

Archiveography Scripts Editor Note

“It looks like the possibility exists to create a life-size photo from that picture and hang it over there,” David Gordon says, pointing to an area of the installation of his work at the Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center. The “possibility exists” – possibly the only tenet David Gordon adheres to.

When I was Curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, David Gordon and Alyce Dissette discussed with me the possibility of his archive coming to the Library for the Performing Arts. The possibility exists, David said, that he could be part of the process of examining his own archive. He could tell his history and annotate his videos. We were delighted to acquire his archive and to have the artist involved with identifying and adding context to his materials. When The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation offered to fund the digitizing and preservation of his videos, photographs, and papers, the project began in earnest. During this time, I retired as Curator and a few months later became the editor for what he calls the “scripts.”

When I joined the Gordon team, David Gordon had already assembled many of these scripts, which were arranged with text, photographs and images. David Gordon is an expert story-teller, with a mature and original voice and style, and a long, fascinating, and complex story to relate. The scripts contain, decade by decade, the story of his life and process. Throughout his career, incidents from his family, friends, films, novels, and past work, informed his new work and the scripts help illustrate his process. The scripts for the archive became a pillar of the website. This installation in the Vincent Astor Gallery of the Library for the Performing Arts grew out of this process of a living artist examining his archive. In the sixties and seventies David Gordon also designed windows to support his family and this installation reflects the style and innovation of that design element which was essential in each of his works. The Library offered the possibility for this installation to exist and David Gordon made it happen.

Jan Schmidt
Editor of scripts in David Gordon Archiveography
Retired Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division
The New York Public Library
for the Performing Arts

