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Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Selma Jeanne Cohen papers of Dance perspectives

1959-1976

(S) *MGZMD 56

Processed by Henley Haslam.

Summary

Creator: Cohen, Selma Jeanne, 1920-2005

Title: Selma Jeanne Cohen papers of Dance perspectives

Date: 1959-1976

Size: 3 Hollinger boxes, 3 document boxes 362 folders

Source: Gift of Selma Jeanne Cohen. Received: 1984, 1985.

Abstract: Dance Perspectives was published quarterly from 1959-1976, a total of 66 issues plus a 1962 Annual which was a bonus for subscribers. Selma Jeanne Cohen's records of Dance Perspectives cover this period, but there is no material for issues #1, #2, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #15, #20, #23, #25, and #29. The amount of material on each issue varies considerably; there is only one letter pertaining to issue #3.

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>

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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. *Dance Perspectives* was a quarterly founded in 1958 with A.J. Pishl as editor, Selma Jeanne Cohen as associate editor, and Sheppard Black as assistant editor. It was described in its first brochure as being "devoted to publishing scholarly dance monographs. In addition to recovering the past through historical essays, it will examine the present and suggest the future. The attempt is to provide the entire dance audience with historical and critical material to enlarge existing bases for judgment." The first issue, "Winter 1959," was published November 25, 1958, by Dance Perspectives, Inc. With the publication of the second issue, A.J. Pishl and Selma Jeanne Cohen were listed as editors. Cohen purchased *Dance Perspectives* from Sheppard Black in 1965 and, beginning with issue #21, she was listed as editor, a position she retained until the quarterly ceased publication. John Martin was listed as consulting editor from issue #25 in the spring of 1966 through the final issue, #66, in the summer of 1976. Karl Leabo was credited with the cover design, which he continued to do until 1962, after which he was listed variously as art editor, art director and associate editor, almost continuously until the summer of 1970. Clell Mize was the art director from issue #43 in 1970 through issue #54 in 1973. In October 1975, the total average distribution of the quarterly was 1,741, with 2,500 copies of a single issue published. In 1976, the Board of Directors of the tax-exempt, educational Dance Perspectives Foundation consisted of Clive Barnes, Selma Jeanne Cohen, George Dorris, Jane Hermann, Anna Kisselgoff, Mary Ann Liebert, Jean Nuchtern, Elinor Rogosin, Ben Sommers, Walter Terry, Michael Truppin, David Vaughan, and Violette Verdy. Marcel Dekker, Inc. became the publisher of *Dance Perspectives* with issue #61 in the spring of 1975 and continued through the final issue, #66, in the summer of 1976.

Scope and Content Note

Dance Perspectives was published quarterly from 1959-1976, a total of 66 issues plus a 1962 Annual which was a bonus for subscribers. Selma Jeanne Cohen's records of *Dance Perspectives* cover this period, but there is no material for issues #1, #2, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #15, #20, #23, #25, and #29. The amount of material on each issue varies considerably; there is only one letter pertaining to issue #3. |||Series I, "Individual Issues," is arranged numerically by issue number, with the bonus Annual appearing at the end. The title of the issue is also given. Most issues have a "General" correspondence subheading, arranged chronologically. These files often include plans for promotion and publication of the issue, permission for use of photographs or other material, or letters written by readers about the issue. If the quantity of correspondence warrants separation from the general file, there are additional files by name of correspondent, usually the author/editor of the issue. In some cases, correspondence may contain sections of manuscript material with notes and/or corrections. In #52 there are actually some poems included in the correspondence. Letters to or from Selma Jeanne Cohen are spread throughout the correspondence files. |||The "Typescript" subseries contains a copy of the

manuscript/typescript for the issue, with the pages in the order received, and often with corrections or notes by Cohen. The “Miscellaneous” subseries may contain reviews of performances and/or issues, programs, printed articles from other sources (magazines, newspapers), press releases, brochures, and flyers. The “Legal” subseries contains a brief contract with the author/editor of the issue and Dance Perspectives Foundation. The “Biographical Material” subseries contains information about the author/editor of the issue, unless specifically listed otherwise. The “Photographs” subseries contains photographs or xeroxes of photographs that were used or considered for use in the issue. |||Series II, “Unpublished Material,” contains correspondence, typescripts, proposals for subjects for issues, and some articles. The subseries “Proposals” is listed alphabetically by correspondent's name, with the subject given in parentheses. The proposals are more developed and detailed than those in the subseries “Suggestions for Issues,” which is also filed alphabetically by correspondent. |||Series III, “Promotion,” contains correspondence, mailings, and advertisements relating to the promotion of *Dance Perspectives* and some individual issues. |||A small portion of the material had been damaged by water, resulting in some pages being specially treated to preserve them, and some material being xeroxed onto acid-free paper. The material affected largely pertained to issues #30, #32, and #39. |||Throughout the Folder List, SJC refers to Selma Jeanne Cohen.

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6. The American Ballet Theatre: 1940-1960 (by Selma Jeanne Cohen and A.J. Pischl)
7. The Duport Mystery (by Lillian Moore)
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18. Antony Tudor. Part Two: The Years in America and After (by Selma Jeanne Cohen)
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20. How to Succeed in Ballet: “The Court Ballet in France: 1615-1641” by Marie-Francoise Christout and “How to Compose a Successful Ballet” (by M. de Saint-Hubert)
21. Follow Me! The Autobiography of Irma Duncan, Part I
22. Follow Me! The Autobiography of Irma Duncan, Part II
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24. The Eight Nayikas: Heroines of the Classical Dance of India (by Mrinalini Sarabhai)
25. New Dance: An Unfinished Autobiography (by Doris Humphrey)
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27. El Duende (by Doris Niles)
28. In Search of Design (by Rouben Ter-Arutunian)
29. Ballet: Flight and Reality (by Birgit Cullberg)
30. Cine-Dance, a symposium on dance film
31. The Dance Theater of Lester Horton (by Larry Warren, Frank Eng, Bella Lewitzky, Joyce Trisler)
32. Ballet under the Three Crowns (by Mary Skeaping)
33. Woods that Dance (by Matteo)

34. Time to Walk in Space, a symposium on Merce Cunningham
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38. Dancers' Notes edited by Marcia B. Siegel
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40. The Male Image (by Igor Youskevitch, Bruce Marks, Helgi Tomasson, Luis Fuente, Edward Villella)
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42. Feasts and Foliage: The Dance in Portugal (by José Sasportes)
43. Micronesian Heritage (by Mary Browning)
44. Russian Journals (by Agnes De Mille)
45. From Master to Student: Letters of Enrico Cecchetti to Gisella Caccialanza, edited by Sally Bailey
46. Into the Mystic with Miss Ruth (by Christena Schlundt)
47. German Dance Prints, 1790-1890 (by Edwin Binney III)
48. Nik: A Documentary Study of Alwin Nikolais (by Marcia B. Siegel)
49. Marius Petipa and "The Sleeping Beauty" (by Vera Krasovskaya)
50. The Connecticut College American Dance Festival, 1948-1972 (by Tom Borek)
51. Sayaw Silangan: The Dance in the Philippines (by Reynaldo G. Alejandro)
52. The Dance, the Dancer and the Poem (edited by Jack Anderson)
53. Sixty Years of Italian Dance Prints, 1815-1872 (by Edwin Binney III)
54. For John Martin. Entries from an Early Diary (by Lincoln Kirstein)
55. Three Essays in Dance Aesthetics (by George Beiswanger, Wilfried A. Hofmann, David M. Levin)
56. Dance in Ghana (by Odette Blum)
57. In the Shadow of the Swastika: Dance in Germany, 1927-1936 (by Horst Koegler)
58. The Beautiful Danger: Facets of the Romantic Ballet (by Erik Aschengreen)
59. Shorashim: The Roots of Israeli Folk Dance (by Judith Brin Ingber)
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61. All that Strange and Mysterious Folk: Studies in Ballet (Supernaturals by Susan Au, Juliet Neidish, Susan Reimer Sticklor)
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Arrangement: I. Individual Issues II. Unpublished Material A. Proposals B. Suggestions for Issues III. Promotion

Key Terms

Subjects

Ballet -- Periodicals
 Dance -- Periodicals
 Dance -- United States -- Periodicals
 Manuscripts -- Collections

Titles

Dance perspectives
 Gift of Selma Jeanne Cohen

Names

Cohen, Selma Jeanne, 1920-2005
Dance Perspectives Foundation

Container List

I. Individual Issues

Series I, "Individual Issues," is arranged numerically by issue number, with the bonus Annual appearing at the end. The title of the issue is also given. Most issues have a "General" correspondence subheading, arranged chronologically. These files often include plans for promotion and publication of the issue, permission for use of photographs or other material, or letters written by readers about the issue. If the quantity of correspondence warrants separation from the general file, there are additional files by name of correspondent, usually the author/editor of the issue. In some cases, correspondence may contain sections of manuscript material with notes and/or corrections. In #52 there are actually some poems included in the correspondence. Letters to or from Selma Jeanne Cohen are spread throughout the correspondence files.

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 - 60. Three Years with Charles Weidman
 - b. 4 f. 292 Correspondence
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 - b. 4 f. 294 Charles Weidman and his Theatre Dance Company, Biographies, About the Dances
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 - 61. All that Strange and Mysterious Folk: Studies in Ballet Supernaturals
 - b. 4 f. 302 Correspondence
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 - b. 4 f. 303 Au, Susan
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 - b. 4 f. 306 Biographical Information
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 - 62. Les fees des forests de S. Germain, ballet de cour 1625
 - Correspondence
 - b. 4 f. 311 Baron, John H.
 - b. 4 f. 312 Typescript
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 - 63. The Art of the Sleeve in Chinese Dance
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 - b. 4 f. 315 Strauss, Gloria B.
 - b. 4 f. 316 General
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I. Individual Issues (cont.)

64. Prechistenka 20: The Isadora Duncan School in Moscow

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- b. 5 f. 321-323 Roslavleva, Natalia
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65. Rural Felicity

- b. 5 f. 329 Correspondence
- b. 5 f. 330 Typescript
- b. 5 f. 331-332 Notes and Corrections
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66. A Chronicle of Dance in Baltimore 1780-1814

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- b. 5 f. 334 Bond, Crystelle Trump
- b. 5 f. 335 Typescript and Corrections
- b. 5 f. 336 Biographical Information
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- b. 5 f. 340 Typescripts

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- b. 5 f. 341 Bridson, Vivien and Hodgson, John (The Early Life of Rudolf Laban)
- b. 5 f. 342 Chiang, Ching (Her Dance Training in Peking)
- b. 5 f. 343 Crisp, Freda (Mlle. Celeste)
- b. 5 f. 344 De Metz, Kaye; Kmen, Henry; Swift, Mary Grace (Dance in New Orleans)
- b. 6 f. 345 Gertsman, Lois (Instruments in Ballet Prints,) 16th-18th Centuries
- b. 6 f. 346 Heymann, Jeanne Lunin (WPA Dance Project)
- Hodgson, John see Bridson, Vivien
- b. 6 f. 347 Jackson, George (Of Vienna in 19th Century)
- b. 6 f. 348 Page, Ruth (Americana in the Making)
- b. 6 f. 349 Robbins, Jerome (Thoughts on Choreography)
- b. 6 f. 350 Shearer, Sybil (A Conversation with Sybil Shearer)
- b. 6 f. 351 Smakov, Gennady (The Earth and Fate: A Eulogy to Maya Plisetskaya)
- b. 6 f. 352 Wiley, John (Sergeev Manuscripts)
- b. 6 f. 353 Wolz, Carl (Japanese Folk Dance)

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- b. 6 f. 355 **H-K**
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- b. 6 f. 356 **L-M**
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- b. 6 f. 357 **P-Z**
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