

Michael Clark Company Cataloguing Project Archivist

Job description

Role/Title: Fixed-term Archivist
Reports to: Interim Executive Director
Liaise with: The Company's archival adviser

About Michael Clark Company

Hailed as “British dance’s true iconoclast”, Michael Clark is a defining cultural figure. Since emerging in the 1980s as a prodigy at London’s Royal Ballet School, he has remained at the forefront of innovation in dance, collaborating with such compelling artists as Sarah Lucas, Leigh Bowery, Peter Doig, Charles Atlas, Jarvis Cocker and The Fall – among many others – winning rave reviews and countless awards.

From the outset, Michael Clark’s performances have been marked by a mixture of technical rigour and experimentation, intense and fine-tuned choreography intersecting with elements of punk, Dada, pop and rock. His productions repeatedly break new ground, provoking and electrifying audiences. As *The Guardian* noted of a recent performance at the Barbican: “throughout the evening, the dancers’ prodigious command and affectless efficiency make them look superhuman.”

Michael Clark founded his own company in 1984. It has since toured worldwide to perform at leading houses in Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Australia, as well as on its home stage at the Barbican in London, where it has been a resident company since 2005. Michael Clark Company has introduced dance to new audiences by performing at unorthodox venues such as the Glastonbury Festival, the legendary Barrowland Ballroom in Glasgow and contemporary art museums, including Tate Modern in London and the Whitney Museum in New York, as well as through its collaborations with leading artists, fashion designers, musicians and filmmakers.

In October 2020 the first major exhibition on Michael Clark opened at the Barbican Art Gallery in London.

The Company archive spans the breadth of Michael’s career. It includes a large amount of audio-visual (digital and analogue) and photographic material, as well as publicity, programmes, articles, administrative files and some costume.

Overall Purpose of the Job:

This Archivist will be responsible for the packaging and cataloguing of the Michael Clark Company archive ahead of its transfer to a permanent home in a formal archive repository.

Duration

A full-time post for 12 months. This includes 25 working days paid annual leave plus bank holidays.

Location

The role is based at Surrey History Centre in Woking (part of Surrey County Council). However, the postholder will be expected to attend occasional meetings in central London for which travel expenses will be paid.

Salary

£30,000 plus costs for travelling to meetings in London.

Management of the post

The post holder will be an employee of Modern Masterpieces (trading as Michael Clark Company). This post does not have any link with Surrey Archives, which is purely providing storage and office accommodation ahead of the collection's move to a permanent home.

Key Responsibilities:

- To appraise and catalogue this collection of paper and audio-visual on to an Excel spreadsheet
- Assess the film collection (a mix of analogue and digital formats) to identify duplication and gaps as well as identifying analogue and digital preservation requirements and implementing very basic digital preservation activities as appropriate e.g. checksums, file format identification, back-ups, packaging
- Assess current digital company records to identify potential archival content for future addition to the archive
- Contribute to discussions around copyright and GDPR issues concerning access to the material
- To undertake stakeholder interviews with people associated with the Company and Michael Clark to capture their knowledge, enrich the catalogue and develop appropriate other resources e.g. oral testimony, essays
- To package the collection as required including ordering material
- Identify any conservation issues and where possible seek solutions to these
- To liaise with the repository to which the collection may move with regards to cataloguing structure, detail and other detail as appropriate
- To list and repack the costume with guidance from the repository
- Develop an estimate to digitise audio-visual content
- To provide regular updates to the Trustees of Michael Clark Company on the progress of the cataloguing project
- Undertake occasional outreach about the collection if that is considered appropriate by the Trustees e.g. blogs, public talks, magazine articles
- Liaise with Surrey History Centre to ensure professional storage and security of the collection and appropriate access to enable the cataloguing project
- Facilitating access to the collection for members of the Company

PERSON SPECIFICATION:**Minimum Skills, Knowledge and Experience:**

- A postgraduate qualification in Archives Administration/Management
- Experience of cataloguing medium-sized collections
- Experience of designing and implementing a cataloguing project for a medium-sized collection
- Experience of simple digital preservation techniques

Other Essential Skills, Knowledge and Experience:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work independently
- Proven ability to work with stakeholders notably depositors and other archival institutions
- Experience of dealing with copyright and GDPR issues
- Experience of working with Excel for cataloguing.
- Excellent planning and time management skills
- Strong project management skills able to complete tasks with a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.

- Experience of undertaking stakeholder interviews

Desirable Knowledge/Skills and Experience:

- General knowledge and interest in modern dance
- Experience of managing and cataloguing audio-visual collections
- Knowledge of digitisation of audio-visual material

Application details

To make an application please supply a CV and a covering letter outlining your skills and experience including:

- Cataloguing experience
- Experience of planning a cataloguing project for a medium-sized collection
- Experience of using Excel for cataloguing
- Why you would like to apply for this role
- Your availability for interview
- The name and contact details for one referee who can comment on your recent work as a cataloguing archivist.

Applications should be submitted to info@michaelclarkcompany.com by 5pm on Friday 11 February 2022. Remote interviews will be held on Friday 18 February 2022. The postholder will be expected to start work w/c 14 March 2022.

If you would like to know more about the post please contact Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan at elizabeth@elizabethoc.co.uk.