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Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the  
**Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive**  
1960-2010  
(S)\*MGZMD 302

Compiled by Lea Jordan, September 2012

## Summary

**Creator:** Baryshnikov, Mikhail, 1948-

**Title:** Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive, 1960-2010

**Size:** 13.09 linear feet (34 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Mikhail Baryshnikov, 2011

**Abstract:** Mikhail Baryshnikov (1948- ) is a Russian-American dancer, choreographer and actor. The Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive holds awards, choreographer files, contracts, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, programs, scripts, and other materials documenting Baryshnikov's 40-plus year career.

**Access:** Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

**Copyright information:** For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

**Preferred citation:** Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:**  Collection rehoused. Original order maintained where evident.

## Creator history

Mikhail Baryshnikov (1948- ) is a Russian-American dancer, choreographer and actor. Born in Riga, he received his early training at the Vaganova Academy in Leningrad. He joined the Kirov ballet in 1967. Recognizing his talent, Soviet choreographers soon began creating works for him. In 1974 while on tour with the Bolshoi ballet, Baryshnikov moved to Canada and joined the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. After appearing as a guest artist with several companies, he began dancing with the New York City Ballet under Balanchine. He also danced with the American Ballet Theatre (ABT), and in 1980 he became the artistic director of ABT, a post he held for ten years.

Baryshnikov's acting credits include the films *Turning Point* (1977) and *White Nights* (1985), many television specials, and theatrical turns in *Metamorphosis* (1989), *Forbidden Christmas* (2004) and *Paris* (2007) among others.

In 1990, Baryshnikov founded the White Oak Dance Project with choreographer Mark Morris. The project was created to be the touring component of the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. Studios were built in Jacksonville, Florida and an emphasis was placed on workshopping and premiering new works in modern dance. The company toured through 2002, when the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation turned its focus to opening the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City. The Baryshnikov Arts Center opened in 2005 and provides a home for artists to create new work.

Among Baryshnikov's many awards are the Kennedy Center Honors, the National Medal of Honor, the Jerome Robbins Award, and Honorary Degrees from several major universities.

### **Scope and content note**

The Mikhail Baryshnikov Archive holds awards, choreographer files, contracts, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, programs, scripts, and other materials documenting Baryshnikov's 40-plus year career. The bulk of the collection is composed of files from Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project and a wide range of photographs. There is a small component of documents and photographs pertaining to Baryshnikov's career before leaving the Soviet Union in 1974.

The choreographer files consist of contract agreements, professional correspondence, press releases, clippings, and other materials relating to dance professionals who were employed by the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. The agreements are often with agents or the rights holders in the case of deceased choreographers. Dates refer to the dates of agreements, contracts and correspondence and not of the actual work being staged.

Company files hold a limited amount of correspondence and paperwork between Baryshnikov and a handful of the many dance companies with which he collaborated. The bulk of this material relates to the American Ballet Theatre.

Correspondence contains a mix of professional and personal letters to Baryshnikov. Noted choreographers and dancers, famous fans, and personal acquaintances are all represented. Much of the material is directly related to dance, whether it is Trisha Brown's description of Baryshnikov dancing her work, to Agnes DeMille's suggestions for *Rodeo* casting. There is correspondence from Romola and Kyra Nijinsky to Baryshnikov and his representatives, with replies by Howard Gillman regarding a possible film version of the life of Nijinsky. These materials include a book of poetry by Kyra Nijinsky in which she has written a letter suggesting that the poetry could be a basis for a film.

The photographs are primarily arranged by dance company, with some personal and miscellaneous professional photographs included. Company shots hold individual production photographs, identified by year and work where possible. There are some rehearsal and backstage images. Photographs taken in the Soviet Union include Kirov ballet images as well as childhood and young adult performance photographs accompanied by correspondence relating to these photographs. One letter is from a former teacher who had choreographed a ballet for Baryshnikov. Some images are scans sent to Baryshnikov over the years.

The personal photographs include candid and posed shots with various celebrities and politicians at galas and after performances, as well as Polaroid shots from his 1979 trip to China and images of Baryshnikov receiving various honorary degrees.

Press clippings include a selection of newspaper and magazine articles regarding Baryshnikov's career. Programs hold individual performance programs, solo and with various dance companies, as well as

programs from Baryshnikov's photography exhibitions.

There are various documents in Russian including his diploma from the Leningrad Academic College of Choreography, a drivers license with a traffic violation ticket, his membership card to the National Theatre Society, and a 1967 Vaganova School yearbook showing Baryshnikov and other dance students.

There are five scrapbooks, mostly compiled by others as gifts. Two show rehearsals and curtain calls from 1975 to 1977. The third is a Presidential album from Baryshnikov's 1979 performance for President Jimmy Carter and his family at the White House. There are two binders of press clippings, primarily from magazines with color pictures.

Baryshnikov's theatre and film materials include work scripts and some correspondence. Four files hold logistical and press information for various solo tours, as well as tours with the White Oak Dance Project and the *Forbidden Christmas* tour in 2004.

The White Oak Dance Project materials consist of contracts with various dancers, choreographers, and vendors, a written project history, master programs, performance reports, programs, and a video inventory. The White Oak Dance Project was located near Jacksonville, Florida on the White Oak Plantation. The Project supported the workshops and eventual staging of new choreography from many artists, including Mark Morris, Twyla Tharp, David Gordon, and many others. Of interest are the performance reports, noting the reaction of the audience at various tour locations, and the master programs, which include preliminaries sent ahead to each city on a tour.

## **Arrangement**

Alphabetical by subject.

## **Key terms**

### **Subjects**

Ballet -- 20th century  
Ballet -- Russia  
Ballet -- United States  
Choreographers  
Modern dance

### **Names**

American Ballet Theatre  
Baryshnikov, Mikhail, 1948-  
New York City Ballet

### **Special formats**

Contracts  
Correspondence  
Photographs  
Programs  
Scrapbooks  
Scripts

## Container list

b.30 f.1 Art (pen and ink sketches by others)

### Awards

b.1 f.1 General, 1988-2005

### Honorary Degrees

b.31 f.4 Brandeis University, 1983

b.31 f.5 Columbia University, 1985

b.30 f.9 Montclair State University, 2008

b.31 f.6 Yale University, 1979

b.1 f.2 Presidential Invitations, 1983-2000

b.1 f.3 State and City Proclamations, 1983-1997

### Choreographers

b.1 f.4 Anastos, Peter, 1999

b.1 f.5 Armitage, Karole, 1996-1999

b.1 f.6 Bando, Tamasaburo, 1995-1998

b.1 f.7 Barton, Aszure, 2005-2007

b.1 f.8 Bausch, Pina, 1994-2003

b.1 f.9 Bejart, Maurice, 1997

b.1 f.10 Brown, Trisha, 1996-1999

b.1 f.11 Clark, Michael, 2002-2004

b.1 f.12 Childs, Lucinda, 1994-2003

b.1 f.13 Cullburg, Birgit, 1992

b.1 f.14 Cunningham, Merce, 1995-2000

b.2 f.1 Feld, Eliot, 2003-2005

b.2 f.2 Forsythe, Bill, 2006

b.2 f.3 Forti, Simone, 1999-2004

b.2 f.4 Gelabert, Cesc, 2003

b.2 f.5 Gillis, Christopher, 1992

b.2 f.6 Gordon, David, 1991-2006

b.2 f.7 Graham, Martha, 1991-2001

b.2 f.8 Greenberg, Neil, 1999-2005

b.2 f.9 Guerin, Lucy, 1998-1999

b.2 f.10 Hahn, Ruth Davidson, 2002-2004

b.2 f.11 Hawkins, Erick, 1994-2002

b.2 f.12 Hay, Deborah, 2000-2004

b.2 f.13 Holm, Hanya, 1992-1993

b.2 f.14 Jakobson, Leonid, 2004

b.2 f.15 Janney, Christopher, 1997-2001

b.3 f.1 Jasperse, John, 1999

b.3 f.2 Limón, José , 1998-2003

Choreographers (cont.)

- b.3 f.3 Lubovitch, Lar, 1991
- b.3 f.4 Michaelson, Sarah, 2002
- b.3 f.5 Millepied, Benjamin, 2005
- b.3 f.6 Morris, Mark, 1990-2001
- b.3 f.7 Moulton, Charles, 1990-2001
- b.3 f.8 Move, Richard, 2001-2002
- b.3 f.9 Murphy, Graeme, 1996
- b.3 f.10 O'Brien, Amy, 1999
- b.3 f.11 O'Connor, Tere, 2003
- b.3 f.12 O'Day, Kevin, 1994
- b.3 f.13 Patterson, Kraig, 1996-1998
- b.3 f.14 Paxton, Steve, 2000-2001
- b.3 f.15 Petit, Roland, undated
- b.3 f.16 Rainer, Yvonne, 2000-2002
- b.3 f.17 Reitz, Dana, 1998-2005
- b.3 f.18 Robbins, Jerome, 1998-2004
- b.3 f.19 Salomons, Ruthlyn, 1996
- b.4 f.1 Schlömer, Joachim, 1996-2004
- b.4 f.2 Scott, Vernon, 1996
- b.4 f.3 Stuart, Meg, 1996-1997
- b.4 f.4 Taylor, Paul, 1992-2004
- b.4 f.5 Tharp, Twyla, 1991-2004
- b.4 f.6 Uchizono, Donna, 2005-2006

Companies

American Ballet Theatre

- b.4 f.7-8 General, 1979-1980
  - b.4 f.9 Souvenir programs, 1979-1981
  - b.4 f.10 Hell's Kitchen Dance, 2007
- New York City Ballet
- b.4 f.11 General, 1978-1979
  - b.32 f.1 Poster, undated
  - b.5 f.1 The Kennedy Center, 1981
- b.5 f.2-5 Contracts, 1976-1989

Correspondence

- b.5 f.6 General, 1978-1989
- b.5 f.7 Brown, Trisha, 1980-1997

Correspondence (cont.)

- b.5 f.8 Croce, Arlene, undated
- b.5 f.9 Cunningham, Merce, undated
- b.5 f.10 d'Amboise, Jacques, 1978
- b.5 f.11 DeMille, Agnes, 1980
- b.5 f.12 Dietrich, Marlene, 1988
- b.5 f.13 Gilman, Howard, 1975-1986
- b.5 f.14 Nijinsky, Kyra and Romola, 1976
- b.5 f.15 Robbins, Jerome, 1983-1995
- b.6 f.1 Ross, Herbert, 1980
- b.6 f.2 Sinatra, Frank, 1978-1983
- b.6 f.3 The White House, 1979-1994
- b.30 f.2 Costumes, 1975-1990  
One sketch along with some receipts for custom pieces.
- b.6 f.4 Documents, 1967-1982  
Professional and government documents, some in Russian.
- b.6 f.5-6 Fanmail, undated
- b.6 f.7 Perfume Line, 1995

Photographs

By Company or Choreographer

- b.6 f.8 Alvin Ailey, 1983
- American Ballet Theatre
- b.6 f.9-11 General
- b.7 f.1 *La Bayadere*, 1977
- b.7 f.2 *Coppelia*, undated
- b.7 f.3 *Le Corsaire*, undated
- b.7 f.4 *Don Quixote*, undated
- b.30 f.7 Gala, 1975
- b.7 f.5-6 *Giselle*, 1975
- b.7 f.7 *Le Jeune Homme et la Morte*, undated
- b.7 f.8 *The Nutcracker*, undated
- b.7 f.9 *Other Dances*, undated
- b.7 f.10 *Push Comes to Shove*, 1987
- b.7 f.11 Rehearsal, undated
- b.7 f.12 *Le Spectre de la Rose*, undated
- b.7 f.13 *La Sylphide*, undated
- b.7 f.14 *Theme and Variations*, 1978
- b.8 f.1-2 Ballet National de Marseille - *La Dame de Pique*

Photographs (cont.)

By Company or Choreographer (cont.)

Eliot Feld Ballet

- b.8 f.3 *Santa Fe Saga*, undated
- b.8 f.4 *Variations on America*, 1977
- b.8 f.5 Mark Morris Company - *Pas de Poissons*, undated
- b.8 f.6 Martha Graham Dance Company, undated
- b.8 f.7 National Ballet of Canada - *Swan Lake*, undated

New York City Ballet

- b.8 f.8 General, undated
- b.8 f.9 *Apollo*, 1979
- b.8 f.10 *Coppelia*, 1978
- b.8 f.11 *Duo Concertant*, 1992
- b.8 f.12 *Harlequinade*, 1978
- b.8 f.13 *The Nutcracker*, undated
- b.8 f.14 *Romeo and Juliet*, 1986
- b.9 f.1 The Royal Ballet, undated
- b.9 f.2 Twyla Tharp - *Once More Frank*, 1976

White Oak Dance Project

- b.9 f.3-7 General, 1991-2001
- b.9 f.8 *Chaconne*, 1997
- b.9 f.9 *HeartBeat:mb*, 1998
- b.9 f.10 *Three Russian Preludes*, 1995

Personal

- b.10 f.1-4 General, 1974-2000
- b.10 f.5 Balanchine, George, undated
- b.10 f.6-7 China Trip, 1979
- b.10 f.8 Cunningham, Merce, undated
- b.10 f.9 Dogs, undated
- b.10 f.10 Honorary Degree, University of Toronto, 2000

Professional

- b.11 f.1 *Adam and Eve*, undated
- b.11 f.2-3 *Baryshnikov on Broadway*, 1980
- b.11 f.4 *La Bayadere*, 1977
- b.11 f.5 *Medea*, undated
- b.11 f.6 National Technical Institute for the Deaf Performance, 1981
- b.11 f.7 Negatives, undated  
all are represented in print within the collection
- b.30 f.5 Other Dancers, undated

Photographs (cont.)

Professional (cont.)

- b.11 f.8 *Prodigal Son*, undated
- b.11 f.9 Proofs, 1975-1997
- b.11 f.10 Rehearsal, 1975-2000
- b.30 f.6 Rehearsal, 1975-2000
- Russia
- b.11 f.11-12 Ballet, 1967-1974
- b.11 f.13 Childhood, undated
- b.12 f.1 Performance and Rehearsal, 1972
- b.12 f.2 Slides, 1978-1987
- Studio Portraits
- b.12 f.3-4 General, 1974-2000
- b.30 f.8 General, 1974-2000
- b.31 f.1 General, 1974-2000
- b.12 f.5 Leibovitz, Annie, 1992
- b.12 f.6 Tours - Forth Worth, Texas, undated
- b.13 f.1 *Turning Point*, 1977
- b.13 f.2 Poem, undated  
Written after Baryshnikov moved to Canada about the joys of watching Baryshnikov dancing.  
Unknown author, in Russian
- Press Clippings
- b.13 f.3-8 1974-1979
- b.14 f.1-8 1980-1992
- b.15 f.1-6 1992-1994
- b.16 f.1-6 1994-2002
- b.17 f.1-6 2002-2003
- b.18 f.1-5 2004
- b.19 f.1-5 2004-2006
- Programs
- b.19 f.6 American Ballet Theatre, 1976-1983
- b.19 f.7 Baryshnikov and Company, 1987
- b.19 f.8 Benefits and Galas, 1982-1994
- b.19 f.9 Eliot Feld Ballet, 1977
- b.20 f.1 *Forbidden Christmas*, 2004
- b.20 f.2 *New York City Ballet*, 1979
- b.31 f.2-3 Oversize, 1977-1980
- b.20 f.3 Photography, 2008-2010
- b.20 f.4 Russian, undated

Programs (cont.)

- b.20 f.5 *Solos with Piano... or Not*, 2004
- b.20 f.6 *Three Solos and a Duet*, 2009
- b.32 f.2 *Tribute to the Queen Mother*, 1980 (silk program)
- b.20 f.7 Score - *Waltz Triste*, undated (by Baryshnikov)

Scrapbooks

General

- b.27 f.4 1975-1989
- b.27 f.5 1977
- b.32 f.6 Presidential Visit, 1979

Press Clippings

- b.28 1975-1988
- b.29 1989-1993
- b.20 f.8 Speeches and Writings, undated

Theater and Film

General

*Baryshnikov on Broadway*

- b.30 f.3 Press Kit, 1980
- b.34 Promotional Binder, 1980 (empty)
- b.30 f.4 *Sunrise, Sunset* Sheet Music, 1980
- b.20 f.9 *Beckett Shorts*, 2007
- b.20 f.10 *Metamorphosis*, 1989

Scripts

- b.20 f.11 *Baryshnikov in Hollywood*, 1981
- b.21 f.1 *Baryshnikov on Broadway*, 1980
- b.21 f.2 *Beckett Shorts*, 2007
- b.21 f.3 *Forbidden Christmas*, 2004
- b.21 f.4-5 *The Turning Point*, 1976

Tours

- b.21 f.6 *Baryshnikov in Concert*, 1981-1983
- b.21 f.7 Fall 2009 Tour, 2009
- b.21 f.8 *Forbidden Christmas*, 2004
- b.21 f.9 Performance Schedules, 1978-1981
- b.22 f.1 Solo Tour, 2003
- b.22 f.2 *Twyla Tharp and Mikhail Baryshnikov*, 1992-1993
- b.22 f.3-6 White Oak Dance Project, 1998-2002
- b.33 Vaganova School Yearbook, 1967 (in Russian)

White Oak Dance Project

- b.22 f.7-8 Contracts, 1994-2004
- b.23 f.1 History, undated
- b.23 f.2-7 Master Programs, 1990-1999
- b.24 f.1-3 Master Programs, 2000-2004
- b.24 f.4 Memorabilia, 1993-2001
- b.24 f.5-6 Performance Reports, 2000-2003
- b.24 f.7-8 Programs, 1991-2002
- b.25 f.1-6 Programs, 1991-2002
- b.26 f.1-5 Programs, 1991-2002
- b.27 f.1-2 Programs, 1991-2002
- b.32 f.3-5 Programs, 1991-2002
- b.27 f.3 Video Inventory, 2004