

**The New York Public Library**  
**New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center**  
**Jerome Robbins Dance Division**

Guide to the

## **Carola Trier papers**

1951-2000

(S) \*MGZMD 266

Compiled by Janine Veazue, Queens College, CUNY, 2012, August 2011

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Trier, Carola S.

**Title:** Carola Trier papers, 1951-2000

**Size:** .63 linear foot (2 boxes)

**Source:** Donated by the Estate of Carola Trier, 2001

**Abstract:** The Carola Trier papers contain books, clippings, professional and personal correspondence, photographs, programs, and anatomical notes and research. Many of the items document Trier's professional life, which included study and practice of orthopedic medicine (in conjunction with her background in Pilates) as well as a strong association with the New York City dance community.

**Access:** To request materials, please contact the Jerome Robbins Dance Division ([dance@nypl.org](mailto:dance@nypl.org)) in advance.

**Preferred citation:** Carola Trier papers, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library

### **Processing note**

Materials are arranged alphabetically by format. A poster was separated from the rest of the collection: please contact the Dance Division.

### **Related collections**

Carola S. Trier Collection, 1900-2000. Leo Baeck Institute

### **Creator history**

Carola Strauss Trier (1913-2000) was born in Germany in 1913. She and her family lived and worked in Europe until the Second World War, when she was sent to a Nazi-run detention camp in France. She escaped and immigrated to New York in 1942. Carola married Edgar Trier and supported herself in the United States as a dancer, acrobat, and most notably a roller-skating contortionist, before a devastating injury brought her to Joseph and Clara Pilates, founders of the Pilates method of exercise and strength-training. In the late 1950s, having been trained by the Pilates, she opened her own Contrology studio and later furthered her anatomical knowledge at New York City's Lenox Hill Hospital, where she aided Dr. Henry Jordan with patient rehabilitation and research. Trier combined her medical and Pilates experiences to develop various exercises and stretching techniques for dancers, many of which are still in use. In 1982, Trier authored a book for children entitled *Exercise, What it is, What it Does*, which

introduced and emphasized the benefit and enjoyment of exercising both alone and with friends. Trier was an active teacher, lecturer, and practitioner until the late 1980s, serving as a coach for choreographer Gloria Contreras until 1985. Carola Trier passed away in New York City on October 28, 2000 at the age of 89.

### **Scope and content note**

The Carola Trier papers consist of books, correspondence, photographs, notes relating to anatomy and anatomical procedures, and magazine and newspaper clippings. Also included are two small pieces of mixed-media artwork, depicting Trier at different stages of her professional life.

Two books from Trier's personal library are in the collection: a medical dictionary inscribed to Trier ("my medical-minded daughter") by her father, Eduard Strauss, and a biography of George Balanchine by Bernard Taper.

Correspondence in the papers range from business greetings to warm notes from Joseph and Clara Pilates, Gloria Contreras, and Dr. Henry Jordan of Lenox Hill Hospital, among other correspondents. Among the photographs in the collection are images depicting Trier as a young woman which demonstrate her physical flexibility. Also included are photographs of Trier with Gloria Contreras (ca. 1990s).

### **Arrangement**

Materials are arranged alphabetically by format.

### **Key terms**

#### **Subjects**

Pilates method

#### **Places**

New York (N.Y.)

#### **Names**

Balanchine, George

Contreras, Gloria

Jordan, Henry H., b. 1897

Pilates, Clara

Pilates, Joseph H. (Joseph Hubertus)

Strauss, Eduard, 1876-1952

Trier, Carola S.

#### **Special formats**

Correspondence

Photographs

Programs (documents)

## Container list

### Books

- b.1 *Balanchine* by Bernard Taper (New York: Harper & Row, 1963)
- b.1 *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*, 5th edition by C. W. Taber (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company, 1951)

### Clippings and Reprints

- b.2 f.1 Clippings, 1951-1999, undated
- b.2 f.2 Reprints, 1951-1984, undated

### Correspondence

- b.2 f.3 Contreras, Gloria, 1985-1999
- b.2 f.4 General--Personal, 1962-2000
- b.2 f.5 General--Professional, 1955-2000
- b.2 f.6 Jordan, Henry, 1953-1970, undated
- b.2 f.7 Pilates, Joseph and Clara, 1956, undated

### Memorabilia

- b.2 f.8 General, 1957-1997, undated
- b.2 f.9 Programs, 1951-2000, undated
- b.2 f.10 Mixed-Media Art, Depicting Trier Roller Skating and Dancing, undated

### Notes and Research Materials

- b.2 f.11 Notes related to Trier's medical studies, undated
- b.2 f.11 Draft of Book Introduction, undated
- b.2 f.11 Spinal Goniometer (physical therapy tool), undated

### Photographs

- b.2 f.12 General, undated