

**News Release: April 2012**

**Dance Heritage Coalition receives funding to support *Foundations of Dance Research* project “Hidden Collections” program, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), makes rare materials accessible to teachers and researchers**

The Dance Heritage Coalition (DHC) announces an exciting collaborative project to create access to 22 dance legacy collections held by seven archives. The *Foundations of Dance Research* project includes materials from 1880 to 2011 relating to dance performance, theory, and education at Arizona State University, Dance Notation Bureau, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival, Library of Congress, Museum of Performance & Design, The Ohio State University, and UCLA Library. These collections share a common connection to sources of fundamental change and creativity in dance style, technique, or theory, and have contributed to the development of dance in America during the 20th century.

Uncovering these collections and providing access for scholars is the heart of the project. DHC Executive Director Libby Smigel observed, “For this project, the DHC archives chose significant seminal collections of dance materials that are virtually unknown to the dance field and other disciplines. The DHC member archives hold an astonishing array of one-of-a-kind assets – personal papers and choreographic notes, photos and posters, personal videotapes – most of which have never been seen by teachers or researchers. This project will organize the items and create descriptive indexes that will be publicly available.”

Dr. Linda Caldwell, coordinator of doctoral studies in dance at Texas Woman’s University, remarked, “The DHC’s project is a critical first step in enabling access to these primary-source materials and improving dance scholarship. As a mentor of graduate students and an active scholar, I am keenly aware of how valuable it will be for budding and seasoned researchers alike, and particularly those working at a distance from major, urban libraries or private archives, to be able to discover online the location and nature of primary dance history materials and, ultimately, through digital formats to be able to access and use such resources.”

Among the collections are several from individuals who have made a valuable impact on the field of dance.

- modern dance pioneers **Ruth St. Denis** and **Ted Shawn**
- Shawn’s associates **Jess Meeker** and **Barton Mumaw**
- second-generation modern dancer and choreographer **Kenneth Rinker**
- postmodern choreographer and dancer **Robert Ellis Dunn**
- film choreographer **Marge Champion**
- mime specialists **Sandra Hughes** and **Robert Post**
- ballet dancer and company director **Michael Smuin**
- scholar and ethnologist **Allegra Fuller Snyder**
- critic and writer **Janice Ross**
- Dalcroze eurhythmics teacher **John Colman**
- Dalcroze biographer and musicologist **Irwin Spector**
- dance notation creator **Rudolf Laban**

Other collections are from organizations significant to dance, such as the San Francisco Ballet, the Dance Notation Bureau, and the Dalcroze Society of America, plus performance videotapes from artistically innovative West Coast dance groups such as AXIS Dance Company, Lily Cai Chinese Dance Co., Joe Goode Performance Group, San Francisco Butoh Festival, SFJazz’s Tap-Jazz Summit, and Theatre Flamenco.

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The Dance Heritage Coalition is the sole national nonprofit organization that works to document and preserve the records of America’s dance legacy and ensures access to the materials for use by scholars and critics, faculty and their students, and the general public. [www.danceheritage.org](http://www.danceheritage.org)

The Council on Library and Information is an independent, nonprofit organization that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. Visit <http://www.clir.org/fellowships/hiddencollections> to learn about the Hidden Collections program.