



The Victoria O'Brien Papers

N6

**The National Dance Archive of Ireland
Glucksman Library
University of Limerick**

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Reference Code: IE 2135 N6
Title: The Victoria O'Brien Papers
Dates of Creation: 1948-2012
Level of Description: Fonds
Extent and Medium: 40 items (36 files)

CONTEXT

Name of Creator(s): O'Brien, Victoria (b. 1967).

Biographical History: Victoria O'Brien started her dance training at the Irish National College of Dance in Dublin and is a graduate of the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds. She undertook further studies at the Laban Centre, London and completed a PhD in dance history at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick. She is currently Dance Adviser at the Arts Council. An active dance historian and consultant, Victoria continues to research, lecture, and publish in the areas of Irish ballet history and cultural memory.

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Donated by Victoria O'Brien to the National Dance Archive of Ireland on 23 March 2011.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Scope and Content: Programmes, flyers, conference proceedings, printed material, and recorded interviews collected by Victoria O'Brien, reflecting her interest in both the historical aspects of and current developments in ballet and contemporary dance.

Appraisal, Destruction and Scheduling Information: All records have been retained.

Accruals: Further accruals are expected.

System of Arrangement: Documents have been arranged into six series according to their form and thereunder listed chronologically by year.

CONDITIONS OF ACCESS AND USE

Conditions Governing Access: Unrestricted access to all items.

Conditions Governing Reproduction: Standard copyright regulations apply to all items. For photocopying or reproducing material, please consult with the staff.

Language/ Scripts of Material: English.

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements: Mostly paper documents in good condition. Cassette tapes containing recorded interviews (5/1-5/7) are too fragile to use. Digital access to the recordings is provided in the reading room – please consult with a member of staff.

Finding Aids: A hard copy of the descriptive catalogue is available at the National Dance Archive of Ireland.

ALLIED MATERIALS

Publication Note: Much of the material in this collection was created and generated by Victoria O'Brien for her doctoral dissertation, published as *A History of Irish Ballet from 1927 to 1963* by Peter Lang (Oxford and New York) in 2011.

DESCRIPTION CONTROL

Archivist's Note: Papers arranged and described by Anna-Maria Hajba.

Rules or Conventions: This description follows guidelines based on *ISAD(G)* 2nd edition, 2000, *Irish Guidelines for Archival Description*, 2009, *National Council on Archives: Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names*, 1997, and *EAP Guidance on Data Protection for Archive Services*, 2018.

Date of Description: April 2011. Updated March 2020.

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The Victoria O'Brien Papers**1 PROGRAMMES AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL (1948-2011)**

- 1/1 July 1948
 Programme of performances by Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, London at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin in July 1948. The repertoire included *Les Sylphides*, *The Vagabonds*, *Pas de Deux*, *Del Sacre Monte*, and *Les Rendezvous*.
 8 pp.
- 1/2 July 1949
 Programme of performances by Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, London at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin in July 1949. The repertoire included *Swan Lake (Act II)*, *Sea Change*, *Pas de Deux*, *Jota Toledana*, and *Facade*.
 8 pp.
- 1/3 February 1952
 Programme of performances by the [London] Festival Ballet at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin in February as part of their 1952 tour. The repertoire included *Les Sylphides*, *Petrouchka*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, and *Prince Igor*.
 8 pp.
- 1/4 February 1952
 Programme of performances by the [London] Festival Ballet during their 1952 tour. The programme was produced by the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, where the company performed in February, but contains synopses of the entire tour repertoire, which included *The Nutcracker*, *Le Beau Danube*, *Petrouchka*, *Giselle*, *The Blue Bird*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, *Swan Lake (Act II)*, *Les Sylphides*, *Capriccioso (Italiana)*, *The Pas de Quatre*, *Bolero*, *Prince Igor*, *Harlequinade*, *Fiesta Espagnole*, *Symphonic Impressions*, *The Black Swan*, and *Don Quixote*.
 8 pp.
- 1/5 May 1960
 Programme of performances by the Royal Ballet, London at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin on 16-28 May 1960. The repertoire included *Coppelia*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Les Sylphides*, *Blood Wedding*, and *Pineapple Poll*, although detailed information is only given for the three last mentioned performances.
 8 pp.

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- 1/6** November 1972
Programme of performances of *Swan Lake* by Cork Ballet Company at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin on 13-18 November 1972. The performances formed part of the company's silver jubilee celebration.
12 pp.
- 1/7** [1972]
Souvenir programme commemorating the silver jubilee of Cork Ballet Company. The booklet contains a brief history of the company from 1947 to 1972; a list of guest artists who have performed with the company; and a chronological list of its productions.
8 pp.
- 1/8** 1980
Programme of a performance by Dublin City Ballet of Anton Dolin's production of *Giselle* during Dublin Theatre Festival. Also see **2/4**.
20 pp.
- 1/9** June 1981
Programme of performances by the Irish Ballet Company at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin on 16-27 June 1981. The repertoire included *Celebration*, *Pas de Quatre*, *Medea* (world premiere), *Reputations*, and *Devil to Pay*, which replaced *Medea* at matinee performances. Also see **2/3**.
16 pp.
- 1/10** December [1982]
Programme of performances by the Irish Ballet Company at the Abbey Theatre in mid-December [1982]. The repertoire included *The Party*, *Pas Classique* (premiere), *Concerto Grosso*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Adagietto No. 5*, and *Invitation to the Dance* (premiere). The matinee programme was aimed at a younger audience and included performances of *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, *In Class*, *Invitation to the Dance*, *Concerto Grosso*, *Pas Classique*, and *Children's Corner*.
28 pp.
- 1/11** December [1982?]
Flyer promoting performances by the Irish Ballet Company at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin on 7-11 December [1982?], including 'Tiny Tots' Matinees on 8 and 11 December.
1 item

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- 1/12** [1987?]
Programme of a performance of *Moving Dances* by Irish Theatre Ballet at an unidentified venue on an unidentified date. The programme doubles as an appeal for funding.
1 item
- 1/13** August 1989
Programme of a performance by the Bolshoi Ballet at the Point Theatre, Dublin on 24 August 1989. The repertoire included Act II of *Giselle*, Pas de Deux from *The Nutcracker*, Adagio from *The Legend of Love*, Pas de Deux from *Le Corsaire*, Pas de Deux from *La Sylphide*, Tango from *The Golden Age*, Grand Pas from *Don Quixote*, and Act III of *Raymonda*.
4 pp.
- 1/14** May 2009
Postcard promoting a site-specific dance performance, *[Tran-si-tion]*, by Dublin Youth Dance Company in collaboration with transition-year students from Rockford Manor Secondary School at the Grainstore Youth Arts Facility, Cabinteely Park, Dublin on 16 May 2009.
1 item
- 1/15** July 2009
Programme of the Irish Youth Dance Festival held in Dun Laoghaire on 4-5 July 2009. The programme includes background information on the performers and the choreographies performed.
1 item
- 1/16** July 2009
Flyer promoting the Irish Youth Dance Festival held in Dun Laoghaire on 4-5 July 2009.
1 item
- 1/17** February [2010]
Fold-out brochure promoting *Paper Pylons*, a dance performance and film presentation created by choreographer Fiona Quilligan and film maker Marek Bogacki and performed by Olwen Grindley and Maria Nilsson at Wood Quay Venue, Civic Offices, Dublin 8 on 21-26 February [2010].
1 item

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1/18 October [2010]
Programme of performances of *Romeo & Juliet* by Ballet Ireland. The production was premiered at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin on 19 October [2010] and toured Ireland and the UK from October to December. The programme comprises a synopsis of the ballet; potted biographies of the directors, artistic staff, and principal dancers of the company; and a list of its past productions.
24 pp.

1/19 April 2011
Fold-out brochure promoting nMotion Dance Festival at Siamsa Tíre, Tralee on 19-20 April 2011.
1 item

2 PRESS REVIEWS (1978-1980s)

2/1 12 February 1978
Press review from *The Sunday Times* of a performance by the Irish Ballet Company at Cork Opera House in early February 1978. The review also provides brief background notes to the origins and history of the company.
1 item

2/2 [June 1978]
Press review of various dance performances, including the premiere of *Shadow-Reach* by the Irish Ballet Company at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin [on 19 June 1978].
1 item

2/3 [October 1981]
Press reviews of *The Tain*, a full-length ballet choreographed by Joan Denise Moriarty and performed by the Irish Ballet Company at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin [on 6 October 1981]. Originally inserted inside 1/9.
2 items

2/4 [1980s]
Press cutting relating to a tour of Northern Ireland by the Irish National College of Dance. Originally inserted inside 1/8.
1 item

3 CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS (2006-2010)

- 3/1 June 2006
 Proceedings of Dance Research Forum Ireland's first international conference held at the University of Limerick on 22-25 June 2006. The theme of the conference was *At the Crossroads? Dance and Irish Culture*.
 24 pp.
- 3/2 June 2008
 Proceedings of Dance Research Forum Ireland's second international conference held in Tralee on 26-29 June 2008. The theme of the conference was *Mediating Movement: Communication and Dance*.
 144 pp.
- 3/3 June 2010
 Proceedings of Dance Research Forum Ireland's third international conference held in Cork on 24-27 June 2010. The theme of the conference was *Capturing Composition: Improvisation in Dance Research and Practice*. Also handwritten notes by Victoria O'Brien relating to the sessions chaired by her.
 2 items

4 BOOKS (2004)

- 4/1 2004
Choreographic Encounters, vol. 2. Edited by Mary Brady. Cork: Institute for Choreography and Dance, 2004. The book comprises essays by Omar Barghouti, Faustin Linyekula, Carol Brown, Alexander Baervoets, Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Vincent Sekwati Koko Mantsoe, Steve Batts, and Thomas McCarthy on the subject of dance and identity.
 112 pp.

5 RECORDINGS (2002-2012)

- 5/1 9 February 2002
 90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Jill Gregory in London, relating to Gregory's time at the Abbey Theatre School of Ballet in Dublin in 1927-1933, and her subsequent work with Ninette de Valois in London. Duration 00:44:00. Side B is blank.
 1 item

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- 5/2** 19 May 2004
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Ester O'Brolchain in county Dublin, relating to the establishment of the National Ballet School, O'Brolchain's early training with Valentine Dutko and Patricia Ryan, and her work as a dancer with the National Ballet Company. Duration 00:49:00. Side B is blank. This interview has been recorded at double speed and can only be listened to on **5/8**.
1 item
- 5/3** 14 June 2005
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Patricia Ryan in county Dublin, relating to her entry into the world of ballet both as a student and as a teacher; her early teaching career; and the establishment of the National Ballet Company. The first two minutes of the interview are missing. The interview continues on Side B 7.5 minutes into the tape. Total duration 01:09:00. Also see **5/5**.
1 item
- 5/4** 16 June 2005
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with dancers and dance teachers Desmond Domnican and Myrtle Lambkin in Dublin, relating to status of ballet in Dublin in the 1940s, with references to Cepta Cullen (Irish Ballet Club), Muriel Kelly (Abbey School of Ballet) and Sara Payne. Duration 00:39:00. The interview continues on Side B for 18 minutes (the tape should be turned as soon as the recording on Side A ends). This interview has been recorded in part at double speed and can only be listened to on **5/8**.
1 item
- 5/5** 26 July 2005
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Patricia Ryan in county Dublin, relating to Ryan's tenure as Director of the National Ballet Company; and her choreographic collaborations. The interview continues on Side B. Total duration 01:04:00. Also see **5/3**.
1 item
- 5/6** 22 September 2005
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Judith McGilligan in Bray, county Wicklow, relating to McGilligan's early training in Dublin; her time with Patricia Ryan and the National Ballet Company; and her subsequent career with Leonide Massine. Side B is blank. Total duration 00:46:00.
1 item

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5/7 14 February 2012
90-minute cassette tape containing on Side A an interview by Victoria O'Brien with Catherine Gyll in Naas, county Kildare relating to Gyll's early years as Cepta Cullen's pupil and how this experience influenced her appreciation of dance in later life. Duration 00:07:00 minutes. Side B is blank.

1 item

5/8 [c. 2000-2002?]
Sony Dictaphone.

1 item

6 EPHEMERA (2012)

6/1 22 March 2012
First day cover, booklet of stamps designed by Ger Garland depicting contemporary dance themes, and a related note issued by An Post.

3 items