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## Booklover: Off-Broadway

Donna Jacobs

donna.jacobs55@gmail.com

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## Collecting to the Core from page 49

the most recent releases, and doesn't have a representative collection for dance. It is, however, open access, which is a plus. A new bibliographic database hosted by the **Library of Congress (LOC)**, *Tap Dance in America*, is based on over twenty-five years of research by dance scholar **Constance Valis Hill** and includes information on the performance medium that can help in selection and procurement decisions (as well as adding a wealth of documentation).<sup>8</sup> Still, as helpful as it may be, there are no links to any digital video materials, and locating copies of the moving texts themselves, many of which are historical, may require a great deal of detective work. As *RCL* editor for Dance I not only rely on my subject matter expertise as a scholar, but I also reach out to colleagues in various subdisciplines for recommendations, especially those in ethnographic studies and/or genres with which I am less familiar (e.g., Bharatanatyam, African styles, tap). So, too, I use listservs and social media; I discovered the **LOC** tap bibliography through **Facebook!**

A final challenge with visual material in dance is the metadata provided by websites, databases, and the OPAC, which in turn affects my ability to provide *RCL* users with the bibliographic information necessary for acquiring materials. For example, even commercially available videos do not always have ISBN numbers, and although I try to provide **OCLC**

numbers, by doing so I am falling into the restriction dilemma I mentioned earlier, for this limits selection by virtue of the material/item having an **OCLC** number. As for streaming websites, I can only hope that they contain a URL that is a persistent link, so that *RCL* users can find them and circumvent a catalog maintenance nightmare. Production data such as dance title, publisher, and publication date can offer some assistance to users hoping to locate visual materials, but other metadata elements are at times more difficult to find and add. Individual choreographers, performers, date of original performance, date of performance captured on video, performance space, set/costume/light designers, composers, specific dances included on a video, alternate versions (new editions or a completely new version, as in the case of *The Dying Swan*): all of these elements and more are important to the study of dance. In fact, I believe that dance is one discipline that could use a FRBR-like concept to improve cataloging and metadata records.

With these and other challenges inherent in the inclusion of visual/moving texts in a dance collection, it might seem futile to try. But try we must, for as librarians we are in a position to provide infrastructure support for our constituents, even those who study the ephemeral art of dance. And as interactive databases, websites, digital materials, and other media enter into the mainstream of academic study in the sciences, arts, and humanities, tackling the challenges with video will help us as we move into the virtual library of the future. 🐾

### Endnotes

1. *Dance in Video*. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street Press. [http://alexanderstreet.com/products/dance-video-series\\*](http://alexanderstreet.com/products/dance-video-series*)
  2. *Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive*. Becket, MA: Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. <http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/>
  3. *Jerome Robbins Dance Division - Audio and Moving Image*, The New York Public Library. New York: New York Public Library Digital Collections. <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/divisions/jerome-robbins-dance-division-audio-and-moving-image>
  4. *Online Exhibition of the Dance Treasures*. Dance Heritage Coalition. <http://www.danceheritage.org/treasures.html>
  5. *DNB Online Digital Archive*. Dance Notation Bureau. <http://www.dancenotation.org/library/frame0.html>
  6. *EVIA Ethnographic Video for Instruction & Analysis Digital Archive*. Indiana University. <http://www.eviada.org/>
  7. **Pavlova, Anna**. Choreography by **Mikhail Fokine**. *The Dying Swan*. YouTube, 1:57. Accessed February 12, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMEB-FhVMZpU>
  8. **Hill, Constance Valis**. *Tap Dance in America: A Twentieth-Century Chronology of Tap Performance on Stage, Film, and Media*. Made available by the Library of Congress, Music Division. <https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/html/tda/tda-home.html>
- \*Editor's note: An asterisk (\*) denotes a title selected for *Resources for College Libraries*.

## Booklover — Off-Broadway

Column Editor: **Donna Jacobs** (Retired, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC 29425) <[donna.jacobs55@gmail.com](mailto:donna.jacobs55@gmail.com)>

When rewinding on some previous columns, I realized that “a little gem of a used book” is my routine description for “Great stories by Nobel Prize Winners” that I purchased from a second hand bookstore a while back. And it is. I come back to it often and each time I am intrigued. *A Man of Letters* by **François Mauriac** caught my attention and I begin to read. There is a bibliographic forward prior to each story. This one italicized paragraph is dense with information. As I learned about **Mauriac** — born in Bordeaux in 1885; considered a leading Catholic novelist of his century; served in World War I; awarded the Nobel Prize in 1952; and wrote a play that appeared off-Broadway to successful reviews in 1958. Wait, off-Broadway productions?

I am also currently reading *Alexander Hamilton* by **Ron Chernow** — the novel that was the inspiration for **Lin-Manuel Miranda's** sensational off-Broadway and now Broadway musical “Hamilton: An American Musical.” One of the principals in the show is **Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roche Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette**, or simply **Lafayette**. He and **Alexander Hamilton**

had some similarities in their respective timelines prior to when they met at that tumultuous point in American history and they established a close bond during the American Revolution. If you are unfamiliar with the musical sensation “Hamilton,” the entire performance is presented in rap and brilliantly crafted. The simple line: “Immigrants..... We get the job done” from the tune “Yorktown (The World Turned Upside Down)” sung by **Lafayette** and **Hamilton** is just one example of the one-point lyrics from **Miranda's** libretto. Frenchmen and off-Broadway, my reading choice in Nobel literature oddly always ties into my life.

**Mauriac's** story, however, is about a more elemental struggle — the one between a man and a woman. On the surface the story reads like a dime-story novel more suited for a day at the beach. A writer named Jerome; his fifteen-year paramour named Gabrielle; the affair with Berthe, the mother of sickly children; the intervention; the angst of the betrayed lover; the departure in a cab all are introduced to us by an unnamed third person, a friend whom Gabrielle not only confides in

but also entices to speak with Jerome on her behalf. However, **Mauriac** pushes the reader a little deeper. “Some books lay on a small table, but none had been opened for months. How on earth did this woman spend her evenings? No sort of reading could release her from herself; nothing her imagination prompted could prevail against what was torturing her. What creature of a poet's fantasy could succeed, even for one minute, in distracting her from the man who had deserted and betrayed her?”

**Mauriac** was presented the Nobel Prize in Literature “for the deep spiritual insight and the artistic intensity with which he has in his novels penetrated the drama of human life.” *A Man of Letters* captures this intensity very nicely. 🐾

*Author's Note: While reading about Mauriac I stumbled upon some quotes attributed to him. This one seemed especially apropos for the booklovers among us: “Tell me what you read and I'll tell you who you are is true enough, but I'd know you better if you told me what you reread.” — DJ*

