

Northern Ballet Archive Collection Development Policy**1) INTRODUCTION**

The Northern Ballet Archive tells the story of the company, from its origins in 1969 to the present, by collecting, preserving and making accessible material that provides an accurate and comprehensive record of its history.

The collections are used for internal use, research, education and interpretation. In the future, some of the archive will be gifted to Leeds University Library Special Collections for safekeeping and wider public access. The material will become the property of LULSC.

2) PURPOSE

The Policy sets out the parameters for decisions on future collecting. It takes into account current heritage sector good practice, including the Archive Service Accreditation Standard (2014), BS:4971 Conservation and care of archive and library collections (2017) and SPECTRUM Collections Management Standard (5.0, 2017).

The Policy will help to safeguard the material that Northern Ballet already owns and strengthen the collection by ensuring future acquisitions or disposals are carried out with clear collecting criteria.

The Policy will also provide clear guidance to donors about the kind of material that Northern Ballet seeks to acquire, the methods by which it does so, and how the collections are managed and accessed.

3) CONTEXT OF COLLECTIONS

The Northern Ballet Archive comprises organisational records and personal papers which were collected in an ad hoc way. It comprises physical, digitised and born-digital formats, including paper documents, printed ephemera, audio-visual formats (e.g. reel-to-reels, tapes, VHS) and objects (e.g. pointe shoes).

There are gaps in the collection, for example due to fire and flooding and Company moves from Manchester to Halifax to Leeds. From the 2000s, efforts to organise and conserve the collection were undertaken by Learning staff and Archive volunteers. From September 2018 a qualified archivist has been in post to manage the collections.

The collection is unique. It can offer help to staff, researchers, educators and learners of all ages to interpret aspects of Northern Ballet. It also complements other collections held by the Leeds University Library Special Collections, such as the Phoenix Dance Theatre, RJC Dance, and Laban collections.

4) METHODS OF COLLECTION

The current collection comprises material acquired via gift or internal transfer. Future acquisition will be by prior agreement and confirmed, where appropriate, in writing by a depositor's agreement signed by both parties.

Material offered to the Archive will be considered on its archival information value rather than its format or medium. The format of any acquired record is bound only by the Archive's professional duty of care, its responsibility to ensure adequate provision for conservation, documentation, storage and access.

Northern Ballet reserves the right to refuse ad hoc transfers whatever the source. If an unsolicited donation cannot be returned, it may be offered to another Department, such as Academy, or disposed of. Full acquisition records of all donations will be maintained. Northern Ballet is unable to accept any items if the donation is in any way conditional, for instance, on an item being displayed.

Following deposit and during the cataloguing process Northern Ballet will evaluate the collection and identify any materials not required for permanent preservation. Disposal will be arranged with the agreement of the depositor.

Acquisitions outside the stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances and only after proper consideration by Northern Ballet.

5) COLLECTING PRIORITIES

Northern Ballet has defined its collecting priorities based on its founding purpose, its current knowledge of the collection and its vision for the archive's future development. These criteria may be reviewed and adapted because of ongoing cataloguing, once more strengths and gaps have been identified in the current collection.

Northern Ballet would like items relevant to the Company's history. These may include but are not limited to:

- Personal papers of former Board members, staff, dancers, guest artists and supporters
- Photographs and ephemera such as production fliers or posters

Northern Ballet Archive will only accept material that can be effectively stored, preserved and made accessible. Due to limited space and resources, we currently do not collect:

- 1) Surrogate copies (such as photocopies) of original material except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. to provide access where the location of the original is unknown or is known to have been destroyed and no other version exists
- 2) Duplicates, unless they are of particular significance

- 3) Props, costumes and objects, unless they are directly related to Northern Ballet and unique in their ability to convey an aspect of the Company and its history
- 4) Published material, such as press cuttings and books, unless it has significant provenance, extensive annotations or other unique features contributing to original research
- 5) Physical audio-visual formats, except in exceptional circumstances

6) ACCESS

The collection is owned by Northern Ballet Limited. Northern Ballet has designated a room, on the fourth floor of its Quarry Hill site, to store the collection. Work is underway to catalogue the collections and increase physical and remote access to the Archive.

Currently we welcome visitors and researchers via prior appointment with the Archive & Records Manager. Please note, we do not have a dedicated research room and our on-site space is limited.

Some of the collection is not yet accessible to external researchers and the public, for instance material which contains sensitive personal information about individuals and is restricted under the Data Protection Act (2018). Please contact the Archive & Records manager for more information or to book a visit.

7) REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every 5 years, or at any time when the policy and procedures have been found to be challenged by changes or events that affect the condition of the collections.

Policy approval date: February 2020

Interim review date: February 2025

8) CONTACT

If you would like further information about visiting or donating to the Northern Ballet Archive, please contact the Archive & Records Manager: archive@northernballet.com | +44 (0)113 220 8000