



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**David Libidins papers**

circa 1936-1958

(S) \*MGZMD 61

Processed by Sally Bomer.

## Summary

**Creator:** Libidins, David, approximately 1899-1958

**Title:** David Libidins papers

**Date:** circa 1936-1958

**Size:** 1523 items in 198 folders

**Source:** Gift of Mrs. Lincoln J. Herzeca (niece of Libidins). Received: 1989.

**Abstract:** The David Libidins Papers document his professional life from 1936 to 1958. Although primarily concerned with his roles as administrator and artists' manager, Libidins' correspondence reflects frequent crossovers between professional relationships and personal friendships. He was widely known as a man for whom there was no separation between the two spheres.

**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:** Libidins, David, c.1899-1958. Papers, (S) \*MGZMD 61, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** In English, French, and Russian with some Italian and German. The papers document Libidins' career as administrator for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo from 1938 to 1943 and manager for individual performers, including Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch. The collection includes correspondence with Sergei Denham, Leonide Massine, René Blum, Sol Hurok, Jacques Rubinstein and others relating to the purchase of Blum's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the formation of the new Ballet Russe in 1938. Much of the collection documents the long personal and professional relationship between Libidins and Youskevitch English

**Processing note:** Processed by Sally Bomer.

## **Creator History**

David Savelevich Libidins was born in c. 1899 in Istanbul (then Constantinople) of Russian parents. He studied voice in Moscow, and after serving in the Russian army in World War I, toured Europe performing with opera companies and in other theatrical shows. In the early 1930's, Libidins took an administrative position with Sol Hurok, handling the U.S. tours of the de Basil Ballet Russe. In 1938, he became administrative director of the newly formed Denham-Massine Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and retained this position until 1943 when he became an independent manager. Except for a brief period in 1943 when he served as administrative director for Ballet Theatre, Libidins maintained his own firm until his death, with a clientele that included the Ballet Russe, Alicia Alonso in her guest appearances with Igor Youskevitch, Teresa and Luisillo's Ballet Espagnol, Vladimir Horowitz, and the harpsichordist Wanda Landowska. In 1946, Libidins began a long-standing professional and personal relationship with Igor Youskevitch, as his manager and deep-sea fishing partner. David Libidins died on December 22, 1958.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The David Libidins Papers document his professional life from 1936 to 1958. Although primarily concerned with his roles as administrator and artists' manager, Libidins' correspondence reflects frequent crossovers between professional relationships and personal friendships. He was widely known as a man for whom there was no separation between the two spheres. In English, French and Russian with some Italian and German.

**Arrangement:** I. World Art/Universal Art II. Igor Youskevitch III. Manuscripts/Diaries IV. Miscellaneous

## **Key Terms**

### **Titles**

Gift of Mrs. Lincoln J. Herzeca

### **Subjects**

Manuscripts -- Collections

### **Names**

Libidins, David, approximately 1899-1958

Youskevitch, Igor, 1912-1994

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

## Container List

### I. World Art/Universal Art (622 items)

The first series of the collection (622 items) contains papers relating to World Art, Inc., later known as Universal Art, Inc. Correspondence with and between Sergei Denham, Leonide Massine, Rene Blum, Sol Hurok, Jacques Rubinstein and others, documents the purchase of Blum's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the formation of the new Ballet Russe in 1938. As all papers are arranged chronologically, an alphabetical list of frequent and/or important correspondents is included in the register. It should be noted that the correspondents frequently use nicknames: "Libby", "Smith" and "Clifford Smith" for Libidins; and "Clyde" for Sergei Denham.

#### A. Correspondence (533 items)

- f. 1 1936 (10 Items)
- f. 2 1937 Jan.-Mar (16 Items)
- f. 3 Apr (9 Items)
- f. 4 May (13 Items)
- f. 5-8 June (54 Items)
- f. 9-10 July (31 Items)
- f. 11-13 Aug (51 Items)
- f. 14-15 Sept (21 Items)
- f. 16-17 Oct (16 Items)
- f. 18-19 Nov (17 Items)
- f. 20-22 Dec (35 Items)
- f. 23 1938 Jan.-Feb (14 Items)
- f. 24 Apr., Dec (5 Items)
- f. 25 1939 Mar. (6 Items)
- f. 26-31 Apr (85 Items)
- f. 32-39 May (109 Items)
- f. 40-41 June (20 Items)
- f. 42 July (5 Items)
- f. 43 Dec (6 Items)
- f. 44 1940-1947 (9 Items)
- f. 45 n.d (1 Item)

#### B. Company Records (82 items)

- f. 46-49 Contracts 1937-1939 (20 Items)  
Sample artist's; Massine's; purchase of BRMC from Blum
- f. 50-53 Memoranda 1937-1939, n.d. (23 Items)  
Executive Committee minutes; phone conversation notes; Massine's and de Basil's role in formation of BRMC; info. re Dolin's and Danilova's contracts; miscellaneous
- f. 54 Performance Records 1936-1955 (7 Items)  
Itineraries; statistics
- f. 55-58 Financial 1936-1955 (32 Items)  
Incl. orchestra payroll  
58 is oversize envelope

I. World Art/Universal Art (cont.)

- f. 59-60 C. Miscellaneous (4 Items)  
Incl. "Diaghileff's Repertoire, 1909-29"; scenario of "Le Diable s'amuse"
- D. Patron Lists (3 items)
- f. 61-84 New York City (1 Item)
- f. 85 New York and East Coast cities (1 Item)
- f. 86-93 National (1 Item)

II. Igor Youskevitch (886 items)

The second series of papers (886 items), relating to Igor Youskevitch, trace the long personal and professional relationship between the two, from 1941 to 1958. The correspondence, while largely relating to tours, contracts, etc., often has updates on Youskevitch's family, including his wife, the dancer Anna Scarpova. The financial papers include many exchanges with the accountant Isador Magidoff, and income tax preparations for Youskevitch.

A. Correspondence (629 items)

- f. 94 1941 (1 Item)
- f. 95-96 1943 (8 Items)
- f. 97 1944 Jan. (12 Items)
- f. 98 Feb.-Mar (11 Items)
- f. 99 Apr (9 Items)
- f. 100 May-July (7 Items)
- f. 101-102 Aug (16 Items)
- f. 103 1944 Sept.-Dec (17 Items)
- f. 104 1945 Jan.-May (3 Items)
- f. 105 Aug (12 Items)
- f. 106 Sept.-Nov (12 Items)
- f. 107 Dec., n.d (12 Items)
- f. 108 1946 Jan. (6 Items)
- f. 109 Feb (10 Items)
- f. 110 Mar (4 Items)
- f. 111-112 Apr (21 Items)
- f. 113-114 May (21 Items)
- f. 115 June (8 Items)
- f. 116 July (18 Items)
- f. 117 Aug (8 Items)
- f. 118 Sept (2 Items)
- f. 119 Oct (4 Items)
- f. 120 Nov (10 Items)
- f. 121 Dec., n.d (12 Items)
- f. 122 1947 Jan. (11 Items)
- f. 123-124 Feb (15 Items)
- f. 125 Mar (12 Items)
- f. 126-128 Apr (40 Items)
- f. 129-130 May (22 Items)

II. Igor Youskevitch (cont.)  
A. Correspondence (cont.)

- f. 131 June (10 Items)
- f. 132 Aug (5 Items)
- f. 133 Sept (8 Items)
- f. 134-135 Oct (20 Items)
- f. 136 1947 Nov. (12 Items)
- f. 137-138 Dec., n.d (33 Items)
- f. 139-140 1948 Jan. (28 Items)
- f. 141-142 Feb (11 Items)
- f. 143-144 Mar (15 Items)
- f. 145 Apr (4 Items)
- f. 146 May (9 Items)
- f. 147-148 June (24 Items)
- f. 149 July, n.d (9 Items)
- f. 150 1949 (5 Items)
- f. 151 1950 (2 Items)
- f. 152 1951-1953 (8 Items)
- f. 153-157 1955 (35 Items)
- f. 158-162 1956 (40 Items)

B. Financial (213 items)

- f. 163 1943 (3 Items)
- f. 164-165 1944 (16 Items)
- f. 166 1945 (3 Items)
- f. 167 1946 (11 Items)
- f. 168 1947 (5 Items)
- f. 169 1948 (16 Items)
- f. 170 1949 (7 Items)
- f. 171-173 1950 (35 Items)
- f. 174-176 1951 (31 Items)
- f. 177 1952 (16 Items)
- f. 178 1953 (11 Items)
- f. 179-180 1954 (15 Items)
- f. 181-182 1955 (15 Items)
- f. 183 1956 (10 Items)
- f. 184 1957 (5 Items)
- f. 185 1958 (11 Items)
- f. 186 n.d (3 Items)

- f. 187-188 C. Touring/Promotional Materials (24 Items)  
Itineraries, press releases, biographies

- f. 189-190 D. Miscellaneous (20 Items)  
Incl. Navy memoranda; poem dedicated to Youskevitch

### III. Manuscripts/Diaries (2 items)

Includes A manuscript and diary written by Libidins (the third series of the collection, 2 items), present a more anecdotal description of the Ballet Russe, as well as offering insights into Libidins' own character.

f. 191-192    A. Manuscript (1 Item)

f. 193-197    B. Diary 1938-1955 (1 Item)

### IV. Miscellaneous (13 items)

The fourth series contains 13 miscellaneous items.

f. 198    Notes for 1942 Ballet Theatre contracts (11 Items)

(Anton Dolin, Andre Eglevsky, Stanley Herbert, Yura Lazovsky, Alicia Markova, Simon Semenovff); apartment lease; Alicia Alonso's bank statement and cancelled checks; autographed piano music

f. non-folded    Photographs mounted on wood (2 Items)