

# Jerome Robbins



NEWS FROM  
**THE JEROME ROBBINS FOUNDATION**

VOL. 5, NO. 1 (2018)



## Robbins in the Night

Recently, the Jerome Robbins Dance Division turned Lincoln Center Plaza in front of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts entrance into an unconventional exhibit space. Photographs of Jerome Robbins' work from their collection were shown in a rotating slide display each night during May and June.



Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library.



Allen Greenberg presents the 2018 Floria V. Lasky Award to Joseph V. Melillo.

**Cynthia Mayeda** The Floria Lasky Award recognizes someone who has contributed to the cultural life of New York City. Of that, there is no doubt that Joe Melillo is deserving. But in addition to making a deep and lasting contribution, he has been as enthusiastic in his life as a consumer of the culture. And that, I'm guessing that Ms. Lasky would have agreed, makes Joe a real and outstanding New Yorker.

**Ralph Lemon** I am eternally grateful to you for all of the support you've given me, and other artists in my generation, and in the younger generation following me and those before me. You are a remarkable man and I love you very, very much.

**Karen Brooks Hopkins** He is my brother and he is my professional partner for life. Together—first with our mentor, Harvey, and then on our own—with the leadership of the dynamic board and our loyal, hardworking staff, we dedicated our lives to creating "Destination BAM." As I like to say, "We were on a path for glory and nothing was gonna stop us."

**Moisés Kaufman** When I found out that you were getting this award for your impact on the cultural life of New York City, I was a little overwhelmed. What do I say about that? It's so evident the impact that you've had on the cultural life of the entire country. And then I thought about something you said to me once. You said, "The great privilege of my life is that I have been able to make theater for theater artists, dance for dancers and choreographers, and opera for opera artists." That really stuck with me. How do you measure "impact"? You made theater for theater artists. So many of the most important conversations that I've had in my life happened when I was in the dark in your theater, watching the work of other artists, who were posing some of the same questions that I was interested in... So when we talk about impacting the cultural landscape, for us—the theater artists working in the field—this is what "impact" really means. This is what I remember, and this is the work that has changed my work, that has allowed me to have a dialogue with the art form that is international.

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. Floria Lasky entered Hunter College at the age of 14. After graduating first in her class at New York University law school in 1945, she joined the law firm of Fitelson & Mayers, where she stayed for the next 62 years, eventually becoming a partner. A master negotiator, she was a leader in the field of entertainment law. For more than fifty years she knew Jerome Robbins, whom she represented, and she continued to serve as president of The Jerome Robbins Foundation and trustee of The Robbins Rights Trust until she died in 2007.

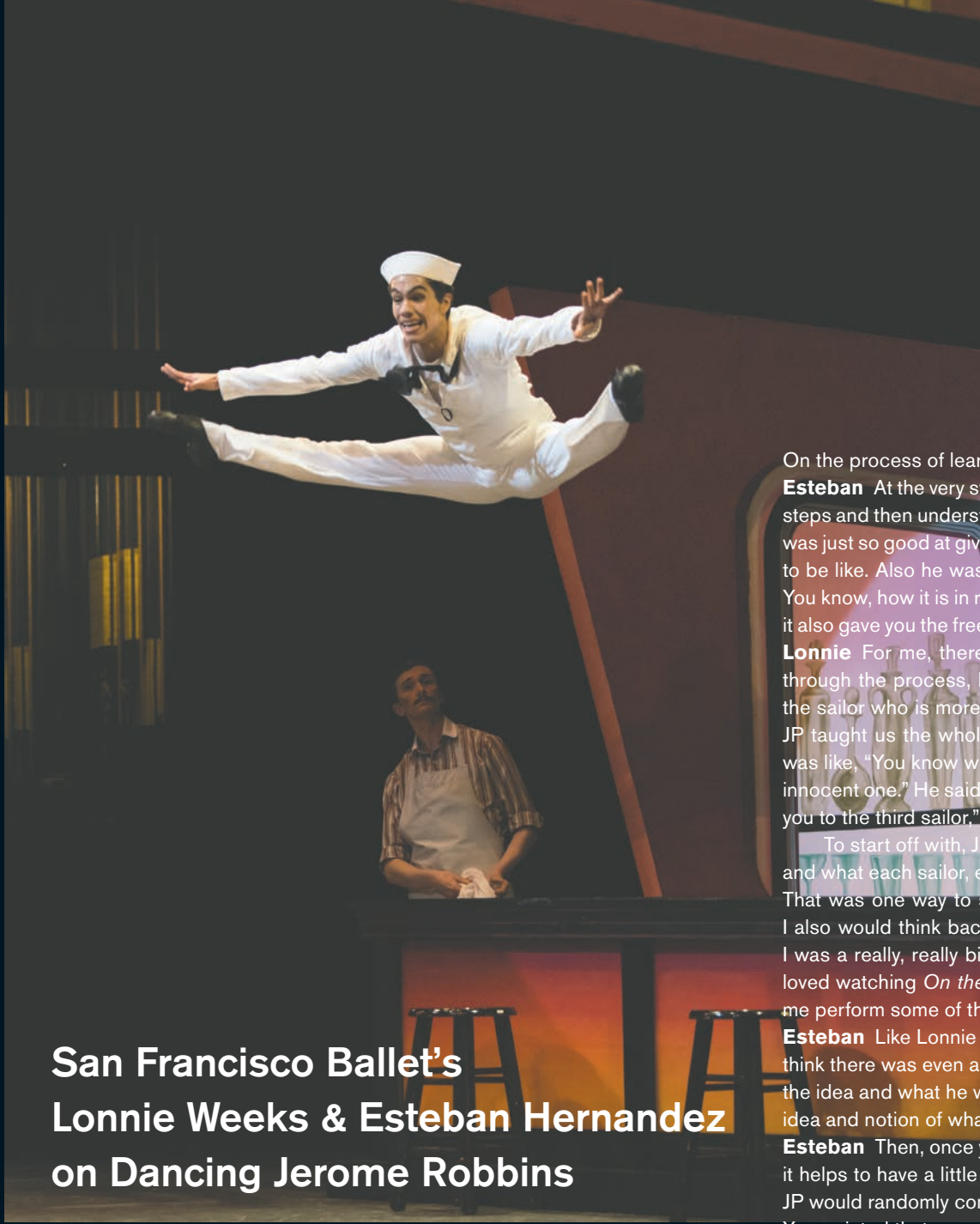
**Joseph V. Melillo**, who has been the executive producer responsible for the artistic direction of the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) since 1999, is the recipient of the 2018 Floria V. Lasky Award. On the stages of BAM—from the grand Howard Gilman Opera House to the daring Harvey Theater to the intimate space at the Fisher—Joseph V. Melillo's impact has been invaluable. His contributions to the cultural life of New York City were celebrated by the Jerome Robbins Foundation at the Greene Space in New York City on April 20, 2018.

At the ceremony, Cynthia Mayeda (Brooklyn Museum Deputy Director), Ralph Lemon (choreographer), Moisés Kaufman (director/playwright), and Karen Brooks Hopkins (President Emerita of BAM) praised Mr. Melillo and his achievements at BAM. Joseph Melillo and former BAM President Karen Brooks Hopkins (recipient of the 2015 Floria V. Lasky Award) took over the leadership of BAM in 1999 from Harvey Lichtenstein (then president and executive producer), under whom they worked for many years. Together they further solidified BAM's role as a major force in the New York cultural scene, with a worldwide reputation for quality and innovation. Since 2015, Mr. Melillo has worked alongside President Katy Clark, planning new projects and institutional growth, and defining BAM's role in a burgeoning Brooklyn Cultural District.

During his tenure, the academy has expanded its programming, increased its audience attendance, and launched initiatives such as the Bridge Project and DanceMotion USA, a cultural diplomacy and exchange program that partners with the US Department of State.

Previously, Mr. Melillo served as BAM's producing director, following a six-year tenure as founding director of the Next Wave Festival—BAM's signature annual contemporary arts showcase. Mr. Melillo will be stepping down from his position at BAM at the close of 2018.





## San Francisco Ballet's Lonnie Weeks & Esteban Hernandez on Dancing Jerome Robbins

by Jennie Scholick

**The Jerome Robbins Centennial Celebration came to San Francisco in March 2018 with San Francisco Ballet's Program 5, "Robbins: Ballet & Broadway." On March 21, I had the opportunity to speak with SF Ballet dancers Lonnie Weeks and Esteban Hernandez about their experiences dancing Robbins' work. Both had premiered in *Fancy Free* the prior evening. The following remarks are pulled from that conversation and have been edited for length and clarity.**

On their roles:

**Lonnie Weeks** This week I'm going to be performing the first intruder in *The Cage* and I also performed the third sailor in *Fancy Free*, also known as the "Rhumba Boy."

**Esteban Hernandez** I'm involved in only *Fancy Free*. I am the first sailor, the one who jumps into the splits.

**Lonnie** It wasn't until after I learned the role that somebody mentioned that it was Jerry's part, so that makes it pretty special.

On their first experience dancing Robbins:

**Esteban** This is the second Robbins ballet that I've gotten to perform. My first one was actually in my first year in the company, when we were doing *Glass Pieces*. That was my first hands-on encounter with his choreography. Later on I learned the "Brick Boy" in *Dances at a Gathering*, but I never got to perform it. So I'm really glad that I got to be a part of *Fancy Free* this time around because it has been a really great experience.

**Lonnie** For me as well, my first experience dancing Robbins was *Glass Pieces*. It's such a joy to dance and it's super tribal.

On the process of learning *Fancy Free*:

**Esteban** At the very start it was very much just about learning the movement, the steps and then understanding the characters. I feel like JP [Jean-Pierre Frohlich] was just so good at giving you the right feel, the right idea of what each sailor had to be like. Also he was very specific about making each sailor his own person. You know, how it is in real life. So I really appreciated his approach to it because it also gave you the freedom to take what he said and interpret it in your own way.

**Lonnie** For me, there was a bit of a challenge learning *Fancy Free* halfway through the process, because originally I was cast as the second sailor. He's the sailor who is more of the carefree, happy-go-lucky, innocent one, and after JP taught us the whole ballet and he got to know our personalities better, he was like, "You know what, Lonnie, now that I know you, I don't think you are the innocent one." He said, "I think you have a little bit of a fire in you. I want to switch you to the third sailor," which was really cool.

To start off with, JP gave us a few pages of Robbins' notes about the ballet and what each sailor, each personality, should have, and a little bit of backstory. That was one way to start off. Then for me, after reading that piece of paper, I also would think back on all the times that I watched *On the Town* because I was a really, really big fan of Gene Kelly in general as a kid, and I especially loved watching *On the Town*. I would even make my family sit down and watch me perform some of those songs.

**Esteban** Like Lonnie said, JP gave us all this information and all these notes. I think there was even a fragment of a letter that Robbins wrote to Bernstein with the idea and what he wanted out of it. I really feel like that gives you a very clear idea and notion of what each character should be like.

**Esteban** Then, once you get comfortable with the movement and the idea of it, it helps to have a little bit of an internal dialogue and a backstory. For example, JP would randomly come up to us and say, "Okay, what did you see over there? You pointed that way, what are you looking at?"

He would say sometimes that Jerry would go and tell one dancer to do something different without telling the rest of them so he could see their genuine reactions to a situation that's unusual, unrehearsed, unplanned. And I think that's really the most important thing in something like *Fancy Free*, in this kind of work, is to make it seem real, to make it seem spontaneous.

**Lonnie** Yeah. To know when to be a dancer and know when to be just a real person walking down the street in New York City.

**Esteban** Yeah. For example, sometimes he'd be like, "Where are you from? Where is your character from?" You would have to think on the spot and then eventually use that consistently and create a backstory from that. So, it really was a great experience because it was more like working on a play rather than a ballet.

On Robbins and Balanchine:

**Lonnie** I would say something that both Balanchine and Robbins shared is that they both had a really wonderful talent for choreography for the principals as well as the corps de ballet. I think some choreographers are stronger at choreographing one or the other, but I think you'll see that both are equally well done.

**Esteban** I think that in Robbins' work, you can tell that he really invested himself. In a way it has a very human feel to it. He's very good at creating this kind of atmosphere on the stage, this kind of mood that drags you in, no matter what kind of ballet. Like *Dances at a Gathering*, *Other Dances*, or *In the Night*, they all have this very moody feel to them, where you can't look away. Even his stronger, more abstract works like *The Cage* still have that kind of feel to them. I feel like Balanchine was very good at interpreting stories and a more intellectual approach to choreography. But Robbins to me feels somehow more human, more real.

**Jennie Scholick** is the Associate Director of Audience Engagement at San Francisco Ballet.

# A Non-Traditional “Tradition” National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene presents new *Fiddler on the Roof*

by Chris Massimine CEO, National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene

In summer 2018, the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene in New York City will produce *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish. The play was originally written for the American stage by Joseph Stein, with music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, and brilliant direction and choreography by Jerome Robbins. It was translated into Yiddish shortly after its Broadway opening in 1964. It was performed only once in Israel in 1965 and never in the United States.

Why produce a Yiddish *Fiddler*? Why now? The National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene is the oldest consecutively-producing performing arts institution in the U.S. and was founded in 1915. The modern Broadway theater is a direct descendent of the Yiddish theater. So was vaudeville, and Hollywood, which later begat Bollywood, Nollywood and worldwide cinema. One of NYTF's missions is to celebrate the Yiddish experience through the performing arts, to preserve its rich cultural heritage. But *Fiddler on the Roof* is an American invention, brightly interpreting the stories of Sholem Aleichem, some of which were quite tragic, for the musical stage.

So I'm asking you: Why produce a Yiddish *Fiddler*? Why now? Producing *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish just feels right. This project has been on our wish list for a long time, just waiting for the right time. Having as our director Joel Grey, who has deep roots in Broadway and Yiddish theater, feels like bringing it back home. Joel Grey has promised “This will be a bold and rich re-imagining, with a highly acclaimed group of theatre artists that will respectfully re-envision this classic theatre touchstone in fresh ways.” Having Zalmen Mlotek, an internationally recognized authority on Yiddish folk and theater music, as the artistic director, cements that authenticity.

Part of the excitement of working with National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene is the opportunity to make the work, particularly in Yiddish, relevant to new audiences. Being able to do so using a vehicle that is familiar to them is a great bridge. Being able to do so using a vehicle that is eminently enjoyable is an unmatched opportunity.

The themes in *Fiddler on the Roof* transcend language and culture. The play was performed to delighted sell-out audiences in Japan last year and has been seen around the world. Oppression, poverty, tension between parents and independently-minded children, the love/ exasperation that characterize long marriages, the pain of being pulled, kicking and screaming, into modernity—everyone, everywhere can identify with the tsurris (troubles) with which these beloved characters struggle.

To be sure, the production presents plenty of artistic and production challenges. The creative team who are working with us have the technical expertise, and often cultural touchpoints in their own backgrounds to make this *Fiddler* really resonate with audiences.

Setting the musical score was a major academic and musical feat, and a labor of love for Zalmen Mlotek and Motl Didner. Sheldon Harnick's iconic lyrics were written in English (left to right). On the other hand, Yiddish is written right

to left in an alphabet that is probably not readable by the performers, since most are not native Yiddish speakers. It was transliterated into the Roman alphabet, completely reversed in order one note at a time and reset left to right under each musical note (there are eighteen songs in the score of *Fiddler on the Roof*). Then, it was paraphrased in English underneath, so the actors have the sense of what they are singing about.

The Yiddish translation was artfully constructed by noted Israeli actor/director Shraga Friedman in 1965, and deepens the connection of the work to Sholem Aleichem's original Tevye the Dairyman stories. Friedman, a native Yiddish speaker, was born in Warsaw and escaped the Second World War with his family, making their way to Tel Aviv in 1941. Well acquainted with Sholem Aleichem's works, Friedman crafted his translation to infuse *Fiddler* with literary references from the original *Tevye the Dairyman* stories.

Great dance numbers are central to *Fiddler on the Roof*, and particularly important to convey emotion and further the plot for audiences who may not understand every word of dialogue. It is not enough for the choreography to be executed with precision and artistry; it also needs to convey cultural identity. The same dancers who portray authoritative, confident Russian townfolk in one scene, also dance the parts of deferential Jewish villagers in another scene. Choreographer Staś Kmiec is working diligently with his cast on the subtleties of the slightest movement. “What happens within the story is grounded in the word ‘tradition’. It's a simple story that can be told simply, and the choreography will reflect that realism. I have a deep knowledge of the original; my work will be inspired by and with a great respect to the Jerome Robbins original.” Kmiec has performed in many productions of Jerome Robbins' original staging (most notably two 2-year tours with Theodore Bikel)—totaling 1,682 performances. Also, as a Dance Captain, he assisted Sammy Dallas Bayes (*Fiddler*'s “keeper of the flame”) during Topol's farewell tour, and has directed and staged Robbins' work multiple times.

The National Yiddish Theater Folksbiene is committed to accessibility. We use supertitles in non-English productions. For *Fiddler*, supertitles will be in both English and Russian. In order to meet space restrictions, they will necessarily be very few words. We will be relying on the actors to convey the meaning through music and body language. Our Tevye will speak volumes with a world-weary shrug.

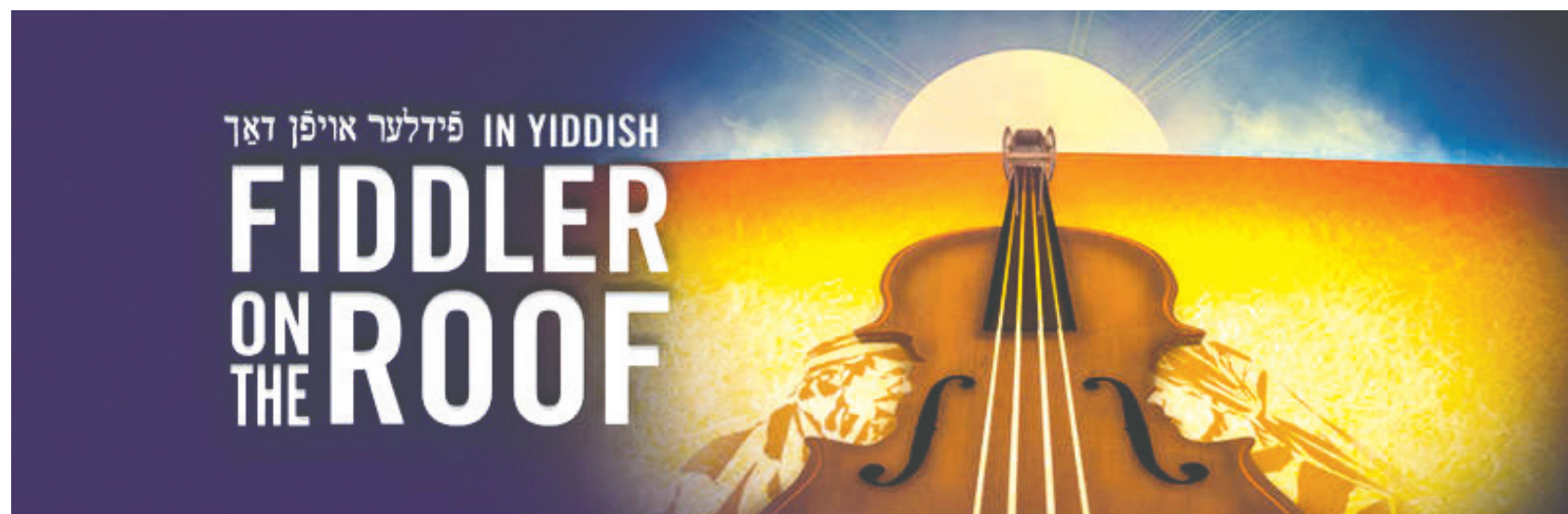
Joining director Joel Grey, artistic director Zalmen Mlotek and choreographer Staś Kmiec will be set designer Beowulf Boritt; costume designer Ann Hould-Ward, lighting designer Peter Kaczorowski, sound designer Dan Moses Schreier, assistant choreographer Merete Muentner, assistant director Matthew (Motl) Didner, casting director Jamibeth Margolis and production manager Sean Francis Patrick.

With the drive for artistic excellence found amongst our creative team, the American premiere of *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish aims to give audiences an authentic, exhilarating, and universally resonant experience. It is our goal to use the Jewish experience to bridge heritage and identity to the widest walks of life.

So why produce a Yiddish *Fiddler*? Why now? Because it is a wonderful and life-affirming musical. Because at this time, we have a wealth of knowledgeable Yiddish-speaking theater professionals to do it and do it well. Because if the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene does not do it, who will? Because on an artistic level, it is well worth doing.

Right? Of course, right!

Join us! The National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene's production of *Fiddler on the Roof* will be performed throughout summer 2018. For tickets and additional information, go to [www.nytf.org](http://www.nytf.org).



## 100 Years of Robbins: A Select Timeline



It has been two decades since the passing of Jerome Robbins, but that has not stopped the world from discovering and rediscovering his many contributions to the arts. On any given night, it is possible to see his ballets and musicals being performed around the globe. It is likely that there has not been a week in over 60 years that a Jerome Robbins musical or ballet has not been performed somewhere. Such is the colossal legacy that the greatest native-born American director/choreographer left the world. His creativity transformed American culture in the twentieth century, and his legacy continues.





Jerome Rabinowitz, 1918.



Elementary school class picture, 1924.

## 1918

Jerome Wilson Rabinowitz (later Robbins) is born October 11, 1918 at the Jewish Hospital in New York City to Herschel and Lena Rabinowitz. His father is an émigré from Rozhanka, Russia (now Belarus) and a baker. His mother is American-born and a college graduate from the Midwest. Her parents were Russian émigrés from Minsk.

## 1921

The Rabinowitz family sells the family delicatessen and moves to Weehawken, N.J. Herschel opens the Comfort Corset Company.

## 1924

At age six, Robbins performs his own music compositions in public. Lena takes Jerry and his sister Sonia to Russia. In September, Robbins enters first grade at Hamilton School in Weehawken.

## 1931

At age 13, Robbins has his bar mitzvah.

**My being a Jew is not because I was bar mitzvahed. It is within the deepest part of my soul, which was nourished by the countless unidentified cultural love stories – the superstitions, the temperaments, the fears and glorious good times.**

## 1932

Robbins enters Woodrow Wilson High School. Robbins observes dance classes as sister Sonia joins the Dance Center Company (directed by Senia Gluck-Sandor and Irma Duncan).

## 1935

Robbins graduates from Woodrow Wilson High School and enters New York University.

## 1936

Financial difficulties end Robbins' college enrollment. The family provides financial assistance while Robbins seeks a job in the theater.

**When I left college and there wasn't any money to go back, I said I wanted to become a dancer. As fast as I possibly could I tried to earn enough money so I didn't have to ask them for anything, so they couldn't stop me.**

Robbins joins Gluck Sandor's Dance Center Company. He performs in studio performances through 1938.

**He [Gluck Sandor] was an extraordinary man. It wasn't that he had a lot of technique, but he had a commitment to the theater and to what life was like in the theater and a passion about the performance itself. I was inspired by everything he did.**

Robbins immerses himself in all kinds of classes. He studies dance with Alys Bentley (modern), Bessie Schönberg (dance composition), Hélène Veola (Spanish dance), Yeichi Nimura (Asian forms), Bess Mensendieck (movement), instructors at the New Dance League (modern) and the WPA. In addition, he studies piano, violin, and acting.



Watercolor of Weehawken, New Jersey home by Jerome Robbins, 1932.

## 1937

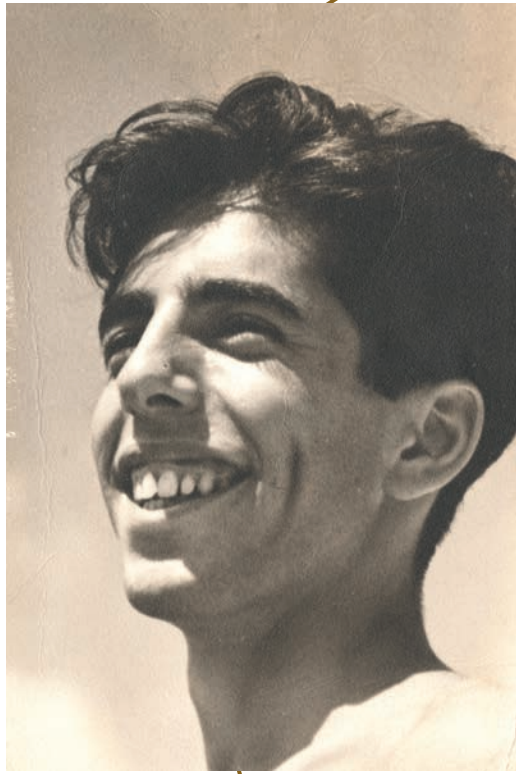
In the summer of 1937, Robbins works as a counselor at Camp Kittatinny, where he teaches dance. Later, he is offered a 10-week contract at \$200 plus room and board for the 1938 season at Camp Tamiment. He dances at Camp Tamiment through 1941, where he is hired by Max Liebman to choreograph for small shows and revues.

Acts in *The Brothers Ashkenazi* at the Yiddish Art Theatre, New York City.

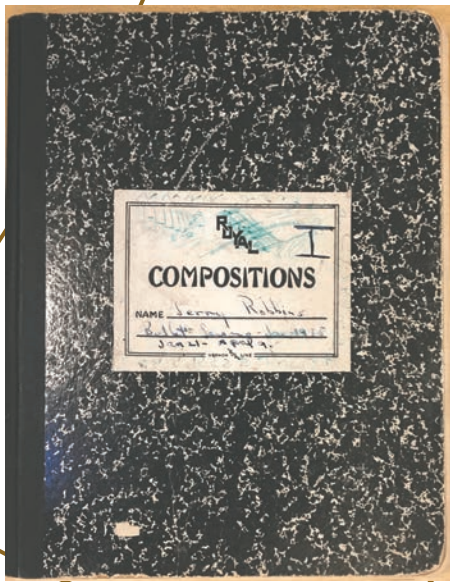
**Well, I'd hardly say what I did was 'acting.' I had a two-word part. But it was my first job in New York. I didn't really know Yiddish – my parents only used the language when they didn't want me to understand something – but the whole thing was a wonderful experience for me.**

With his sister Sonia, he opens up a dance studio at the Dance Center.

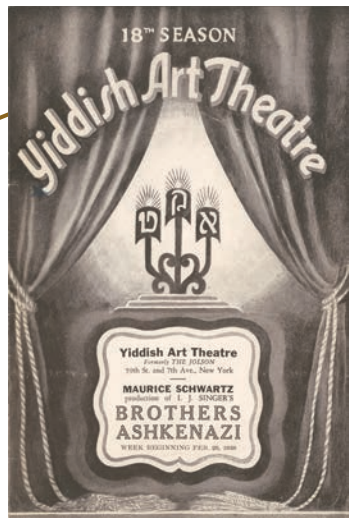




Jerome Robbins at Camp Tamiment, 1938.  
Photo by Lewis "Snappy" Goren.



Jerome Robbins' ballet lessons notebook, 1938.



Brothers Ashkenazi, 1938.



Detail of map used by Jerome Robbins while on tour with Ballet Theatre, 1941.

## 1938

On advice from Gluck Sandor, Robbins begins ballet training with Ella Daganova, former member of the Pavlova company.

**He [Gluck Sandor] said to me, 'You'd better study ballet.' I said, 'Ballet? Yuch!' 'No, no, no,' he said, 'You should study it because it's going to come back. You should get that technique in your body while you still can, while you're still growing.' I said, 'Well, all right.'**

Choreographer George Balanchine selects Robbins for the dancing chorus of the Broadway musical *Great Lady*.

**From my ballet technique I finally auditioned and got into a Broadway show called *Great Lady*. I decided at that audition I was going to dance as if I already had the job. I got picked. And I got picked by Mr. Balanchine.**

## 1939

The Shuberts produce a Broadway show of Max Liebman's Tamiment Playhouse revues. It is called *The Straw Hat Revue*, and Robbins is the choreographer. Robbins also dances in the show.

## 1940

Robbins works with Balanchine a second time as a dancer, in the chorus of the Broadway musical *Keep Off the Grass*.

**I was intensely interested in how he [Balanchine] worked. He came in, did his numbers and that was it. He knew what he was after, he knew his music very well, he was quite organized about what he wanted to do, and seemed to have no problems of going from step to step.**

Signs a two-month contract, as a dancer in the corps de ballet, with Ballet Theatre for the summer season.

**I auditioned for Ballet Theatre and I got in. There, I came under the influence of a lot of people. There was Balanchine, Massine, Fokine, Lichine, Dolin, Tudor, de Mille, Loring, Nijinska, La Argentinita, Mordkin. The one who interested me initially the most, of course, was Tudor. I fell in love with all those psychological and dramatic and ritual ballets he did.**

## 1941

Robbins is promoted to soloist by Ballet Theatre. Robbins is listed as Production Choreographer in his last summer at Camp Tamiment.

Creates the role of "The Youth" in *Three Virgins and a Devil* at Ballet Theatre.



Itinerary: BALLET THEATRE  
November 5th through December 16th, 1942

<u>Date</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Auditorium</u>
Thurs. eve. Nov. 5	Richmond, Virginia	Mosque Theatre
Fri. eve. Nov. 6	Durham, N. C.	Page Auditorium
Sat. eve. Nov. 7	Augusta, Georgia	Municipal Auditorium
Sun. Nov. 8		
Mon. eve. Nov. 9	Raleigh, N. C.	Memorial Auditorium
Tues. eve. Nov. 10		
Wed. (2) Nov. 11	Newark, N. J.	Mosque Theatre
Thurs. eve. Nov. 12	Philadelphia, Pa.	Academy of Music
Fri. eve. Nov. 13	Philadelphia, Pa.	Academy of Music
Sat. mat. Nov. 14	Philadelphia, Pa.	Academy of Music
Sun. Nov. 15		
Mon. eve. Nov. 16	Baltimore, Md.	Lyric Theatre
Tues. eve. Nov. 17	Baltimore, Md.	Lyric Theatre
Wed. eve. Nov. 18	Washington, D. C.	Constitution Hall
Thurs. eve. Nov. 19	Washington, D. C.	Constitution Hall
Fri. eve. Nov. 20	Cleveland, Ohio	Music Hall
Sat. (2) Nov. 21	Cleveland, Ohio	Music Hall
Sun. mat. Nov. 22	Cleveland, Ohio	Music Hall
Mon. eve. Nov. 23	E. Lansing, Mich.	College Auditorium
Tues. eve. Nov. 24	E. Lansing, Mich.	College Auditorium
Wed. eve. Nov. 25	Kalamazoo, Mich.	Central High School Aud.
Thurs. eve. Nov. 26	Battle Creek, Mich.	Kellogg Auditorium
Fri. Nov. 27		
Sat. (2) Nov. 28	Detroit, Mich.	Masonic Auditorium
Sun. (2) Nov. 29	Detroit, Mich.	Masonic Auditorium
Mon. eve. Nov. 30	Columbus, Ohio	Memorial Hall
Tues. eve. Dec. 1	Indianapolis, Ind.	English Theatre
Wed. eve. Dec. 2	Bloomington, Ind.	University Auditorium
Thurs. eve. Dec. 3	Louisville, Kentucky	Memorial Auditorium
Fri. eve. Dec. 4	Cincinnati, Ohio	Music Hall
Sat. (2) Dec. 5	Cincinnati, Ohio	Music Hall
Sun. mat. Dec. 6	Cincinnati, Ohio	Music Hall
Mon. eve. Dec. 7	Knoxville, Tenn.	Alumni Memorial Aud.
Tues. eve. Dec. 8	Atlanta, Georgia	Auditorium
Wed. eve. Dec. 9	Savannah, Georgia	Auditorium
Thurs. eve. Dec. 10	Jacksonville, Florida	
Fri. eve. Dec. 11	St. Petersburg, Florida	Senior High School Aud.
Sat. eve. Dec. 12	Miami, Florida	
Sun. Dec. 13		
Mon. eve. Dec. 14	Birmingham, Alabama	Municipal Auditorium
Tues. Dec. 15		
Wed. (2) Dec. 16	New Orleans, La.	Municipal Auditorium

17 Columbus Miss.  
20 Little Rock Ark

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Ballet Theatre touring itinerary, November/December 1942.



Sketch of Vaslav Nijinsky as Petrouchka by Jerome Robbins, 1942.



On the Town, 1944.



Billion Dollar Baby, 1945.

## 1942

Ballet Theatre promotes Robbins to principal dancer.

First performs the title role in *Petrouchka* at Ballet Theatre.

## 1944

Robbins choreographs *Fancy Free*, his first ballet for Ballet Theatre. He collaborates with composer Leonard Bernstein for the first time. The ballet about three sailors on shore leave in New York City is a smash hit.

**I had spent a couple of years in Ballet Theatre, which was known then as "The Greatest in Russian Ballet." I had spent most of the years in boots, peasant wigs and Cossack pants, dancing Russian folklore. It was a company made up of a lot of American dancers, performing in America. I felt that we should dance about our own material.**

Officially changes name to Jerome Robbins.

Choreographs *On the Town* on Broadway.

**We were asking each other, 'Do you think it's good?' We were too busy working to worry about whether it was going to be a hit until it was on. And then we read the reviews.**

## 1945

Choreographs the ballet *Interplay* for the musical *Concert Varieties* on Broadway.

Choreographs *Billion Dollar Baby* on Broadway.

**I've tried to break down the iron-clad traditional forms of both musical comedy and ballet. I think that *Fancy Free* moved ballet toward the theater, and that *Billion Dollar Baby* moved the theater toward ballet.**

## 1947

Choreographs *High Button Shoes* on Broadway. Robbins wins his first Tony Award for Best Choreographer for the musical.

**I said, 'Here's a chance to do a Mack Sennett ballet. First I had to get the style and then I had to distort it. If I had done it exactly as it had been done then, it might be boring. It's like furniture. You don't furnish your home exactly as the Victorians did, for instance. You combine it with modern stuff to spike it up.**

Becomes a founding member of the Actors Studio in New York City.

**A choreographer can justifiably look to the ballet as a medium in which he can say pertinent things about ourselves and our world, no less than a playwright or a novelist. For its part, the audience will come to expect as much of ballet as it does of a play, or a novel.**

## 1948

Co-directs [with George Abbott] and choreographs *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!* on Broadway.

**There is a definite moral to the story, which – as shown in the person of the ambitious and ruthless young choreographer – is that success as an end in itself is not worth achieving. What you contribute is what matters, and that has to do with what you are, for if in climbing to the top you lose your friends, it's not going to be much fun.**

Directs *That's the Ticket!*, which closes out-of-town in Philadelphia.

On his thirtieth birthday, Robbins sees *Concerto Barocco*, *Orpheus*, and *Symphony in C* at the nascent New York City Ballet, at City Center.

**I saw a performance that included *Symphony in C*, with Maria Tallchief and Tanaquil Le Clercq, and at the end of the second movement, I was just dissolved by tears watching the beauty of it. And I went home and wrote him [Balanchine] a note and said, "I'd like to come work for you. I can be a dancer. I can be a choreographer. I can be an assistant. I can be a stagehand... whatever you want. I'd like to come and be part of the company." And I got a phone call saying, "Come." And I went.**

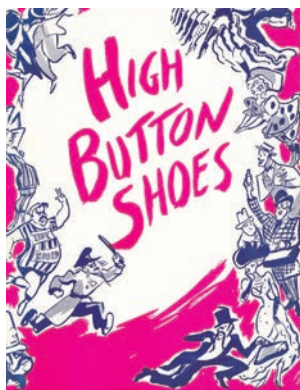




Jerome Robbins in *Fancy Free*, 1944.



Sketch of Jerome Robbins' *The Cage* (1951) by Andrea Selby.



*High Button Shoes*, 1947.



*Miss Liberty*, 1949.



*Call Me Madam*, 1950.



*The King and I*, 1951.

## 1949

Robbins choreographs his first ballet for New York City Ballet, *The Guests*. He is named NYCB's Associate Artistic Director.

**That was, I guess, the most thrilling thing – to be around when this man [Balanchine] was turning out ballet after ballet after ballet, while I was struggling to get one out a year. He would say, “Do a ballet. Then do another ballet. Then do another ballet. Then do another ballet. Then, maybe, you’ll do one good ballet.” Of course, his “good” was something exceptional. He said, “You’ve just got to do them.” And he would always come in and say, “Do. It doesn’t matter. If it doesn’t work, throw it away. Do another one.”**

Choreographs *Miss Liberty* on Broadway.

Creates a principal role in Balanchine's *Bourrée Fantasque* at New York City Ballet.

## 1950

Dances the title role in Balanchine's restaging of *Prodigal Son* at New York City Ballet. For Robbins, the role was a rare opportunity to portray a great tragic figure on the stage.

Choreographs *Age of Anxiety*, inspired by Leonard Bernstein's music, at New York City Ballet.

Choreographs *Call Me Madam* on Broadway.

**I told them to just sit down on the stage and sing [“You’re Just In Love”]. That’s all. I remember [Irving] Berlin came over and said, “What are you going to do with it?” And I said, “I’m not going to do anything with it.” And he said, “What do you mean?” And I said, “I’m going to let them sit down on the stage and do it. You’ll see. It’ll work.” I didn’t want to fool around with staging it. You just had to listen to that song and it worked.**

## 1951

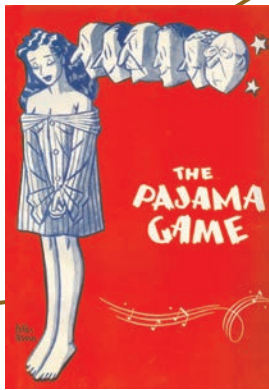
Choreographs *The King and I* on Broadway.

**I did a lot of studying and research for it, and later used some of it for a ballet that I did called *The Cage*, which had that sort of hyper-extension of thrust in it. And I thought Where else do I get the chance to do *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as Siamese people would imagine it?**

Choreographs *The Cage* at New York City Ballet.

Travels to Israel several times, recommending Inbal Dance Theatre to the American Fund for Israel Institutions.





The Pajama Game, 1954.



Peter Pan, 1954.



Jerome Robbins on the film set of *The King and I*, 1956.



Sketch of Jerome Robbins' *The Concert* (1956) by Andrea Selby.

## 1953

Stages musical numbers [uncredited] for *Wonderful Town* on Broadway.

**For a while, I did a lot of play doctoring. I was good at that. I used to be able to be sucked into anything that was in trouble. I'd be intrigued by the trouble."**

Jerome Robbins was a "friendly" witness at a House Committee on Un-American Activities Testimony, stating that he had broken ties with the Communist party. Fearful for his career and of public exposure of his sexuality, Robbins then named eight other members.

Choreographs *Afternoon of a Faun* at New York City Ballet.

**For me the sensations of a faun may be felt on a beach, in a wood, in a street, in the heat of summer, now or in the future. Why not in a dance studio?**

Choreographs *Fanfare* at New York City Ballet.

Conceives and stages musical numbers for *The Ford 50th Anniversary Show*, starring Ethel Merman and Mary Martin.



*Bells Are Ringing*, 1956.

## 1954

Robbins works with George Balanchine on *The Nutcracker*, staging the Mouse King "fight scene" in the ballet's first act at New York City Ballet.

**He [Balanchine] asked me to help on *The Nutcracker*. He gave me from after the tree is up – when the toys come to life and play the bugle – right through to the end of the killing of the king of the mice.**

Directs Aaron Copland's opera, *The Tender Land*, at New York City Opera.

Co-directs (with George Abbott) *The Pajama Game* on Broadway.

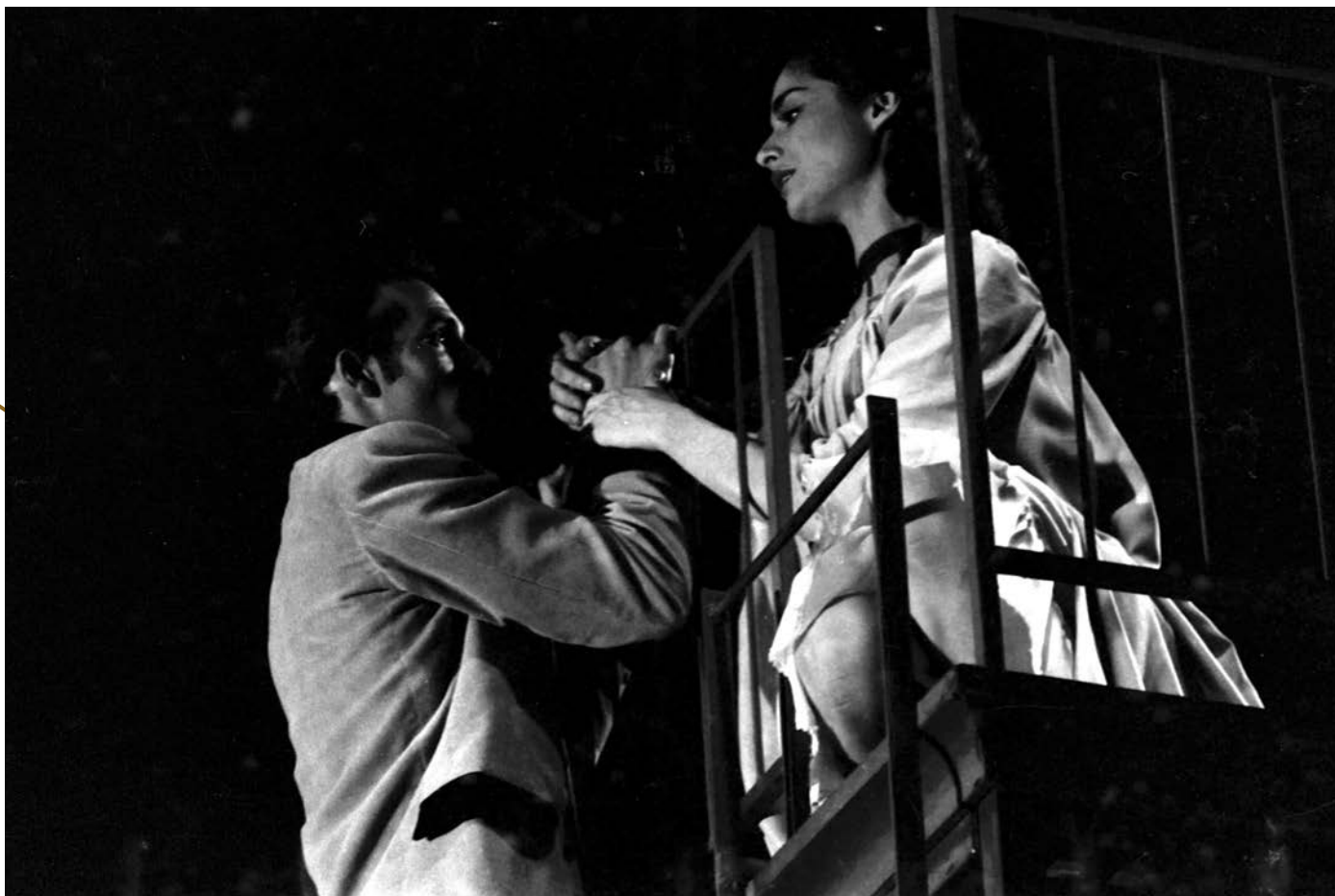
## 1952

New York City Ballet presents its first repertory performance consisting of all Jerome Robbins ballets.

Choreographs *Two's Company* on Broadway.

**In theater, why do so many conventional shows – the ones that aren't supposed to be risky – turn out to be flops? I heard that Bette Davis was in something. I admired her extravagantly, and I said to my agent, "Get me that." It was *Two's Company*. Another flop.**

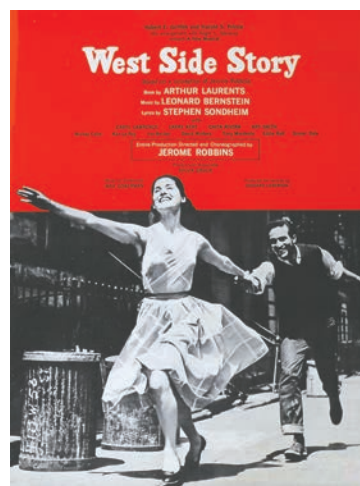




Photograph of Larry Kert and Carol Lawrence taken by Jerome Robbins during a performance of *West Side Story*, 1957.



Photograph taken by Jerome Robbins, 1957.



*West Side Story*, 1957.

Adapts, directs, and choreographs *Peter Pan* on Broadway.

**Mary Martin, with whom I had worked before, called me and asked if I was interested in directing a musical version of *Peter Pan*. I was very interested because this was the first time that I was responsible for both the choreography and the direction of a show.**

## 1955

Adapts, directs, and choreographs *Peter Pan* for its first television telecast.

## 1956

Stages *Peter Pan* for its second television telecast.

Choreographs *The Concert* at New York City Ballet.

**In my ballets I think that one can find several instances that belong more to the theatre than to dance. In my works, an enormous part always remains for the imagination of the spectator, for his active participation.**

Stages *Fanfare* for the Royal Danish Ballet.

Directs and choreographs *Bells Are Ringing* on Broadway.

Choreographs *The King and I* for film.

Exhibits his paintings in an art show at the *Dance Magazine* offices in New York City.

## 1957

Conceives, directs, and choreographs *West Side Story* on Broadway. For the ground-breaking musical inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Robbins enlists Leonard Bernstein [music], Arthur Laurents [book] and Stephen Sondheim [lyrics] as collaborators.

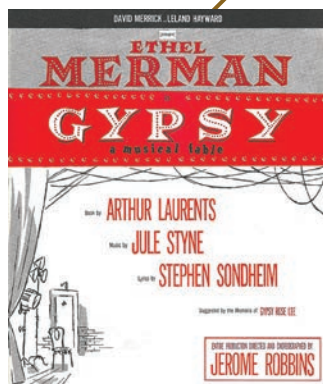
**What we are trying to do is to make the poetry come alive in twentieth-century terms, through the cadence of Arthur Laurents' lines and Leonard Bernstein's music. The story has a hopeful as well as a tragic side. It says that the price of prejudice is too high to pay. Love and peace cannot exist in a world in which such hostile forces exist. But the show is not preachy or didactic. The theme is arrived at emotionally.**

Establishes the Lena Robbins Foundation in honor of his mother, with the intent to support dance, theater, and their associative arts.





On August 31, 1958, a headline in the New York Herald Tribune read "New York Is a Jerome Robbins Festival." In September, Robbins' works were playing in five different theatres: the four seen in this New York Times listing, plus American Ballet Theatre performing *Fancy Free* at The Met.



Gypsy, 1959

## 1958

Robbins creates Ballets: U.S.A., an ethnically diverse company of sixteen dancers for the first Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy. The company also appears in Florence and Trieste, Italy and Brussels, then in New York City, followed by a U.S. tour.

**I think the most important thing with this group is that such a restricted number of dancers is able to master very different techniques and styles.**

Choreographs *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz* for Ballets: U.S.A.

*West Side Story* wins Robbins the Tony Award for Best Choreography. September 1958 is a virtual "Jerome Robbins Festival" in NYC; he has three projects on Broadway: *Bells Are Ringing*, *West Side Story*, Ballets: U.S.A., as well as performances of his works at New York City Ballet.

Stages *West Side Story* for London's West End.

## 1959

Directs and choreographs *Gypsy* on Broadway.

**I am fascinated by this theatrical family. Essentially, it is a story about recognition – all kinds of recognition. Not merely the kind that comes with fame, but people recognizing each other and themselves – what they really are.**

Choreographs *Moves for Ballets: U.S.A.*

Appears with his company, Ballets: U.S.A., on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. It is the first of several such appearances over the new few years.

Ballets: U.S.A. visits seven international festivals and 16 European countries.

## 1960

Exhibits his paintings in art show at the Bianchini Gallery in New York City.

Begins work on the film of *West Side Story*, which he co-directs [with Robert Wise] and choreographs. Parts of it are filmed on location in New York City, including the future site of Lincoln Center.

**I know it's hard on them, especially on that asphalt surface, but I just can't allow them to relax. In a movie there is no tomorrow's performance. You either get it on film or you don't.**

Stages *Peter Pan* for its third television telecast [this time in color].

## 1961

United Artists releases *West Side Story*. The film goes on to win ten Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Jerome Robbins wins a special Oscar for choreography and shares the Academy Award for Best Director with Robert Wise.

Ballets: U.S.A. tours through Europe, which leads to a run in New York City.

## 1962

Directs *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad* Off-Broadway first, then on Broadway.

Contributes staging and choreography [uncredited] to *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* during its out-of-town tryout.

**It's hard when you're out of town. It's hard for the people who've been working that hard. They're tired, and they've lost a lot of objectivity. The interrelationships have developed pros and cons of a higher nature than when they started out, and they like to have someone new and fresh just to, even, have those ears to tell their woes to.**

Ballets: U.S.A. performs at the White House in Washington, D.C., and then in "New York's Birthday Salute to the President" at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

## 1963

Directs *Mother Courage and Her Children* on Broadway.

Director-in-residence of the Experimental Theatre Workshop at the Festival of Two Worlds at the Arena Theatre, in Spoleto, Italy.





The filming of *West Side Story* (Robbins in foreground), 1960. Photo by United Artists.



Photo by Jerome Robbins, 1961.



*Fiddler on the Roof*, 1964.



*Funny Girl*, 1964.

## 1964

Robbins is production supervisor on the musical *Funny Girl* on Broadway.

**She [Barbra Streisand] always surprises. Her performances astound, arouse, fulfill. When she sings she is as honest and frighteningly direct with her feelings as if she was, is, or will be in bed with you. The satisfaction she gives also leaves one with terrible and pleasurable hunger. For what will become of this woman? She is still unfinished. Where will she go and what will she do?**

Directs and choreographs *Fiddler on the Roof* on Broadway.

**I saw *Fiddler* as a celebration of my father's life and background – a thank you note for my Jewish heritage. I had no factual memories of my own about the sort of traditional Judaism that *Fiddler* is about. But I had emotional memories. I was astonished at the little bits of tradition and culture that came back to me while I was working on it. The dances are wild, virile, earthy and robust. The participants fling themselves into the dance like commuters hurling themselves into a rush-hour subway train.**

Arranges for a portion of his future earnings from *Fiddler on the Roof* to go toward the New York Public Library's Dance Collection at Lincoln Center.

Robbins is made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, the first of several honors from the government of France.

## 1965

Choreographs *Les Noces* at American Ballet Theatre.

The National Endowment for the Arts grants Robbins \$300,000 to establish an American lyric theater workshop. Robbins creates the American Theater Laboratory, Inc. [ATL].

**I wanted to see if I could make a theater piece the way I make ballet – without the time pressures, without having to produce – so unknown things can come out. It's not possible to put into words what came out of that research period.**

He receives the Tony Award for Best Choreographer and Best Director for *Fiddler on the Roof*.

## 1966

Directs *The Office* Off-Broadway. The production does not officially open.

## 1968

After two years of exhaustive experimental work, Robbins closes ATL.

**I stopped when I did because I wanted a period of reflection, but I know for sure that I will always go back to the materials I dug up there.**

Develops the musical *The Exception and the Rule* (unproduced).

## 1969

Robbins returns to NYCB after an absence of thirteen years, sharing the title of Ballet Master with George Balanchine and John Taras.

**I never did slam the door on Broadway. I just got interested in ballet and have preferred to do it until something came along. I was asked if I will do more Broadway shows. That's like asking if I will travel again. You tell me where, and I'll tell you if I want to go.**

He choreographs *Dances at a Gathering*, an hour-long masterpiece set to piano music by Chopin.

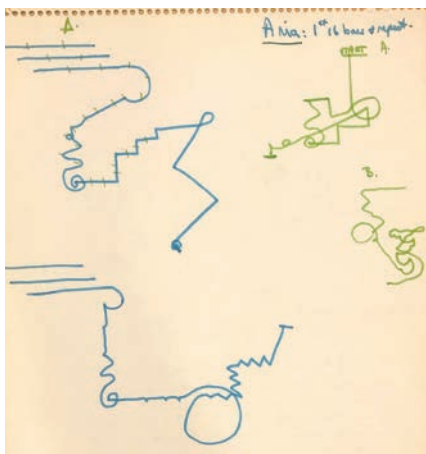
**It's almost like an artist who has not been drawing for a long time. I didn't know how my hand would be. I was so surprised that the dances began to come out and began to come out so gushing. And I worked in a way I hadn't worked before. Whether I knew the details or not, I pushed through to the end of the dance. Quite often the dancers weren't even sure how they got through the steps to the next step. But they went with me.**

## 1970

Robbins collaborates on a Balanchine ballet, creating the "monster" section in *Firebird* at New York City Ballet.

Choreographs *In the Night* at New York City Ballet.

**I'm still fascinated by the music of Chopin. It keeps opening up further avenues for me, so there is more to come. I may do another work first, but I'll be back to Chopin. There will be another Chopin ballet from me and then, I hope, a whole evening of Chopin.**



Sketch of a "rhythmic pattern" by Jerome Robbins in preparation for *The Goldberg Variations*, 1971.



Sketch of Igor Stravinsky by Jerome Robbins during the NYCB Stravinsky Festival, 1972.

## 1971

After two years of development, Robbins unveils the towering 75-minute *The Goldberg Variations* to great acclaim.

**I guess after the Chopin I just wanted to get away from Romantic music. It seemed to me that in *The Goldberg Variations* Bach was describing something very big and architectural – very life-cycle, if you want – and so I thought I'd try that and see what I could do.**

## 1972

Robbins presents *Watermill*, an epic, Noh-theater-inspired piece at New York City Ballet. It is a controversial sensation and takes its name from a town on Long Island where Robbins keeps a residence.

**I said it's going to be the opposite of the kind of ballets I've been doing as far as dancing is concerned. It's going to be a search into another place. George [Balanchine] said that it's a ballet about there being no time. And that was when he made a remark to me about choreographers – that we dare to get our fingertips into the land where there are no names for anything.**

As part of New York City Ballet's Stravinsky Festival, Balanchine and Robbins co-choreograph and appear in *Pulcinella*. Robbins also creates four other ballets for the historic celebration [*Scherzo Fantastique*, *Circus Polka*, *Dumbarton Oaks*, and *Requiem Canticles*].

**One of the things that appeals to me tremendously about Stravinsky's music is what I call the motor. There is always a pulse, a tremendous motor, going that is attractive to dance to. It almost carries you, takes you along with it. It's almost irresistible.**

## 1973

Serves on the Second International Ballet Competition Jury Panel at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

Choreographs *Celebration: The Art of the Pas de Deux* at the Festival of Two Worlds, in Spoleto. It featured five celebrated ballet couples in ten of the world's most famous pas de deux, including two by Robbins himself.

Serves on the New York State Council on the Arts/Dance Panel [through 1988].

## 1974

Choreographs *Dybbuk* [later called *The Dybbuk Variations*, and then *Suite of Dances*] at New York City Ballet.

Serves on the National Council on the Arts [through 1980].

## 1975

At age fifty-six, Robbins performs an excerpt with other original cast members of *Fancy Free* for ABT's 35th Anniversary Celebration.

Robbins creates five ballets for NYCB's Ravel Festival.

**Sometimes you hear a piece of music at a concert, and then you hear it again, and then suddenly it focuses in your head. Then we decided to do a Ravel Festival... and then you look around and you think, Yes, that's beautiful.**

## 1976

Robbins returns to the music of Chopin to create a pas de deux, *Other Dances*, for Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov that debuts at the Metropolitan Opera House, as a benefit for the New York Public Library.

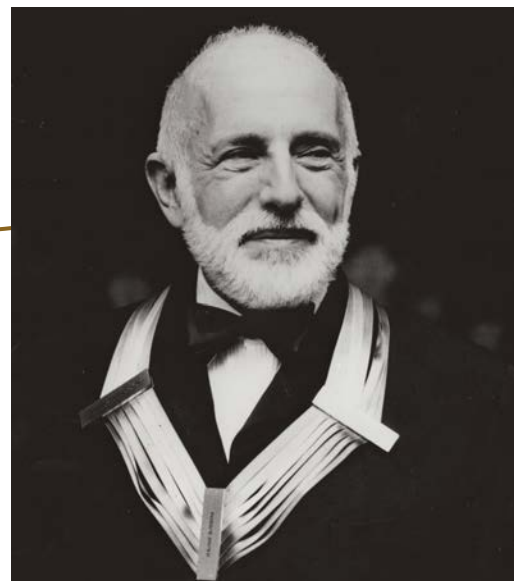
Robbins is awarded the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest award for cultural achievement.

## 1979

Robbins creates the only new ballets to be made on Mikhail Baryshnikov during the dancer's tenure at NYCB: *The Four Seasons* and *Opus 19/The Dreamer*.

**It's a pleasure working with him [Mikhail Baryshnikov] in every way – as a dancer, as an artist, as a gentleman, as a friend. Every dancer brings who they are and what they are into what they dance, and when you're dealing with an artist of Misha's sensitivity and sensibility, the results are extraordinary. He's capable of profound poetry, and that's so rare.**

Robbins works on the televised Baryshnikov at the White House.



Kennedy Center honoree Jerome Robbins, 1981.

## 1980

Directs and choreographs a revival of *West Side Story* on Broadway.

Choreographs *Rondo* at New York City Ballet.

## 1981

Robbins creates three ballets for NYCB's Tschaikovsky Festival.

Robbins creates The Jerome Robbins Chamber Dance Company [with NYCB dancers] for the first official U.S. Department of State cultural exchange to the People's Republic of China.

Robbins is named a Kennedy Center Honoree.

## 1982

Choreographs *Gershwin Concerto* at New York City Ballet.

Choreographs *Four Chamber Works* for the Stravinsky Centennial Celebration at New York City Ballet.

***Four Chamber Works* is sort of an examination of that part of the Stravinsky oeuvre that doesn't get many hearings. That's always the adventure of these festivals. In a way, Mr. B. makes us pay attention to something we wouldn't have ordinarily – and consider them, and work with them – and see what happens.**

## 1983

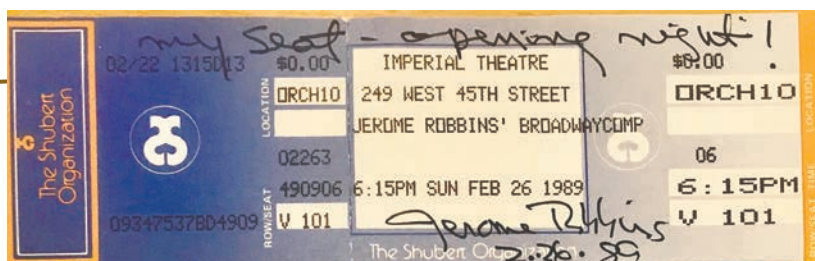
George Balanchine dies on April 30. Robbins assumes [with Peter Martins] position of Co-Ballet Master in Chief at New York City Ballet.

Robbins premieres *Glass Pieces* in May, and *I'm Old Fashioned* in June, at New York City Ballet.

**Philip Glass wanted me to direct his opera *Akhmat*, and he sent me some of the music. I fell in love with one of the pieces. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to do the opera, but I said "Let me choreograph some, and see what happens."**

Robbins appears as Herr Drosselmeier in the 1,000th performance of *The Nutcracker*, which also marks Peter Martins' final performance as a dancer with New York City Ballet.





Jerome Robbins' ticket from opening night of *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*, 1989.



Jerome Robbins acknowledging Musical Director Paul Gemignani during his *Jerome Robbins' Broadway* opening night bow, 1989.



Jerome Robbins in Paris, 1990.

## 1984

Choreographs *Antique Epigraphs* at New York City Ballet.

**It was only when I got near the end that I realized that what was haunting me were some statues at the National Museum in Naples [Italy]. Many years ago I had walked into a room, and there were four or five bronze life-sized statues with enamel eyes. It was like walking into the middle of a silent ritual. It was almost alarming.**

Co-choreographs [with Twyla Tharp] *Brahms/Handel* at New York City Ballet.

**It was a wonderful, hard, fierce, exciting experience. I think altogether we made five ballets to arrive at the one.**

## 1985

Choreographs *In Memory of...* at New York City Ballet.

Initiates New York City Ballet's establishment of the Dancers' Emergency Fund.

**Illnesses and traumatic things happen to everyone, including dancers. The public that adores them should try to help us protect them.**

## 1986

Supervises his choreography for the television broadcast of *Choreography by Jerome Robbins* with the New York City Ballet [Dance in America].

Choreographs *Quiet City* [New York City Ballet].

## 1987

Robbins revisits and works on sections from his past musicals with original cast members.

**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. I don't want a new show, and I don't want it to be the story of my life. I wanted the pieces to stand on their own. Most of the shows when I got into them, whether it was *King and I* or *West Side or Fiddler*, I felt like I was doing the whole show. It wasn't like doing a piece of the show. The directorial part of it, getting them into the history and background and atmosphere of each show, was as intense as if I were doing the show originally. Time disappeared.**

Directs a workshop of the musical *The Exception and the Rule*, based upon Brecht's *Measures Taken* (unproduced).

In the fall, he directs the landmark "Dancing for Life" AIDS benefit at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center.

## 1988

Choreographs *Ives, Songs* (New York City Ballet).

**The changes that occurred in my work are the ones that occur with changes in age. I don't think I could do *Fancy Free* now, but I don't think I could have done *Ives, Songs* then.**

The process of revisiting his Broadway shows, begun the previous year, evolves into *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*, which begins a 22-week rehearsal period, unprecedented for a Broadway show.

## 1989

*Jerome Robbins' Broadway* earns Robbins the Tony Award for Best Director of a Musical.

**The 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. It's all about those book writers and set designers and all the costume designers and dance arrangers. I hope the show will be a worthy tribute to everyone I worked with.**

NYCB celebrates Robbins' 70th birthday at its Spring Gala. Robbins steps down as co-Ballet Master in Chief but maintains his affiliation with the Company.

**It was imperative to help the company deal with its loss, heal its wounds and find a directional movement without Mr. B's presence. I feel now that the transition has taken place, closing that period. The company is strong, dancing the repertory with ever-extending artistry and with deep confidence and commitment. I relinquish my position with undiminished love for the superb dancers.**

Nureyev, then director of the Paris Opera Ballet, invites Robbins to set several of his ballets on the company.

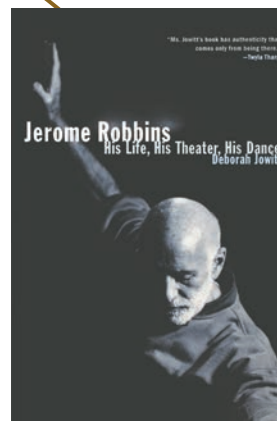
## 1990

New York City Ballet presents a "A Festival of Jerome Robbins' Ballets"; three weeks of performances of 27 of Robbins' greatest works.

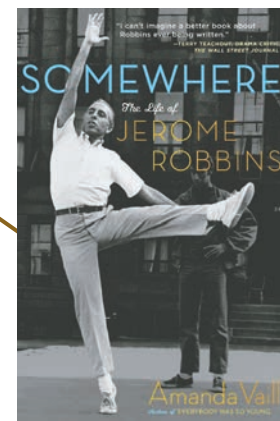
**I've had a chance to look at my ballets in a different light. Suddenly, they're all standing shoulder to shoulder in front of me. I'm surprised by the variety of them, by each one having its own character, its own colors, its own spine. Each one has its own center.**



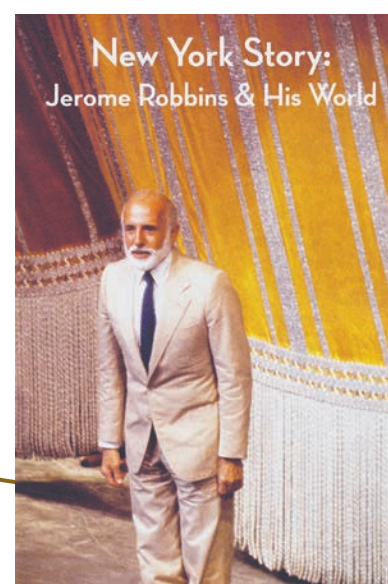
Sketch of Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story Suite* (1995) by Andrea Selby.



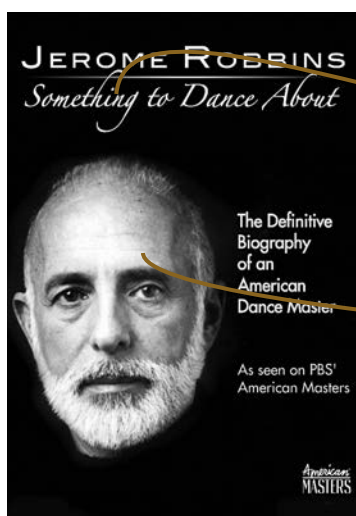
Deborah Jowitt, *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance*, 2004.



Amanda Vaill, *Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins*, 2006.



NYPL for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center exhibition, 2008.



Jerome Robbins: *Something to Dance About*, PBS American Masters biography, 2009.

## 1991

Directs and choreographs workshop of *The Poppa Piece* [Lincoln Center].

**I've been working on a theater piece for ten years or so. It comes out of my own experience. But it's not ready yet. I can only hope that something's happening with it, inside.**

## 1993

France awards Robbins its highest honor for a non-French citizen, the Chevalier dans l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur.

## 1994

Robbins creates *2 & 3 Part Inventions* on students of the School of American Ballet, which premieres at SAB's Annual Workshop Performance. Robbins again works with Baryshnikov on *A Suite of Dances* [White Oak Dance Project], set to Bach solo cello suites.

**It's always a surprise to me. You work, and suddenly there's a step there that you don't expect, that leads you to another step. There's a trust in it all, which is wonderful to have.**

## 1995

Choreographs *West Side Story Suite* at New York City Ballet.

**I feel very lucky, very fortunate, about it still having a life of its own. It's about our experience here in New York – really a plea for a little more understanding between the variety of people who live here.**

## 1997

Robbins creates his last original work for New York City Ballet. *Brandenburg* is an ensemble piece set to Bach's Brandenburg Concertos.

**I feel that the New York City Ballet understands my work very, very well and there's very little I have to tell them. They get into it right away, and they see what it's about, and they understand it right away.**

## 1998

Revives *Les Noce*s for the Spring Gala at New York City Ballet.

Robbins dies at home in Manhattan at age seventy-nine.

A revival of *On the Town* opens on Broadway.

A revival of *Peter Pan* opens on Broadway, and returns again the following year.

## 1999

The Dance Collection of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts is renamed the Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

## 2003

A revival of *Gypsy* opens on Broadway.

The Jerome Robbins Award is given to both Jennifer Tipton and New York City Ballet. The Award will continue to be given over the years.

## 2004

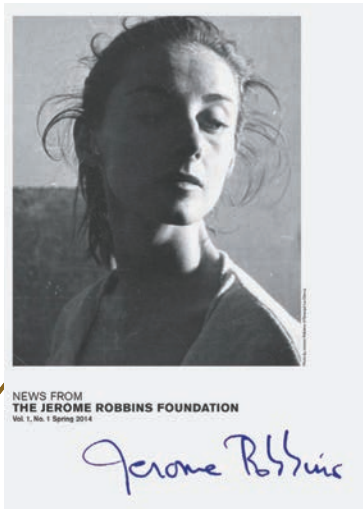
A revival of *Fiddler on the Roof* opens on Broadway.

Deborah Jowitt's *Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance* is published by Simon & Schuster.

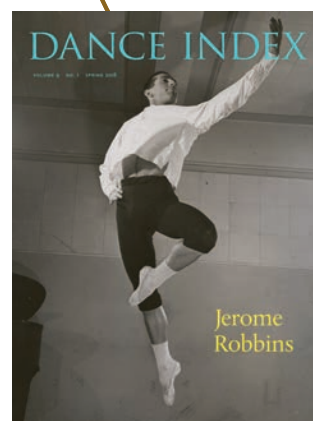




Corner of West 62nd Street and Columbus Avenue named Jerome Robbins Place.



Debut issue of Jerome Robbins Foundation newsletter, 2014.



Dance Index on Jerome Robbins, 2018.



The Jerome Robbins Terrace at the Teatro Nuovo, Spoleto, Italy. Sculptural figures by Robin Heidi Kennedy. Photo by Stefano Bonilli.



NYCB's "Robbins 100" centennial celebration, 2018.

## 2005

The corner of West 62nd Street and Columbus Avenue in New York City is renamed Jerome Robbins Place.

## 2006

Amanda Vaill's *Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins* is published by Broadway Books.

## 2008

A revival of *Gypsy* opens on Broadway.

New York City Ballet presents *A Jerome Robbins Celebration*, featuring thirty-three Robbins works, ranging from *Fancy Free* [1944] to *Brandenburg* [1997].

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, at Lincoln Center, presents *New York Story: Jerome Robbins and His World*, an exhibit reflecting on Robbins' life and artistry.

## 2009

Thirteen/WNET's American Masters produces "Jerome Robbins: Something to Dance About," a profile of Robbins featuring excerpts from his journals, archival footage, and interviews with Robbins and others.

Inauguration of the Jerome Robbins Terrace at the Teatro Nuovo, Spoleto, Italy.

A revival of *West Side Story* opens on Broadway.

## 2010

A successful cinematic reinterpretation of Robbins' *N. Y. Export: Opus Jazz* places the ballet in contemporary New York City locations.

The Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City opens The Jerome Robbins Theater.

## 2014

A revival of *On the Town* opens on Broadway.

The inaugural issue of the Jerome Robbins Foundation newsletter is published.

## 2015

A revival of *The King and I* opens on Broadway.

A revival of *Fiddler on the Roof* opens on Broadway.

## 2017

New York City's Historic Landmarks Preservation Center dedicates a Cultural Medallion at Robbins' longtime residence (117 East 81st Street).

## 2018

A year of performances, exhibits, seminars, and tributes celebrates the genius of Jerome Robbins around the globe, including New York City Ballet's "Robbins 100" festival.







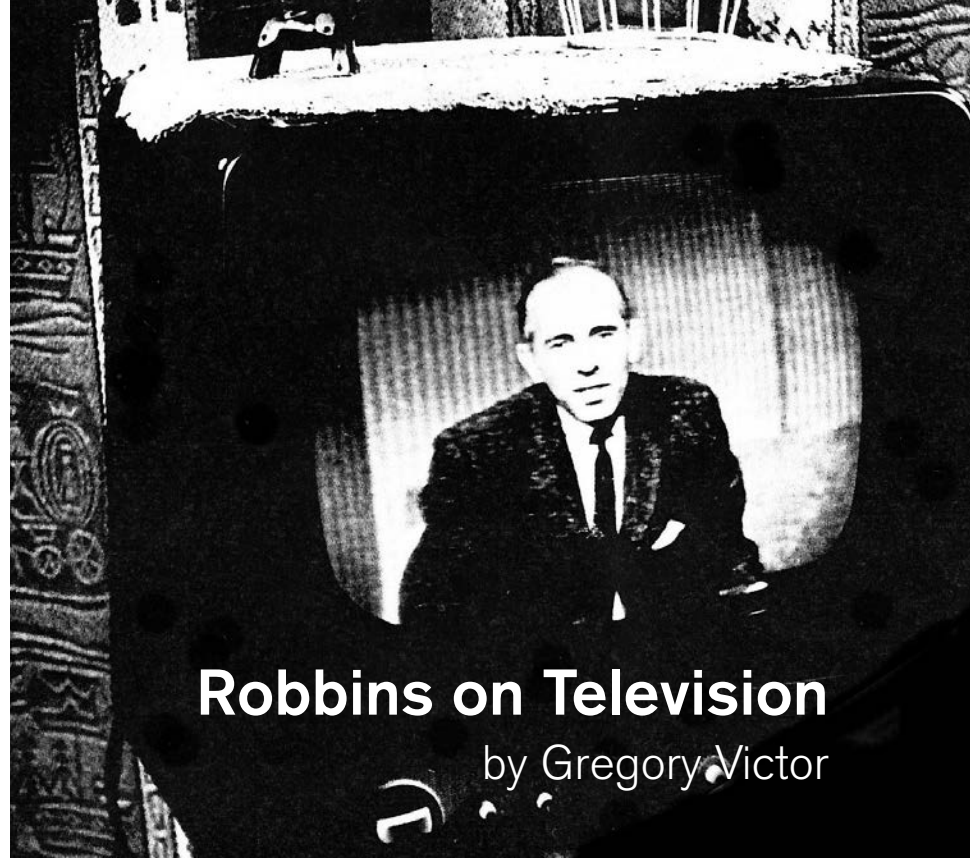
Director/choreographer Jerome Robbins resisted working in television. What he created was meant to be seen in real time and space. Robbins had three main objections: the challenge in collapsing three-dimensional movement onto a depth-distorted screen, having to hand over creative control to a director and crew who specialized in television, and a suspicion that a studio taping would result in a performance robbed of its spontaneity, energy and life. In a 1960 *New York Times* article, Robbins explained: "In the theatre, choreography is movement through a limited three-dimensional space—the area of the stage. But television is a two-dimensional medium. And you never sense in television the limitations of space. You cannot sense, either, the kinetic energy of the dancer nor his dangers, feats and pleasures. There is only an illusion, which the mind translates, of depth." Although Robbins cared greatly for the preservation of his choreography, to allow someone else to frame, shoot, and edit his ballets was asking a lot. Thankfully, he did it anyway. Many of these Robbins choreographic appearances on TV can be found in the archive of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the Lincoln Center Library during this Robbins Centenary, and long after.

*Tonight on Broadway* was a weekly show (1948–50) that aired excerpts from Broadway shows live from the theaters where they were playing. The telecasts of abridged versions of *High Button Shoes* (on April 20, 1948) and *Look, Ma, I'm Dancin'!* (on May 25, 1948) gave Robbins the opportunity to see his work on the small screen for the first time. He wasn't thrilled. As CBS telecast, Robbins could be found in the theater basement, hovering behind TV director Roland Gillette, who watched four screens and made split-second decisions about which image to use. It was a frustrating experience for Robbins, who had staged the numbers to be seen through a proscenium. "Don't misunderstand me," he told the *New York Herald Tribune* the next day, "I think television is a wonderful new medium for ballet and I'm all for it. But it was all I could do to keep from hollering 'Oh, no!' a couple of times." The camera cut back and forth, jumping from long to medium to close-up shots, often missing the point of the choreography. When Nancy Walker executed comic moves with her hands or feet, the camera zoomed in on her face, losing the laugh completely. If television was here to stay, then the lesson was clear for Robbins, who declared, "The only answer I know is that I'd better learn something about television."

By 1949, Robbins had begun to consider the challenge that lay ahead for choreographers working in television. In a *New York Daily News* article, he stated: "A complete change of pace and focus are necessary in video. Dances which employ pantomime, for example, may sometimes appear to be dull on the stage but will come over well on television. High altitude leaps that are so breathtaking in the theater lose all their effects on video because the screen fails to convey the illusion of height. And the wide, graceful movements of the stage result in a distorted picture on the receiver." With the rise of television, Robbins was preparing for the future.

And then, it happened. On June 15, 1953, *The American Road: The Ford 50th Anniversary Show*—TV's first variety special—set a new standard for TV entertainment. The program, featuring Mary Martin and Ethel Merman, aired live on both CBS and NBC. There wasn't a single commercial, unless you count the entire program as a 2-hour commercial—not only for Ford, but for television too. [The program is available for viewing in its entirety at the Paley Center for Media.]

All of the program's musical sequences were staged by Robbins, including: "By the Sea"—a comic dance sequence about bathing suits and manners;



"Charleston" (a revised version of "Charleston" from the musical *Billion Dollar Baby*)—depicting characters from the "Roaring Twenties"; and "Popular Dance"—a look at popular social dances. In a clever sketch for Martin titled "The Shape," a tongue-in-cheek narrator described the changing fashion styles from 1900 to 1953 as Martin demonstrated by rearranging a basic tubular piece of jersey, along with a hat, and adding perfect expressions to match. In a tribute to vaudeville, Merman and Martin lip-synched to a recording by the team of Billy Jones & Ernest Hare, known as "The Happiness Boys." The highlight of the show was a medley performed by the pair of Broadway stars for a thrilling thirteen minutes. Robbins kept it simple, knowing that all he needed was a spotlight and a couple of stools, with Merman and Martin crooning. (Or was it Martin and Merman? Credit Jerome Robbins with having them switch stools once during the medley, in order to keep the billing equal.) Stools became a fixture—almost a cliché—in TV variety shows from then on. "I've been cursed for it ever since," stated Robbins in the *New York Times*.

The show earned high ratings and praise. *Time* magazine wrote: "Perched on stools, both Mary and Ethel whipped through a rapid-fire medley of some of the best pop songs ever written. Televiewers hoped they would not have to wait another 50 years for so good a show. But if they do, it will be worth waiting for." The program introduced the craftsmanship and creativity of the Broadway musical to TV. It was television, but television with the Robbins touch.

Mary Martin and her husband, producer Richard Halliday, impressed with Robbins, insisted that he oversee their next project, a musical version of *Peter*

Photo of television set featuring Jerome Robbins appearing on a program, 1940s. Photo from the collection of Jerome Robbins.

Advertisement appearing in newspapers nationwide for *The Ford 50th Anniversary Show*, 1953.

Advertisement appearing in *The Detroit News* for the television broadcast of *Peter Pan*, 1960.

Advertisement appearing in *The New York Times* for NBC's *Live From Studio 8H: An Evening with Jerome Robbins and Members of the New York City Ballet*, 1980.





*Pan*. As popular as *Peter Pan* was on Broadway, the show reached its greatest success on its three initial TV broadcasts. Robbins adapted, directed, and choreographed the telecast in NBC's studio in Brooklyn on March 7, 1955. It was the first time a Broadway musical had been transferred to television intact, and it thrilled 65,000,000 viewers—40% of the population of the United States. There was a second live telecast on January 9, 1956, and a third (filmed for posterity) telecast on December 8, 1960.

On June 12, 1959, Robbins appeared on *Person to Person*, hosted by Edward R. Murrow. Cameras visited Robbins at home and gave an intimate look at his preparations for the forthcoming tour of his company, Ballets: U.S.A. Robbins' company next appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on July 19, 1959, and November 29, 1959. By now, Robbins was allowed more creative control than most acts. He was given more time than usual to prepare (using two days for camera run-throughs) and he used seven cameras instead of the usual three. Still, Robbins was never satisfied with the result, stating in a *Miami Herald* interview: "It's hard on television to make dance work. The screen robs the dance of a lot of personal energy; it takes away much of the effort and daring of the dance." In the same interview, Robbins expressed an appreciation of teenage rock 'n' roll shows, such as *American Bandstand*. He admitted that by watching such programs, he had moments of inspiration while choreographing *West Side Story*. He stated: "The dance partners scarcely ever touch one another. I once went to a dance hall in East Harlem and noticed that none of the dancers were anywhere near their partners. I asked someone, 'How do you know who is dancing with who?' and the guy said 'Try cutting in.' "

Of an appearance by Ballets: U.S.A. on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on January 17, 1960, *Variety* wrote, "the camera work got most of the Robbins dance design." The company had performed an abridged version of Robbins' angsty *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz*—the ballet that featured an urban skyline backdrop of rooftop TV antennae by artist Ben Shahn. On February 21, 1960—the company's third appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*—they presented an abridged version of *The Concert*. Robbins stated: "I've done three segments of Ballets: USA on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and the hardest was the one I did last—a version of *The Concert*. If the cameras get the feet, they lose the face; if you get the face, you lose the body; if you pull back and get the whole dancer, you lose the expression. A lot of points were lost in the telling."

*Baryshnikov at the White House* was telecast on PBS on April 15, 1979. Although Robbins traveled to the White House to restage his choreography in order to make the best use of the East Room's small stage (with its low, upstage

chandelier), he remained skeptical, stating in the *Los Angeles Times*, "No film has ever truly recorded a ballet as a performance. The art of photographing dance for television hasn't improved much in the last 20 years, it seems to me. One just hopes the work comes out not slaughtered."

Because of the program's attempt to capture and present the "live" aspect of a ballet's performance, Robbins preferred the PBS "Live from Lincoln Center" series to its "Dance in America" programs. On February 20, 1980, PBS's "Dance in America" presented *Two Duets*, featuring Robbins' *Other Dances*. This time, Robbins had a few demands: it was to be filmed in front of an audience, and it was to be shot on film (opting for a softer look, rather than the clarity of videotape). On July 2, 1980 NBC devoted 90 minutes to Robbins with *Live From Studio 8H: An Evening with Jerome Robbins and Members of the New York City Ballet*. In deciding what to present, Robbins chose pieces intimate in nature (*Afternoon of a Faun*) and works with a narrative aspect (*The Cage*, and excerpts from *Fancy Free*, *The Concert*, and *Dances at a Gathering*). In this case, Robbins was not given the creative control to which he was accustomed. It was frustrating for him to have the artistic reins held tightly by NBC, and he abhorred the experience. It also ended up in 60th place in the Nielsen ratings—the week's lowest rated program. On May 2, 1986 PBS's "Dance in America" presented *Choreography by Jerome Robbins with the New York City Ballet*. The program presented *Antique Epigraphs*, and *Fancy Free*. On January 16, 1987 PBS's "Dance in America" presented *In Memory of...: A Ballet by Jerome Robbins*. Robbins bracketed the performance with two on-camera interviews with writer Rosalind Bernier, which proved as interesting as the ballet. It was during these talks that Robbins recalled George Balanchine having described a ballet choreographer as one "who dares to get his fingertips on that world where there are no names for things."

By the 1960s, recognizing that dance on television was entering into a time "when even TV commercials need a choreographer" as he put it, Robbins decried the lack of a proper dance archive. He helped fix that problem with his ongoing financial support of what eventually became the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the New York Public Library, where so much of his choreography may be viewed today. In his foreword to *A Bibliography of Dancing* (1936), John Martin wrote, "Reading about the dance is highly unsatisfactory, but not nearly so unsatisfactory as not reading about it." So it is with viewing dance on television—even the works of Jerome Robbins. To view his choreography live, as intended, is best. Not always possible, there is still the opportunity to view his work for the small screen as intended.



Left: Dancers of English National Ballet in Jerome Robbins' *The Cage*, 2018. Photo by Laurent Liotardo.

Right: Dancers of Washington Ballet in Jerome Robbins' *The Concert*, 2018. Photo by media4artists Theo Kossenias.



# RECORDING THE DANCE

by Jerome Robbins

Never before in America have we had such a wealth of dance concerts, ballet seasons, dance schools, dance in the theater, films, night clubs and on television, never so many appearances of imported ballet and folk groups and never so many papers, magazines and books published concerning dance. Let's face it: when even TV commercials need choreographers, dance is frighteningly in. Putting aside the commercial aspects and uses, American dance has come to a marvelous fruition. In Europe it is having a tremendous impact and influence; on our cultural front we are more than holding our own.

So here we are; our native dance culture is flourishing, its acceptance and respect are becoming ever more widespread at home, and its achievements are recognized as unchallenged abroad.

And how it is recorded. We cheer, they cheer, various deep bows are made in articles, books and by citations and then it all immediately enters the marvelous Land of Legend of the dance. Every dance event and figure is there, some vaguely, some clearly, but all are legends. In this land live Nijinsky, Duncan, the Diaghilev days, the Astaires together, early performances of every important ballet. In this marvelous Land of Legend live Martha Graham's early concerts, Danilova's *Swan Lake*, the Humphrey-Weidman days, Markova's *Giselle* and the coming of age and full flowering of Fonteyn, Tallchief, Le Clercq, Kaye, Hayden.



In this land the gods and goddesses are invoked in ritualistic evocations. Myths are told by those old enough to remember. Their eyes glow and they attempt to conjure into being the figures of the very recent or very dim past, and to give those images substance. Thus we hand down our history.

The Land of Legend also has many missing myths. Some of the influential gods and goddesses weren't giant or animal enough to be preserved by word of mouth or lasting lines of print; some made meteoric appearances viewed for too brief by too few. Formal attention is paid them by the devoted dance quarterlies.

Just think what would have happened to Mozart's music if it had been forced to depend on each member of the original performing orchestra teaching, from memory, to his successors what he had played and how he had interpreted it. What would happen if the great symphonic and opera scores were unable to be notated and recorded, and all that remained were the accounts, descriptions and pictures of their premiers. How marvelous that museums can hang, side by side, the currently considered masterpieces of past and present. Consider also the wealth of musical recordings preserving interpretations for posterity, and the libraries of plays to be reread and revived.

And what records does the dance have? How do we preserve it so that there is a foundation from which growth and development can progress? Dance notation valiantly struggles to write down the steps. Photographs, programs, letters, memorabilia are collected and stored. Books evaluating and analyzing the dance scene are published and put on the shelf for reference. But no matter how much one reads, no matter how many still and fixed photographs are poured over the essence, the action of dance is missing. One can only try to imagine it, and everyone's imagination is singular. Years hence, the legend of Nureyev may equal the Nijinsky legend; but it will be harder for him because years from now he can still be seen on TV. Tougher for him, but better for us, because although these cherished tapes give a very limited picture of the man and his talents, he will be seen, and that is a treasure for our heritage and the development of our future dancers, teachers and choreographers.

The point of all this?

We must have a library of Dance Film. First, everything that has already been recorded—by television, amateurs, professionals, art films and "hot film" (grabbed illegally during a performance)—must be collected and preserved before it disappears or is destroyed. Spadework has been done and an impressive amount of film is available. The television networks have promised cooperation and the private collections have been researched.

Secondly, every year we must film dance works during actual performances to have a stage record of how and what is danced. These films could be made with the cooperation of theater unions and guaranteed to be used for noncommercial purposes by being placed in a film library similar to that at the Museum of Modern Art.

And finally, selected works must be filmed in a studio to record with careful preparation and to its best advantage the work of individuals and particular ballets. For each year we find violent changes in our dance world. A new talent emerges and an established one fades a bit. Dance is ephemeral. If you didn't witness it, you missed it forever. The repeats are different and the years change it—and us. Ballets not only go out of date; they also become travesties of themselves by having to endure too long a run with constant changes of cast, and without the choreographers' presence. To catch everything at its height—and to record it as it was meant by the choreographer and as it was originally interpreted by the dancers—is imperative. Without it, we, the wealthiest of nations with the most flourishing dance culture, are leaving behind for the nourishment of future generations an arid field of faded photographs, hieroglyphics, and accounts of an art that, like music and painting, cannot be experienced by reading about it.

What would a future dancer, historian, researcher, or choreographer make out of contemporary records. Looking at the worst aspects, and with deep respect to their devotion, dance historians contradict each other as much as agree; often contradict themselves, and occasionally are the victims of such immediate and personal prejudices and influences that praise or damnation can have serious weight only outside the dance world. Three recently published dance books are informative, entertaining, and all contain lapses of factual accuracy. In other arts this is mitigated in that plays are revived, scores exhumed, canvases reappraised, literature re-evaluated. And looking at its best side, the most unanimous unreserved praise, lucid perceptions and vivid descriptions can in no way make anyone experience the action of the event.

This article appeared in *The New York Times* on November 24, 1963.

# THE BUSINESS OF SHOW

## Put a [Trade]Mark Where Your Dance Is

by Kimberly Maynard, Esq.

In dance, as anywhere, one's reputation can be an invaluable asset. Gaining recognition as an individual person or organization that provides goods or services of a consistent quality can be synonymous with success, whether those goods or services are the creation or performance of choreography, the provision of dance instruction, the presentations of dances by dance companies, or any other of the myriad services provided to and in connection with dance. In intellectual property terms, that reputation or recognition is known as goodwill and the brand that is associated with that goodwill is a trademark. Said differently, trademarks are essentially brands under which goods or services are provided. They tell consumers that the goods or services provided under that brand will be of a consistent quality (be that quality bad or good, in the eye of the beholder).

Trademarks can be fairly easy to acquire and protect, but can slip away almost unnoticed if not properly used and protected.

### How are trademark rights acquired?

A trademark\* can be any word, phrase, design, symbol or other device used to designate the source of the goods or services provided under that mark. It can be the name of a dance company, name or alias of an individual choreographer or dancer, a stylized logo used by a dance presenter, a design used on the label of dancewear, or even the certain look and feel of a dance venue.

Trademark rights are acquired by using a trademark to provide goods or services in interstate commerce. For example, a dance company—let's call it Beauty—that tours in different states likely owns rights in the trademark BEAUTY for the provision of dance performance services. A New York City dance presenter called Untrod, which has an audience from outside New York State, likely owns rights in the trademark UNTROD for dance presentation services. Both organizations acquire their rights by using their marks consistently to provide their respective services. In doing so, the general public learns that when it purchases tickets for different performances by BEAUTY, it can expect those performances to be given by—or sponsored or approved by—the same company and to be of a like quality. Similarly, the general public can expect that all dance companies presented by UNTROD or in the UNTROD venue will be of a similar quality. In short, the BEAUTY or UNTROD trademarks become a signal to the public that the respective dance services provided under those marks are going to be of the same quality.

### What does it mean to have a trademark?

The owner of a trademark has the exclusive right to use that mark for the particular goods or services. In other words, following the examples above, the Beauty Dance Company would have the sole right to use the trademark BEAUTY for a dance company and likely could stop other organizations from using BEAUTY or any trademark that is confusingly similar to BEAUTY for a dance company or for goods or services typically associated with a dance company. It might, for example, be able to prohibit a dancewear company from using BEAUTY WEAR to market and sell clothing or an agent who represents dancers and other artists from using BEAUTY as the name of the agency. Trademark rights, though, are specific to the goods and services offered under the mark, and the Beauty Dance Company likely would not be able to prevent another company from using the trademark BEAUTY in connection with automotive parts.\*\*

\* The term "trademark" is often reserved to identify words and symbols that indicate the source of goods, while the term "service mark" is often reserved to identify words and symbols that indicate the source of services. Throughout this article, the word "trademark" encompasses both trademarks and service marks.

### What are the best practices for trademark use?

Trademark rights last only so long as the mark is used with the particular goods and services. Failure to use a mark at all or failure to use it consistently or properly can result in loss of rights in that mark—and a loss of the ability to stop others from using a confusingly similar mark for related goods or services.

Best practices for trademark use include:

- Always spell the mark the same, e.g. UNTROD and not UNTRED or UN-TROD;
- Place the mark prominently on any publicity, marketing or advertising materials, including programs and tickets, where appropriate;
- When using the mark in text, use it as an adjective, and not a verb or noun, e.g. the BEAUTY dance company;
- When using the mark in text, offset it from the surrounding text by using bold or italic font, capital letters, or larger font; and
- If you do not have a federal registration (more on that below), consider using the symbol "TM" after the mark, e.g., BEAUTY™ or UNTROD™.

In addition to using a trademark properly, trademark owners should consider registering their marks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, which provides certain advantages, including:

- National rights in the mark as of the date the mark was first used or the date the application for registration was first filed;
- Evidence that the trademark is valid and is owned by the owner of the registration;
- The right to use the "®" symbol with the mark;
- The possibility of achieving incontestable status five years after registration, which makes it more difficult for another to challenge the trademark; and
- Discourages others from using and/or registering a confusingly similar mark.

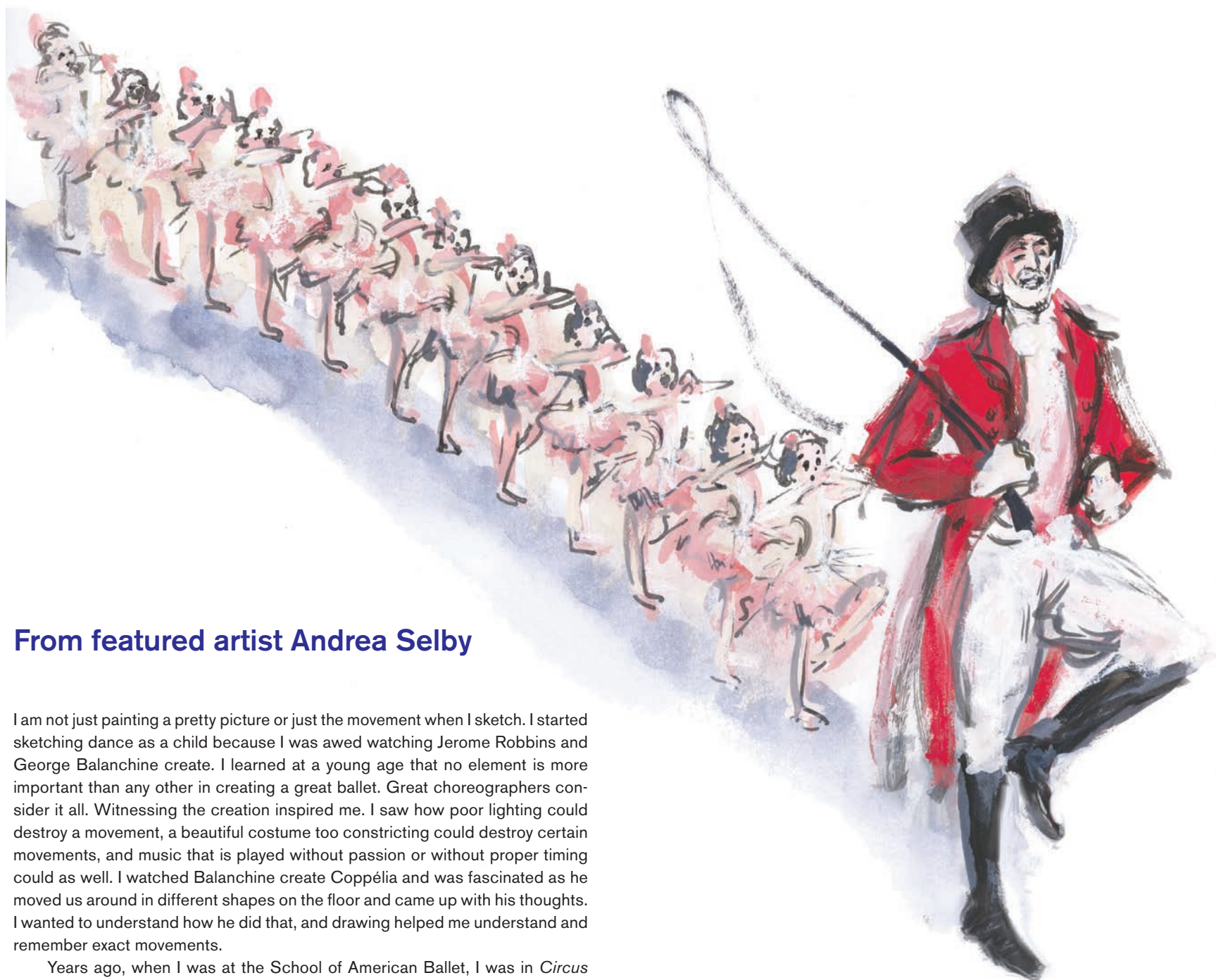
### In sum

Trademark rights can be owned by almost all individuals and organizations, including those in the dance field, that provide goods or services under a brand name. They are the representation of an organization's or individual's reputation and, treated properly, they can become one of a company's most valuable assets and an important partner in executing an artistic mission. When next updating a website or preparing marketing materials, dance professionals may wish to take a moment to ensure that all trademarks are being used in a way that best maximizes their value. Further, if there are particularly important trademarks, dance professionals may also benefit from considering federal registration.

**Kimberly Maynard** is an intellectual property attorney at Frankfurt, Kurnit, Klein + Selz. Kim focuses her practice on trademark and copyright law, and regularly counsels clients in the arts and entertainment industries. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Kim worked as an arts administrator for Trisha Brown Dance Company.

\*\* Importantly, there are a number of factors that play into the analysis of when and to what extent one trademark owner can stop another from using a confusingly similar mark. This analysis is fairly complex and outside the scope of this article.





## From featured artist Andrea Selby

I am not just painting a pretty picture or just the movement when I sketch. I started sketching dance as a child because I was awed watching Jerome Robbins and George Balanchine create. I learned at a young age that no element is more important than any other in creating a great ballet. Great choreographers consider it all. Witnessing the creation inspired me. I saw how poor lighting could destroy a movement, a beautiful costume too constricting could destroy certain movements, and music that is played without passion or without proper timing could as well. I watched Balanchine create *Coppélia* and was fascinated as he moved us around in different shapes on the floor and came up with his thoughts. I wanted to understand how he did that, and drawing helped me understand and remember exact movements.

Years ago, when I was at the School of American Ballet, I was in *Circus Polka* for the S.A.B. workshop. I can't recall what year or how old I was. I was little. David Richardson taught us the steps and Jerry was always there with him as a guide. David Richardson was being taught to be the Ringmaster, but one time Jerry decided to do it. I remember being very confused by the change and the energy and all the whispers and talk. I remember that it was unsettling having things change. We were used to David. I remember how important it was to point my feet when going in the diagonal line—both David and Jerry kept saying that to all the children, all the time. Once, Mr. Balanchine was onstage for a rehearsal and he said that too. They kept repeating themselves and saying the same thing. I also remember wanting to tell someone that I didn't feel like an elephant. I didn't understand how it was that we were elephants. I went home and drew elephants in a line after the first rehearsal. Nothing about my dance steps in *Circus Polka* reminded me of being an elephant. Elephants hold each other's tails and don't march with high knees. Horses do, and dogs do, when trained. It was very troubling to me. I wanted to ask Jerry but he was a bit scary and unapproachable. David was always busy and too strict. But as told, I made sure my knees were high and I pointed my feet as best I could as I marched across the floor. In my mind I thought of myself as a Lipizzan Stallion, but I didn't tell anyone that.

What made me go to any lengths to sketch dance was to try to understand the genius behind choreographers who really do it all well. I consider Jerome Robbins one of those few great greats.

*Illustrations by Andrea Selby appear on the front and back covers of this centennial celebration newsletter, above, and throughout the timeline.*

**Andrea Selby** was encouraged to transfer her love for dance into artwork from her dance teacher, Madame Alexandra Danilova. As a student at the School of American Ballet she danced in ballets with New York City Ballet including *Coppélia*, *Don Quixote*, *Harlequinade*, *Circus Polka*, and, of course, *The Nutcracker*. When an injury forced her to sit out and watch rehearsals, Selby channeled her frustration into a fascination with other elements of the production. She was inspired to sketch what she saw. Her artwork, with its insider's view of dance performances, garnered her attention from the dance world. She has been an artist-in-residence at the Vail International Dance Festival, and created artwork for the Broadway musical *An American in Paris*. To Selby, her artwork is a tribute to the motion of the dancers, and her art becomes a kind of performance diary.



# JEROME ROBBINS' CENTENNIAL Performances & Events

## SEPTEMBER 2017

17  
Hamburg Ballet  
*THE CONCERT, DANCES AT A GATHERING*

## OCTOBER 2017

10  
HLPC Cultural Medallion Program, E 81st St, NYC  
20  
DEMO BY DAMIAN WOETZEL:  
JEROME ROBBINS—AMERICAN GENIUS  
Kennedy Center, Washington DC

## NOVEMBER 2017

4  
92nd Street Y's Dance Education Lab  
with Heather Watts & Robert La Fosse  
5  
92nd Street Y's Dance Education Lab  
with Sean Suozzi & Anne Biddle

## JANUARY 2018

13  
Stuttgart Ballet *DANCES AT A GATHERING*  
12  
Miami City Ballet  
*CIRCUS POLKA, IN THE NIGHT, THE CAGE,  
OTHER DANCES, WEST SIDE STORY SUITE*  
22–26  
Centennial Kick-Off Event,  
Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse

## FEBRUARY 2018

7  
Joffrey Ballet *GLASS PIECES*  
28  
NYC Department of Education,  
professional development workshop

## MARCH 2018

5  
NYPL for the Performing Arts  
A Jerome Robbins' Broadway Reunion  
15  
Cincinnati Ballet *FANCY FREE*  
16  
New York Theatre Ballet  
*RONDO, SEPTET, CONCERTINO*  
Harkness Dance Festival, 92nd Street Y, NYC  
16  
BalletMET *INTERPLAY*  
16  
Vienna State Ballet *THE CONCERT*  
20  
San Francisco Ballet  
*FANCY FREE, THE CAGE, OTHER DANCES, OPUS 19*  
31  
Rome Opera Ballet *THE CONCERT*

## APRIL 2018

11  
English National Ballet *THE CAGE*  
12  
Washington Ballet *THE CONCERT*  
21–22  
Columbia Ballet Collaborative  
*ANTIQUÉ EPIGRAPHS*

## MAY 2018

3  
New York City Ballet *ROBBINS 100 FESTIVAL*  
4  
Pittsburgh Ballet  
*FANCY FREE, IN THE NIGHT, WEST SIDE STORY SUITE*  
7  
Inside NYCB Presentation:  
A Celebration of Jerome Robbins  
21  
National Dance Institute  
Upper West Side Story—  
A Celebration of Jerome Robbins  
25  
Spoleto Festival USA:  
Celebration—The Art of the Pas de Deux,  
featuring Miami City Ballet

## JUNE 2018

Dance Index "Jerome Robbins, Dancer" published  
4  
New York City Center's Studio 5 Series  
Bernstein & Robbins at 100 with Tyler Angle  
11  
The Muny (St. Louis, MO)  
JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY  
25  
Les Étés de la Danse: Hommage à Jerome Robbins  
featuring New York City Ballet, Joffrey Ballet,  
Miami City Ballet, Perm Opera Ballet Theatre,  
and Pacific Northwest Ballet  
(La Seine à Musicale, Paris)

## 27

Ballet de l'Opéra National de Bordeaux *THE CONCERT*

## JULY 2018

20  
Dance on Camera Festival

## AUGUST 2018

9  
The Intrepid Goes Broadway  
18  
Boston Ballet and Boston Symphony Orchestra  
at Tanglewood (Lenox, MA) *FANCY FREE*

## SEPTEMBER 2018

6  
Boston Ballet  
*FANCY FREE, GLASS PIECES, INTERPLAY*  
11  
Dutch National Ballet *DANCES AT A GATHERING*  
21–30  
Pacific Northwest Ballet  
*AFTERNOON OF A FAUN, THE CONCERT,  
DANCES AT A GATHERING, IN THE NIGHT,  
OTHER DANCES, WEST SIDE STORY SUITE*  
25  
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts  
*Voice of My City: Jerome Robbins and New York*  
(Oenslager Gallery, Lincoln Center, NYC,  
exhibition runs through March 2019)

## OCTOBER 2018

*Writings of Jerome Robbins* by Amanda Vaill  
published by Alfred A. Knopf  
11  
Jerome Robbins' 100th birthday  
11  
Paley Center (Los Angeles, CA)  
*West Side Story* with Rita Moreno, George Chakiris,  
and Russ Tamblyn  
18  
Charlotte Ballet *FANCY FREE*  
25  
BAM's Next Wave Festival:  
*Jerome Robbins' Watermill*  
(Fisher Space, NYC)  
29  
Paris Opera Ballet  
*AFTERNOON OF A FAUN, FANCY FREE, GLASS PIECES*

## NOVEMBER 2018

5  
Paley Center (NYC)  
*Jerome Robbins and Television*  
27  
Orchestra of St. Luke's presents  
Free School Concerts: Jerome Robbins  
(BMCC Tribeca Performing Arts Center)

## DECEMBER 2018

18  
Royal Ballet (London) *THE CONCERT*

## MARCH 2019

7  
Houston Ballet  
*FANCY FREE, THE CAGE, THE CONCERT*

Please note: Most dates are first performance  
with subsequent dates following.



## News from The Jerome Robbins Foundation

Volume 5, No. 1 (2018)

*Jerome Robbins* will be sent upon request.  
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