



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Eugene Loring papers**

circa 1938-1981

(S) \*MGZMD 40

Processed by Diane Coburn Brüning.

## Summary

**Creator:** Loring, Eugene, 1914-

**Title:** Eugene Loring papers

**Date:** circa 1938-1981

**Size:** 198 folders in 9 boxes approximately 440 items

**Source:** Gift of Alan Boehmer. Received: March 1985 (manuscripts) and January 1986 (films, videotapes, music scores, audio tapes).

**Abstract:** The Eugene Loring Papers document several aspects of Loring's career from 1938 to 1981. He kept extensive notes related to his productions and teaching theories. He also often wrote and spoke about his philosophy of dance, transcripts of which are found in these papers. Being a trained musician, Loring frequently notated his choreography on musical charts or scores. His teaching records include numerous ballet syllabi on six different levels of technique. Loring also expressed himself through drawings, poetry, and prose found among his diaries and personal notes.

**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>

**Preferred citation:** Loring, Eugene, 1911-1982. Papers, (S) \*MGZMD 40, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Diane Coburn Brüning.

## Creator History

Eugene Loring was born LeRoy Kerpestein in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on August 2, 1911. Loring came to dance through theater. After graduating from high school in 1929, he worked with the Milwaukee

Players during which time he began to study ballet and tap dancing. In the spring of 1934, he went to New York to study at the School of American Ballet. That summer, during the school's recess, Loring performed with the Fokine Ballet in Lewisohn Stadium. Loring performed with the American Ballet Company in Balanchine's works in its initial appearance in Hartford, Connecticut in December 1934.

Loring's first ballet "Harlequin for President" followed a libretto by Lincoln Kirstein and premiered in a Ballet Caravan performance at Bennington College on July 17, 1936. Loring's other works for Ballet Caravan include his well-known "Billy the Kid," which premiered in Chicago on October 16, 1938, with Loring dancing the role of Billy.

"The Great American Goof" was created by Loring for Ballet Theatre's inaugural performance on January 11, 1940; it was a ballet with words based on a libretto by William Saroyan.

Loring worked with his own company Dance Players in 1941 and 1942 and choreographed three new works on the company. After his association with Dance Players, he became steadily involved in motion pictures and television. He was signed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios to a contract as dance director and actor and moved to Hollywood in 1943. Loring worked intermittently on Broadway shows in New York over the next decade, however, his work for ballet companies dwindled. He created no major work again until "Capital of the World" in 1953 for Ballet Theatre.

Loring's work in film began as a performer in a minor role in "National Velvet" in 1944. He went on to stage the dance sequences in more than a dozen films from 1944 to 1960, including "Ziegfeld Follies," "Meet Me in Las Vegas," "Funny Face," and "Silk Stockings."

His American School of Dance was founded in Hollywood in 1948 and provided a comprehensive program in dance, covering a stylistic range from classical ballet to modern and character dance. It was here that Loring developed his "Freestyle" technique, which attempted to synthesize several forms of movement in order to develop versatile dancers and enable them to adapt to the many styles required of them professionally. Loring sold the school in 1974.

In 1965 Loring became the first chairman of the new dance program at the University of California at Irvine. He patterned the program after the one he had developed at the American School of Dance. He retired from the University in 1981 and moved to Accord, New York.

Eugene Loring died on August 30, 1982, in Kingston, New York.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Eugene Loring Papers document several aspects of Loring's career from 1938 to 1981. He kept extensive notes related to his productions and teaching theories. He also often wrote and spoke about his philosophy of dance, transcripts of which are found in these papers. Being a trained musician, Loring frequently notated his choreography on musical charts or scores. His teaching records include numerous ballet syllabi on six different levels of technique. Loring also expressed himself through drawings, poetry, and prose found among his diaries and personal notes. Certain non-manuscript materials received with the original gift have been removed from the Eugene Loring Papers. All newspaper and magazine articles, programs, photographs, scrapbooks, films, videotapes, audio tapes and musical scores have been dispersed throughout the Dance Collection. A separation list, located at the end of the folder list, indicates the nature and disposition of these items.

**Arrangement:** I. Correspondence II. Writings by Eugene Loring III. Production and Choreographic Notes IV. Choreographic Notebooks V. The American School of Dance VI. University of California at Irvine VII. Miscellaneous

## **Key Terms**

### **Titles**

Billy the Kid (Choreographic work : Loring)  
Gift of Alan Boehmer  
Great American goof (Choreographic work : Loring)

### **Subjects**

Manuscripts -- Collections

### **Names**

Loring, Eugene, 1914-  
Dance Players (Company)  
University of California, Irvine. Dance Dept

## Container List

### I. Correspondence 1940-1981 (72 items)

"Correspondence, 1940-1981," the smallest series, contains various cards and letters written to Loring. There is no substantial run of letters from any single correspondent.

- b. 1 f. 1 1940 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 1 1945 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 1 1950 (4 Items)
- b. 1 f. 1 1951 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 2 1953 (11 Items)
- b. 1 f. 3 1954 (3 Items)
- b. 1 f. 3 1956 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 3 1958 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 3 1959 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 4 1962 (4 Items)
- b. 1 f. 4 1963 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 4 1964 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 5 1968 (12 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1969 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1972 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1973 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1974 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1975 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 6 1977 (3 Items)
- b. 1 f. 7 1978 (8 Items)
- b. 1 f. 7 1980 (2 Items)
- b. 1 f. 7 1981 (1 Items)
- b. 1 f. 8 no date (3 Items)

### II. Writings by Eugene Loring (167 items)

The writings of Eugene Loring consists of diaries, personal notes, and addresses, essays, and lectures.

#### A. Diaries and Personal Notes ca. 1937-1980.

- b. 2 f. 9a Diary ca. 1937-1938 (1 Items)
- b. 2 f. 9b Diary 1940 Mar. 23 - 1942 Nov (1 Items)
- b. 2 f. 10 Diary 1944 Apr. (1 Items)
- b. 2 f. 11 Diary 1955 Feb. 4 (1 Items)
- b. 2 f. 12 Diary, "Trip to Italy" (1 Items)
- b. 2 f. 13-16 Personal notes 1963-1980 (67 Items)
- b. 2 f. 17-20 Personal notes no date (74 Items)

#### B. Addresses, Essays, and Lectures (arranged alphabetically by title or first line)

- b. 2 f. 21 The Art of Pas de Deux (lecture)

II. Writings by Eugene Loring (cont.)

B. Addresses, Essays, and Lectures (arranged alphabetically by title or first line) (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 22-23 Cavalcade of Jazz (also titled Cavalcade of Dance)
- b. 2 f. 24 Choreography
- b. 2 f. 26 Choreutics (outline)
- b. 2 f. 27 "Coordination is not necessarily automatic..."
- b. 2 f. 28 Creating Ballet Combinations and Routines
- b. 2 f. 29 Dance
- b. 2 f. 30 Dance Training Related to Sport Activity
- b. 2 f. 31 The Eugene Loring System of Movement Notation
- b. 2 f. 32 Gold is for the Greedy (poem)
- b. 2 f. 33 Jethro and Amalek
- Lecture Series (transcripts)
- b. 2 f. 34 1973 May 15
- b. 2 f. 35 1973 May 22
- b. 2 f. 36 1973 May 29
- b. 2 f. 37 "The method of teaching called creative ballet..."
- b. 2 f. 38 "My brothers' birthdays were celebrated together..."
- b. 2 f. 39-40 "The people you have seen drawing are dancers..." (lecture)
- b. 2 f. 41 Plans for Project: Kinesography
- b. 2 f. 42 Some Questions About Ballet and How I Answer Them
- b. 2 f. 43 "There is nothing I wish to see changed about the ideology..."
- b. 2 f. 44 "Too often I see actors who seem to think that merely speaking..."
- b. 2 f. 45 Miscellaneous notes - autobiographical
- b. 2 f. 46 Miscellaneous writings

III. Production and Choreographic Notes

The largest series is that of production and choreographic notes and comprises various libretti, musical and choreographic notes, and other descriptive notes on his ballets and lecture-demonstrations. In addition, the scripts of the "Omnibus" and "Dance in America" telecasts are contained in this series. A related series, choreographic notebooks, extensively documents the choreography of two of Loring's ballets, "Billy the Kid" and "The Great American Goof." (arranged by title)

Billy the Kid

- b. 3 f. 47 Choreographic and programmatic notes
- b. 3 f. 48 Omnibus telecast narration
- b. 3 f. 49 Dance in America telecast
- Capital of the World
- b. 3 f. 50-52 libretto and cast
- b. 3 f. 53-54 Omnibus telecast script
- b. 3 f. 55 Compostion and Choreography (lecture-demonstration)
- Catulli Carmina
- b. 3 f. 56 libretto and musical notes
- City Portrait
- b. 3 f. 57 libretto
- b. 3 f. 58-59 Dance is a Language (lecture-demonstration)

III. Production and Choreographic Notes (cont.)

- The Enigma (also titled Roshomon)
- b. 3 f. 60 libretto
- Faculty Dance Concert, University of California, Irvine 1979
- b. 3 f. 61-63 notes
  - b. 3 f. 64 stage set
- Folkdances of a Mythical Country
- b. 3 f. 65-71 musical notes
  - b. 3 f. 72-78 choreographic notes
- Gloria
- b. 3 f. 79 musical notes
- The Great American Goof
- (see also Box 6)
- b. 3 f. 80 choreographic notes
- The Hobo of the Hills (also titled The Duke of Sacramento)
- b. 3 f. 81-83 chart of dramatic outline, libretto, stage presence, and character
  - b. 3 f. 84 background notes
  - b. 3 f. 85 libretto and direction
  - b. 3 f. 86 action synopsis
- The Invisible Wife
- b. 4 f. 87-88 musical notes, action synopsis
- Jazz Dancarama
- b. 4 f. 89 libretto and miscellaneous notes
- Kanter Putnam
- b. 4 f. 90 libretto and miscellaneous notes
- Lecture-Demonstrations
- b. 4 f. 91-93 notes and scripts
- The Man from Midian
- b. 4 f. 94-96 libretto, character analysis, synopsis
- Moses
- b. 4 f. 97 libretto
- Pinions
- b. 4 f. 98 choreographic notes
- Polyphonica
- b. 4 f. 99 poem and program notes
- Prairie
- b. 4 f. 100 poem and notes
- The Sisters
- b. 4 f. 101 choreographic description
- Tender Land
- b. 4 f. 102 choreographic notes
- The Toy Box (lecture-demonstration)

III. Production and Choreographic Notes (cont.)  
The Toy Box (lecture-demonstration) (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 103-106 script  
Yerma
- b. 4 f. 107-108 script
  - b. 4 f. 109 unidentified production
  - b. 4 f. 110 unidentified production scenario
  - b. 4 f. 111 notes on musical selections
  - b. 4 f. 112 miscellaneous notes related to Noah's Ark, Billy the Kid

IV. Choreographic Notebooks

Choreographic notebooks, extensively documents the choreography of two of Loring's ballets, "Billy the Kid" and "The Great American Goof."

- b. 5 Billy the Kid 1938
- b. 6 The Great American Goof 1941

V. The American School of Dance 1948-1974

Two series pertain to Loring's work as a dance educator. The first, entitled The American School of Dance, 1948-1974, contains extensive syllabi and class descriptions. The second, entitled The University of California at Irvine, 1965-1981, includes some of the same syllabi revised and descriptions of choreography classes and Loring's system of notation, Kineseography.

- b. 7 f. 113 "American School of Dance" by Eugene Loring
- b. 7 f. 114 Credo
- b. 7 f. 115 Classroom Decorum
- b. 7 f. 116 Summary of Course Requirements
- b. 7 f. 117 Course Descriptions
- b. 7 f. 118 "Points to Watch in Promotions and Placements" by Eugene Loring
- b. 7 f. 119 "Ballet Class on Three Levels" by Eugene Loring
- b. 7 f. 120 Ballet Theory and Terminology Exam
- b. 7 f. 121-124 Ballet Syllabi - general indices of Pre-Ballet through Ballet IV
- b. 7 f. 125-126 Ballet syllabus-general notes
  - b. 7 f. 127 Description of Pre-Barre
- b. 7 f. 128-143 Ballet Syllabi - Pre-Barre through Ballet V
  - b. 7 f. 144 Ballet Syllabus - men's class
- b. 7 f. 145-146 Ballet class notes on steps and positions
  - b. 7 f. 147 miscellaneous ballet notes
  - b. 7 f. 148 Teachers' meeting - Ballet 1952 Dec. 16
  - b. 7 f. 149 Free Style syllabus discussions
  - b. 7 f. 150 Free Style I-III Syllabus
  - b. 7 f. 151 Character Classes - Faculty and course titles

VI. University of California at Irvine 1965-1981. (51 items)

Two series pertain to Loring's work as a dance educator. The first, entitled The American School of Dance, 1948-1974, contains extensive syllabi and class descriptions. The second, entitled The University of California at Irvine, 1965-1981, includes some of the same syllabi revised and descriptions of choreography classes and Loring's system of notation, Kineseography.

- b. 8 f. 152 Course outlines - 1978 (8 Items)
- b. 8 f. 153 Dance Department policies (2 Items)
- b. 8 f. 154 Teacher Theory class (2 Items)

VI. University of California at Irvine (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 155 Ballet pronunciation (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 156 "Points to Watch in Ballet Examinations" (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 157 Ballet Syllabi - Ballet I-IV by school quarters (4 Items)
- b. 8 f. 158 pas de bourée - variations and descriptions (3 Items)
- b. 8 f. 159 Choreography II (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 160-161 Choreography III (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 162 Kineseography - notes and diagrams (6 Items)
- b. 8 f. 163 Articles on Nijinsky's and miscellaneous notation systems (8 Items)
- b. 8 f. 164 Musical Theater Workshop Audition Numbers (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 165 Pantomime class (2 Items)
- b. 8 f. 166 Notes on dance warm-up (3 Items)
- b. 8 f. 167 "A Dancer's Lineage in the Ballet" by Olga Maynard (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 168 Student papers (4 Items)
- b. 8 f. 169 Dance Representatives Meeting 1973 Feb. 15 (1 Items)
- b. 8 f. 170 miscellaneous notes (2 Items)

VII. Miscellaneous (80 items)

A small series of miscellaneous manuscripts include several contracts, drawings by Loring, and drawings and writings by others.

- b. 9 f. 171 Contracts (6 Items)
- b. 9 f. 172 White House program of of Billy the Kid performance 1962 May 22 (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 173 miscellaneous notes on choreography (5 Items)
- b. 9 f. 174 miscellaneous dance notes (13 Items)
- b. 9 f. 175 Sabbatical report for 1975 (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 176 "Recent Activities" Spring 1976-April 1980 by Eugene Loring (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 177 NEA grant application 1980 (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 178 Plaudit Award, National Dance Association (4 Items)
- b. 9 f. 179 "Business" by Hendrik J. DeLange (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 180 "The story of Eugene Loring's career..." unknown author (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 181 sheet music - Schottische, Tarantella, Polka (3 Items)
- b. 9 f. 182 Table of folk and theatrical dances - origins and descriptions (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 183 song lyrics (3 Items)
- b. 9 f. 184 Drawings by Eugene Loring 1961, 1973-1974 (14 Items)
- b. 9 f. 185 miscellaneous drawings by Eugene Loring n.d. (9 Items)
- b. 9 f. 186 Diagrams of spatial areas and directions (2 Items)
- b. 9 f. 187 Childrens' drawings for Eugene Loring (2 Items)
- b. 9 f. 188 graphite pencil drawing on cardboard, unknown artist (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 189 pen drawings of kneeling and sitting positions of the legs (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 190 "Gene, `Sprung Steet,' L." pencil drawing, artist unknown (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 191-192 drawings for Kineseography book (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 193 ballet material for sale by Norman Crider - annotated list (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 194 "Program for Classic Dance" by Agripinna Vaganova (typescript) (1 Items)



VII. Miscellaneous (cont.)

- b. 9 f. 195 "The Eugene Loring Gift to the University of California, Irvine" descriptive list with appraisals annotated (2 Items)
- b. 9 f. 196 "A Daily Diary of Choreography Class for 1976-1977" compiled by Monica C. L. Morris (1 Items)
- b. 9 f. 197 miscellaneous bills (2 Items)
- b. 9 f. 198 miscellaneous (5 Items)