



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Selma Jeanne Cohen papers relating to teaching/critical writing projects**

1965-1973

(S) \*MGZMD 62

Processed by Henley Haslam.

## Summary

**Creator:** Cohen, Selma Jeanne, 1920-2005

**Title:** Selma Jeanne Cohen papers relating to teaching/critical writing projects

**Date:** 1965-1973

**Size:** 3 document boxes 96 folders

**Source:** Gift of Selma Jeanne Cohen. Received: 1973.

**Abstract:** Selma Jeanne Cohen is an author, editor, lecturer, and teacher, and the records of several of her teaching projects comprise the bulk of this collection. From 1965-1969, at the Connecticut College School of Dance, (which became the American Dance Festival in 1969), she taught or lectured on dance history or writing on dance, classes which were open to all students at the summer school. The Critics' Conferences, 1970-1972, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and held during the Connecticut College - American Dance Festivals, were for a select group of professional critics, to train them in "the skills of describing and evaluating dance." The National Critics Institutes were sponsored by the O'Neill Foundation, to provide "intensive on-the-job training for young critics," and Cohen taught there during the summers of 1969, 1971 and 1972.

**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:** Selma Jeanne Cohen Papers, (S)\*MGZMD 62, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Henley Haslam.

## Creator History

Selma Jeanne Cohen was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1920. She received an A.A. degree from Stephens College and an A.B., M.A., and Ph.D. (in English) from the University of Chicago. She received her dance education from Edna McRae, Eugene Loring, Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, and Jose Limon. She has been active as an author, editor, lecturer, and teacher. Cohen was managing and associate editor of the monograph *Dance Perspectives* from its founding in 1960 until 1965 and editor from 1965 until its demise in 1976. She is the author of articles in numerous publications, journals, encyclopedias, and anthologies. She is also the author or editor of numerous books, including *The Modern Dance: Seven Statements of Belief* (1966), *Doris Humphrey, An Artist First* (1972), and *Next Week, Swan Lake: Reflections on Dance and Dancers* (1982). Cohen has taught courses in dance history and critical writing at colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. She was Founder-Director of the University of Chicago Seminars in Dance History (1974-1976), a three-week course which was the first intensive seminar on dance history. She was Founder-Director of the Connecticut College American Dance Festival Critics' Conferences (1970-1972), which she began as a forum to permit professional dance critics from around the country to discuss common artistic and journalistic problems, to develop writing skills, and to attend a range of dance performances. Among the awards and honors received by Cohen have been a Rockefeller Foundation Research Grant (1969), the Professional Achievement Award, University of Chicago (1974), the American Dance Guild Award (1976), and the Dance Magazine Award (1981). She was a charter member of the Dance Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts (1966-1971). Selma Jeanne Cohen is currently the editor of the first comprehensive multi-volume reference work on dance, the *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, to be published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Selma Jeanne Cohen is an author, editor, lecturer, and teacher, and the records of several of her teaching projects comprise the bulk of this collection. From 1965-1969, at the Connecticut College School of Dance, (which became the American Dance Festival in 1969), she taught or lectured on dance history or writing on dance, classes which were open to all students at the summer school. The Critics' Conferences, 1970-1972, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and held during the Connecticut College - American Dance Festivals, were for a select group of professional critics, to train them in "the skills of describing and evaluating dance." The National Critics Institutes were sponsored by the O'Neill Foundation, to provide "intensive on-the-job training for young critics," and Cohen taught there during the summers of 1969, 1971 and 1972.||||Throughout the Folder List, SJC refers to Selma Jeanne Cohen.

**Arrangement:** I. Connecticut College School of Dance and American Dance Festival A. 1965-1968 B. 1969 Course: Writing on Dance C. List of Films II. Connecticut College Women's Dance Festival - Critics' Festival A. 1970 B. 1971 C. 1972 D. 1973 III. O'Neill Foundation - National Critics Institute A. 1969 B. 1971 C. 1972 IV. Alverno College - Symposium on Careers in Dance

### **Key Terms**

#### **Titles**

Gift of Selma Jeanne Cohen

#### **Subjects**

Manuscripts -- Collections

#### **Names**

Cohen, Selma Jeanne, 1920-2005

Connecticut College. School of Dance

Critics' Conference. American Dance Festival (Connecticut College)

Eugene O'Neill Foundation

## Container List

### I. Connecticut College School of Dance and American Dance Festival

The Connecticut College School of Dance - American Dance Festival Series (I, 14 folders) contains correspondence with the college (arranged chronologically), some writings of the students, and various brochures, schedules of classes and events, rosters, and minutes of faculty meetings. There are also lists of dance films which were used to make selections for a film series.

#### A. 1965-1968

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence
- b. 1 f. 2 Writings of Students 1967
- b. 1 f. 3 Directory; Class Lists
- b. 1 f. 4 Minutes: Faculty Meetings
- b. 1 f. 5 Schedules
- b. 1 f. 6 Misc.

#### B. 1969 Course: Writing on Dance

- b. 1 f. 7-8 Correspondence
- b. 1 f. 9 Writings of Students
- b. 1 f. 10 Minutes: Faculty Meetings
- b. 1 f. 11 Schedules
- b. 1 f. 12 Directory
- b. 1 f. 13 Misc.

#### C. List of Films

- b. 1 f. 14 List of Films

### II. Connecticut College American Dance Festival - Critics' Conferences

The Connecticut College American Dance Festival - Critics' Conferences Series (II, 69 folders) is subdivided chronologically by year. It includes correspondence with the college and the sponsor, arranged chronologically, and it contains folders on each participant, arranged alphabetically by name. Under each participant, the "Application" subseries usually contains correspondence arranged chronologically, the application form, letters of recommendation, and examples of the applicant's critical writing which often includes published reviews of dance performances. The "Writings" subseries contains assignments written during the conference and often clippings of reviews published during that time.

#### A. 1970

##### Correspondence

- b. 1 f. 15 National Endowment for the Arts
  - b. 1 f. 16 Recruiting
  - b. 1 f. 17 Beiswanger, George
  - b. 1 f. 18 General
  - b. 1 f. 19 Grant Application and Report (NEA)
  - b. 1 f. 20 Roster
- ##### Participants
- Bunger, Melody (Peterson)
  - b. 1 f. 21 Application
  - b. 1 f. 22 Writings

## II. Connecticut College American Dance Festival - Critics' Conferences (cont.)

## A. (cont.)

## Participants (cont.)

Earle, Anitra

b. 1 f. 23 Application

Mueller, John

b. 1 f. 24 Application

b. 1 f. 25 Writings

Roos, Jim

b. 1 f. 26 Application

b. 1 f. 27 Writings

Shapiro, Laura

b. 1 f. 28 Application

b. 1 f. 29 Writings

Winer, Linda

b. 2 f. 30 Application

b. 2 f. 31 Writings

b. 2 f. 32 Schedules

b. 2 f. 33 Misc.

## B. 1971

## Correspondence

b. 2 f. 34 National Endowment for the Arts

b. 2 f. 35-36 Recruiting

b. 2 f. 37 Monahan, James

b. 2 f. 38 General

## Participants

Aupy, Monique

b. 2 f. 39 Correspondence

Bond, Crystelle T.

b. 2 f. 40 Application

b. 2 f. 41 Writings

Carter, Curtis

b. 2 f. 42 Application

b. 2 f. 43 Writings

Cohen, Susan

b. 2 f. 44 Application

b. 2 f. 45 Writings

Daniels, Susan

b. 2 f. 46 Application

b. 2 f. 47 Writings

Giffin, Glenn

b. 2 f. 48 Application

b. 2 f. 49 Writings

Hale, Lewis David

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II. Connecticut College American Dance Festival - Critics' Conferences (cont.)

## B. (cont.)

## Participants (cont.)

Hale, Lewis David (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 50 Application
- b. 2 f. 51 Writings
- Hertelendy, Paul
- b. 2 f. 52 Application
- b. 2 f. 53 Writings
- Morner, Kathleen
- b. 2 f. 54 Application
- b. 2 f. 55 Writings
- Shelton, Suzanne
- b. 2 f. 56 Application
- b. 2 f. 57 Writings
- b. 2 f. 58 Schedules
- b. 2 f. 59 Unidentified Notes
- b. 2 f. 60-61 Misc.

## C. 1972

## Correspondence

- b. 3 f. 62 National Endowment for the Arts
- b. 3 f. 63-64 Recruiting
- b. 3 f. 65 General
- b. 3 f. 66 Roster
- Participants
- Allen, Zita
- b. 3 f. 67 Application
- b. 3 f. 68 Writings
- Chiavaroli, Linda
- b. 3 f. 69 Application
- b. 3 f. 70 Writings
- Goldberg, Jane Nedda
- b. 3 f. 71 Application
- b. 3 f. 72 Writings
- Jacoby, Thomas Kent
- b. 3 f. 73 Application
- b. 3 f. 74 Writings
- Littler, William
- b. 3 f. 75 Writings
- Martin, Robert Lee
- b. 3 f. 76 Application
- b. 3 f. 77 Writings
- Restivo, Valerie
- b. 3 f. 78 Application
- b. 3 f. 79 Writings

II. Connecticut College American Dance Festival - Critics' Conferences (cont.)

C. (cont.)

b. 3 f. 80 Teaching Materials

b. 3 f. 81 Misc.

D. 1973

Correspondence

b. 3 f. 82 Recruiting: Mailing List, Inquiries

b. 3 f. 83 "Pending"

III. O'Neill Foundation - National Critics Institute

The O'Neill Foundation - National Critics Institute Series (III, 12 folders) is subdivided by years. It contains some correspondence, arranged chronologically, and writing assignments by the students, arranged alphabetically by name.

A. 1969

b. 3 f. 84 Correspondence

b. 3 f. 85 Roster

Writings of Participants

b. 3 f. 86 Bannon, Anthony

b. 3 f. 87 Fain, Nathan

b. 3 f. 88 Kreisberg, Louisa

b. 3 f. 89 Noth, Dominique Paul

b. 3 f. 90 Steele, Mike

b. 3 f. 91 Taylor, Robert

b. 3 f. 92 SJC Notes and Memos

b. 3 f. 93 Misc.

B. 1971

b. 3 f. 94 Writings of Participants

[includes Curcio, Chris Davis, Curt DeVine, Lawrence Fischer, Ruth]

C. 1972

b. 3 f. 95 Writings of Participants

[includes Carroll, ? Lague, ? Neville, John Nickell, Tom Raspanti, Celeste]

IV. Alverno College - Symposium on Careers in Dance

The Alverno College - Symposium on Careers in Dance Series (IV, 1 folder) contains only a few items of correspondence about Cohen's participation in 1972 and a letter of agreement.

b. 3 f. 96 A. Correspondence