



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Louis Horst papers

1935-1964

(S) *MGZMD 57

Processed by Marcia Ethel Hicks.

Summary

Creator: Horst, Louis

Title: Louis Horst papers

Date: 1935-1964

Size: 116 items in 14 folders

Source: Gift of Louis L. Hember. Received: November 8, 1976.

Abstract: The Louis Horst Papers document his professional, and primarily his personal, life from 1962 to 1964. There are, however, letters and contractual information dating back as early as 1935 and 1959. The importance of this collection lies in its personal nature. The appreciation, gratitude, and honor bestowed upon Horst by students, contemporaries, supporters, and friends is repeated again and again in the correspondence written to him. The content consists mainly of correspondence to Horst by friends, such as Gertrude Lippincott, and dance associates, such as Harriet Berg. There is also correspondence from relatives, primarily May, his sister, George, her husband, and Betty, Horst's wife.

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: Horst, Louis, 1884-1964. Papers, (S) *MGZMD 57, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Marcia Ethel Hicks.

Creator History

Louis Horst was born to Conrad and Leva Horst on the twelfth of January, 1884, in Kansas City, Missouri. Horst began to study piano at an early age. He became a professional accompanist, playing

for silent films, stock theater companies, Broadway rehearsals, and later for many of the modern dance personalities of the thirties and forties. In 1915, Horst joined the Denishawn Company as accompanist; his wife, Betty, was a member of the company. He remained with Denishawn until 1925. There he met, among others, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Martha Graham. Horst later collaborated with these second generation modern dance pioneers as accompanist, composer and teacher of choreography. Leaving Denishawn with Martha Graham, Horst composed several of Graham's early group works: *Primitive Mysteries*(1931), *Frontier*(1935), and *El Penitente*(1940). He also wrote scores for other dance artists, for dance classes and for publication. He taught the art of choreography at the Neighborhood Playhouse, several colleges such as the Juilliard School of Music and Connecticut College, and in workshops around the country. In 1934, Horst founded a major dance periodical, *The Dance Observer*. This magazine was a voice through which modern dance spoke. He and the other writers volunteered their knowledge, experience, and time to the critical review of modern dance concerts and recitals. Horst also published two books, *Pre-Classical Dance Forms*(1937) and *Modern Dance Forms*(1960). Aside from Horst's musical, literary, and aesthetic criticism of modern dance performances, he "managed to train at least half of the choreographers now producing." His students include Anna Sokolow, Meredith Monk, Yvonne Rainer, and Lucinda Childs. Louis Horst was granted many awards, including the Capezio Award and an honorary degree from Wayne State University in 1964.

Scope and Content Note

The Louis Horst Papers document his professional, and primarily his personal, life from 1962 to 1964. There are, however, letters and contractual information dating back as early as 1935 and 1959. The importance of this collection lies in its personal nature. The appreciation, gratitude, and honor bestowed upon Horst by students, contemporaries, supporters, and friends is repeated again and again in the correspondence written to him. The content consists mainly of correspondence to Horst by friends, such as Gertrude Lippincott, and dance associates, such as Harriet Berg. There is also correspondence from relatives, primarily May, his sister, George, her husband, and Betty, Horst's wife.

Arrangement: I. Personal Memorabilia II. Correspondence III. Documents - Business and Legal IV. Notes V. Miscellaneous

Key Terms

Titles

Gift of Louis L. Humber

Subjects

Manuscripts -- Collections

Names

Horst, Louis

Container List

I. Personal Memorabilia (10 items, 1 folder)

- f. 1 Birth Certificate (1 item)
- f. 1 Marriage Certificate (1 item)
- f. 1 Social Security Card (1 item)
- f. 1 Passport 1925 (1 item)
- f. 1 Draft Registration Certificate (1 item)
- f. 1 War Dept. Local Board Card (1 item)
- f. 1 War Ration Books (3 Items)
- f. 1 Membership Card, A.F. of M., Local 802 (1 item)

II. Correspondence (11 items, 1 folder)

[to Horst unless specified]

Arrangement: chronological, with correspondent given

A. Personal - Family

- f. 2 May 11/25/62 - (1 item)
- f. 2 May 12/26/62 - (1 item)
- f. 2 May 1/5/63 - (1 item)
- f. 2 May 7/15/63 - (1 item)
- f. 2 Betty 11/2/63 - (1 item)
- f. 2 [?] - Betty 12/20/63 (1 item)
- f. 2 May 1/11/64 - (1 item)
- f. 2 Betty 1964 - (1 item)
- f. 2 May n.d. - (3 Items)

B. Personal - Friends (45 items, 3 folders)

- f. 3 John Patterson 9/17/54 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Pauline Mitchell Murray 8/18/56 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Abbott Fraser 12/19/58 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Ruth "Rusty" Bloomer 1/12/59 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Ernestine Stodelle 1960 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Margery Turner 6/23/61 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Miriam Bleamaster Lidster 8/22/62 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Sylvia 10/24/62 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Dorothy Madden 11/12/62 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Genevieve 12/6/62 - (1 item)
- f. 3 Renate Schottelius 12/20/62 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Walter Sorell 1/11/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Loyce Houlton 1/21/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Anne Douglas Doucet 1/22/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Ximenez Vargas 1/23/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Ernestine Stodelle 3/5/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Gertrude Lippincott 11/6/63 - (1 item)

II. Correspondence (cont.)

B. Personal - Friends (cont.)

- f. 4 Warrine Eastburn 12/15/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Paul Morrison 12/18/63 - (1 item)
- f. 4 George Jackson 1/13/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Gertrude Lippincott 1/13/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Carroll Russell 1/14/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Anne douglas Doucet 1/15/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Elsa Rainer 1/15/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Marie Heghinian 1/18/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Marian Seldes 1/20/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Virginia B. Janes 1/20/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Gertrude Lippincott 1/20/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Arden & Wilfrid 1/21/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Mary V.C. Willis 1/21/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 Harriet Berg 1/22/64 - (1 item)
- f. 4 B.B. Ward 2/14/64 - (1 item)
- n.d
- f. 5 Beatrice Paipert (1 item)
- f. 5 Barbara & George Beiswanger (1 item)
- f. 5 Eileen D. Cohan (1 item)
- f. 5 Harriet [Berg] (1 item)
- f. 5 Eli (1 item)
- f. 5 Portia Mansfield (1 item)
- f. 5 Laura Sheleen [?] (1 item)
- f. 5 Shirley (1 item)
- f. 5 Iris Mabry (1 item)
- f. 5 Carmen Rooker (1 item)
- f. 5 Anne Douglas Doucet (1 item)
- f. 5 Jeanette (1 item)
- f. 5 Diane Sherer, Jennifer Muller, Kathy Posin, Linda Tolbert (1 item)

C. Business (4 items, 1 folder)

- f. 6 Jean Pyatt 7/30/62 - (1 item)
- f. 6 Jean Pyatt 8/27/62 - (1 item)
- f. 6 Mary McPartland 1/22/64 - (1 item)
- f. 6 Louis Himber 11/8/76 - (1 item)
(to Genevieve Oswald)

III. Documents - Business and Legal (5 items, 2 folders)

- f. 7 Contract with Samuel French, music for Noah 11/27/35 (1 item)
Royalty Agreements
- f. 7 "Three South American Dances" 4/29/59 (1 item)
- f. 7 "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain" 5/26/59 (1 item)
- f. 7 El Penitente 3/8/60 (1 item)

III. Documents - Business and Legal (cont.)

- f. 8 Certificate of Incorporation, The Dance Observer 8/31/1960 (1 item)

IV. Notes

Compositional and Choreographic Ideas (32 items, 3 folders)

- f. 9 Fantasy and Variations (12 Items)
- f. 10 Out of the Rolling Ocean (10 Items)
- f. 11 Unidentified Works (10 Items)
- f. 12 Music, Dance, Criticism (4 Items)

V. Miscellaneous (5 items, 2 folders)

- f. 13 Class/Student Lists (2 Items)
- f. 14 Photo, unidentified elderly woman (1 item)
- f. 14 Clipping, John Martin on dance in California (1 item)
- f. 14 Drawing (1 item)