programs, scripts, and other materials documenting Baryshnikov's 40-plus year career.

Access: Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

Status note: Electronic records are currently unavailable.

Conditions Governing Use: For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

Preferred citation: Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Lea Jordan, 2012 Collection rehoused. Original order maintained where evident. Electronic records (er. 1 through 7) were incorporated into the collection by Kit Fluker in 2016.

Creator History

Mikhail Baryshnikov (1948-) is a Russian-American dancer, choreographer and actor. Born in Riga, he received his early training at the Vaganova Academy in Leningrad. He joined the Kirov ballet in 1967. Recognizing his talent, Soviet choreographers soon began creating works for him. In 1974 while on tour with the Bolshoi ballet, Baryshnikov moved to Canada and then to the United States. After appearing as a guest artist with several companies, he began dancing with the New York City Ballet under Balanchine. He also danced with the American Ballet Theatre (ABT), and in 1980 he became the artistic director of ABT, a post he held for ten years.

Baryshnikov's acting credits include the films *Turning Point* (1977) and *White Nights* (1985), many television specials, and theatrical turns in *Metamorphosis* (1989), *Forbidden Christmas* (2004) and *Paris* (2007) among others.

In 1990, Baryshnikov founded the White Oak Dance Project with choreographer Mark Morris. The project was created to be the touring component of the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. Studios were built in Jacksonville, Florida and an emphasis was placed on workshopping and premiering new works in modern dance. The company toured through 2002, when the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation turned its focus to opening the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City. The Baryshnikov Arts Center opened in 2005 and provides a home for artists to create new work.

Among Baryshnikov's many awards are the Kennedy Center Honors, the National Medal of Honor, the Jerome Robbins Award, and Honorary Degrees from several major universities.

Scope and Content Note

The Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive holds awards, choreographer files, contracts, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, programs, scripts, and other materials documenting Baryshnikov's 40-plus year career. The bulk of the collection is composed of files from Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project and a wide range of photographs. There is a small component of documents and photographs pertaining to Baryshnikov's career before leaving the Soviet Union in 1974.

The choreographer files consist of contract agreements, professional correspondence, press releases, clippings, and other materials relating to dance professionals who were employed by the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. The agreements are often with agents or the rights holders in the case of deceased choreographers. Dates refer to the dates of agreements, contracts and correspondence and not of the actual work being staged.

Company files hold a limited amount of correspondence and paperwork between Baryshnikov and a handful of the many dance companies with which he collaborated. The bulk of this material relates to the American Ballet Theatre.

Correspondence contains a mix of professional and personal letters to Baryshnikov. Noted choreographers and dancers, famous fans, and personal acquaintances are all represented. Much of the material is directly related to dance, whether it is Trisha Brown's description of Baryshnikov dancing her work, to Agnes DeMille's suggestions for *Rodeo* casting. There is correspondence from Romola and Kyra Nijinsky to Baryshnikov and his representatives, with replies by Howard Gillman regarding a possible film version of the life of Nijinsky. These materials include a book of poetry by Kyra Nijinsky in which she has written a letter suggesting that the poetry could be a basis for a film.

The photographs are primarily arranged by dance company, with some personal and miscellaneous professional photographs included. Company shots hold individual production photographs, identified

by year and work where possible. There are some rehearsal and backstage images. Photographs taken in the Soviet Union include Kirov ballet images as well as childhood and young adult performance photographs accompanied by correspondence relating to these photographs. One letter is from a former teacher who had choreographed a ballet for Baryshnikov. Some images are scans sent to Baryshnikov over the years. Photographs for the White Oak Dance Project include images from the Judson Dance Theater, originally taken in the 1960s, which were used as digital slides for the Project's *PASTForward* tour in 2000. Among these slides there is also a video file.

The personal photographs include candid and posed shots with various celebrities and politicians at galas and after performances, as well as Polaroid shots from his 1979 trip to China and images of Baryshnikov receiving various honorary degrees.

Press clippings include a selection of newspaper and magazine articles regarding Baryshnikov's career. Programs hold individual performance programs, solo and with various dance companies, as well as programs from Baryshnikov's photography exhibitions.

There are various documents in Russian including his diploma from the Leningrad Academic College of Choreography, a driver's license with a traffic violation ticket, his membership card to the National Theatre Society, and a 1967 Vaganova School yearbook showing Baryshnikov and other dance students.

There are five scrapbooks, mostly compiled by others as gifts. Two show rehearsals and curtain calls from 1975 to 1977. The third is a Presidential album from Baryshnikov's 1979 performance for President Jimmy Carter and his family at the White House. There are two binders of press clippings, primarily from magazines with color pictures.

Baryshnikov's theatre and film materials include work scripts and some correspondence. Tour files hold logistical and press information for various solo tours, as well as tours with the White Oak Dance Project and the *Forbidden Christmas* tour in 2004.

The White Oak Dance Project materials consist of contracts with various dancers, choreographers, and vendors, a written project history, master programs, performance reports, programs, and a video inventory. The White Oak Dance Project was located near Jacksonville, Florida on the White Oak Plantation. The Project supported the workshops and eventual staging of new choreography from many artists, including Mark Morris, Twyla Tharp, David Gordon, and many others. Of interest are the performance reports, noting the reaction of the audience at various tour locations, and the master programs, which include preliminaries sent ahead to each city on a tour.

Arrangement: Alphabetical by subject.

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet -- 20th century
Ballet -- Russia
Ballet -- United States
Choreographers
Modern dance

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Contracts
Correspondence
Photographs
Programs
Scrapbooks
Scripts

Names

American Ballet Theatre
New York City Ballet

Container List

- b. 30 f. 1 Art
 - pen and ink sketches by others
 - Awards
- b. 1 f. 1 General 1988-2005
 - Honorary Degrees
- b. 31 f. 4 Brandeis University 1983
- b. 31 f. 5 Columbia University 1985
- b. 30 f. 9 Montclair State University 2008
- b. 31 f. 6 Yale University 1979
- b. 1 f. 2 Presidential Invitations 1983-2000
- b. 1 f. 3 State and City Proclamations 1983-1997
- Choreographers
- b. 1 f. 4 Anastos, Peter 1999
- b. 1 f. 5 Armitage, Karole 1996-1999
- b. 1 f. 6 Bando, Tamasaburo 1995-1998
- b. 1 f. 7 Barton, Aszure 2005-2007
- b. 1 f. 8 Bausch, Pina 1994-2003
- b. 1 f. 9 Bejart, Maurice 1997
- b. 1 f. 10 Brown, Trisha 1996-1999
- b. 1 f. 11 Clark, Michael 2002-2004
- b. 1 f. 12 Childs, Lucinda 1994-2003
- b. 1 f. 13 Cullburg, Birgit 1992
- b. 1 f. 14 Cunningham, Merce 1995-2000
- b. 2 f. 1 Feld, Eliot 2003-2005
- b. 2 f. 2 Forsythe, Bill 2006
- b. 2 f. 3 Forti, Simone 1999-2004
- b. 2 f. 4 Gelabert, Cesc 2003
- b. 2 f. 5 Gillis, Christopher 1992
- b. 2 f. 6 Gordon, David 1991-2006
- b. 2 f. 7 Graham, Martha 1991-2001
- b. 2 f. 8 Greenberg, Neil 1999-2005
- b. 2 f. 9 Guerin, Lucy 1998-1999
- b. 2 f. 10 Hahn, Ruth Davidson 2002-2004
- b. 2 f. 11 Hawkins, Erick 1994-2002
- b. 2 f. 12 Hay, Deborah 2000-2004
- b. 2 f. 13 Holm, Hanya 1992-1993
- b. 2 f. 14 Jakobson, Leonid 2004
- b. 2 f. 15 Janney, Christopher 1997-2001
- b. 3 f. 1 Jasperse, John 1999
- b. 3 f. 2 Limón, José 1998-2003

Choreographers (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 3 Lubovitch, Lar 1991
- b. 3 f. 4 Michaelson, Sarah 2002
- b. 3 f. 5 Millepied, Benjamin 2005
- b. 3 f. 6 Morris, Mark 1990-2001
- b. 3 f. 7 Moulton, Charles 1990-2001
- b. 3 f. 8 Move, Richard 2001-2002
- b. 3 f. 9 Murphy, Graeme 1996
- b. 3 f. 10 O'Brien, Amy 1999
- b. 3 f. 11 O'Connor, Tere 2003
- b. 3 f. 12 O'Day, Kevin 1994
- b. 3 f. 13 Patterson, Kraig 1996-1998
- b. 3 f. 14 Paxton, Steve 2000-2001
- b. 3 f. 15 Petit, Roland undated
- b. 3 f. 16 Rainer, Yvonne 2000-2002
- b. 3 f. 17 Reitz, Dana 1998-2005
- b. 3 f. 18 Robbins, Jerome 1998-2004
- b. 3 f. 19 Salomons, Ruthlyn 1996
- b. 4 f. 1 Schlömer, Joachim 1996-2004
- b. 4 f. 2 Scott, Vernon 1996
- b. 4 f. 3 Stuart, Meg 1996-1997
- b. 4 f. 4 Taylor, Paul 1992-2004
- b. 4 f. 5 Tharp, Twyla 1991-2004
- b. 4 f. 6 Uchizono, Donna 2005-2006

Companies

American Ballet Theatre

- b. 4 f. 7-8 General 1979-1980
 - b. 4 f. 9 Souvenir programs 1979-1981
 - b. 4 f. 10 Hell's Kitchen Dance 2007
- New York City Ballet
- b. 4 f. 11 General 1978-1979
 - b. 32 f. 1 Poster undated
 - b. 5 f. 1 The Kennedy Center 1981
- b. 5 f. 2-5 Contracts 1976-1989

Correspondence

- b. 5 f. 6 General 1978-1989
- b. 5 f. 7 Brown, Trisha 1980-1997
- b. 5 f. 8 Croce, Arlene undated
- b. 5 f. 9 Cunningham, Merce undated
- b. 5 f. 10 d'Amboise, Jacques 1978
- b. 5 f. 11 DeMille, Agnes 1980
- b. 5 f. 12 Dietrich, Marlene 1988

Correspondence (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 13 Gilman, Howard 1975-1986
- b. 5 f. 14 Nijinsky, Kyra and Romola 1976
- b. 5 f. 15 Robbins, Jerome 1983-1995
- b. 6 f. 1 Ross, Herbert 1980
- b. 6 f. 2 Sinatra, Frank 1978-1983
- b. 6 f. 3 The White House 1979-1994
- b. 30 f. 2 Costumes 1975-1990
One sketch along with some receipts for custom pieces.
- b. 6 f. 4 Documents 1967-1982
Professional and government documents, some in Russian.
- b. 6 f. 5-6 Fanmail undated
- b. 6 f. 7 Perfume Line 1995

Photographs

By Company or Choreographer

- b. 6 f. 8 Alvin Ailey 1983
American Ballet Theatre
- b. 6 f. 9-11 General
 - b. 7 f. 1 *La Bayadere* 1977
 - b. 7 f. 2 *Coppelia* undated
 - b. 7 f. 3 *Le Corsaire* undated
 - b. 7 f. 4 *Don Quixote* undated
 - b. 30 f. 7 Gala 1975
 - b. 7 f. 5-6 *Giselle* 1975
 - b. 7 f. 7 *Le Jeune Homme et la Morte* undated
 - b. 7 f. 8 *The Nutcracker* undated
 - b. 7 f. 9 *Other Dances* undated
 - b. 7 f. 10 *Push Comes to Shove* 1987
 - b. 7 f. 11 Rehearsal undated
 - b. 7 f. 12 *Le Spectre de la Rose* undated
 - b. 7 f. 13 *La Sylphide* undated
 - b. 7 f. 14 *Theme and Variations* 1978
- b. 8 f. 1-2 *Ballet National de Marseille - La Dame de Pique*
Eliot Feld Ballet
 - b. 8 f. 3 *Santa Fe Saga* undated
 - b. 8 f. 4 *Variations on America* 1977
 - b. 8 f. 5 *Mark Morris Company - Pas de Poissons* undated
 - b. 8 f. 6 Martha Graham Dance Company undated
 - b. 8 f. 7 *National Ballet of Canada - Swan Lake* undated
- New York City Ballet
 - b. 8 f. 8 General undated
 - b. 8 f. 9 *Apollo* 1979
 - b. 8 f. 10 *Coppelia* 1978

Photographs (cont.)

By Company or Choreographer (cont.)

New York City Ballet (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 11 *Duo Concertant* 1992
- b. 8 f. 12 *Harlequinade* 1978
- b. 8 f. 13 *The Nutcracker* undated
- b. 8 f. 14 *Romeo and Juliet* 1986
- b. 9 f. 1 The Royal Ballet undated
- b. 9 f. 2 *Twyla Tharp - Once More Frank* 1976

White Oak Dance Project

- b. 9 f. 3-7 General 1991-2001
- b. 9 f. 8 *Chaconne* 1997
- b. 9 f. 9 *HeartBeat:mb* 1998
- b. 9 f. 10 *Three Russian Preludes* 1995
PASTForward Slides 2000
- er. 1 Title Slides
(44.99 Megabytes (54 computer files))
White text on black background.
- er. 2 Opening
(198.7 Megabytes (98 computer files))
- er. 3 New Opening
(486.3 Megabytes (77 computer files))
- er. 4 David Gordon
(7,033 Kilobytes (6 computer files))
- er. 5 Steve Paxton
(5,420 Kilobytes (5 computer files))
- er. 6 Yvonne Rainer
(3,724 Kilobytes (4 computer files))
Includes a video file.

Personal

- b. 10 f. 1-4 General 1974-2000
- b. 10 f. 5 Balanchine, George undated
- b. 10 f. 6-7 China Trip 1979
- b. 10 f. 8 Cunningham, Merce undated
- b. 10 f. 9 Dogs undated
- b. 10 f. 10 Honorary Degree, University of Toronto 2000

Professional

- b. 11 f. 1 *Adam and Eve* undated
- b. 11 f. 2-3 *Baryshnikov on Broadway* 1980
- b. 11 f. 4 *La Bayadere* 1977
- b. 11 f. 5 *Medea* undated
- b. 11 f. 6 National Technical Institute for the Deaf Performance 1981
- b. 11 f. 7 Negatives undated
all are represented in print within the collection
- b. 30 f. 5 Other Dancers undated
- b. 11 f. 8 *Prodigal Son* undated

Photographs (cont.)

Professional (cont.)

- b. 11 f. 9 Proofs 1975-1997
- b. 11 f. 10 Rehearsal 1975-2000
- b. 30 f. 6 Rehearsal 1975-2000
- Russia
- b. 11 f. 11-12 Ballet 1967-1974
- b. 11 f. 13 Childhood undated
- b. 12 f. 1 Performance and Rehearsal 1972
- b. 12 f. 2 Slides 1978-1987
- Studio Portraits
- b. 12 f. 3-4 General 1974-2000
- b. 30 f. 8 General 1974-2000
- b. 31 f. 1 General 1974-2000
- b. 12 f. 5 Leibovitz, Annie 1992
- b. 12 f. 6 Tours - Fort Worth, Texas undated
- b. 13 f. 1 *Turning Point* 1977
- b. 13 f. 2 Poem undated
Written after Baryshnikov moved to Canada about the joys of watching Baryshnikov dancing
Unknown author, in Russian

Press Clippings

- b. 13 f. 3-8 1974-1979
- b. 14 f. 1-8 1980-1992
- b. 15 f. 1-6 1992-1994
- b. 16 f. 1-6 1994-2002
- b. 17 f. 1-6 2002-2003
- b. 18 f. 1-5 2004
- b. 19 f. 1-5 2004-2006

Programs

- b. 19 f. 6 American Ballet Theatre 1976-1983
- b. 19 f. 7 Baryshnikov and Company 1987
- b. 19 f. 8 Benefits and Galas 1982-1994
- b. 19 f. 9 Eliot Feld Ballet 1977
- b. 20 f. 1 *Forbidden Christmas* 2004
- b. 20 f. 2 *New York City Ballet* 1979
- b. 31 f. 2-3 Oversize 1977-1980
- b. 20 f. 3 Photography 2008-2010
- b. 20 f. 4 Russian undated
- b. 20 f. 5 *Solos with Piano... or Not* 2004
- b. 20 f. 6 *Three Solos and a Duet* 2009
- b. 32 f. 2 *Tribute to the Queen Mother* 1980 (silk program)
- b. 20 f. 7 *Score - Waltz Triste* undated
by Baryshnikov

Scrapbooks

Scrapbooks (cont.)

General

- b. 27 f. 4 1975-1989
- b. 27 f. 5 1977
- b. 32 f. 6 Presidential Visit 1979
- Press Clippings
 - b. 28 1975-1988
 - b. 29 1989-1993
- b. 20 f. 8 Speeches and Writings undated

Theater and Film

General

Baryshnikov on Broadway

- b. 30 f. 3 Press Kit 1980
- b. 34 Promotional Binder 1980
empty
- b. 30 f. 4 *Sunrise, Sunset Sheet Music* 1980
- b. 20 f. 9 *Beckett Shorts* 2007
- b. 20 f. 10 *Metamorphosis* 1989

Scripts

- b. 20 f. 11 *Baryshnikov in Hollywood* 1981
- b. 21 f. 1 *Baryshnikov on Broadway* 1980
- b. 21 f. 2 *Beckett Shorts* 2007
- b. 21 f. 3 *Forbidden Christmas* 2004
- b. 21 f. 4-5 *The Turning Point* 1976

Tours

- b. 21 f. 6 *Baryshnikov in Concert* 1981-1983
- b. 21 f. 7 Fall 2009 Tour 2009
- b. 21 f. 8 *Forbidden Christmas* 2004
- b. 21 f. 9 Performance Schedules 1978-1981
- b. 22 f. 1 Solo Tour 2003
- b. 22 f. 2 *Twyla Tharp and Mikhail Baryshnikov* 1992-1993
- b. 22 f. 3-6 White Oak Dance Project 1998-2002
 - er. 7 White Oak Dance Project--Light Cues 1992 July
(512 Bytes (1 computer file))
- b. 33 Vaganova School Yearbook 1967
in Russian

White Oak Dance Project

- b. 22 f. 7-8 Contracts 1994-2004
- b. 23 f. 1 History undated
- b. 23 f. 2-7 Master Programs 1990-1999
- b. 24 f. 1-3 Master Programs 2000-2004
- b. 24 f. 4 Memorabilia 1993-2001
- b. 24 f. 5-6 Performance Reports 2000-2003

White Oak Dance Project (cont.)

- b. 24 f. 7-8 Programs 1991-2002
- b. 25 f. 1-6 Programs 1991-2002
- b. 26 f. 1-5 Programs 1991-2002
- b. 27 f. 1-2 Programs 1991-2002
- b. 32 f. 3-5 Programs 1991-2002
- b. 27 f. 3 Video Inventory 2004