



Jerome Robbins in Paris. Photo by Jesse Gerstein.

# NEWS FROM **THE JEROME ROBBINS FOUNDATION**

Vol. 1, No. 2 (2014)

# Paris Opera Ballet Receives The 2014 Jerome Robbins Award

In 1995, Jerome Robbins wrote to the directors of his Foundation, "I would like there to be established a prize to some really greatly outstanding person or art institution. The prizes should lean toward the arts of dance and its associative collaborators but not necessarily be defined by that surround." In explanation, he cited many callings, from teachers and designers to choreographers and presenting organizations, enjoining the directors to award the prize only when warranted by the distinction of the person, organization, or project.

The Jerome Robbins Award was most recently presented to the Paris Opera Ballet at a reception on June 19, 2014 at the Palais Garnier in Paris. Jerome Robbins enjoyed a close relationship with the Paris Opera Ballet, which he often described as his second artistic home (after New York City Ballet). Since Robbins first presented his works at the Palais Garnier in 1974, the company has had 14 of his ballets in its repertory. The presentation of the 2014 Jerome Robbins Award was preceded by a performance of Robbins' ballet, *Dances at a Gathering*.

The award was presented to Brigitte Lefèvre, the director of the Paris Opera Ballet, on behalf of the Company. (Upon Ms. Lefèvre's retirement in October, 2014, Benjamin Millepied, former New York City Ballet principal dancer, became the new director.) At the reception, Ms. Lefèvre accepted the award – a statue of a sailor from Jerome Robbins' ballet, *Fancy Free*, sculpted by Robin Heidi Kennedy.

Ms. Lefèvre was also presented a personal gift – a framed photograph of the Seine River, taken by Jerome Robbins in Paris in the 1950s.

That photograph of the Seine is reproduced here...



Allen Greenberg (center), Brigitte Lefèvre, Ellen Sorin and Christopher Pennington at the reception for the 2013 Jerome Robbins Award.



Photo by Jerome Robbins.

## Past recipients of the Jerome Robbins Award...

The Jerome Robbins Award, Sculptor: Robin Heidi Kennedy.



### 2013

#### **HAROLD PRINCE, CHITA RIVERA and STEPHEN SONDHEIM**

Dancer, singer and actress Chita Rivera, composer Stephen Sondheim, and director and producer Harold Prince shared the 2013 Jerome Robbins Award. The ceremony was held in the Jerome Robbins Theater at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City. The award ceremony was an evening of musical performances, hosted by Frank Rich that featured stars from Broadway paying tribute to the remarkable careers of the awardees. The finale featured dancers from New York City Ballet performing "America," from *West Side Story* – the musical that brought the three awardees and Jerome Robbins all together for the very first time in 1957.

### 2011

#### **FORMER OR CURRENT NEW YORK CITY BALLET PRINCIPAL BALLERINAS WHO HAD WORKED WITH JEROME ROBBINS**

On September 30, the 2011 Jerome Robbins Award was shared by former or current New York City Ballet principal ballerinas, four posthumously, who danced several principal roles in Jerome Robbins' ballets. Vital to the decades of Jerome Robbins' creative life at New York City Ballet, the honorees were: Hélène Alexopoulos, Alexandra Ansanelli, Merrill Ashley, Yvonne Borree, Maria Calegari, Suzanne Farrell, Judith Fugate, Melissa Hayden (deceased), Jillana, Nora Kaye (deceased), Allegra Kent, Gelsey Kirkland, Darci Kistler, Maria Kowroski, Tanaquil Le Clercq (deceased), Sara Leland, Lourdes Lopez, Kay Mazzo, Patricia McBride, Yvonne Mounsey, Kyra Nichols, Janet Reed (deceased), Jenifer Ringer, Melinda Roy, Stephanie Saland, Margaret Tracey, Violette Verdy, Heather Watts, Miranda Weese and Wendy Whelan. The awards, presented by Chita Rivera at an all-Robbins program of the New York City Ballet, celebrated the Robbins legacy and those whose talent had carried it forward.

### 2010

#### **ROBERT WILSON**

Robert Wilson was described by The New York Times as a towering figure in the world of experimental theater. Wilson's works integrate a wide variety of artistic media, combining movement, dance, lighting, furniture design, sculpture, music, and text into a unified whole. His images are aesthetically striking and emotionally charged, and his productions have earned the acclaim of audiences and critics worldwide. The 2010 Jerome Robbins Award ceremony was held at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City in an evening that featured a performance of Robert Wilson's *KOOL, Dancing in my Mind*.

### 2008

#### **TWYLA THARP**

The 2008 Jerome Robbins Award was given to dancer, choreographer, director and author Twyla Tharp. Ms. Tharp has choreographed more than one hundred sixty works: one hundred twenty-nine dances (including *Brahms/Handel* – a choreographic collaboration with Jerome Robbins for New York City Ballet), twelve television specials, six Hollywood movies, four full-length ballets, four Broadway shows and two figure skating routines. Today, Ms. Tharp continues to create and to lecture around the world; she was recently named the Joyce Theater Foundation's 2014-16 artist-in-residence.

#### **SAN FRANCISCO BALLET**

The 2008 Jerome Robbins Award was presented to America's oldest professional ballet company – San Francisco Ballet. The Company has enjoyed a long and rich tradition of artistic "firsts" since its founding in 1933; performing the first American productions of *Swan Lake* and *Nutcracker*, as well as the first 20th-century American *Coppélia*. Under the direction of Helgi Tomasson since 1985, the Company has achieved an international reputation as one of the preeminent ballet companies in America. By commissioning new works by some of today's most sought-after choreographers, giving rise to young talent, acquiring existing works by master choreographers, and introducing new interpretations of classic full-length productions, Tomasson has created a sophisticated, diverse international repertory that offers powerful entertainment for all audiences.

### 2005

#### **MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV**

The 2005 Jerome Robbins Award was presented to Mikhail Baryshnikov – one of the world's greatest dancers and champions of dance. A native of Riga, Latvia, he entered the school of the Kirov Ballet, graduating from student to principal dancer in 1969. In 1974, he left Russia to pursue a career with ballet and modern companies around the world, settling in NYC in 1979 as a principal dancer with the American Ballet Theatre and from 1979 to 1980, with New York City Ballet. In 1980 he returned to ABT as artistic director. In his career, he has danced more than one hundred different works on the world's greatest stages. Most of the world's foremost choreographers have created works especially for him, including Jerome Robbins with *A Suite of Dances*. Mr. Baryshnikov has also proven to be a talented actor, starring in five films and earning an Oscar nomination for his performance in *The Turning Point*. He has appeared numerous times on television, including three Emmy award-winning specials. In 1989, he appeared on Broadway in *Metamorphosis*, earning a Tony nomination. From 1990-2002, Baryshnikov was director and dancer with White Oak Dance Project. Mr. Baryshnikov is currently devoting his time and energy to the realization of the Baryshnikov Arts Center, dedicated to the development of new and experimental work.

### 2005

#### **BROOKLYN ACADEMY of MUSIC**

The 2005 Jerome Robbins Award was presented to Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM). BAM is recognized internationally for its innovative programming of dance, music, theater, music-theater, opera, and film. Founded in 1861, it is America's oldest continuously operating performing arts center, and it still recognized worldwide for its bold, contemporary productions and its celebration of international musicians, choreographers, and theater companies. BAM presents leading national and international artists and companies in its annual Spring Season and highlights groundbreaking, contemporary work in the performing arts with its Next Wave Festival each fall. Founded in 1983, the Next Wave is one of the world's most important festivals of contemporary performing arts. BAM Rose Cinemas features new, independent film releases and BAMcinématek—a curated, daily repertory film program—features classics, retrospectives, and contemporary international films often accompanied by guest speakers. BAM also serves New York City's diverse population through a weekend concert series in BAMcafé, community events, literary series, and a variety of educational programs. The institution is led by President Karen Brooks Hopkins and Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo.

*The original directors of The Jerome Robbins Foundation – Floria V. Lasky, Esq., Mr. Allen Greenberg, and Dr. Daniel Stern – in pursuit of Mr. Robbins' expressed desires, presented the first two Jerome Robbins Awards in 2003...*

### 2003

#### **JENNIFER TIPTON**

Ms. Tipton, began her studies at Cornell University in astrophysics, graduated with a degree in English, and moved to New York City where she studied dance and performed with a group called the Merry-Go-Rounders. She began her design career under the tutelage of lighting designer Thomas Skelton and since then has won international acclaim and honors for her work in the performing arts including numerous Tony, Obie, Bessie, and Olivier Awards. In addition to her work in theater and opera, she has worked closely with Mikhail Baryshnikov and such choreographers as Jiri Kylian, Dana Reitz, Paul Taylor, and Twyla Tharp. Her first collaboration with Mr. Robbins took place in 1973 at the Spoleto Festival in Italy where she lit *Celebration: The Art of the Pas de Deux*. Other collaborations with Mr. Robbins include *Antique Epigraphs*; *Brahms/Handel* (with Twyla Tharp); *Brandenburg*; *The Dybbuk Variations*; *The Four Seasons*; *In Memory Of...*; *In the Night*; *Ives, Songs*; *Quiet City*; *A Suite of Dances*; *Watermill*; and *West Side Story Suite*.

#### **NEW YORK CITY BALLET**

New York City Ballet was established by George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein in 1948. Over the past half century, NYCB has become one of the most highly regarded dance companies in the world, both for its stewardship of the Balanchine and Robbins repertory and for its commitment to new choreography. A co-founding choreographer with Mr. Balanchine, Mr. Robbins joined NYCB in 1949 and continued his association with the Company until the year of his death. He choreographed some of his greatest works for New York City Ballet, including *The Cage* (1951), *Afternoon of a Faun* (1953), *Fanfare* (1953), *The Concert* (1956), *Dances at a Gathering* (1969), *The Goldberg Variations* (1971), *In G Major* (1975), *The Four Seasons* (1979), *Opus 19/The Dreamer* (1979), *Glass Pieces* (1983), *I'm Old Fashioned* (1983), *Antique Epigraphs* (1984), *Ives, Songs* (1988), *2 & 3 Part Inventions* (1994), and *Brandenburg* (1997).

# A Conversation About Jerry

## Wendy Whelan and Jenifer Ringer

Wendy Whelan was a celebrated interpreter of Jerome Robbins' works for New York City Ballet and worked closely with him during her time with the company. After she retired from NYCB on October 18, 2014, she went to Los Angeles to be a guest master teacher for the Colburn Dance Academy, a new pre-professional ballet training program directed by Jenifer Ringer and James Fayette. On November 2, 2014 Ms. Whelan concluded her residency with the Colburn Dance Academy by performing and discussing Christopher Wheeldon's pas de deux from *After The Rain* along with NYCB principal dancer Jared Angle. After the performance, Mr. Fayette drove everyone, including Wendy's husband and photographer David Michalek, through Beverly Hills, and the topic of Jerry came up...

**Jenifer Ringer:** So, Wendy Whelan, what was your first experience with Jerry when you got into the company?

**Wendy Whelan:** My first memory of Jerry is just watching him from afar and wondering about him. And then, after a year or two of that, he came up to me when I was at the schedule board and he had just seen my performance of (Balanchine's) *Symphony in Three Movements*, which was my first principal role. He said to me, "I am so happy that this is happening for you." And that was such a surprise to me, and so nice to hear.

**JR:** And what was the first ballet of his in which you were called to learn a principal role?

**WW:** Well, I remember doing the Harp in *Fanfare*...

**JR:** Oh! I remember you dancing the Harp!

**WW:** I remember having a very private, memorable moment with Jerry during that experience where he took me to the back of the stage during a dress rehearsal. And he said, "You know, Baby, they are all here to enjoy you – the audience. So, just let them." He was telling me to stop fighting with myself. And I always thought that he saw a bit of himself in me, with that struggling feeling. And I felt that he was healing a part of himself when he was working with me; it was a connection we had.

**JR:** Well, you were also one of those people whom he never got upset with, that I remember. Watching you would relax him.

**WW:** Really?

**JR:** I definitely think so – there were some people who would agitate Jerry because he would get frustrated with them, but he never got that way with you.

**WW:** I felt lucky that that didn't happen. You know, I feel like he appreciated my state of mind, and that I made him laugh. He liked my confidence, and certain people who did not have that level of confidence, Jerry would push, and that irritated him because he wanted them to find their own confidence. I felt that I could just be me, and that was OK, and he was happy with that too.

**JR:** And that, for Jerry's choreography, is so important, because so often it is just about real people dancing. Do you have a ballet that you feel the most satisfied about in terms of your studio work with Jerry?



Wendy Whelan and Albert Evans rehearsing Christopher Wheeldon's *After the Rain* at New York City Ballet. Photo by Kyle Froman.



Wendy Whelan preparing to perform in Jerome Robbins' *The Cage* at New York City Ballet. Photo by Kyle Froman.

**WW:** Well, I felt like *The Cage* was a very pivotal role for me. I felt like he never really had corrections for me, he just had pats on the shoulder for me. Any time I would see him around that performance, he would just touch my hair and fix my wig around my face and then kind of send me out on stage. It felt like the mama cat licking the baby cat. It felt familial. We got each other.

**JR:** For your final performance with the New York City Ballet, you chose to dance the *Grand Waltz* from *Dances at a Gathering*.

**WW:** Yes, I did.

**JR:** What went into that decision, and how was it to perform it?

**WW:** That decision was the hardest decision out of everything for that evening. My choosing of a Jerry role for that evening took me a long, long time to come to, because I thought, of all of the roles that I have done – and I have done a lot of his roles – what would be the *one* to do? Certain things I couldn't do, physically, and certain things weren't appropriate. But I was doing barre one day, only a month or two before the retirement, and I just thought, "Grand Waltz!" It was like Jerry had sent me a message. And it was perfect because it is about the group, about dancing together, about being equal, about having a good time together and being youthful and energetic... and that is what I got from Jerry and that is the message I wanted to give out and give back. It just felt to me like the perfect choice for what I learned from him. And it was really fun to do. I had a really fun time putting it together; I got to choose whom I got to dance with—

**JR:** And you got to be thrown through the air...

**WW:** I got to be thrown through the air like a little kid! And I did my first big jump on stage since my surgery, and I did it for Jerry, and then I will never have to do it again. (*laughs*)

Onstage, I said to Jared (Angle), "Here goes nothing!" and I did a *tour jeté* and it went great and I was really proud of myself. It was a lot of fun.

**Jared Angle:** What was your last Jerry experience?

**WW:** *Brandenburg*. It was the last ballet he fully choreographed and he chose me to be a principal in it and I was very honored about that. I remember Merrill Ashley telling me after that premiere, "I have never seen you dance better in your life." And I got to tell him thank you for that. I got to thank Jerry for letting me be a part of that ballet.

I think Jerry shaped my future. He shaped where I am going now as a dancer. He shaped my continual search and my continuous open mind. Because, I remember one time we went out to the Hamptons to see Jerry at his house. We went out and Jerry ordered carpaccio and he asked me if I wanted to try some. And I said, "No, I don't like it." And he said, "Have you ever tried it?" And I said, "No." So he said, "Well then how do you know you don't like it?" And I remember that. You can't judge something unless you have tried it. So try everything. That is what I am doing now.



Seth Orza, Wendy Whelan and Charles Askegard in Jerome Robbins' *In Memory Of...* at New York City Ballet. Photo by Kyle Froman.

**Jenifer Ringer** joined the New York City Ballet in 1990, was promoted to soloist in 1995, became a principal dancer in 2000 and retired from the company in 2014. During her career she performed principal roles in ballets by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Peter Martins, Christopher Wheeldon, and Alexi Ratmansky. She wrote a book about her experiences in the ballet world entitled *Dancing Through It: My Journey in the Ballet*, and is currently the Director of the Colburn Dance Academy in Los Angeles, where she lives with her husband, James Fayette, and their two children.

In 1981 **Wendy Whelan** received a scholarship to the summer course at the School of American Ballet (SAB), the official school of New York City Ballet, and a year later, became a full-time student there. In 1984, Ms. Whelan danced as an apprentice with New York City Ballet. Ms. Whelan became a member of New York City Ballet's corps de ballet in January 1986. She was promoted to the rank of soloist during the 1989 spring season and to the rank of principal dancer in the 1991 spring season. Ms. Whelan performed a wide spectrum of the George Balanchine repertory and worked closely with Jerome Robbins on many of his ballets, including *The Cage*, *Dances at a Gathering*, *The Four Seasons*, *Glass Pieces*, *The Goldberg Variations*, *In G Major*, *In Memory Of...*, *Brahms/Handel* and *Brandenburg*. She originated featured roles in seven ballets by Christopher Wheeldon and all four of Alexei Ratmansky's ballets made for NYCB, as well as in the ballets of William Forsythe, Wayne McGregor, Jorma Elo, and Twyla Tharp.

NY Export: Opus Jazz at New York City Ballet. Dancers, left to right: Amar Ramasar, Sarah Ricard Orza, Giovanni Villalobos, Rebecca Krohn, Ashley Laracey, Ellen Bar, Adam Hendrickson. Photo by Kyle Froman.



# “I Get Dances From Two Sources...”

by Jerome Robbins

(Written in 1958, this article originally appeared in a programme for his company, *Ballets: U.S.A.*)

I get ideas for dances from two sources; from music already composed, or from a dramatic idea. If I am moved by music, I let it lead me. In the second case, I ask that the composer follow the dramatic ideas that are proposed.

I heard two pieces of Bob Prince's music on the album *What's New?*, met with him, and suggested ideas for other contrasting sections to make a whole ballet. I wanted something fast with a lot of percussion, a pas de deux (a slow bluesy kind of thing) and finally a jazz theme and variations. He went to work. All of the choreography for the ballet [*N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz*] was composed after the music was written, except for the theme and variations that were choreographed at rehearsals way before Bob put notes on paper. So he wrote the theme and the first three or four variations to what I had already set. After that he took off and I followed him. While working on the jazz ballet, I wasn't sure quite what it was all about, but the longer I went along with it the more it clearly formed – a clear instance of where the music leads and the choreography follows.

On *West Side Story*, the strong dramatic idea was there to begin with – an up-to-date *Romeo and Juliet* story told against the warfare of street gangs. Both Leonard Bernstein and I were deep in atmosphere, the characters, and the style and the quality of the theatrical piece. Finally, the moments to be told in dancing were agreed upon and I worked out a detailed scenario, which I gave to Leonard:

- “The gang is waiting on a street corner, itching and anxious to have something happen.”
- “Tony meets Maria during a dance and the frenetic place disappears leaving them alone in love.”
- “The lovers run frantically, furiously, trying to push their way out of the events that have caught them and to arrive at a place of peace.”

All these quotes are from scenarios written to give the composer specific ideas. He sketched bits and pieces for it, which we pushed back and forth until we had a good rough musical version that I took into rehearsal. There I found out what would or would not work, where we had to stretch or condense music, etc., always guided and dictated by a tenacious clinging to the story line.

The fortunate part of working with these two composers is that they are there to work with you. When you decide to work with Chopin, you're stuck; but when you work with Bernstein and Prince, they are there to help you in case an idea has been overstretched or underwritten or ill conceived by the choreographer to start with. Both these boys were vibrant, flexible, theatrical craftsmen, giving more than a huge support and boost to their dances, which rest on the foundation of their music.



Photo from the collection of Jerome Robbins.



Ken LeRoy (as Bernardo) in the original production of *West Side Story*. Photo by Jerome Robbins.



Justin Peck and Andrew Veyette in *West Side Story Suite* at New York City Ballet. Photo by Kyle Froman.



*NY Export: Opus Jazz*, performed by members of Jerome Robbins' Ballets: USA in the East Room of the White House, 1962. Photo by Abbie Rowe.

# NY Export: Opus Jazz

## A Resource Guide for Dance Teachers

In 1958, Jerome Robbins' "ballet in sneakers," became a smash hit and toured around the world. Shot on location in New York City with dancers from New York City Ballet, *NY Export: Opus Jazz* re-imagines the original ballet for a whole new generation. To date, *NY Export: Opus Jazz* has screened theatrically at 40 festivals and 43 nonprofit cinemas in 78 cities on six continents.

The film has also successfully been included in school curricula, with a resource guide written by Ann Biddle and commissioned by the Jerome Robbins Foundation.

When Ellen Bar and Sean Suozzi embarked upon the ambitious project to create a film that would capture the essence of Robbins' ballet, they conceived it as a gift to future generations – as a loving tribute to a choreographic genius and his masterworks, as a means to further Robbins' legacy, and as a work of film art on its own terms. Educational use of the film – for students and also for the general public – became part of their plan upon completing the film. Christopher Pennington, Executive Director of the Jerome Robbins Organization saw the potential in this approach and offered to support the creation of a film guide for dance teachers that would explore thematic and movement ideas in the piece and in the film and suggest lesson activities and unit arcs for teachers to adapt in their own way.

Curriculum guide author Ann Biddle is a dance education expert and consultant who has done a splendid job of walking the reader through the sections of the film, suggesting myriad ideas and essential questions to underpin instruction and providing examples of full units of study. Technique, improvisatory exploration, student composition, reconstruction/staging, research and reflective discussion are all addressed as instructional modalities. Guidance about using the film in a variety of ways for different age groups is extremely useful as well. All of this work is explicitly aligned with the NYC Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance PreK-12 – the learning standards for dance education in New York City.

The *NY Export: Opus Jazz* Film Resource Guide for Dance Teachers offers material for three different age groups (Upper Elementary, Middle School & High School), and consists of three sections: an exploration of the piece, instructional resources, and a bibliography of support resources. Section one includes descriptions of the film, questions to generate student discussion and delve into the meaning of the piece, exploration of themes and ideas in the piece, the identification of key movement motifs and concepts, and an examination of the dance's movement vocabulary and choreographic structure. Section two of the guide includes resources including sample lesson plans, and assessment tools. The third section of the guide provides a bibliography of resources as well as a list of support materials (websites, research ideas, articles, interviews) that help teachers gain an understanding of issues related to the piece, and assist them in knowing what kinds of connections to make in terms of interdisciplinary study.

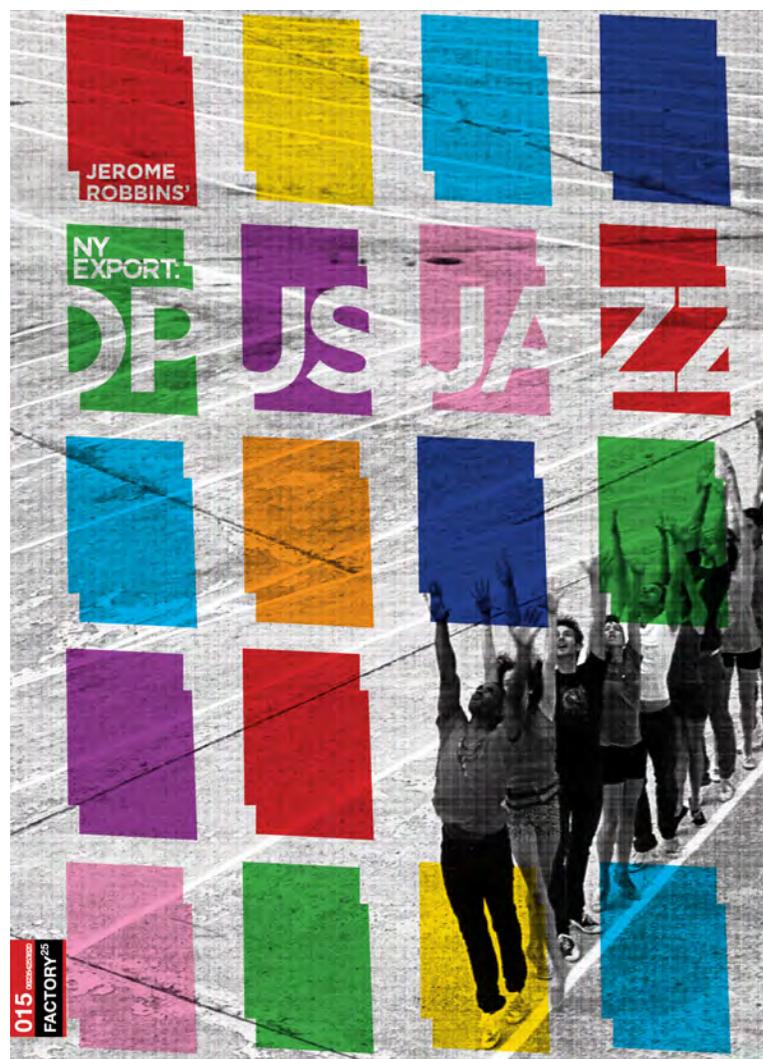
Mary Anne Fantauzzi, Saratoga Springs High School mathematics teacher and group fitness instructor co-taught a six-week unit based on *NY Export: Opus Jazz's* curriculum, along with Kelly Polhemus (a Skidmore College '15 dual dance/social work major). The participating students were in grades 11 and 12.

Here are the highlights from the experience that Mrs. Fantauzzi shared with the Jerome Robbins Foundation:

"The class was an elective, which 16 girls chose as their dance unit in lieu of watching and participating along with a Zumba DVD (the other dance unit option!)."

"...many of the girls had participated in the New York City Ballet Workout program as Freshmen and enjoyed the unique experience."

"Ms. Polhemus used the unit's planning and implementation along with its strong social themes as the final independent project in her Sociology course and the choreographic/musical component as a paper for her Dance History II course at Skidmore College."



"The 16 girls represented four distinct social groups: four at-risk students with emotional needs; four cheerleaders; four art-aware students with either musical or dance backgrounds; and four shy, yet very responsive students."

"During week 5, one of the girls had a baby, bringing our number down to 15 students. At 9 months pregnant and a veteran of the New York City Ballet Workout program, she was determined to participate right up until labor."

**Week 1, Day 1:** "We began a dialogue about Jerome Robbins, New York City Ballet, the ballet and the film. We played a video from the NYCB archives about Jerome Robbins with a special emphasis on his choreographic process and portrayal of the American teenager in other ballets including *West Side Story Suite* and *Interplay*...We then talked about the making of the film and how it transports the characters to modern times while maintaining the original music and choreography....In their groups the girls discussed 'who are they' and which character they most identify with. They agreed they all know at least one person in the high school to represent each teen portrayed."

**Week 1, Day 2:** "We showed the first sequence – *Entrance: Group Dance*, then did a brainstorming/movement exercise where each group chose what they considered to be 'signature moves' in this section.... and the groups demonstrated their movement pattern to the other groups.... On the way out the door, the students had to yell out words that evoked the emotions of Section 1. We wrote them down to use on Day 3."

**Week 1, Day 3:** "The students were told to create a graffiti wall using the words written down from the class before. The words were: friends, connected, turf and group dance. This was followed by a warm-up using music from Robbins' *Interplay* to create the playful feeling of Section 1....The rest of the class time was spent reviewing the choreography created on Day 2 plus a 'face off' that included heels and chassés through each other. Kelly and I emphasized the simplicity of the pedestrian movements that became exciting with the addition of rhythm and patterns."

**Week 2, Day 4:** "Students began by watching section 2 of the film – *Statics*. A discussion followed about the dynamics of the lone girl and the group of boys. The teens could relate to feelings of boredom during the summer and their desire to see friends even if it involved a secret meeting place to accomplish this. They created an 8-16 count phrase that captured signature movements in this section and shared with the whole group. Interestingly, one group chose the girl's solo as their movement combo while the other three groups chose the boys' group dance with references to the drums as its signature sound."

**Week 2, Day 5:** "The graffiti wall for Section 2 included the words: lonely, aggressive, jazzy, sleazy, sensual, forbidden space, drums and mysterious. We warmed up to Robbins' *Glass Pieces* – Section 3. The rudimentary choreographic phrases from Day 4 were formalized."

**Week 3, Day 6:** "After the students watched Section 3 – *Improvisations*, they warmed up to *West Side Story*'s 'Dance at the Gym.' This time their task was to come up with their own 'Dance at the Gym'....There was a different energy and a more cohesive sharing now that they felt more comfortable with each other after 5 shared classes. The result was a combination of pedestrian movements and signature moves from the film clip."

**Week 3, Day 7:** "The graffiti wall included the words: friendship, fun, playful, goofy, leap frog and lighthearted....Kelly formalized the group moves into four 32-count combinations linked together. The mood was explosive and showy and you could see the girls were beginning to have fun with the choreography and the music. Given 5 minutes to collaborate, they re-danced the four segments as a 'face-off.'"

**Week 3, Day 8:** "The students shared their deeper understanding of the questions, 'Who are these teenagers?' and 'What is their story?' The students also admitted they never thought when they heard the music the first time that it would be danceable. They said creating their own movements and seeing the film clips helped them 'wrap their heads around' the music and its underlying feelings."

**Week 4, Day 9:** "The students viewed Section 4 – *Passages for Two*. Much discussion followed about the pas de deux ('Was it really a relationship or just a casual encounter?') This time the camera angle was mentioned as changing the feeling of the scene to one where maybe you shouldn't be watching such a private moment. The slow musical tempo and views from different angles heightened the sensual nature of the dance."

**Week 4, Day 10:** "The graffiti wall's words were: sensual, reaching out, reaching up, raw, intimate, risky and powerful. The warm-up today was *Glass Pieces* – *Facades*. The girls continued an exercise with 'call and response,' creating simple duets involving eye contact, arm patterns, different levels and communicating with movement rather than words. The results were beautiful and powerful."

**Week 5, Day 11:** "The girls watched Section 5 – *Theme, Variations and Fugue*. They all agreed this was the finale because it repeated movements from all four previous segments, brought all of the characters together, and celebrated friendship with upbeat music and fun choreography....The girls were divided into their original four groups, and their task was to revisit the choreography for that section (1, 2, 3 or 4) and create a 16 or 32 count phrase that best captured its feeling."

**Week 5, Day 12:** "The words on the graffiti wall were: friendship, play, trust, jazzy, love, finale and the end. They agreed 'the end' not only meant the film, the musical score but also the end of summer vacation.... They showed each other their section's signature movement combo. Kelly then taught them choreography inspired by the beginning of Section 5. As they repeated it, she increased the speed of the movements. Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 were then shown in succession, with the promise of a true finale on Day 13."

**Week 5, Day 13:** "The graffiti wall was spread out across the wrestling loft for all to see, read and reminisce. The class was spent dancing all of the choreography the students had created collaboratively throughout all 12 classes plus Kelly's high-energy references to Section 5's intro repeated faster and faster. At the end, the students said they enjoyed the entire experience because they were able to relate to the teens, the modern setting, and, surprisingly, the musical score. They even called Jerome Robbins 'Jerry,' as if he had become one of the characters himself in the process. The juniors agreed they would love to take this unit again next year as seniors and feel richer for having had the experience."

Besides the success of Mary Anne Fantauzzi's program, there have been teacher workshops, with over 40 New York City teachers participating so far, where the film and guide have been utilized.



Scene from the film, *NY Export: Opus Jazz* (Directors: Jody Lee Lipes & Henry Joost).



Photos from the collection of Jerome Robbins.

## Jerome Robbins' Broadway at 25!

**"I'd like the audience to get a taste of the years I worked on Broadway, that time between 1944 and 1964, to see what it was like."**

At first it was titled *Jerome Robbins' Broadway Dances*. By the time rehearsals were well under way, it was clear that these were not just dances that were being presented, but an entire vision – a fusion of movement, acting, design and story. The show that opened on February 26, 1989, gave audiences an opportunity to experience firsthand the entirety of the director/choreographer's vision from what is often called "the golden age of Broadway." That show, which was given a more fitting title, was *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*.

Twenty-five years ago, Jerome Robbins took audiences on a sightseeing trip through his prolific career as a director, choreographer and conceiver of such Broadway shows as *On the Town*, *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!*, *The King and I*, *High Button Shoes*, *Peter Pan*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Gypsy*, *West Side Story* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. To open and close the show, Robbins used *On the Town*, the first musical he ever choreographed, as a framing device. In that show, three sailors on twenty-four hour leave take in as many exhilarating sights and adventures as possible, ending with a bittersweet return to reality. *On the Town's* storyline was the perfect structure on which to build an evening of Robbins theatrical highlights. The audience was swept along, not on a nostalgic trip, but on their own voyage of theatrical discovery (or rediscovery, for audiences lucky enough to have seen the original productions).

**"One of the things I learned working in Broadway theatre, was how important economy was.... Here you had to really be as concise as you could be to make the points that had to be made. I found out that the more that I would edit my work, the better it got."**

In the end, this would mean recreating fifteen numbers from a dozen different shows. Recreating the numbers meant researching and presenting the original choreography, set designs, orchestrations and costume designs. Then, of course, the numbers had to be organized so that they ran seamlessly together. It was a mammoth undertaking. Robbins demanded (and got) 22 weeks of rehearsal (a rehearsal period previously unheard of), an out-of-town technical tryout in Purchase, New York, and seven weeks of previews on Broadway. It took five months of auditions for Robbins to find a cast of 62 singers and dancers that he felt could pull off the near impossible; to do so, Robbins drew talent from both the ballet and Broadway worlds.

**"Ballets, if good, become a part of a repertory and are constantly performed by a large number of ballet companies. Shows run and then stop.... and I just don't want to lose those works."**

*Jerome Robbins' Broadway* featured sets, costumes and lights from a "who's who" of theatrical design, including: scenery by Boris Aronson, Jo Mielziner, Oliver Smith and Tony Walton; costumes by Joseph G. Aulisi, Alvin Colt, Raoul Pene du Bois, Irene Sharaff, Tony Walton, Miles White and Patricia Zipprodt; lighting by Jennifer Tipton. The show ultimately cost \$8.7 million to produce and established a new top ticket price (\$55) for a Broadway show. It was also nominated for ten Tony Awards and went on to win six, including Best Musical and Robbins' fifth Tony Award (for Best Direction) and it ran for almost two years.

**"The upcoming show is not just my dances. It's about Leonard Bernstein and Jule Styne and Betty Comden and Adolph Green and Stephen Sondheim and Richard Rodgers and Irving Berlin and Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, to name some of my 45 collaborators.... I hope the show will be a worthy tribute to everyone I worked with in those days."**

The bittersweet ending for *Jerome Robbins' Broadway* audiences came when they exited the Imperial Theatre, realizing that the profoundly beautiful, thought provoking and entertaining musical numbers they had just witnessed were all created at least 25 years earlier.

And in the 25 years since, the show's legend has only grown.

**"I've had a wonderful time going back into all this material again."**

*Jerome Robbins' Broadway* marked its 25th anniversary this year. To celebrate, several cast members gathered in New York City for an evening of reminiscing. National tour cast member Paul Kreppel was one of the actors who played the part of what Robbins called "The Setter" (the role was originally performed by Jason Alexander on Broadway). He is the show's host, who steps forward to act as a guide and quick-change artist throughout the evening.

Mr. Kreppel shares with us a few of the stories and memories that were exchanged that evening...

—Gregory Victor

As I drove through the aptly named village of Sleepy Hollow, I couldn't help but think about the locale's history and literary significance. Anyone familiar with "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and the Headless Horseman must enjoy a bit of a thrill while visiting this historic New York hamlet. But I was there for another, in theatrical terms, equally historic event – the 25th Anniversary Reunion of *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*!

Although I had only done the last 4 months of the show's run on the road, I still felt very much a part of this exquisite evening. As I approached the house, I wondered who would attend? How would they look? Would I know anyone? The silence of the sweet streets gave me momentary pause as to whether I had arrived on the right day. But as I got closer to the beautiful home, I could literally feel the energy exuding from within its walls. The door opened to a blast of boisterous energy, laughter and the kind of pure kinetic energy that I feel from any and all dancers. It's a quality they carry for the rest of their lives, whether performing or not. Forty or fifty dancers... Well, athletes – that's what they are – athletes...with extraordinary vitality and creative gifts beyond description. I have always, I must admit, been smitten by the dance world. I believe dancers are the most disciplined of all artists – dedicating themselves to years of highly structured training, resulting in artistry in motion.

I was immediately swept up in this whirlwind of conversation, seeing faces and hearing voices I hadn't seen or heard in 10, 20 and, yes, 25 years – since most of them were in their early twenties. We were all immediately together again. All part of this extended family. A family so many described as the most important, defining time of their lives. Yes, we caught up and showed pictures of and introduced our families. We exchanged information in an attempt to catch up on the past 25 years. And then, something magical happened. All the various conversations quickly began to quiet down and we found ourselves in a giant circle. Then, almost on cue, one unified exchange began to take place. All 50 of us participated both as storyteller and audience, and the knowing laughter at story after story lifted us all to a euphoric high. So many anecdotes... So many hilarious and amazing remembrances of the long workshop process... I only wish I had participated in the workshop, but this was good enough for me.

This gang spent seven months re-creating all the breathtaking numbers from all of the groundbreaking shows associated with Mr. Robbins. Stories about how all of the original stars and creators from these legendary shows came to various run-throughs to give input and offer support. Stories about the New York opening and the glorious feeling of presenting all these

brilliant numbers, accompanied by that incredible music for the Broadway theatre going community...and, of course, all the stories of working with Mr. Robbins himself.

There was nothing but love in the room for his brilliance and what they had learned. Even when I joined the show there was only love and respect... and fear! I have never worked with anyone who could illicit such fear in a group as I encountered doing *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*. He would have given the Headless Horseman a run for his money! Maybe it was his iconic status. Maybe it was his genius. Maybe it was his history of demanding only the best from everyone. Whatever the reason, he was "The Man" and you wanted him to give you some type of approval and that was indeed rare. After he finally saw me in the show, he walked up to me and said, "You were OK." I ran around like I had just received communion from the Pope...and I'm Jewish! "Mr. Robbins said I was OK!!!!," I bragged for days. (OK...for years. Because that's MY Jerome Robbins story!)

Many in that room, and the following evening at a soiree in Manhattan, had moved onto very successful careers as choreographers, directors, producers; some continue, 25 years later, to work as Broadway dancers. A few are currently starring on Broadway. There were many who had changed professions, becoming doctors, lawyers, nurses or business owners. Many chose to give back and open dance academies, where their students receive all the knowledge that Mr. Robbins had passed down to them. Everyone at the reunion looked stunning...their families, too. An absolutely beautiful group inside and out, and I was thrilled to be a part of it – seeing all my old *JRB* friends and meeting all my new *JRB* friends.

These theatrical families, developed from being in long-running shows, are a seldom talked about, but heartwarming perk of being in the performing arts. The *Jerome Robbins' Broadway* family is in a very elite group of long-running shows that not only provide you with lifelong friendships, but a foundation to be used to build a career and a life. Thanks, Mr. Robbins. I am OK.

—Paul Kreppel

**Paul Kreppel** is a Tony Award-Winning Producer/Director/Actor.

(Quotes from Jerome Robbins are taken from various interviews in 1988 & 1989)

46th  
ST  
BROAD  
West Side Story  
Fiddler on the Roof  
IMPERIAL  
Fiddler on the Roof  
West Side Story  
Peter Pan  
Miss Liberty  
billion dollar baby  
SILK stockings  
FIMMY GIRL  
same name





The curtain call for Jerome Robbins' *Broadway*. Photo by Martha Swope.

# The Business of Show Making Your Board of Directors Part of Your Development Effort

by Allen Greenberg

Many organizations look to their boards of directors as a major source of support. While it is nice to have a board that can provide significant funds to your organization, that may not be feasible for all board members. That does not mean that a board member needs to feel “left out.” A member can engage in the development effort in many ways. The following will present just a few possible ways other than direct giving that a board member can help support his or her organization.

## Give and/or Get

Many organizations have a policy of a required mutual level of board support. This can be direct support from the board member or a combination of direct support and a board member providing support to the organization from third parties that he or she “brings” to the organization.

## New Board Members

A board member can help in development by suggesting individuals to the board’s nominating committee who are both interested in the organization and happy to support it financially.

## Seeking Foundation Support

A board member may know an officer or a director of a foundation that he or she thinks may provide support to your organization. An introduction to that organization by your board member can go a long way, especially for those organizations that accept funding requests by invitation only. The introduction may not win you the grant, but at least it will get you a foot in the door.

## Invite to Events

Whatever your organization, there is no better way for someone to gain an interest than to see what you do – whether a dance performance, an exhibition or... Board members taking their friends or family members to your organization’s events will not only help those guests learn firsthand what the organization does, but may also get them interested in providing financial support, possibly joining the board or, as importantly, passing the word on to others.

## Hosting

A nice way a board member can help in the development effort is to host a small gathering at home, inviting potential donors determined by both the board member and the directors of the organization. The gathering should not be just a sales pitch, but should include a discussion of your recent work and anticipated endeavors. If a demonstration of said work is possible, that would be an added bonus.

## Identify Potential New Donors

Many board members say, “If I ask my friends to support my organization, they will just ask me to do the same for theirs.” While that may be true, it is not necessarily so. Find someone who is truly interested in what your organization does, and in many cases they may become an “annual giver.”

## Provide Strategic Counsel on Fundraising and Marketing Strategies

Your board members’ experience in fundraising and marketing may help you navigate some of the issues you are facing for developing support and awareness for your organization. This expertise may prove more valuable than direct financial support.

These are just a few of the ways to fully utilize your board in the development area. It not only assists your organization, but allows most board members to participate in helping your organization achieve its development goals.



*Fancy Free*, performed by Ballet Theatre in 1944. Dancers (left to right): Paula Floyd, Muriel Bentley, Jerome Robbins, John Kriza, Michael Kidd. Photo: The Granger Collection, New York.

## SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM: WORKS & PROCESS – Jerome Robbins: *Fancy Free to On The Town*

Works & Process, the performing arts series at the Guggenheim Museum founded and produced by Mary Sharp Cronson, has offered audiences unprecedented access to leading creators and performers. Taking place in the Guggenheim’s intimate Frank Lloyd Wright–designed 285-seat Peter B. Lewis Theater, New Yorkers have been able to see, hear, and meet the most acclaimed artists in the world, in an intimate setting unlike any other.

This season, the Works and Process series devoted two evenings of discussion and performance to Jerome Robbins’ work. On November 9 & 10, 2014, the series explored the relationship between the ballet *Fancy Free* and the musical *On the Town*.

In the autumn of 1943, dancer Jerome Robbins walked the streets of Manhattan, contemplating ideas for a ballet that he might choreograph for Ballet Theatre, and asking himself, “Why can’t we dance about American subjects?” During the time of war, New York was a city full of sailors. Robbins noticed the dozens of sharp white uniforms and white hats that dotted Times Square, and the thousands more that appeared throughout the city’s boroughs: passing through, in training, working on ships in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and on shore leave. On shore leave, Robbins thought – now that had possibilities; why not a ballet about



Photo of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum by Jean-Christophe Benoist/Wikimedia Commons.



*Fancy Free*, performed by Ballet 2014 at Jacob's Pillow. Dancers (left to right): Tiler Peck, Georgina Pazcoguin, Robert Fairchild, Tyler Angle, Daniel Ulbricht, Teresa Reichlen. Photo by Christopher Duggan.

sailors as they searched for adventure, companionship, and maybe even love, during their 24-hour shore leave in New York City?

Robbins met with a composer, Leonard Bernstein, and asked him if he could write music for a ballet built around popular American music and social dance (including the boogie-woogie, the lindy hop). Bernstein smiled and handed Robbins a song he had written at the Russian Tea Room that very afternoon. The choreographer loved it. They went to work.

What was born was *Fancy Free*, a ballet with an American subject, an American score and an American spirit, that premiered at the Metropolitan Opera on April 18, 1944. It was an instant smash and received 22 curtain calls. By the ballet's first anniversary, it had been performed 162 times – a record number of performances for any ballet to be presented within a single year. *Fancy Free* was soon expanded into a musical, *On the Town*, with Robbins (choreographer) and Bernstein (composer) joined by book writers and lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green.

At the Works and Process evenings devoted to Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free* and *On the Town*, audiences enjoyed excerpts from *Fancy Free*, a performance of "New York, New York" from *Jerome Robbins' Broadway* (staged by Robert LaFosse, who appeared in the number in that production) and excerpts of the new Broadway revival of *On the Town* by director John Rando and choreographer Joshua Bergasse. Jerome Robbins biographer Amanda Vaill moderated the discussion with LaFosse, Bergasse and writer/narrator Jamie Bernstein (daughter of Leonard Bernstein).

## THE 2014 FLORIA V. LASKY AWARD & SYMPOSIUM

The Floria V. Lasky Award is given in tribute to one of the most influential and successful entertainment attorneys in the world of dance, theater, literature and music.

The 2014 **Floria V. Lasky Award** was presented to Matthew Goldstein. Matthew Goldstein served as chancellor of The City University of New York from September 1999 to June 2013, the first CUNY graduate to lead the nation's most prominent urban public university. Under Dr. Goldstein's leadership, the University raised academic standards, improved student performance, increased enrollment, built its faculty corps, created new colleges and schools, and expanded its research capacity. Dr. Goldstein was previously president of Adelphi University, Baruch College, The Research Foundation, and acting vice chancellor for academic affairs of CUNY.

Currently, Dr. Goldstein is chair of the Board of Trustees of the JP Morgan Funds, a member of the Executive Committee of the Business-Higher Education Forum, the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, as well as director of the Lincoln Center Institute for the Arts in Education, ex officio. By appointment of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, he is chair of the New York City Regional Economic Development Council and a member of the New NY Education Reform Commission. Dr. Goldstein is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences and a fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences.

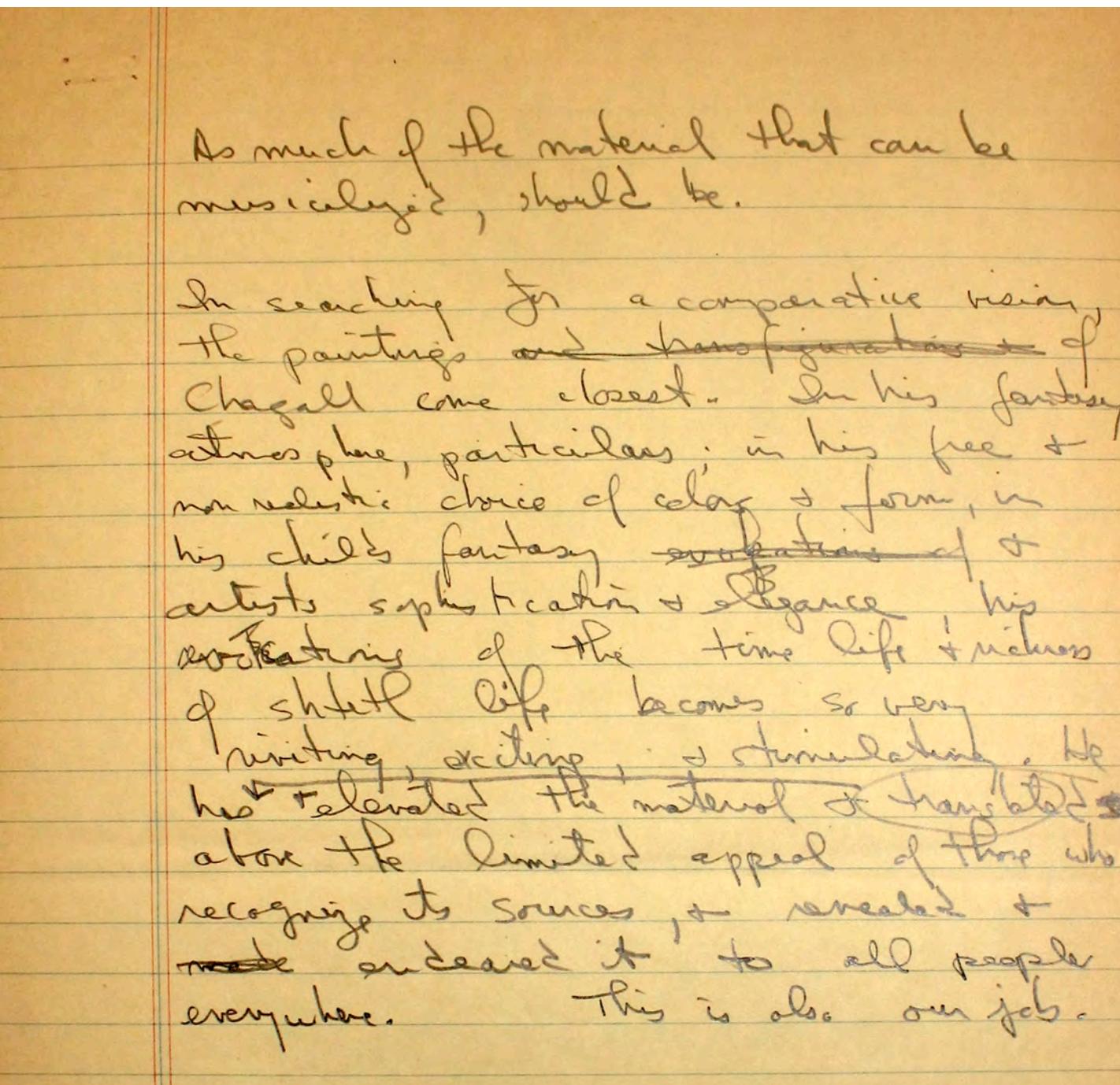
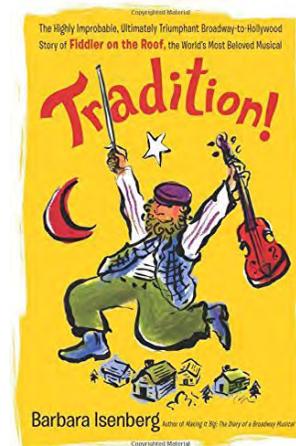
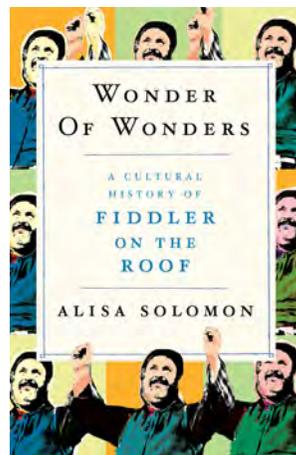
Dr. Goldstein is the fourth recipient of the award named for Floria V. Lasky, who represented such clients as Jerome Robbins, Jule Styne, Elia Kazan, Tennessee Williams and Carson McCullers as a leader in the field of entertainment law. Past recipients of the award include Paul H. Epstein, New York City Center (accepted by Arlene Shuler) and Cora Cahan.

The Floria V. Lasky Award is presented in conjunction with the **Floria V. Lasky Symposium**. The Jerome Robbins Foundation has been in partnership with the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in hosting the Symposium since its inception. Now in its third year, The Floria V. Lasky Symposium provides a forum for the not-for-profit cultural community to come together around the salient issues facing their organizations, while at the same time honoring Ms. Lasky's dedication to the cultural life of New York City. Past symposiums, featuring leaders in the arts and culture, have focused on digital and social media strategy (planning and implementation) and conveying the organization's brand (both internally and externally). The 2014 Floria V. Lasky Symposium took place on April 26, 2014 and was titled, "Managing Change, Fostering Sustainability." Representatives from New York City cultural organizations gathered to explore the issues around transformational change within their organizations. Presenters included New York City Ballet, Beth Morrison Projects, Gina Gibney Dance, Noreen O'Loughlin from New York Public Radio and Sebastian Chen from the Cooper-Hewitt/Smithsonian/ National Design Museum.

# 'FIDDLER' AT FIFTY!

2014 marks the fiftieth anniversary of *Fiddler on the Roof*. The joyful, funny, and, ultimately, heartbreaking tale of life in the shtetl of Anatevka, with music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, book by Joseph Stein, and direction and choreography by Jerome Robbins, opened on Broadway on September 22, 1964, and ran for a record-setting total of 3,242 performances. The original production was nominated for ten Tony Awards, winning nine, including Best Musical and for score, book, direction, and choreography. Zero Mostel originated the role of Tevye the milkman and Maria Karnilova the role of his wife, Golde (each of whom won a Tony for their performance). The musical was made into a film in 1971, winning three Academy Awards. *Fiddler on the Roof* has received numerous productions including four Broadway revivals, with a fifth Broadway production scheduled for 2015. Over the decades, it has also been performed at numerous international theaters and by hundreds of community theaters and schools. With the anniversary and the recent publication of two books about the musical, 2014 has been a year of celebration, discussion and exploration of the musical's longevity and cultural influence.

In April of 2014, **Symphony Space** in New York City held its annual Gala – *Fiddler At 50*. The evening, hosted by BD Wong, honored lyricist Sheldon Harnick with a concert performance produced and directed by Jim Caruso and John McDaniel, featuring songs from the score. Performers included Kate Baldwin, Christina Bianco, Stephanie J. Block, Len Cariou, Tovah Feldshuh, La Tanya Hall, Clint Holmes, Linda Lavin, Megan McGinnis, Trevor McQueen, Jane Monheit, Christine Pedi, Andrew Rannells, Tori Scott, Leslie Uggams and violinist Christian Hebel as The Fiddler. The event also featured a display of sketches and an original set model (of Tevye's house) from the original Broadway production of *Fiddler*, on loan from the family of set designer Boris Aronson and Lisa Jalowetz.



One of Jerome Robbins' many notes written while creating *Fiddler on the Roof*. It reads:

"As much of the material that can be musicalized, should be. In searching for a comparative vision, the paintings of Chagall come closest. In his fantasy atmosphere, particularly in his free and non-realistic choice of colors and form, in his child's fantasy and artist's sophistication and elegance, his depictions of the time, life and richness of shtetl life becomes so very riveting, exciting and stimulating. He has translated and elevated the material above the limited appeal of those who recognize its sources, and revealed and endeared it to all people everywhere. This is also our job."



From the Jerome Robbins Collection at the New York Public Library.

Raising the Roof program.



Joshua Bell performing at *Raising the Roof*. Photo by Michael Priest Photography.



Sheldon Harnick and Andrea Martin perform "Do You Love Me" at *Raising the Roof*. Photo by Michael Priest Photography.

(then still going by the name of Jerome Rabinowitz) himself made his stage debut in a Yiddish Theatre production; in 1937 he appeared in the Yiddish Art Theatre production of *The Brothers Ashkenazi*. "Half a century later, *Fiddler on the Roof's* universal themes remain as relevant as ever, offering every culture a lesson in how to navigate inevitable change while preserving what makes that culture unique," said Zalmen Mlotek, Artistic Director of The National Yiddish Theatre - Folksbiene.

Original *Fiddler on the Roof* producer, Harold Prince, Harvey Fierstein, star of the 2004 Broadway revival, and journalist Frank Rich were the Honorary Co-Chairs, with Gary John La Rosa and Erik Liberman co-conceiving and co-directing the evening. The evening featured renditions of musical numbers from *Fiddler* by their originators and notable successors. Generations of Anatevkan celebrated, including Topol, who originated the role of Tevye on the London stage, reprised the role in the film, and returned to Broadway with the role in 1991. He was joined by violinist Joshua Bell, Frank London, author Alisa Solomon, Jerry Zaks, Andrea Martin, Adrienne Barbeau, Liz Larsen, Austin Pendleton, Sammy Dallas Bayes, Louis Zorich, Pia Zadora, Fyvush Finkel and Jackie Hoffman, as well as three sisters from the 1971 film – Rosalind Harris, Michele Marsh and Neva Small. Original Broadway cast members Robert Aberdeen, Maurice Edwards, Tanya Everett-Bagot, Louis Genevrino, Sandra Kazan, Faye Menken-Schneier, Joanna Merlin, Carolyn Mignini, Joe Ponazzecki, Larry Ross, Carol Sawyer, Roberta Senn, Harriet Slaughter and Mimi Turque-Marre were joined by *Fiddler* veterans including Leslie Alexander, Joanne Borts, Mike Burstyn, Rachel Coloff, T. Doyle Leverett, Michael J. Farina, Kerry Frances, Deborah Grausman, Rebecca Hoodwin, Lori Ada Jaroslow, Mark Sanders, Donalyn Petrucci-Shreve, Cheryl Stern, Lori Wilner and a choir of 36 children.



Topol performs "If I Were A Rich Man" at *Raising the Roof*. Photo by Michael Priest Photography.

Speaking of his experience working with Jerome Robbins, actor Austin Pendleton stated that it has had an enduring effect on him. He said, "This is the only piece I've ever been in where, all through my life, I dream I am in it still. Every few years I dream I'm playing this part. And it has total reality. And then I wake up and I think 'Oh, I dreamed I was in the show.' Finally I started thinking, 'Maybe I dreamed I was in the show... maybe I never was in the show!' And tomorrow maybe I'll dream I did this tonight! There's just something about this experience that is so formative and so profoundly challenging, thanks to the great artist Jerry was, that it feels it has the shape of a dream... just like the show itself has the shape of a dream."

One of the true highlights of the evening was "Do You Love Me," performed by Sheldon Harnick and Andrea Martin. Their abundance of warmth and humor resulted in a truly show-stopping moment. Indeed, the entire evening was one highlight after another: Joshua Bell's virtuoso rendition of music from Fiddler's wedding celebration, the performance of "Matchmaker, Matchmaker" by the many actresses who had played the parts of Tevye's daughters onstage and in the film, Karen Ziemba's affecting delivery of a spellbinding song cut from the show during its out-of-town tryout ("Dear Sweet Sewing Machine"), Topol's cappella rendition of "If I Were A Rich Man," and the remarks by Ido Aharoni, the Consul General of Israel in New York. To quote writer Alisa Solomon, *Fiddler's* ties to Yiddish culture made the joint celebration between Fiddler and the Folksbiene "a perfect match."

On November 14 & 15, 2013, the Lewis Center for the Arts and the Program in American Studies at **Princeton University** held a symposium celebrating the 50th anniversary of *Fiddler*. The occasion explored the work as an icon of musical theater and its place in Jewish-American cultural history. Events included a screening of the 1971 film version of the musical, followed by a discussion, and a series of lectures and discussions by scholars, theater artists, and *Fiddler* lyricist Sheldon Harnick.

The symposium, funded by the Lapidus Fund in American Jewish Studies in Princeton's Program in American Studies, was organized by Jill Dolan, Princeton Professor in Theater, the Annan Professor in English and Director of the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Stacy Wolf, Princeton Professor in Theater and Director of the Princeton Atelier. The event was an outgrowth of two courses that semester: the professors co-taught "Jewish Identity and Performance in the U.S." and Wolf taught "Performance and Politics in the 1960s: Hippies and 'Homos,' Black Arts and Broadway." Stacy Wolf explained, "We invited a group of scholars to talk about the history of *Fiddler* from various perspectives of Jewish history and musical theatre history. We also invited Joanna Merlin, who originated the role of eldest daughter Tzeitl, director John Doyle (who teaches in Princeton's Program in Theater), and the imitable Sheldon Harnick to share their stories about working on the show."

Students in the courses provided a dramaturgical introduction of the film on November 14 and facilitated a discussion following. November 15th included an interview with Sheldon Harnick and talks by theater scholars: Jeremy Dauber, author of *The World of Sholom Aleichem*; Alisa Solomon, author of *Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof*; and Jenna Weissman Joselit whose many books include *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950*, which received the National Jewish Book Award in History, and *A Perfect Fit: Clothes, Character, and the Promise of America*. In that evening's discussion, Ms. Solomon suggested that one reason for the show's enduring power is that it is "focused on tradition rather than Torah or law," adding that the idea of tradition is cherished by any culture in today's world. She said, "It is a way of embracing a legacy without having to adopt its strictures."

The symposium involved undergraduates from the university's two seminars, who introduced the speakers and facilitated the Q & A. Ms. Wolf added, "We were eager to make the students' work visible and to integrate them into this public artistic and intellectual activity. We had around 100 people from the university and the community and it was a wonderful, fascinating, and lively event."

"*Raising the Roof*" was presented on June 9, 2014, at The Town Hall in New York. This benefit concert celebrated the 50th Anniversary of *Fiddler on the Roof*, as well as and the 90th birthday of its lyricist, Sheldon Harnick. At the same time, the event celebrated the 100th Anniversary of The National Yiddish Theatre - Folksbiene. Since 1915, it has presented a window into the world of Jewish culture by engaging generations of theatregoers. Indeed, Jerome Robbins

# Celebrating “Fiddler on the Roof” On its 50th Anniversary Night

by Joshua Ellis

On Monday evening, September 22, 2014 – exactly 50 years after the premiere of the original Broadway production of *Fiddler on the Roof* – two important members of the original cast, Austin Pendleton and Joanna Merlin, who created the roles of Motel the Tailor and Tzeitel, Tevye’s eldest daughter, delighted a group of over a hundred with wonderful stories about *Fiddler’s* creation. The event was a celebration of the publication of a new book, *Tradition!: The Highly Improbable, Ultimately Triumphant Broadway-to-Hollywood Story of ‘Fiddler on the Roof,’ the World’s Most Beloved Musical* by Barbara Isenberg. The illustrious panel for the evening at Barnes and Noble’s Upper East Side Manhattan store included Isenberg, Pendleton, Merlin and Tony Award-winning director/actor Jerry Zaks, who, early in his career, played Motel opposite Zero Mostel in a later production of *Fiddler*.



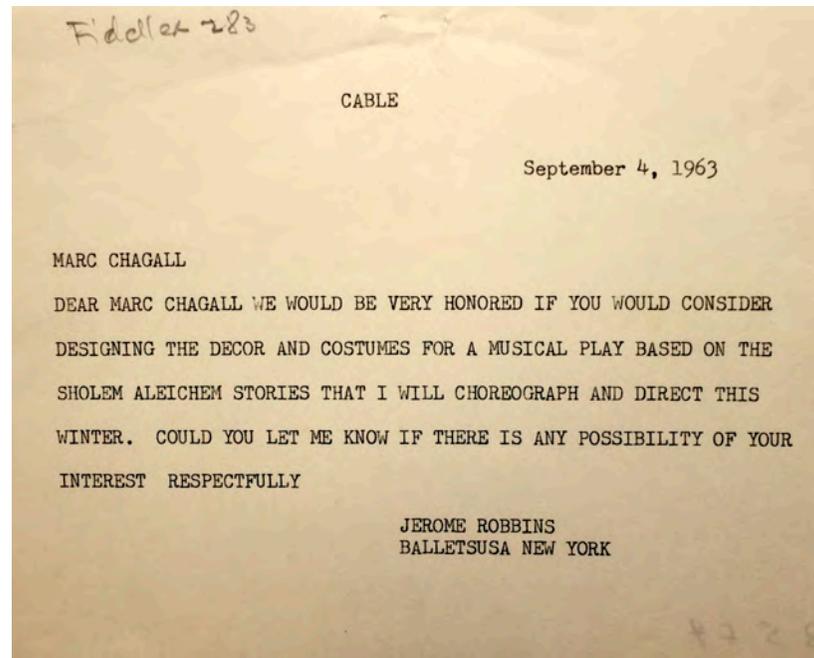
Joanna Merlin, Austin Pendleton and Joshua Ellis at the Barnes & Noble *Tradition!* discussion.

When the subject of *Fiddler on the Roof* comes up, the conversation naturally revolves around the musical’s original director and choreographer, Jerome Robbins. Robbins’ first casting decision for *Fiddler on the Roof* was Austin Pendleton – even before Zero Mostel. Pendleton had to audition for Robbins six times for a role in *Fiddler*, although Robbins had directed him previously in the off-Broadway comedy hit, *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Momma’s Hung You in the Closet and I’m Feelin’ So Sad*. Pendleton auditioned for and wanted the role of Perchik, the revolutionary. Robbins cast him as Motel, a role Pendleton didn’t want to play. At Barnes and Noble, Pendleton explained, “Jerome Robbins told me, ‘Now that you are playing Motel we’ll change the whole character.’” Many months later, during the musical’s tryout in Washington, D.C., Pendleton was given the song “Miracle of Miracles” – only two days before the show left town! From that moment on, he loved the role.

Joanna Merlin told of her first audition for Robbins, for a role in *Mother Courage and Her Children*. She didn’t get the part; but a year later Robbins kept her in mind for the role of Hodel, Tevye’s second daughter. At her seventh *Fiddler* audition for Robbins, he asked her to sing the title song from *Irma La Douce*. When she finished he knew he had found his Tzeitel, Tevye’s eldest daughter. Another actress, future opera star Julia Migenes, was cast as Hodel.

Pendleton reminisced about the *Fiddler on the Roof* opening night. “When word came out that [theatre critic] Walter Kerr didn’t like it, I fled the opening night party. I wasn’t convinced we were in a hit until the next day when I saw box office lines around the corner.” Kerr was in the minority.

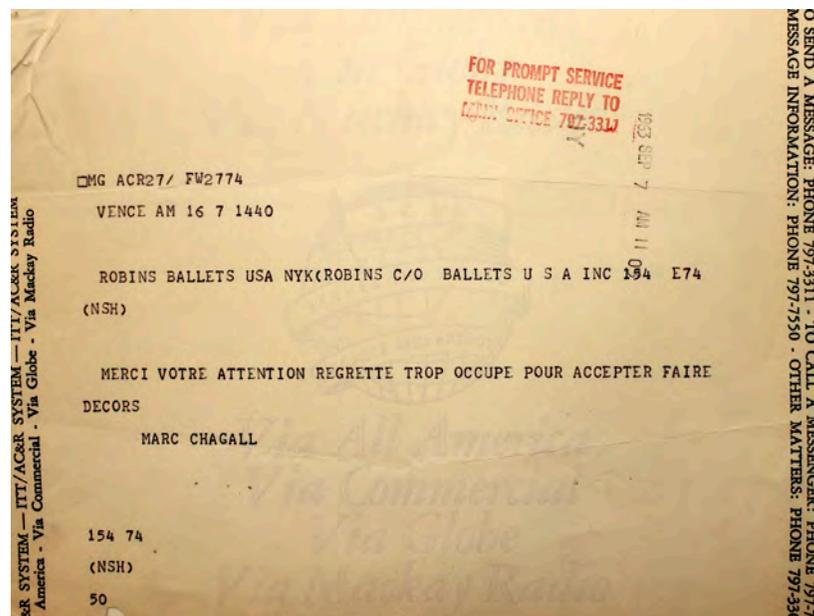
In her book *Tradition!*, Barbara Isenberg calls Jerome Robbins *Fiddler’s* “fourth author.” By that, she means he was a vital force in shaping the show as written by Joseph Stein (libretto), Jerry Bock (music) and Sheldon Harnick (lyrics). It was Robbins who ultimately shaped the musical’s structure, tone and look. Robbins insisted that the creators find the universality in the specific story of Jews in Czarist Russia. This ultimately led to the development of *Fiddler’s* opening number, “Tradition,” involving the entire community of Anatevka. He demanded that the show never be sentimental. For the show’s look, Robbins requested that



From the Jerome Robbins Collection at the New York Public Library.

set designer Boris Aronson create scenery with the flavor of Marc Chagall, having originally asked (and been turned down by) Chagall himself to design the show.

Isenberg’s book is a popular history of *Fiddler on the Roof* as a play, movie and cultural icon. It is in that last mentioned aspect that she came to interview me. I am an Interspiritual minister and in that capacity I contacted Sheldon Harnick with a request in 2011. Might he consider writing new lyrics for “Sunrise, Sunset” that could be sung at same-sex weddings? With the blessing of Richard Ticktin, the lawyer for the late Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick wrote new lyrics and they premiered on October 1, 2011 at the marriage celebration of entertainer Richard Skipper and landscape architect Daniel Sherman. Isenberg includes the story in her book.



From the Jerome Robbins Collection at the New York Public Library. Cable letter from Marc Chagall to Jerome Robbins: “Thank you for your attention. Sorry, too busy to accept designing the decor. Marc Chagall.”

More serious in tone, and also a treasure is Alisa Solomon’s new book *Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of ‘Fiddler on the Roof’*. She begins her story with writer Sholem Aleichem in Kiev, Russia and traces the roots of *Fiddler* from his Yiddish short stories to Yiddish theatre, Yiddish movies, early television and eventually Broadway and beyond. *Fiddler on the Roof* remains an iconic musical of the American theatre. It’s hardly surprising that it would take at least two books to tell the story of its lasting legacy.

**Joshua Ellis** was a Broadway press agent for many years during which time he represented dozens of award-winning plays and musicals including the original productions of *Into the Woods*, *Fences*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Elephant Man*, *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music*, *42nd Street*, *Big River* and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. He also represented Roundabout Theatre Company for eight years. In 1977 his professional path crossed with Jerome Robbins on the 1977 Broadway production of *The King and I*, starring Yul Brynner. Ordained an Interspiritual minister in 2006, Rev. Joshua officiates at numerous weddings and serves on the leadership team of New York’s Disaster Chaplaincy Services.

# NYPL Celebrates *Fiddler*

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' *Fiddler on the Roof Singalong Show-and-Tell* took place on September 30, 2014. This program took place in the Library for the Performing Arts' Café, where the show's history was on display with archival material from the Library's collections. Evan Leslie, artistic producer at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, hosted the event, adding witty and informative commentary throughout. He shared images from the show's scenic and costume designers, Boris Aronson and Patricia Zipprodt, whose designs are housed at the Library.

Under the warm and inviting direction of Mana Allen, attendees lent their voices to the anniversary celebration. They sang along with live performances of everyone's favorite songs from the musical, along with performers who appeared in a production of *Fiddler on the Roof* this past summer at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Connecticut. Although nothing beats the sound of a community, it was nice to have a few professionals in the room to hit some of the notes. Featured performers included Jen Brissman, Elizabeth DeRosa, Adam Heller, Barrie Kreinik and music director Carl Danielsen. A musical highlight of the event was Adam Heller's performance (with Carl Danielsen at the piano) of "When Messiah Comes," a song that was cut from the show during its out-of-town tryout. Although the song was one of Zero Mostel's favorite songs to perform, it simply didn't work in the context of the show; a comedic song just didn't gel with the tragic tone of the scene, when the villagers of Anatevka were being forced to leave. Jerome Robbins was never sentimental about cutting anything that didn't work, so the song never made it past the Detroit tryout. As Mr. Harnick explained, the song "works wonderfully out of context, but in context, it just doesn't work."

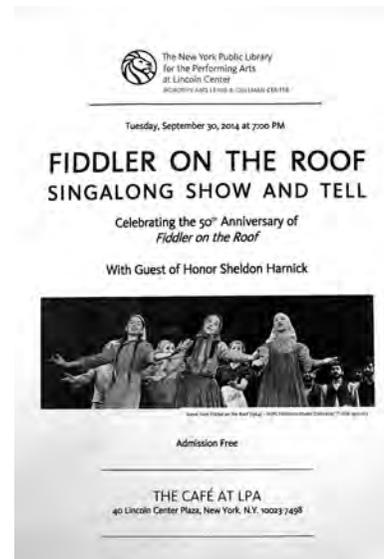
As the songs were performed, Sheldon Harnick, the guest of honor, spontaneously shared stories about many of them. He told of the time Jerry Bock returned from Iceland, where Mr. Bock had been honored as a composer. Mr. Harnick explained, "When he came back, I said 'How was it?' And he said, 'It was thrilling. They had a symphony orchestra. They had a chorus. They did the songs from *Fiddler*... But one thing I have to tell you... they changed one of your lyrics.' I said, 'They did?' And he said, 'Yeah. They sing "Sunrise, Sunrise" in Iceland!'"

Finally, on Monday, October 6th, '**50 Years with Fiddler**,' an evening of stories about the creation and legacy of the show, took place in the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Bruno Walter Auditorium. Guests for this event included Sheldon Harnick; cultural historian (and son of designer Boris Aronson) Marc Aronson; Amanda Vaill, author of *Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins*; and Alisa Solomon, author of *Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof*. Rarely seen materials from The Library for the Performing Arts' theatre, dance, and music collections were also on display.

In her introductory remarks, Jan Schmidt, Curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the NYPL, reminded the audience that the Jerome Robbins Archive of the Recorded Moving Image was begun in 1965 with six cans of film donated by Mr. Robbins (along with a percentage of his royalties as one of the *Fiddler* authors). It now holds over 24,000 reels of film and video, featuring all styles of dance from around the world.

The panel discussed how performances of *Fiddler* worldwide attest to its profound cultural power; how the show's theme of yearning for tradition in a world in the midst of change has proven timely and relevant in productions around the globe, in many languages, for five decades now. According to Alisa Solomon, it is the show's balance between the universal and the particular that has given the musical its staying power.

Marc Aronson brought up another historical aspect of the original production of *Fiddler*. He pointed out that Harold Prince's monetary backers ("mostly second or third generation Jews from Long Island") were a community involved in telling their own story. He said that Jewish theater artists, who had been successful in the theater for a long time, usually wrote stories and songs of other groups (giving "White Christmas" as an example). But *Fiddler* was the story of those who created it... even if it was a generation or two away. Mr. Aronson suggested that this pointed the direction for further "identity shows" that were "about the lives of



Alisa Solomon, Sheldon Harnick, Marc Aronson, Amanda Vaill and Adam Heller at the New York Public Library.

the people who created them," saying, "I think *Fiddler* was a crossing point, even if the creators weren't intending it to be."

Sheldon Harnick spoke of Jerome Robbins' motivation to bring the story of *Fiddler* to the stage, saying, "When Jerome Robbins became our director, he told us that when he was a child of 6, his parents took him to that part of Poland where their ancestors came from... and he remembered it being a very happy experience. Then, during World War II, when he read about the extermination of these little villages, he was sure that the village that he had visited was one of those that had been obliterated. He wanted to put that culture back on stage."

Over the past fifty years, putting that culture back on stage has become something of a Broadway tradition. The original production ran for eight years, followed by a revival in 1976, again starring Zero Mostel as Tevye. It was revived again in 1981 and 1990, both times with Topol in the lead role. The most recent *Fiddler* production on Broadway was in 2004, and starred Alfred Molina, and later, Harvey Fierstein as Tevye.

Next year, the beloved show will continue to reach audiences; *Fiddler* will return to Broadway in a new production in fall 2015, starring five-time Tony Award nominee Danny Burstein as Tevye. Bartlett Sher, who will be represented this season on Broadway with *The King and I*, will direct the production, which will feature choreography by Hofesh Shechter, based on Robbins' original conceptions. The production is scheduled to begin performances on November 17, 2015.



Adam Heller performs "When Messiah Comes" at the New York Public Library.

# A few words from Sheldon Harnick by Bernard Carragher

Sheldon Harnick turned 90 this past April. After serving in World War II, he began writing lyrics for college revues at Northwestern University. His words were first heard on Broadway in Leonard Sillman's *New Faces of 1952*, *Two's Company* (1952) starring Bette Davis with dances and musical numbers staged by Jerome Robbins, and *The Littlest Revue* (1956). Actor Jack Cassidy introduced him to composer Jerry Bock in 1956 and their first show, *The Body Beautiful* (1958), about prizefighters, ran on Broadway for 60 performances. *Fiorello!* (1959), the writing pair's next show, based on New York's colorful Mayor LaGuardia, won them a Pulitzer Prize. Other Harnick and Bock shows were *Tenderloin* (1960), *She Loves Me* (1963), *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), *The Apple Tree* (1966) and *The Rothschilds* (1970). In 1976, Harnick wrote the lyrics for composer Richard Rodgers' musical *Rex*, centered around Henry VIII's marital woes.

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In 2011, I interviewed Sheldon Harnick as part of the ongoing Jerome Robbins Foundation's Oral History Project. We discussed many of Mr. Harnick's creative collaborations during our conversation. What follows are excerpts from that dialogue pertaining to the creation of *Fiddler on the Roof*; the comments are Mr. Harnick's.

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*Fiddler on the Roof* was the first time that Jerry Bock and I had worked on a project that hadn't been given to us by a producer. In this case, someone sent me a book called *Wandering Star* by Sholem Aleichem. I read it. I thought, "There is a musical in this book." I gave it to Jerry Bock and he thought there was a musical in it too. I then gave it to the book writer Joseph Stein, who had worked with us on *The Body Beautiful* and he thought it was too big a canvas for the musical stage.

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*Wandering Star* covers over forty years and has a multitude of characters. Yet we loved the way it was written. We decided to find something by Sholem Aleichem that could be adapted for the stage. We saw a play downtown by Arnold Perl based on three Aleichem stories about dairyman Tevye's daughters. We then got the rights from Mr. Perl to do our own version of it.

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The first producer we took it to was Harold Prince, but he said he was a Hungarian Jew, not a Polish or Russian Jew, so it was not his cup of tea. He did say that there was only one director for the project – Jerome Robbins. We took it to other producers we admired like Arnold Saint-Subber and Fred Coe, but for various reasons they didn't work out. So we wrote the show on our own and showed it to Robbins. He agreed to do it immediately. It turned out that when he was six his family took him on a trip to Poland where the ancestors he visited lived in a shtetl. Years later, when World War II began, he read that these shtetls were being destroyed and he realized that one of these shtetls he had visited as a child had been destroyed. Robbins became imbued with recreating that shtetl life on stage and now we were giving him that opportunity with *Fiddler*.

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After Robbins had said yes, we went back to Harold Prince and he agreed to be the producer. He also looked at the long list of titles we had for the show and saw *Fiddler on the Roof*. He chose it because he wanted the show to have a musical sounding name.

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Jerry liked what we had written, but he felt that a great deal of work was still needed on the show. Six months before we went into production we began to try to solve as many problems as possible. Jerry began every meeting by saying, "What is this show about?" and we would say that it was about



Chita Rivera and Sheldon Harnick at *Raising the Roof*. Photo by Michael Priest Photography.

a milkman who has five daughters. Jerry would say, "No... that is the plot. That is not what gives these stories their power." After many meetings one of us said, "You know what this is about? It's about a changing way of life. It's Enlightenment that percolated in Western Europe and now has arrived at these isolated villages in Eastern Europe. These Enlightenment ideas are beginning to change the way these people live. Conditions are changing." That's when Robbins' eyes lit up. "That's it!", he said, "We have to have an opening number which will show a change in tradition, and every scene should relate to the breaking down of that tradition." When we came up with the word "tradition," Jerry said that he then knew how to begin and end the show. The circle of the show became complete.

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Before we went into rehearsal one of my good friends, actress Sondra Lee, warned me that two weeks before the show's New York opening, Jerry's demons would come into play, and that if I couldn't approach him with humor, I should stay out of his way, saying, "He is possessed by demons and he feels everything can go wrong at the last minute." Sondra Lee's prediction about Jerry came true. On time too. About two weeks before we opened in New York, Jerry came to me and I could see sparks in his eyes. He wanted me to change a lyric in the song, "Sunrise, Sunset." "Where is that lyric?", he asked. I tried to kid him and reach him by humor. I couldn't. I wrote the new lyric as fast as I could and I stayed out of his way because I could see he was in that stage that Sondra had warned me about.

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It was Jerry's decision to hire Zero Mostel, even though Mostel had been blacklisted and named before HUAC [the House Un-American Activities Committee]. Zero was smart enough to know that Jerry was the right man for the job. Two years earlier, he had agreed on letting Jerry come in and doctor one of his biggest hits, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. On the first day of rehearsal I was curious what would happen when Robbins arrived to meet and greet Zero and the cast. Zero greeted Jerry with, "Hello, blabbermouth!", and the whole room exploded with laughter, including Robbins. Zero did everything Robbins asked him to do. In Robbins' staging of "If I Were a Rich Man," one of the things he asked Zero to do while singing was to sigh and throw his arms up to Heaven. After one of these sighs, his hand goes into the milk can. He looks at his wet sleeve and looks up to God as if to say, "This too? You give me a wet sleeve?" It was funny, but within three days Zero had extended the song by three or four minutes. He squeezed the milk out of his sleeve. He dabbed it on as perfume or used it as grease for the wheels of his milk cart. Zero was destroying the number. It was no longer a song about a "rich man." It had become a song about a wet sleeve. Jerry solved the problem. That evening when Zero's hand went into the milk can there was no milk there; Jerry had taken the milk out.

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After *Fiddler* had opened in New York, I asked Jerry how often would he come back to see the show. He said, "I don't do that. You have a wonderful stage manager. She will keep the show on track. With this show I don't want to see what Zero is doing." Audiences adored Zero, but the actors hated the way he distorted the show. When he left the show after about a year, I went to see Zero on his closing night. He had shaved off his beard. I went up to him and said, "I am sorry to see you leave." He said, "No, you are not sorry to see me leave. You are sorry to see the box office grosses go down." But that never happened. Zero's heart was broken. He was more heartbroken when he didn't get the film. Norman Jewison felt Zero's acting was too big for the screen. Norman felt that the only director that was able to make Zero work on screen was Mel Brooks in *The Producers*.

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Except for a compendium of his musical numbers for *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*, Jerry left the musical theater after *Fiddler on the Roof*. We were walking down a street in either Detroit or Washington, D. C., and he said to me, "*Fiddler* is the last theater project I am going to do." "Why?", I asked. "When I do a musical, I have an image in my head of what it should look like, and I can never realize that image. In the theater there are too many people I have to go through to achieve it, and it drives me crazy. I am not going to do it anymore. I'm going back to the ballet."

**Bernard Carragher** is a theater critic for *New York Theater News* and *The Catholic Transcript*. He has written for *The New York Times*, *Playbill* and *Show* magazine. He was one of the producers of *My One and Only* and *Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life*.



# Upcoming Performances of Jerome Robbins Works...

Here is a select list of upcoming performances of Jerome Robbins ballets in the USA and elsewhere.

## JANUARY 2015:

21, 23, 27, 30  
THE CAGE / ANDANTINO – New York City Ballet; David H. Koch Theater, New York  
23  
MOVES – Ballett am Rhein; Theater Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Germany  
24  
IN THE NIGHT – Mariinsky Ballet; Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY  
29, 31(e)  
THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS – New York City Ballet; David H. Koch Theater, New York

## FEBRUARY 2015:

1(m)  
THE CAGE / ANDANTINO – New York City Ballet; David H. Koch Theater, New York  
5, 7(e)  
THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS – New York City Ballet; David H. Koch Theater, New York  
7 (m), 17, 19, 26  
INTERPLAY / GLASS PIECES – New York City Ballet; David H. Koch Theater, New York  
20, 21(m), 21(e), 22(m), 26, 27, 28  
FANCY FREE – Colorado Ballet; Ellie Caulkins Opera House, Denver, CO  
26, 28(m)  
DANCES AT A GATHERING – San Francisco Ballet; War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, CA

## MARCH 2015:

1(m)  
FANCY FREE – Colorado Ballet; Ellie Caulkins Opera House, Denver, CO  
3, 4, 6, 8(m)  
DANCES AT A GATHERING – San Francisco Ballet; War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, CA  
6, 7,8  
THE CONCERT – Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre; Benedum Center, Pittsburgh, PA  
27, 28(m), 28(e), 29(m)  
THE CONCERT – Miami City Ballet; Kravis Center, West Palm Beach, FL

## APRIL 2015:

10, 11, 12(m)  
THE CONCERT – Miami City Ballet; Adrienne Arsht Center, Miami, FL  
17, 18(m), 28(e), 19(m)  
THE CONCERT – Miami City Ballet; Broward Center, Fort Lauderdale, FL

(m)=matinee, (e)=evening

## Peter Pan: “Television’s Happiest Hour” Flies Again

*Peter Pan*, based on the play by Sir James M. Barrie, with lyrics by Carolyn Leigh, Betty Comden and Adolph Green and music by Mark Charlap and Jule Styne, was the first time Jerome Robbins served as the sole director and choreographer of a Broadway show. It earned Tony Awards for stars Mary Martin and Cyril Ritchard, and for Technical Director Richard Rodda, and convinced an entire generation of children to believe in the powers of “youth, joy and freedom.”

Before *Peter Pan* opened at the Winter Garden Theatre in New York on October 20, 1954, NBC offered to broadcast a live performance of the musical in March of 1955 for its *Producers’ Showcase* program. One aim of the series was to broadcast color spectaculars to promote the new television system developed by RCA – NBC’s parent company; the live color broadcast of *Peter Pan* fit the program’s agenda better than a shadow. The Broadway production was announced as a limited run, and when it closed on February 26, 1955, the colorful scenery and costumes were transported to the NBC studios in Brooklyn. NBC broadcast *Peter Pan*, with nearly the entire Broadway cast reprising their roles, on March 7, 1955. It was the first live broadcast of a Broadway musical ever on TV and it attracted a then-record audience of 65 million viewers, inspiring Jack Gould of the *New York Times* to describe it as “perhaps television’s happiest hour.” It won the Emmy Award as the best single program of the year, and Mary Martin was named best actress in a single performance. The second live TV version aired on January 9, 1956, again starring Mary Martin and Cyril Ritchard. A live version of the musical was broadcast a third time on December 8, 1960. This production had a slightly different cast, since the children had grown too old for their roles. This production was videotaped (in color) and rebroadcast in 1963, 1966, and 1973, and was restored and again rebroadcast in 1989 and 1990.

On Thursday, December 4, 2014, *Peter Pan* aired once more as NBC presented a new live television production of the musical. Following in the footsteps of the successful *The Sound of Music LIVE!*, which drew over 18 million viewers, executive producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron presented a live, three-hour event that took viewers on a musical journey to the second star to the right. The show, inevitably, also brought attention to the original; while it aired, it caused the name Mary Martin to “trend” on Twitter.



### Errata

In Volume 1, No. 1 of the Jerome Robbins Foundation newsletter, the following caption was omitted with the photo shown here: Photo by Wilfried Hösl of Bayerisches Staatsballett (Bavarian State Ballet) performing Jerome Robbins’ *The Goldberg Variations*. Bavarian State Ballet is the only company, outside of New York City Ballet, with *The Goldberg Variations* currently in its active repertoire.

Bayerisches Staatsballett (Bavarian State Ballet) performing *The Goldberg Variations*. Photo by Wilfried Hösl.

## NEWS FROM THE JEROME ROBBINS FOUNDATION Vol. 1, No. 2 (2014)

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*Jerome Robbins* is a publication of the Jerome Robbins Foundation and Robbins Rights Trust.

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