

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>

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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.
Gordon, David, 1936-2022.
Harris, Rennie, 1964-
Hay, Deborah, 1941-
Jones, Bill T.
King, Eleanor, 1906-1991--Biography.
King, Eleanor, 1906-1991--Photographs.
King, Eleanor, 1906-1991.
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

BOX 1, 3

Series

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.

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

Container	Contents
BOX 1, 3	<p>Iconography, 1935-1987</p> <p>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 <i>Hornpipe</i> (1937-1938), <i>To the West</i> (1943), <i>Northwest Indian Spirit Dance</i> (1945), <i>Transformations</i> (1950-1951), <i>Il Combattimento di Tancredie e Clorinda</i> (1954), <i>The Well-Tempered Dancer</i> (1967), <i>Temptation of St. Anthony</i> (1969), and <i>A Fantasy on T'ai Chi</i> (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.</p> <p>The series also contains two watercolor paintings by Eleanor King. Organized as two subseries.</p> <p>Photographs, 1935-1987</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Arranged alphabetically by title.</p>
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Beasts and Saints, undated Photographer unknown
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Byzantiou, 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 <i>Includes:</i> Sidney Pellissier; Tom Schumacher; Ed Brown; Eddie Baker
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Enthousiasmus, undated Photography by Cissie Ludlow <i>Includes:</i> Andrea Seidel
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	A Fantasy on T'ai Chi, undated <i>Includes:</i> 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 <i>Note:</i> Bennington School of Dance is location for one image

Iconography, 1935-1987

Container	Contents
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 <i>Note:</i> 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
BOX-FOLDER 1/38	Soliloquy in the Morning, 1954 Photography by Howard Whitlatch
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 <i>Includes:</i> 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 <i>Includes:</i> Students at Ewha University, South Korea, in trio version
BOX-FOLDER 1/51-55	Unidentified, 1981, undated Photography by Cissie Ludlow and unknown <i>Includes:</i> 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	<i>Dances with Suzu</i> , 1958

Iconography, 1935-1987

Container

Contents

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

List of choreographic works, 1970, 1982, 1988

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

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-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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Files on Eleanor King, 1940-1999

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 2/13, 3/1	Clippings, circa 1940, 1982-1991
BOX-FOLDER 2/14	Correspondence, 1977-1978, 1987 <i>Contents:</i> Lynn Garafola; Myra Ellen Jenkins; 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 <i>Note:</i> Interview of Eleanor King, conducted by Charles Fort
BOX-FOLDER 2/17	King, Eleanor. "Indian Dance in the Northwest," 1945 Photocopy Published in <i>Dance Observer</i> 12, 1945