Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials

Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2021

Contact information: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/2020570121

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu021045

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress
Finding aid encoded by Rachel McNellis, 2021 September
Collection Summary
Title: Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials
Inclusive Dates: 1935-2003
Bulk Dates: 1970-1989
Call No.: ML31.P55
Creator: Plett, Nicole
Extent: approximately 200 items
Extent: 3 containers
Extent: 1.75 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/2020570121
Summary: Nicole Plett (née Bronowski) is an American dance critic and writer on dance and art. The Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials consists primarily of photographs and negatives of Eleanor King and other dancers performing King’s choreography. It also contains notes from and portions of interviews that Plett conducted with dance artists, Plett’s publications on dance, and an assortment of clippings, programs, and promotional material related to King’s professional activities as a choreographer and dancer.

Acquisition Information
Gift, Nicole Plett, 2021.

Accruals
No further accruals are expected.

Processing History
Rachel McNellis processed the Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials and coded the finding aid in 2021.

Transfers
Audiocassette recordings of many of Nicole Plett's interviews with dance artists have been transferred to the Library of Congress Motion picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound (MBRS) Division where they are identified as part of the Nicole Plett Collection (MAVIS collection no. 17519). An inventory of this material is available in the Music Division's collection file.

Other Repositories
Arizona State University's Cross-Cultural Dance Resources (CCDR) collection houses original materials related to Eleanor King, including costumes, personal papers, writings, programs, clippings, and photographs. The Dance Division of the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts holds similar materials.

Related Material
The Cherie Jorgensen Collection on Jane Grossenbacher and Eleanor King contains photographs of Eleanor King, as well as other papers that document King’s life.
Copyright Status
Materials from the Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions
The Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time. Certain restrictions on using or copying materials may apply.

Preferred Citation
Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container or reel or digital ID number], Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note
Nicole Bronowski Plett is an American dance critic and writer on dance and art who has published in prominent newspapers and magazines. She studied the history of photography at the University of New Mexico, where she earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees. In 1988, Plett published Eleanor King: Sixty Years in American Dance (New Mexico: Moving Press, distributed by University of New Mexico Press). Between 1995 and 2004, she was the arts editor for U.S. 1 Newspaper, an entertainment weekly in Princeton, New Jersey. She has also served as the executive officer of the Rutgers Institute for Women and the Arts and as the project manager for the Women Artists Archives National Directory (WAAND).

Scope and Content Note
The Nicole Plett collection spans the years 1935 to 2003, the bulk of which dates between 1970 and 1989, and is organized into four series. The Iconography consists primarily of photographs and negatives, most of which depict Eleanor King and other dancers performing her choreography, as well as several headshots and portraits of King. The series also contains two of King’s watercolor paintings. The Writings series contains some of Nicole Plett’s publications about modern dance, including an exhibit catalog that Eleanor King signed. The Interviews series consists of portions of interviews that Plett conducted with modern and postmodern dance artists such as Lucinda Childs, David Gordon, Rennie Harris, Deborah Hay, Bill T. Jones, Eleanor King, Mark Morris, and Twyla Tharp. The Files on Eleanor King include a small amount of clippings, programs, and promotional material related to King’s professional activities as a choreographer and dancer.

Organization of the Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials
The collection is arranged in four series:
- Iconography, 1935-1987
- Writings, 1970-1988
- Interviews, 1982-2003
- Files on Eleanor King, 1940-1999

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.
People
Childs, Lucinda.
Harris, Rennie, 1964-
Hay, Deborah, 1941-
Jones, Bill T.
Morris, Mark, 1956-
Plett, Nicole--Archives.
Plett, Nicole.
Tharp, Twyla.

Subjects
Choreographers--United States--Biography.
Choreographers--United States--Interviews.
Modern dance--United States--History.

Form/Genre
Biographies.
Clippings (Information artifacts)
Dance programs.
Exhibition catalogs.
Interviews.
Photographs.
Promotional materials.
Watercolors.
Writings (Documents)
Description of Series

Container Series
BOX 1, 3 Iconography, 1935-1987

This series contains photographs, negatives, and several pieces of artwork, most of which depict or pertain to Eleanor King and date between 1970 and 1988. Other modern dancers depicted include José Limón and Andrea Seidel, performing King’s choreographed works. These dances, among others, include Hornpipe (1937-1938), To the West (1943), Northwest Indian Spirit Dance (1945), Transformations (1950-1951), Il Combattimento di Tancredie e Clorinda (1954), The Well-Tempered Dancer (1967), Temptation of St. Anthony (1969), and A Fantasy on T’ai Chi (1975). Portraits and headshots are present, as well as candid shots of King while teaching. These images represent the work of many photographers, including Thomas Bouchard and his daughter Diane Bouchard, Jane Grossenbacher, Cissie Ludlow, and Howard Whittlatch. Unless otherwise indicated, the photographs or negatives depict King alone.

The series also contains two watercolor paintings by Eleanor King.
Organized as two subseries.

Photographs, 1935-1987

Photographs and negatives of Eleanor King and other dancers performing King's works as well as headshots and candid photographs of King. Where no credit is listed, the photographer is unknown. Dates listed refer to the date of the photograph, not the premiere of the work.
Arranged alphabetically by title.

Artwork, 1958

Two watercolor paintings by Eleanor King.
Arranged alphabetically by title.

BOX 2 Writings, 1970-1988

This series consists chiefly of newspaper and magazine articles that Nicole Plett wrote between 1970 and 1988. These publications encompass topics related to dance artists Lucinda Childs, David Gordon, Deborah Hay, Bill T. Jones, Eleanor King, Mark Morris, Steve Paxton, and Twyla Tharp. Also present is an exhibit catalog, Eleanor King: Sixty Years in American Dance, autographed by Eleanor King, and Plett’s compilation of King’s choreographic works.
Arranged alphabetically.

BOX 2 Interviews, 1982-2003

This series consists of notes and excerpts of interviews conducted by Nicole Plett with American choreographers between 1982 and 2003. Some of these artists were associated with the Judson Dance Theater. Other subjects included Black choreographers Bill T. Jones and Rennie Harris. In addition to these excerpts, recordings of most of these interviews, as well as additional interviews with Eve Gentry, Alonzo King, Steve Paxton, and Edward Villella, were transferred to the Library of Congress Motion picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound (MBRS) Division.
Arranged alphabetically by interviewee.

BOX 2, 3 Files on Eleanor King, 1940-1999

This series consists of a small amount of clippings, correspondence, programs, and promotional material related to Eleanor King. The newspaper and magazine clippings
encompass performance reviews, an obituary, and articles about King’s distinctive choreographic style. The programs and promotional material document events at which Eleanor King or other modern dancers performed her choreographed works. Programs for the Eleanor King Retrospective Dance Concert (1988) and the 14th Annual Governors Awards (1987), at which King was honored, are especially notable. The correspondence includes letters from Myra Ellen Jenkins, John Martin, and Genevieve Oswald to Andrea Seidel about restaging, performing, and videotaping King’s works, as well as a letter from Lynn Garafola to Nicole Plett regarding King’s performance in the Rite of Spring in New York City. This series also includes a copy of King’s article “Indian Dance in the Northwest” (*Dance Observer*, 1945) as well as her curriculum vitae.

Arranged alphabetically by material type.
## Container List

<table>
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<th>Container</th>
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| **BOX 1, 3** | **Iconography, 1935-1987**  
This series contains photographs, negatives, and several pieces of artwork, most of which depict or pertain to Eleanor King and date between 1970 and 1988. Other modern dancers depicted include José Limón and Andrea Seidel, performing King’s choreographed works. These dances, among others, include *Hornpipe* (1937-1938), *To the West* (1943), *Northwest Indian Spirit Dance* (1945), *Transformations* (1950-1951), *Il Combattimento di Tancredie e Clorinda* (1954), *The Well-Tempered Dancer* (1967), *Temptation of St. Anthony* (1969), and *A Fantasy on T’ai Chi* (1975). Portraits and headshots are present, as well as candid shots of King while teaching. These images represent the work of many photographers, including Thomas Bouchard and his daughter Diane Bouchard, Jane Grossenbacher, Cissie Ludlow, and Howard Whitlatch. Unless otherwise indicated, the photographs or negatives depict King alone.  
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Arranged alphabetically by title. |

**BOX-FOLDER 1/1**  
Beasts and Saints, undated  
Photographer unknown

**BOX-FOLDER 1/2**  
Byzantou, 1956  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch

**BOX-FOLDER 1/3**  
Characters of the Annunciation, circa 1943  
Photography by Thomas Bouchard

**BOX-FOLDER 1/4**  
Contact sheets, undated  
Photography by Jane Grossenbacher

**BOX-FOLDER 1/5**  
Dance in the Afternoon, 1954  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch

**BOX-FOLDER 1/6**  
Delight Makers, 1966  
*Includes:* Sidney Pellissier; Tom Schumacher; Ed Brown; Eddie Baker

**BOX-FOLDER 1/7**  
Enthousiasmus, undated  
Photography by Cissie Ludlow  
*Includes:* Andrea Seidel

**BOX-FOLDER 1/8**  
A Fantasy on T’ai Chi, undated  
*Includes:* Jan Hendrix; Judy Howie; Camille Maurine; Louisa Putnam; Andrea Seidel

**BOX-FOLDER 1/9**  
Haniwa, 1963  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch

**BOX-FOLDER 1/13-14**  
Hogoromo, 1962, undated

**BOX-FOLDER 1/15-16**  
Hornpipe, 1937-1938, undated  
Photography by Robert McAfee and unknown  
*Note:* Bennington School of Dance is location for one image

Nicole Plett Collection of Dance Research Materials  7
**Iconography, 1935-1987**

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| BOX-FOLDER 1/17 | Invocation, 1953  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/18-19 | Japanese Trance Dance, 1971  
Photography by Paul Jackson |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/20-21 | Japanese Trance Dance, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/10 | King, headshots, 1987  
Photography by Victoria Rogers  
*Note:* New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/11-12, 3/3 | King, headshots, undated  
Photography by Marcus Blechman and unknown |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/22 | King teaching, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/23 | King with paintings, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/24-26 | Mater Dolorosa, 1935, 1977, undated  
Photography by E. Mueller, Cissie Ludlow, unknown |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/27 | Mitsumen Kourori, 1962 |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/28-29 | Moon Dances, undated  
Photography by Diane Bouchard, Ernst Kassowitz |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/30 | Night Song, 1979 |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/31-33 | Northwest Indian Spirit Dance, 1945, 1984, undated  
Photography by Diane Bouchard, Thomas Bouchard, Jane Grossenbacher |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/34 | Roads to Hell, undated  
Photography by Thomas Bouchard |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/35-36 | Sal Puri (Korean Shaman Dance), 1981, undated  
Photography by Bergsohn and unknown |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/37 | Salutation: A Meditation on the East, 1963  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/38 | Soliloquy in the Morning, 1954 |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/39-40 | Tabaruzaka, 1975, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/41 | Tancredi e Clorinda, 1954 |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/42-43 | Temptation of St. Anthony, 1970, undated  
*Includes:* Ray Rickles; Paul Jackson |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/44 | To the West, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/45 | Transformations, 1955  
Photography by Howard Whitlatch |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/46-50 | The Well-Tempered Dancer (trio and solo versions), 1977-1978, undated  
Photography by Jane Grossenbacher, Cissie Ludlow  
*Includes:* Students at Ewha University, South Korea, in trio version |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/51-55 | Unidentified, 1981, undated  
Photography by Cissie Ludlow and unknown  
*Includes:* Juanita Londaño Barry, Eleanor King, José Limón, unidentified dancers |

**Artwork, 1958**

Two watercolor paintings by Eleanor King.  
Arranged alphabetically by title.

| BOX-FOLDER 3/2 | Dances with Suzu, 1958 |
BOX-FOLDER 3/4  
*Sado Okasa Line Dance*, undated

BOX 2  
**Writings, 1970-1988**
This series consists chiefly of newspaper and magazine articles that Nicole Plett wrote between 1970 and 1988. These publications encompass topics related to dance artists Lucinda Childs, David Gordon, Deborah Hay, Bill T. Jones, Eleanor King, Mark Morris, Steve Paxton, and Twyla Tharp. Also present is an exhibit catalog, *Eleanor King: Sixty Years in American Dance*, autographed by Eleanor King, and Plett's compilation of King’s choreographic works.

Arranged alphabetically.

Box-Folder 2/1  
*Articles, 1981-1986*

Box-Folder 2/2  

Box-Folder 2/3  
*Sixty Years in American Dance.* Edited by Nicole Plett. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988

Exhibit catalog, autographed on cover by Eleanor King

**BOX 2  
Interviews, 1982-2003**
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Arranged alphabetically by interviewee.

Box-Folder 2/4  
*Childs, Lucinda, 1985 November 3*

Box-Folder 2/5  
*Gordon, David, 1987 February 13*

Box-Folder 2/6  
*Harris, Rennie, 2003 October 24*

Box-Folder 2/7-8  
*Hay, Deborah, 1982 December 2, 2000 July 12*

Box-Folder 2/9  
*Jones, Bill T., 2002 January 12*

Box-Folder 2/10  
*King, Eleanor, 1987 July 30*

Box-Folder 2/11  
*Morris, Mark, 1993 October 16*

Box-Folder 2/12  
*Tharp, Twyla, 2001 February 14*

**BOX 2, 3  
Files on Eleanor King, 1940-1999**
This series consists of a small amount of clippings, correspondence, programs, and promotional material related to Eleanor King. The newspaper and magazine clippings encompass performance reviews, an obituary, and articles about King’s distinctive choreographic style. The programs and promotional material document events at which Eleanor King or other modern dancers performed her choreographed works. Programs for the Eleanor King Retrospective Dance Concert (1988) and the 14th Annual Governors Awards (1987), at which King was honored, are especially notable. The correspondence includes letters from Myra Ellen Jenkins, John Martin, and Genevieve Oswald to Andrea Seidel about restaging, performing, and videotaping King’s works, as well as a letter from Lynn Garafola to Nicole Plett regarding King’s performance in the *Rite of Spring* in New York City. This series also includes a copy of King’s article “Indian Dance in the Northwest” (*Dance Observer*, 1945) as well as her curriculum vitae.

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<td>BOX-FOLDER 2/13, 3/1</td>
<td>Clippings, circa 1940, 1982-1991</td>
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</table>
| BOX-FOLDER 2/14 | Correspondence, 1977-1978, 1987  
  *Contents:* Lynn Garafola; Myra Ellen Jenkens; John Martin; Genevieve Oswald; James Rutherford; Andrea Seidel; Muriel Topaz |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/15 | Curriculum vitae of Eleanor King, circa 1985 |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/16 | Interview, 1981  
  *Note:* Interview of Eleanor King, conducted by Charles Fort |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/17 | King, Eleanor. "Indian Dance in the Northwest," 1945  
  Photocopy  
  Published in *Dance Observer* 12, 1945 |