



Guide to the Michigan Dance Archives: Denise Szykula Papers UP002560

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 24, 2019.

English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Walter P. Reuther Library
Creator:	Szykula, Denise
Title:	Michigan Dance Archives: Denise Szykula Papers
ID:	UP002560
Date [inclusive]:	1970-2018
Physical Description:	6.5 Linear Feet (4 MB, 2 SB, 2 OS)
Language of the Material:	English
Language of the Material:	Material entirely in English.
Abstract:	<p>Denise Szykula won praise over many decades for her work as a dancer, choreographer, teacher and innovator. Szykula founded Dance Nonce Ensemble in 1973 (later renamed Dance Nonce) and served as its artistic director and choreographer for over 45 years. As a respected teacher of modern dance and creative movement, Szykula has taught weekly classes as well as serving as guest teacher and choreographer for workshops and master classes in colleges and universities. Szykula has collaborated with many musicians and artists around Michigan, and her body of work has been supported frequently with grants from arts organizations. Szykula's papers includes choreographic notes and notations from many of her works dating from 1979 to 2015, as well as her notebooks of lesson plans dated from 1991 to 2018. Brochures, programs, publicity and correspondence are also included. There is one box of photos from various productions of her work, and an oversize box contains photos and posters, including original artwork. Small wooden stage-set mock-ups for two of her dances are part of the collection. One box containing slides and DVDs has been transferred to the Reuther A-V Department, and ten videos of dances are held in the Reuther digital repository.</p>

Citation Style

"Michigan Dance Archives: Denise Szykula Papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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History

Denise Szykula won praise over many decades for her work as a dancer, choreographer, teacher and innovator. Born in Hamtramck, Michigan, in 1946, she established her dance career in Southeast Michigan. Szykula graduated from East Detroit High School, completed the medical office assistant program at Highland Park Junior College and attended Macomb Community College. Her formal dance training began in her teens at the renowned American Dance Festival at Connecticut College during three summers, where she studied with Martha Graham, Lucas Hoving, José Limon, Paul Taylor and Merce Cunningham. Her study at the Toronto Dance Theatre focused on modified Graham technique. In 1973, Szykula studied at the Wolftrap Dance Festival, at American University, Washington, DC, with Twyla Tharp among others. Szykula founded Dance Nonce Ensemble in 1973 (later renamed Dance Nonce) and served as its artistic director and choreographer for over 45 years. A professional modern dance company located in Southeast Michigan, Dance Nonce established a reputation for innovative and original work. In the 1980s, Szykula developed the Traveling Technique, a teaching technique that accommodated her own choreography for Dance Nonce. As a respected teacher of modern dance and creative movement, Szykula has taught weekly classes as well as serving as guest teacher and choreographer for workshops and master classes in colleges and universities. In 1989, she developed the Creative Movement Program for pre-school through kindergarten classes for the Grosse Pointe Academy (GPA), in Grosse Pointe Farms, MI. Additionally, in 1994, she designed and implemented the Creative ARTS Movement Program for grades one through five at the GPA, where she taught until 2015. Szykula has collaborated with many musicians and artists around Michigan, and her body of work has been supported frequently with grants from arts organizations. The Arts Foundation of Michigan recognized Szykula's work in 1984 with the Michigan Arts Award for Excellence. Her work with well-known Structurist artist, David Barr, is documented in the Archives of American Art. Szykula's dance "Intrusions" is documented and preserved in the archives of the Dance Labanotation Bureau in New York. In 2004, she received the Touchstone Award as Michigan Dance Teacher of the Year from the Michigan Dance Council.

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Scope and Content

Szykula's papers include choreographic notes and notations from many of her works dating from 1979 to 2015, as well as her notebooks of lesson plans dated from 1991 to 2018. Brochures, programs, publicity and correspondence are also included. There is one box of photos from various productions of her work, and an oversize box contains photos and posters, including original artwork. Small wooden stage-set mock-ups for two of her dances are part of the collection. One box containing slides and DVDs has been

transferred to the Reuther A-V Department, and ten videos of dances are held in the Reuther digital repository.

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Arrangement

Folders are listed by their location within each box. They are not necessarily arranged, so any given subject may be dispersed throughout the entire collection.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition

Materials donated by Denise Szykula in batches in 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018.

Processing History

Processed and finding aid written by Aimee Ergas on 10 July 2018.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials." Restrictions: Researchers may encounter records of a sensitive nature – personnel files, case records and those involving investigations, legal and other private matters. Privacy laws and restrictions imposed by the

Library prohibit the use of names and other personal information which might identify an individual, except with written permission from the Director and/or the donor.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Michigan Dance Archives: Harriet Berg Papers and others

Transfers

Three DVDs and one box of slides transferred to Reuther A-V Department. Additional material--10 videos--are in the Reuther Digital Repository.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Dance
- Dance companies
- Dance -- Study and teaching
- Modern dance

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
Biographies, resumes, various dates	Box 1	Folder 1
Essays, dance lesson plans and techniques, various dates	Box 1	Folder 2
Clippings, correspondence, various dates	Box 1	Folder 3
Dance Nonce: programs, history, brochures, various dates	Box 1	Folder 4
Various brochures, programs, flyers, 1986-1998	Box 1	Folder 5
Choreography: Trairsicals, 1979	Box 1	Folder 6

Choreography: And Then There Were None, 1987	Box 1	Folder 7
Choreography: Transgressions, 1992	Box 1	Folder 8
Choreography: Boxes, 1992	Box 1	Folder 9
Choreography: Hail Caesar!, undated	Box 1	Folder 10
Choreography: Carmina Burana, 1994	Box 1	Folder 11
Choreography: Paladins, 1995	Box 1	Folder 12
Choreography: Turning Point, Life Rhythms, 1996	Box 1	Folder 13
Choreography: Striking Out, 1998	Box 1	Folder 14
Choreography: SET, 1999	Box 1	Folder 15
Choreography: When I First Heard About..., 2010	Box 1	Folder 16
Choreography: The Letter, 2013	Box 1	Folder 17
Script and Scene Development Sheets: Quintet: A Dance of Mystery and Murder, 1985	Box 1	Folder 18
Score for choreography: Motor City Sequence: Assembly Line Boogie, Churches of Detroit, Renaissance, 1982	Box 1	Folder 19
Brochures, programs, posters, 1970s	Box 2	Folder 1
Brochures, programs, posters, 1980s	Box 2	Folder 2
Performance programs, 1997-1999	Box 2	Folder 3
Conference program, performance programs, flyers, 2001-2018	Box 2	Folder 4
Articles, clippings, 1970s	Box 2	Folder 5
Articles, clippings, 1981-1983	Box 2	Folder 6
Articles, clippings, 1984-2004	Box 2	Folder 7
Correspondence: Jewish Community Center Mini Troupe, 1971, 1972	Box 2	Folder 8
Correspondence: Michigan Council for the Arts grant, congratulations, 1988	Box 2	Folder 9
Correspondence: Michigan Dance Council, Teacher of the Year, 2004	Box 2	Folder 10
Michigan Foundation for the Arts, award nomination letters, 1981	Box 2	Folder 11
Personal reflections, essays, 1971, 1980	Box 2	Folder 12
Awards and honors, 1984-2004	Box 2	Folder 13
Photos: Dance Nonce, rehearsal, 1973	Box 3	Folder 1
Photos: Dance Nonce, rehearsal with Jacob Lascu, 1974	Box 3	Folder 2
Photos: Dance Nonce, Intrusions, 1975	Box 3	Folder 3

Photo: Grosse Pointe Dance Theatre, Literary Kicks in '76, 1976	Box 3	Folder 4
Photos: Dance Nonce, Dances I Thought I Wanted to Do, 1978	Box 3	Folder 5
Photos: Dance Nonce, Asylum, 1978	Box 3	Folder 6
Photos: Dance Nonce, Crustaceamals, 1979	Box 3	Folder 7
Photos: Dance Nonce, Such Good Friends, 1979	Box 3	Folder 8
Photos: Dance Nonce, Toronto, Movement 1: Yonge Street, 1979	Box 3	Folder 9
Photos: Dance Nonce, Toronto, Movement 3: Leather Paraphernalia, 1979	Box 3	Folder 10
Photos: Dance Nonce, Toronto, Movement 3: Leather Paraphernalia, 1982	Box 3	Folder 11
Photos: Dance Nonce, Toronto: Leather Paraphernalia, 1979	Box 3	Folder 12
Photos: Dance Nonce, Trairsicals, 1979, 1980	Box 3	Folder 13
Photos: Dance Nonce, Private Passion, Private Pain, 1980	Box 3	Folder 14
Photos: Dance Nonce, The Other Self, circa 1982	Box 3	Folder 15
Photos: Dance Nonce, Motor City Sequence: Churches of Detroit, 1982	Box 3	Folder 16
Photos: Dance Nonce, Motor City Sequence: Churches of Dettroit, 1982	Box 3	Folder 17
Photos: Dance Nonce, Carmina Burana, circa 1982	Box 3	Folder 18
Photos: Dance Nonce, Quintet: A Dance of Murder and Mystery, 1985	Box 3	Folder 19
Photos: Dance Nonce, Motor City Portrait, 1986	Box 3	Folder 20
Photos: Nonce Dance Ensemble, Muscle and Machine: Motor City Portrait, 1986	Box 3	Folder 21
Photos: Dance Nonce, SET, circa 1990	Box 3	Folder 22
Photos: Dance Nonce, Transgressions, rehearsal, 1992	Box 3	Folder 23
Photo: Nonce Dance Ensemble, Striking Out...in Anger, 1994	Box 3	Folder 24
Photo: Denise Szykula, circa 2014	Box 3	Folder 25
Photos: Dance Nonce, anniversary celebration, Eastpointe (MI) Memorial Library, 2014	Box 3	Folder 26
Photos: Dance Nonce, Boxes, 2015	Box 3	Folder 27
Photo: Dance Nonce, The Letter, 2015	Box 3	Folder 28
Photo: Dance Nonce, ...and so I dance, 2015	Box 3	Folder 29
Photos: When I First Heard About..., 2015	Box 3	Folder 30
Key for lesson plans, undated	Box 4	Folder 1

Notation: Trairsicals, third movement, notation by Louise Paquette, spiral notebook, 2018	Box 4	Folder 2
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 1993 November-1994 April	Box 4	Item 3
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 1994 November-1997 February	Box 4	Item 4
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 1997 February-November	Box 4	Item 5
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 1998 February-2001 January	Box 4	Item 6
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2001 January-2003 November	Box 4	Item 7
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2003 November-2007 April	Box 4	Item 8
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2007 April-2010 March	Box 4	Item 9
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2010 March-December	Box 4	Item 10
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2010 December-2012 November	Box 4	Item 11
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2012 November-2014 April	Box 4	Item 12
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2014-2015 June	Box 4	Item 13
Lesson plans, spiral notebook, 2015 June-2016 April	Box 4	Item 14
Teacher's guide for Creative Movement classes, for ages 4-6, 1991	Box 5	Folder 1
Creative Movement lesson plans: Henri Matisse, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 2
Creative Movement lesson plans: Andy Goldsworthy, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 3
Creative Movement lesson plans: Alexander Calder, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 4
Creative Movement lesson plans: M.C. Escher, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 5
Creative Movement lesson plans: Vincent Van Gogh, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 6
Creative Movement lesson plans: Pablo Picasso, 1997-2016	Box 5	Folder 7
Performance poster, Nonce Ensemble, Oakland University, circa 1971	Box 6	Item 1
Performance poster, Dance Nonce, Encounters, Millennium Theatre Centre, undated	Box 6	Item 2
Performance poster, Dance Nonce Ensemble, art by Wm. Christopher King, 1976 April 30, May 1	Box 6	Item 3
Event Poster, "Literary Kicks in '76," Grosse Pointe Dance Theatre, East Detroit Public Library, original design by Bill Giordano, 1976 April 4	Box 6	Item 4
Performance poster, "Under the trees and in a shelter," Nonce Dance Ensemble, original art by Bill Giordano, 1975 September 20, 21	Box 6	Item 5
Program layout, "Saturday Nonce at the Movies," original art by Bill Giordano, event at Friends School, Detroit, 1976	Box 6	Item 6

Performance poster, The Nonce Dance Ensemble in Concert, Rackham Auditorium, Detroit, artwork by Christopher King, 1978 April 14, 15	Box 6	Item 7
Artist's proof, "At the Vanishing Point," artwork by Wm. Christopher King, for performance poster, Nonce Dance Ensemble in Concert, 1978	Box 6	Item 8
Performance poster, The Nonce Dance Ensemble: In Concert, Rackham Auditorium, Detroit, artwork by Christopher King, 1982 April 29, 30	Box 6	Item 9
Photo, Dance Nonce, "Private Passion Private Pain," Dennis East and Denise Szykula, 11"x14", 1980	Box 6	Item 10
Stage set mock-ups, design by David Barr, 2 wooden gears for "Muscle and Machine: Portrait of a Motor City," 1986	Box 7	Item 1
Stage set mock-ups, design by David Barr, block shapes for "Quintet: A Dance of Mystery and Murder," 1985	Box 7	Folder 2
"The Letter," premiere with soloist Michele Reis, DVD-R, 2013	Box 8	Folder 1
"When I First Heard About...", premiere, cut 2, DVD-R, 2010	Box 8	Folder 2
Secret Society of Twisted Storytellers presents Denise Szykula, DVD, 2018	Box 8	Folder 3
Box of 35-mm slides, 34 slides, "Quintet: A Dance of Mystery and Murder," 1985	Box 8	Item 4