

Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet



**Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2024**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020570134>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu024010>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Morgen Stevens-Garmon, March 2024

Collection Summary

Title: Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet

Inclusive Dates: 1932-1999

Bulk Dates: 1989-1991

Call No.: ML31.A65

Creator: Arkin, Lisa C.

Extent: 358 items

Extent: 2 boxes

Extent: 2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English, with some in French, German, Polish, and Russian

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020570134>

Summary: This collection contains research by Lisa C. Arkin, a former faculty member at the University of Oregon. Arkin's research investigates the inaugural year of the Polish Ballet when dancer, choreographer, and teacher Bronislava Nijinska (1891-1972) served as the company's artistic director. Material types include articles, clippings, correspondence, drafts, notes, photographs, prints, programs, slides, and writings.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Lisa C. Arkin, 2021

Custodial History

Materials were maintained by Lisa C. Arkin until their arrival at the Library of Congress in 2021. A few items in the collection were originally part of Bronislava Nijinska's personal collection and were given to Arkin by Irina Nijinska.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

Morgen Stevens-Garmon processed and created the finding aid for the Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet in March 2024.

A photocopy of the score for "Legend of Cracow" by Michał Kondracki was removed from the collection. The score contained no additional annotations, and the original is available in the [Bronislava Nijinska Collection](#), Box 131, Folder 6.

Related Material

The [Bronislava Nijinska Collection](#) contains extensive materials on Nijinska's life and career collected and maintained by her and her daughter, Irina Nijinska, and her son-in-law, Gibbs S. Raetz.

Nijinska's work with the Ballets Russes is documented in the [Serge Grigoriev / Ballets Russes Archive](#), and her work with the American Ballet Theatre during its formative years is discoverable in the [American Ballet Theatre Archive](#).

Copyright Status

Materials from the Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet 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 Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet 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 number], Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

The Polish Ballet (Balet Polski) was formed in 1937 with Bronislava Nijinska (1891-1972) as artistic director. Born into a dance family, Nijinska's career on stage began in 1908. She built a reputation as a choreographer working with her brother Vaslav Nijinsky and within companies run by Serge Diaghilev and Ida Rubinstein. The company's debut was at the 1937 Paris International Exposition of Art and Technology Applied to Modern Life. The Polish Ballet then went on to perform in London and in multiple venues across Germany before returning to Poland in March 1938. Nijinska's leadership lasted only one season, and in that time, she created five new works: *Chopin Concerto*; *Le chant de la terre*; *Legend of Cracow*; *Apollon et la belle*; and *Le rappel*. In the late 1980s, Lisa C. Arkin, then an assistant professor at the University of Oregon, began conducting research on Nijinska's involvement in the Polish Ballet. This research resulted in the publication of "Bronislava Nijinska and the Polish Ballet, 1937-1938: Missing Chapter of the Legacy" in *Dance Research Journal*, volume 24, no. 2 (Autumn 1992).

Scope and Content Note

The Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet contains materials collected or created by Arkin, the majority dating from 1989 to 1991, for her *Dance Research Journal* article "Bronislava Nijinska and the Polish Ballet, 1937-1938: Missing Chapter of the Legacy." [Research Files](#) contains articles, clippings, images, notes, and programs of the Polish Ballet. [Writings](#) includes drafts of Arkin's article, a research grant proposal, and a proposal for another article on folk dance. [Correspondence](#) consists of Arkin's exchanges on research inquiries and letters with Vladimir Dokoudovsky, Irina Nijinska, Gibbs S. Raetz, and Nina Youshkevitch.

Organization of the Lisa C. Arkin Collection on Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet

The collection is arranged in three series:

- [Research Files, 1932-1991](#)
- [Writings, 1989-1995](#)
- [Correspondence, 1989-1993, 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

Arkin, Lisa C.

Arkin, Lisa C.--Correspondence.

Davis, Janet Rowson.

Dokoudovsky, Vladimir.
Nijinska, Bronislava, 1891-1972.
Nijinska, Irina.
Raetz, Gibbs S.

Organizations

Balet Polski (1937-1939)--History.

Subjects

Ballet historians--United States--Correspondence.
Ballet--Poland--History.

Form/Genre

Articles.
Business correspondence.
Clippings (Information artifacts)
Dance programs.
Dance reviews.
Drafts (Documents)
Photographs.
Research notes.
Slides (Photographs)
Writings (Documents)

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1-2

Series

Research Files, 1932-1991

This series holds material collected or created by Arkin in the process of researching Bronislava Nijinska's involvement with the Polish Ballet. It includes articles, clippings, notes, photographs, programs, prints, and slides. Among Arkin's notes are interviews she conducted with former Polish Ballet dancer Nina Youshkevitch. Original programs of the Polish Ballet may have been given to Arkin by Irina Nijinska or Irina's husband, Gibbs S. Raetz.

Arranged alphabetically by material type or subject.

BOX 1

Writings, 1989-1995

This series consists of three folders holding materials created by Arkin, including drafts of her article on Nijinska, proposals for a paper on folk dance, and documentation for a research grant proposal.

Arranged alphabetically by title or subject.

BOX 1

Correspondence, 1989-1993, 1999

This series contains letters written to and from Arkin while she researched Bronislava Nijinska's Polish Ballet. Correspondents include Nijinska's daughter and son-in-law, Irina and Gibbs S. Raetz, as well as two dancers from the Polish Ballet company, Vladimir Dokoudovsky and Nina Youshkevitch. Inquiries to Janet Rowson Davis, the British Broadcasting Corporation, National Film Archive, and several Polish organizations are further evidence of Arkin's research. Letters from the Society of Authors concern a permissions request to reprint John Masefield's poem "To the Dancers in the Polish Ballet."

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-2	Research Files, 1932-1991 This series holds material collected or created by Arkin in the process of researching Bronislava Nijinska's involvement with the Polish Ballet. It includes articles, clippings, notes, photographs, programs, prints, and slides. Among Arkin's notes are interviews she conducted with former Polish Ballet dancer Nina Youshkevitch. Original programs of the Polish Ballet may have been given to Arkin by Irina Nijinska or Irina's husband, Gibbs S. Raetz. Arranged alphabetically by material type or subject.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Clippings, 1989-1991
BOX-FOLDER 2/1-6	Clippings and scrapbook pages, 1937-1990 and undated Photocopies
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Koegler, Horst. "In the Shadows of the Swastika," 1974 and undated Photocopy; page of notes
BOX-FOLDER 1/3-4	Miscellaneous research notes, 1930-1991 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Notebook, 1989 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Notepad, 1992 and undated <i>Includes:</i> Interview with Nina Youshkevitch
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Photographs, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Prints of Polish national dances, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	Programs (French), 1932, 1937
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Programs (German), 1937-1938
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	Program (Polish), 1937 Research Notes binder
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	The Choreographies and Interviews, 1936-1938, 1989
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Composers, Music and Background Information on 20th century Art, 1939-1991
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Outline and Historical Background, 1937-1988
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Paris Tour and German Tour, 1938-1989
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	Slides, 1989
BOX-FOLDER 1/15	Smith, Albert. "The Natural History of the Ballet Girl," undated Photocopy
BOX 1	Writings, 1989-1995 This series consists of three folders holding materials created by Arkin, including drafts of her article on Nijinska, proposals for a paper on folk dance, and documentation for a research grant proposal. Arranged alphabetically by title or subject.
BOX-FOLDER 1/16	"Bronislava Nijinska and the Polish Ballet, 1937-1938: Missing Chapter of the Legacy," 1991
BOX-FOLDER 1/17	Proposals on folk dance, 1994-1995 <i>Note:</i> Written with Marian Smith

Writings, 1989-1995

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Summer research grant proposal, 1989
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BOX-FOLDER 1/19	British Broadcasting Corporation, 1990 March
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Davis, Janet Rowson, 1990 September-October
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Dokoudovsky, Vladimir, 1989
BOX-FOLDER 1/22	Miscellaneous Polish institutions, 1989
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	National Film Archive (Great Britain), 1990 March
BOX-FOLDER 1/24	Nijinska, Irina, 1989 October
BOX-FOLDER 1/25	Raetz, Gibbs S., 1989, 1999
BOX-FOLDER 1/26	Society of Authors (Great Britain), 1992 August-September
BOX-FOLDER 1/27	Youshkevitch, Nina, 1992, 1993