



The New York Public Library  
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

**Michael and Mary Ann Herman papers**

1936-1956

(S) \*MGZMD 334

Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013

## Summary

**Creator:** Herman, Mary Ann

**Title:** Michael and Mary Ann Herman papers

**Date:** 1936-1956

**Size:** .42 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Donated by the Estate of Michael and Mary Ann Herman, 1999.

**Abstract:** Michael Herman (1911-1996) and his wife, Mary Ann Herman (d.1992), were American folk dance teachers and authorities on folk dance. The collection dates from 1936 to 1956 and holds four items: Mary Ann Herman's diary; a notebook belonging to Michael Herman containing his notes on folk dances; an autograph book; and a scrapbook.

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**Preferred citation:** Michael and Mary Ann Herman papers, (S) \*MGZMD 334. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Robyn Hjermsstad, 2013 The four objects in this collection were placed into folders.

## Creator History

Michael and Mary Ann Herman were American folk dance teachers and authorities on folk dance. Both born to Ukrainian parents, Mary Ann Bodnar (d.1992) met Michael Herman (1911-1996) at a Ukrainian folk dance group in New York City in 1930. They married soon after, and would continue to dance and

teach folk dance in the United States and internationally for the rest of their lives. In 1951, they established Folk Dance House in Manhattan and directed it until 1970. The United States State Department commissioned the Hermans and other individuals to tour 19 Japanese cities to teach folk dance in the 1950s. They opened and taught at numerous folk-dance camps on the East Coast. The Hermans edited and wrote for several folk-dance publications, including *The Folk Dancer* magazine, and the *Folk Dances for All* handbook.

### **Scope and Content Note**

The collection dates from 1936 to 1956 and holds four items: Mary Ann Herman's diary; a notebook belonging to Michael Herman containing his notes on folk dances; an autograph book; and a scrapbook.

The diary, dated 1936, documents Mary Ann's daily activities at work and relates to her folk dancing. Michael Herman's notebook contains detailed descriptions of different Ukrainian folk dances. Each dance is titled and subdivided into different stages. The scrapbook documents the folk dance program that was part of the U.S. State Department's cultural exchange program in Japan. The scrapbook contains photographs, programs, certificates, tickets, newspaper clippings, and a detailed report of the program. Material is chiefly in Japanese and is labeled with typewritten descriptions in English. The autograph book contains autographs of Japanese students from the folk dance class in Tokyo in 1956.

### **Key Terms**

#### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Autograph albums  
Diaries  
Scrapbooks

#### **Subjects**

Folk dancing  
Folk Dancing, Ukrainian

#### **Geographic Names**

Japan  
United States

#### **Names**

Herman, Michael, 1911-1996

## Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 Michael Herman Notebook 1950
- b. 1 f. 2 Mary Ann Herman Diary 1936
- b. 1 f. 3 Autograph Book 1956
- b. 1 f. 4 Scrapbook 1956