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Finding Aid - Kennetha McArthur fonds (F0143)

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Kennetha McArthur fonds

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Summary information

Repository: York University Archives & Special Collections (CTASC)

Title: Kennetha McArthur fonds

ID: F0143

Date: 1977-1997 (date of creation)

Language: English

Language: French

Physical description: ca. 1 m of textual records and other materials

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Kennetha Rose O'Heany (nee Koch, then McArthur) is a ballet teacher who prepares dancers for the Royal Academy of Dance exams and auditions. Born in Kitchener, Ontario, on January 21, 1956, her family moved to Toronto where at age 15 she studied under Gladys Forrester who suggested a career in teaching.

In 1974, O'Heany moved to London, England to attend the College of the Royal Academy of Dancing. After graduating in 1978 with a L.R.A.D, A.I.S.T.D. (Nat.) and the inaugural Ivor Guest Dance History Award for her work on Jerome Robbins, O'Heany moved to Champaign-Urbana, Illinois to set up the RAD Majors Programme - the only RAD school in the area. She returned to Toronto in 1980 and taught at various dancing schools until 1985.

In 1980, O'Heany auditioned to teach a daily ballet class at York University but was denied because she had not attended university. She then registered for the Master of Fine Arts Programme (Dance) at York University with the permission of department chair Dianne Woodruff who allowed O'Heany to pursue her Masters without a tertiary degree due to her training in England. O'Heany was the first person in the Dance Programme ever granted this privilege as well as the first person allowed to pursue a M.F.A. in Dance on a part-time basis. O'Heany attained her M.F.A. in 1985 with the thesis topic "Ballet in England at the turn of the century leading to the foundation of the R.A.D., including a video reconstruction of the first RAD Elementary examination syllabus." Her writings on dance history are available in The International/Oxford Encyclopaedia of Dance, the New York Public Library, and various research libraries.

O'Heany opened her ballet school doncespoce in 1985 and later founded a ballet company, dancecorps (later after winning registration as a charitable organization, the Toronto Ballet Ensemble). In 1990, the Vaganova Choreographic Institute and Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg, Russia invited O'Heany to study differences in teaching methodologies.

She closed doncespoce in 1997 to pursue future endeavours outside dance. She also stepped down as CEO of the Board of Directors of the Toronto Ballet Ensemble (which ceased to exist in 1997) and soon afterwards resigned from the Company altogether.

Up until December 1998, O'Heany was the inaugural head of the RAD Studies for the new George Brown College Diploma Programme in Dance, where Bengt's company is Artist-in-Residence. Since 1999, O'Heany has been a teacher of RAD at institutions such as Pegasus Dance Center, and also taught master classes at the Conservatory of Dance and Music, and the Squamish School of Fine Arts. O'Heany currently teaches at the Oakville Ballet.

Scope and content

Fonds consists of administrative files relating to the activities of DanceSpace and includes correspondence, posters, photographs, and various published materials relating to dance.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Donated by Kennetha McArthur in July 1997.

Restrictions on access

No restrictions on access.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
 - **Level of detail:** Full
 - **Status description:** Final
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Access points

- Textual record (documentary form)
 - Graphic material (documentary form)
 - Dance (subject)
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Collection holdings
