



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Michel Fokine papers**

1914-1941

(S) \*MGZMC-Res. 11

Processed by Marion Kahn.

## Summary

**Creator:** Fokine, Michel, 1880-1942

**Title:** Michel Fokine papers

**Date:** 1914-1941

**Size:** Approximately 52 items

**Source:** Gift of Vitale Fokine. Material received on: June 1963.

**Abstract:** Papers of the choreographer, dancer and teacher, including letters from Arnold L. Haskell, Cyril W. Beaumont, Sara Yancey Belknap, Alexander Levitoff and others, also essays and articles by Fokin and others, bookplates, calling cards and miscellaneous items.

**Access:** Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:  
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

**Preferred citation:** Fokin, Mikhail Mikhailovich, 1880-1942 Papers, (S) \*MGZMC-Res.-11, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** In English, French and Russian English

**Processing note:** Processed by Marion Kahn.

## Creator History

Mikhail Fokine, Russian dancer, choreographer, teacher, and ballet director, was born in St. Petersburg May 5, 1880. He was trained at the Imperial Theatre School, St. Petersburg where he graduated in 1898. He was a dancer and choreographer at the Maryinsky Theatre and teacher at the Imperial Theatre School. His choreography for the Maryinsky included *The Dying Swan* for Anna Pavlova and *Le Pavillion d'Armide*. From 1909-1912, Fokine was chief choreographer for Ballets Russes of Serge Diaghilev, producing such works as *Polovtsian Dances*, *Les Sylphides*, *Cléopâtre*, *Le Carnaval*,

*Sheherazade*, *Firebird*, and *Le Spectre de la Rose*. Leaving Diaghilev in 1912, and eventually Russia, in 1918, he pursued work, mainly in Scandinavia, before settling in New York in 1923. As a free-lance choreographer and dancer, often with his wife Vera Fokina (née Antonova), he worked for the Metropolitan Opera House, Hippodrome, and the Ziegfeld Follies, and in other cities such as Boston and Philadelphia. He continued to recreate his older works and stage new ones in Europe and South America. Founder of the Fokine School in New York City in 1921, he and Fokina had one son, Vitale who became a ballet teacher. Fokine died in New York, August 22, 1942.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Papers of the choreographer, dancer and teacher, including letters from Arnold L. Haskell, Cyril W. Beaumont, Sara Yancey Belknap, Alexander Levitoff and others, also essays and articles by Fokin and others, bookplates, calling cards and miscellaneous items. Material written in English, Russian and French

### **Key Terms**

#### **Subjects**

Manuscripts -- Collections

#### **Names**

Fokine, Michel, 1880-1942

Beaumont, Cyril W. (Cyril William), 1891-1976

Belknap, S. Yancey (Sara Yancey)

Haskell, Arnold L. (Arnold Lionel), 1903-1980

Levitoff, Alexander

## Container List

### I. Letters

- f. 1. Various correspondents to Mikhail Fokin. 1930 Aug. 8-1936 June 4
- f. 2. Various correspondents to Mikhail Fokin. 1936 June 5-1941 Nov. 25
- f. 3. Miscellaneous material: envelopes, clippings, bookplates, hotel bills, 1 calling card, 1 invitation.

### II. Essays and Articles by Mikhail Fokin.

- f. 4. "The New Russian Ballet-Conventions in Dancing-M. Fokine's Principles and Aims." From "The Times" of London Monday, 1914 July 6. (4 p.)
- f. 5. "The New Ballet" (from the Russian magazine "Argus" 1916 Nov. 1. (22 p.)
- f. 6. "The Dance is Poetry Without Words" New York 1924. (6 p.)
- f. 7. "A Sad Art" New York City. Sunday, 1931 Mar. 1. (6 p.)
- f. 8. "The Central European Dance" ("Is Modernism Modern") 7 p. (carbon) 1931 Mar.
- f. 9. "Sex Appeal in Dance" 1932 Sept. [UNK (1 p.)
- f. 10. "Dilettantism in the Dance" New York. 1932 Nov. 20. (4 p.)
- f. 11. "Art does not enrich modern life..." n.d. (1 p.)
- f. 12. "Fokine v. Susini" n.d. (2 p.)
- f. 13. "Editor of the "Musical America" 3 p. (carbon) n.d.
- f. 14. "How a legend is created" and "The Diaghileff file." (Dictated to Vitale Fokine in July 1961. Originally intended to be published in "Dance Magazine" but was never used.)