

Thompson (Marcia A. T.) papers

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Summary Information

Repository: Rockefeller Archive Center

Creator - aut: Thompson, Marcia

Creator: New York City Ballet

Creator: National Arts Stabilization Fund

Creator: Ford Foundation

Title: Marcia A. T. Thompson papers

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Date [inclusive]: 1936-2006

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document containers)

Language of the

Material:

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Biographical / Historical

Marcia Aldrich Thompson Thompson (1923-2018) was an advocate for financial stabilization projects in the arts throughout her long career with the Ford Foundation, the National Arts Stabilization Fund, and as a board member for many arts organizations. She was born on Oct. 2, 1923 in Hankow, China. Thompson attended the Columbia University School of General Studies, the New School for Social Research, and earned a certificate from Katherine Gibbs School. She started her career at the New York Times as the Assistant to the Sunday Editor from 1946-1951. She moved on to hold multiple positions at the International Press Institute as Assistant to the Chairman and Associate Director, Conference Coordinator until 1953. In 1955, she married Ralph Thompson, a book critic and columnist for the New York Times, and secretary of the Book#of#the-Month Club.

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In 1953, Thompson joined the Ford Foundation as a program officer. From the beginning, she was involved in the formation and development of the Foundation's program in humanities and the arts. She had a hand in all major subsequent initiatives through 1983, including the development of programs for individual artists as well as institutional development in the arts. She worked to create incentives for symphonies, ballet companies, theaters and other arts groups to liquidate their deficits and build working capital reserves. Some of her achievements include: providing \$80.2 million in grants to orchestras across the country as part of the Symphony Orchestra Program, providing support for development of dance companies and professional training in classical dance, and developing the Program for Administrative Interns, the Program for Curatorial Training, and the Program for Catalogues of American Fine Arts Collections. She also led the Ford Foundation Cash Reserve Program from which the National Arts Stabilization Fund eventually evolved. She collaborated closely with Ford Foundation executive William W. McPeak and Vice President W. McNeil Lowry. Lowry and Thompson's partnership helped Ford become the country's largest nongovernmental arts patron and the first to support dance. By 1967, Thompson was the Ford Foundation's senior program officer in the arts and humanities.

Thompson left the Ford Foundation to found and serve as president of the National Arts Stabilization Fund (NASF) in December 1983. The NASF was created with funding from the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation, to provide arts institutions with grants and fiscal management strategies. Thompson was responsible for all aspects of the NASF's operations including development of principles and policies, fundraising, project development and oversight, administration, planning, board relations and external affairs until 1991. She served as Chairman of the Executive Committee and Vice Chairman of the NASF from 1991-1993. Thompson was also a board member of the School of American Ballet, Theater for a New Audience and the Scherman Foundation. Marcia Thompson died in March 2018.

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Scope and Contents

The collection contains the personal and professional files of Marcia T. Thompson, longtime promoter of financial stabilization projects in the arts. The collection includes reports and correspondence related to the Trude Lash Fellowship Program, reports and correspondence from Thompson's time at the Ford Foundation, and financial reports, correspondence, and long-term planning materials from the National Arts Stabilization Fund (NASF). There are many files related to the School of American Ballet, the New York City Ballet, and arts stabilization projects in major cities across the United States.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged into three series:

- 1. Trude Lash Fellowship Program, 2004-2006
- 2. Personal Correspondence, Newsletters, and Reports, 1973-2004
- 3. Arts Stabilization Projects, 1936-2000

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue Sleepy Hollow 10591

archive@rockarch.org

URL: http://www.rockarch.org

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This material was transferred to the RAC in 2018 by Janet E. Merrill, Executor of the Marcia Thompson Estate, and was ingested by the RAC as Accession 2018:130.

Conditions Governing Access

Open for research with select materials restricted as noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC.

Processing Information

Standard processing by Katie Martin, February 2019.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

Ford Foundation records, Arts and Humanities Program Files, Marcia T. Thompson (FA1482) http://dimes.rockarch.org/FA1482/collection

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Controlled Access Headings

- Arts -- Finance
- Ballet
- Ballet companies -- United States -- Finance
- Ford Foundation
- Performing arts -- United States
- Symphony orchestras -- United States
- Theatre

Collection Inventory

Trude Lash Fellowship Program, 2004-2006			
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Lash - Steering Committee Minutes, 2004-2006	box 1	folder 2	
Lash - Selection Committee, 2005	box 1	folder 3	

Lash - Steering Committee, 2004-2005	box 1	folder 4	
Lash - Memorandum of Understanding for The Steering Committee of the Trude Lash Fellowship Program, 2005	box 1	folder 5	
Fund for Social Change, 2004	box 1	folder 6	
Lash - Application Materials, 2001-2006	box 1	folder 7-8	
Lash - Correspondence, Call for Applicants, Application Background Materials, 2004-2006	box 1	folder 9-10	

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Title/Description	Instances	
Arts Organizations Newsletters, Real Estate Documents, and Magazine Clippings, 1992-1999	box 1	folder 11
Scope and Contents		
Materials related to Central Park Views, the School of American Ballet, Park Avenue Real Estate Lyric Opera, Dartmouth Alumni, Theatre Communications Group, Corporate Council for the Arts, Campaign for Thirteen WNET		
Foundation Reports and Correspondence, 1989-1993	box 2	folder 12
Scope and Contents		
Includes: 1988 NACUBO Endowment Study: Executive Summary; Oregon Arts Commission; National Arts Stabilization Fund; Endowment Issues; Managing Foundation Assets, The Foundation Center; Council on Foundations; Managing Endowment Funds for Arts Organizations		
Endowments Issues, 1984-1991	box 2	folder 13
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Memo - Notes on Endowment Self-Evaluation Issues		
American Symphony Orchestra League Conference -1989		
NASF Spending Policy		
Articles Regarding Endowment Spending		
Special Report on the Finance Committee: The High Art of Strategic, Directors and Boards		
Personal Correspondence and Newsletters, 1995-2000	box 2	folder 14

Personal correspondence with David Hawkanson of the Guthrie Theater (MN) and Robert F. Branscombe

Clippings and materials related to the Hacienda Del Sol in Tucson

NASF Press Release - Opera/Columbus Awarded First Stabilization Grant

The New York Committee of the Garden Club of America newsleter, 2000

Guthrie Theater Report, 1996-1998 and news clippings

Museum of Fine Arts - Newsletters and Reports, 1975-1993	box 2	folder 15	
Danny Newman and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, 1991-2004	box 2	folder 16	
Scope and Contents			
File also includes 3 issues of The Livable City, A Publication of the Municipal Art Society (1991-1993)			
The Carlisle Project: A Center for Choreographic Development and Professional Ballet Studies, Barbara Weisberger, Artistic Director, 1993-1996	box 2	folder 17	
Danny Newman - Correspondence, Clippings, and Drafts (4	box 2	folder 18	
folders), 1981-2004 Scope and Contents	box 3	folder 19-21	
Note from folder: Danny Newman of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, good friend of Marcia, met doing stabilization of the arts			
Michael George, Freelance Photographer - Reviews in Publications and CV, 1973-1986	box 3	folder 22	
Michael George Photography - Photographic Book Projects - CV and Correspondence, 1988-1992	box 3	folder 23	

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Arts Stabilization Projects, 1936-2000

Scope and Contents

This series includes reports, correspondence, clippings, and speeches related to arts stabilization projects at the National Arts Stabilization Fund and various Ford Foundation programs. There are a number of reports and correspondence from Marcia Thompson's board membership with the School of American Ballet

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National Arts Stabilization Fund - List of Press Releases, 1993 December	box 3	folder 24	
National Arts Stabilization Fund - Investment and Financial Strategy Materials, 1986-1991	box 3	folder 25	
Ten Years of Service to Arts Organizations, National Arts Stabilization Fund, circa 1993	box 3	folder 26	
National Arts Stabilization Fund: The First Phase (2 copies), 1987	box 3	folder 27	
National Arts Stabilization in Arizona: A Report to the Community, The Flinn Foundation, circa 1997	box 3	folder 28	
National Arts Stabilization Fund - Arizona Project, 1993-1994	box 3	folder 29	
National Arts Stabilization Fund Seattle Program, 1994	box 4	folder 30	
The National Arts Stabilization Fund, Inc Meeting of the Finance Committee - Dec. 7, 1993, 1993	box 4	folder 31	
To-Do Lists, undated	box 4	folder 32	
National Arts Stabilization Fund Board of Directors Meetings and Grant Documents, 1993	box 4	folder 33	

Recommended Grant Actions Documents for:

Ballet Arizona

Phoenix Symphony Association

Maryland Institute, College of Art

Baltimore Opera Company, Inc.

Kansas City Art Institute

National Arts Stabilization Fund - Ford Foundation Symphony Orchestra Program Analysis, 1985-1987	box 4	folder 34	
National Arts Stabilization Fund - Mellon Foundation Analysis, 1987	box 4	folder 35	
National Arts Stabilization Fund - Reports and Correspondence with Grantees/Partner Organizations (2 folders), 1983-1992	box 4	folder 36-37	

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Folder 36:

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Boston University Theatre
Institute of Contemporary Art
New England Conservatory
Greater Boston Arts Fund
Massachsetts Council on the Arts and Humanities
Hall Family Foundations
Clearinghouse for Midcontinent Foundations
Arizona Academy
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Illinois Arts Foundation
Actors Theatre of Louisville
Albany Museum of Art
Alliance of Independent Colleges of Art
Amas Repertory Theatre
American Place Theatre
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BankAmerica Foundation
Berkely Repertory Theatre
The British Council
Brooklyn Academy of Music
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Department of Cultural Affairs, Chicago
Cincinnati Art Museum
Clear Lake Chamber Music Society

Handel and Hadyn Society

Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities
Colorado Music Festival
Opera Colorado
Colorado Philharmonic Orchestra
Colorado Springs Symphony
Community Foundation of Greater Washington (DC)
Contemporary Arts Museum (Houston)
D-Art Visual Art Center
Dayton Performing Arts Fund
The Duluth Playhouse
Ohio Arts Council
Eugene Arts Foundation
Eugene Ballet Company
Film Forum
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
The Edison Institute: Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village
Frederick Gash Foundation
Gannett Foundation
The Goodman Theatre
LaClaire Portraiture
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
Howard Heinz Endowment
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
The Dun and Bradstreet Corporation
Indiana Repertory Theatre
The James Irvine Foundation
The JBSpeed Art Museum

Just Causes				
Peter Kiewit Foundation				
Knight Foundation				
Knoxville Opera Company				
Samuel H. Kress Foundation				
La Mama Etc.				
Medicine Show Theatre Ense	emble			
Memphis Arts Council				
Miami City Ballet				
Middlesex County Cultural a	nd Heritage Commission			
Minnesota Council on Found	ations			
Music-Theatre Group				
National Public Radio				
Opera Theatre of Saint Louis				
Opinion Research Association	n, Inc.			
The Oram Group				
Orange County Performing A	arts Center			
Ordway Music Theatre				
National Dance Institute				
ATT Foundation				
Education and Culture Comm Results	nittee: A Supplement to Part II:			
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Denver Symphony Association		
Foundation for American Dance/City Center Joffrey Ballet		
Harlem School for the Arts		
The Loretto Hilton Repertory Theatre		
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- 2. Ballet Hispanico
- 3. Boys Choir of Harlem
- 4. Bronx Museum of the Arts
- 5. Caribbean Cultural Center
- 6. Dance Theatre of Harlem
- 7. El Museo del Barrio
- 8. Harlem School of the Arts
- 9. INTAR

- 10. Jamaica Arts Center
- 11. Jazzmobile
- 12. Pan Asian Repertory Theatre
- 13. Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre
- 14. Repertorio Espanol
- 15. Studio Museum in Harlem
- 16. New York City Project Committee
- 17. New York City Project Donors
- 18. Other

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- 1. Kansas City Art Institute
- 2. Kansas City Symphony
- 3. Lyric Opera of Kansas City
- 4. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
- 5. State Ballet of Missouri
- 6. Kansas City Project Committee
- 7. Kansas City Donors
- 8. Other

Boston Project Comments Binder

- 1. American Repertory Theatre
- 2. Boston Ballet
- 3. Boston CAMERATA
- 4. Boston Concert Opera
- 5. Boston Film/Video Foundation
- 6. Boston Shakespeare Company
- 7. Concert Dance Company
- 8. Danforth Museum of Art
- 9. DeCordova Museum and Dana Museum

- 10. Empire Brass Quintet
- 11. Fuller Museum of Art
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National Arts Stabilization Fund - Blank Year-to-Date Financial Highlight Summary Forms and Fiscal Year End Financial Highlight Summary Forms, Financial Statements, etc. (2 folders), 1989-1995	box 8	folder 68-69	
Rethinking Stabilization: Strengthening Arts Organizations During Times of Change: Discussion Draft, Prepared by Strategic Grantmaker Services, Jane Culbert, William Keens, Laura Lewis Mandeles, Thomas Wolf, 1995 May	box 8	folder 70	
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- 2. NASF Summary of Objectives
- 3. Summary of Impact and Advantages of Corporate and Foundation Support of NASF Strategy
- 4. National Response to Establishment of NASF
- 5. Greater Boston Arts Fund December 12, 1983 news release [excerpted]
- 6. GABF Officers and Members of the Board
- 7. Boston Stabilization Project: Commitment of Local Donors
- 8. Initial Reactions to Announcement of GBAF
- 9. NASF Preliminary Eligibility Requirements
- 10. The Stabilization Strategy: What It Is and How It Works

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- 3. The Stabilization Strategy
- 4. What NASF's Strategy Can Achieve
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Tab 15: Appendix H: Greater Boston Arts Fund 1983 Release [Excerpted Version], Initial Reaction to the Release:

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