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Guide to the

Les Ballets nègres scrapbook

1946-1986 [bulk 1946-1953]

Sc MG 526

Home to Harlem Project funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Summary

Creator: Ballets nègres

Title: Les Ballets nègres scrapbook

Date: 1946-1986 [bulk 1946-1953]

Size: 0.21 linear feet (1 box)

Source: Gift, Richie Riley, March 1987

Revision History: This finding aid was updated by Allison Hughes.

Abstract: Les Ballets Nègres, the first Black ballet company in Europe, was established by dancer and choreographer Berto Pasuka in London in 1946. Pasuka (1911-1963), a Jamaican, directed the company throughout its existence and choreographed ballets that dealt with African/Caribbean traditions and Black/white relationships, among them "De Prophet," based on an actual incident that occurred in Jamaica, "They Came," "Aggrey," "Market Day," and "Cabaret-1920." Music for the ballets was composed by Leonard Salzedo and often incorporated African drumming. The company was comprised of dancers from the West Indies, West Africa, England, and the U.S., and received critical acclaim throughout England, and also performed in Paris, Scotland, and Nova Scotia. The Ballets Nègres scrapbook contains photocopied photographs of performances and photocopied and original news clippings of reviews and programs. Included is a brief history of the company and a statement that discusses the reason it came into being, what it achieved, and why it disbanded written by Richard Riley, who was with the company throughout its existence and donated the scrapbook.

Preferred citation: [Item], Les Ballets nègres scrapbook, Sc MG 526, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Creator History

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Scope and Content Note

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Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet companies -- Europe
Dance companies -- Europe
Dance, Black

Occupations

Ballet dancers -- Europe
Dancers -- Europe

Names

Pasuka, Berto
Ballets nègres