



The New York Public Library
Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Eleanor King Photographs

circa 1900-1990 [bulk 1928-1988]

*MGZEB 16-245

Compiled by Camille Croce Dee, November 2016.

Summary

Creator: King, Eleanor, 1906-1991

Title: Eleanor King Photographs

Date: circa 1900-1990 [bulk 1928-1988]

Size: 1.93 linear feet (5 boxes)

Abstract: The Eleanor King Photographs include black and white and color photographs and slides documenting the life and career of modern dance choreographer, teacher and dancer Eleanor King, and span from approximately 1900 to 1990 (bulk years 1928-1988).

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>

Conditions Governing Use: The author/creator retains copyright of materials. For information on obtaining permission to publish, contact the Dance Division at dance@nypl.org.

Preferred citation: Eleanor King Photographs, *MGZEB 16-245. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: Compiled by Camille Croce Dee, November 2016.

Creator History

Choreographer, teacher and dancer Eleanor King (1906-1991) was born in Middletown, Pennsylvania and was one of six children. In 1927, she enrolled in the Denishawn School where she studied with modern dance pioneers Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, becoming a founding member of their company from 1928 to 1935. With The Little Group (a Humphrey-Weidman offshoot), King began to choreograph in 1931, continuing to perform and teach in New York and on the East coast until 1941.

King moved to Seattle, Washington, where she taught and performed from 1942 to 1951. In 1952, she

joined the faculty of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where she remained until her retirement in 1971, then moving to Santa Fe. King traveled to Europe and the Far East, to study eastern dance, and was the recipient of two Fulbright Research Grants in 1967 and 1976, as well as numerous awards and tributes.

Her autobiography, *Transformations: the Humphrey-Weidman Era; a Memoir*, was published by Dance Horizons in 1978. King died at the Actors Home in New Jersey on February 27, 1991.

Custodial History

Accessioned in 2000.

Scope and Content Note

The Eleanor King Photographs contain black and white and color photographs and slides documenting the life and career of modern dance choreographer, teacher and dancer Eleanor King and span from approximately 1900 to 1990.

A number of the photographs capture King's performances with the Humphrey-Weidman Company, as well as her own works over several decades. *American Folk Suite* (circa 1938-1946), *Antique Suite* (1931-1935), *Icaro* (1936-1946), *Mother of Tears* (1935-1936), *Parodisms* (1938-circa 1949), *She* (1947-1955), *Study (Edward Ballade, 1931)*, and *To the West* (1943-1963) are among the best documented works in the collection. Of particular note are 35 mm prints of the Theatre Dance Company (1938-1939 and 1940-1941), founded by King, a few snapshots of King with Doris Humphrey and other dancers on Fire Island (1929-1940) and *Les Romanesques* (interludes choreographed by Humphrey and performed by King and others on a Newport, Rhode Island estate, (1930 July 18).

Many photographs and slides depict King's travels to the Far East: her four trips to Japan, and 1976 trip to Korea (Fulbright Research Grants, 1967 and 1976, respectively). There are also some candid and early photographs of King, her family and friends, as well as portraits. A few black and white and color negatives are also found in the collection.

Photocopies marked "Missing" indicate that the original photographs were published in King's book *Transformations*, but are not found in this collection.

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Key Terms

Occupations

Choreographers
Dance teachers

Subjects

Choreographers -- United States -- 20th century
Dance teachers -- United States -- 20th century

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographs

Slides

Names

Humphrey, Doris, 1895-1958

Weidman, Charles

Humphrey-Weidman Company

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 *Agonistae (Ascendance) (King) - Cornish School - Seattle* 1943-1944
American Folk Suite: Hoe-Down, Hornpipe, Lonesome Train Blues (King)
1938-circa 1946
Includes photographs of Bennington Fellows Concert, 1938 and Seattle, circa 1946.
- b. 1 f. 2 *Hoe-Down, Hornpipe, Lonesome Train Blues* 1938-circa 1946
- b. 5 f. 1 *Hornpipe - Bennington Fellows Concert* 1938
Mounted.
- b. 1 f. 3 *Amorphous Shapes* circa 1950s
- b. 1 f. 4 *Andalouse (King and Limín)* 1933
- b. 1 f. 5 *Antique Suite: Gagliarda, Minuetto, Siciliana (King)* 1931-1935
- b. 1 f. 6 *Aria da Capo (King) - University of Arkansas* 1958
- b. 1 f. 7 *At the Hawk's Well* 1958
Bacchanale
See Danse.
- b. 1 f. 8 *Ballet Intime (Cole) - Rainbow Room* circa 1939
Photo of newspaper ad; King performed.

Candide (Weidman) 1933
Photographs by Edward Moeller.
- b. 1 f. 9 8 x 10 inch Photographs - Mounted
- b. 5 f. 2 8 x 10 inch Photographs on Larger Mounts
- b. 1 f. 10 *Characters of the Annunciation (King)* 1940-1941
- b. 1 f. 11 Colman, John 1938
- b. 1 f. 12 *Il Combattimento de Tancredi e Clorinda (King) - University of Arkansas Dance Workshop* 1971
- b. 1 f. 13 *Commedia (Burlesca; Weidman)* 1931
- b. 1 f. 14 *Concerto for Harpsichord (King)* circa 1950
Includes head shot of King by Marcus Blechman.
- b. 1 f. 15 *Dances for Saturday, Sunday, Monday - Capriole Suite (The Little Group)* circa 1932
Marcus Blechman photograph.
- b. 1 f. 16 *Danse (Bacchanale) - The Little Group* 1931
- b. 1 f. 17 Early Photographs circa 1910-1920
- b. 1 f. 18 Egypt (from Album) 1984
Includes some postcards.
- b. 1 f. 19 *Experimental Program to Debussy's Nuages, Fêtestes (Humphrey) - Yale University* 1933
Includes 2 photographs from Yale University Theatre for Stanley McCandless experimental lighting program.
- b. 1 f. 20 Family and Personal circa 1900-1983

- b. 1 f. 21 Family Homes - Middletown and Mount Gretna, Pennsylvania circa 1920-1943
- b. 1 f. 22 Family - Summer Home? circa 1920s-1928
- b. 1 f. 23 Fire Island 1929-1940
Includes photographs of Doris Humphrey, King, Dorothy Lathrop, Ernestine Stodelle, Paula Yasgour.

- b. 1 f. 24 *Four Visions: Air, Earth (King) - University of Arkansas* circa 1952
- b. 1 f. 25 *Hagoromo (One of Three Dance Plays; King) - University of Arkansas* 1958
- b. 1 f. 26 *Haniwa (King) - Rehearsal* circa 1963
- b. 1 f. 27-28 Humphrey, Doris and Charles Weidman circa 1928-1935
Includes photographs of *Air on a Ground Bass* (photocopy), *Alcina Suite, B Minor Suite* (photocopy), *Bloch Quartet* (photocopy), *Color Harmony* (reproduction), *Dances for Women, Dionysiaques, Duo-Drama* (photocopy), *Grieg Concerto, (The) Happy Hypocrite, The Lake at Evening* (photocopy), *Life of the Bee* (photostat), *New Dance, (The) Oresteia, La Valse*, unidentified, brochure for classes; King in some photographs.

- b. 1 f. 29 *Icaro (King)* 1936-1946
Includes photographs of performances at Brooklyn Museum, Seattle and unidentified.

- b. 1 f. 30 *Images Japonaises (King)* 1959
Includes University of Arkansas program; photographs of performances at College of the Ozarks, March 11, 1959.

- b. 1 f. 31 *Iphigénie en Aulide (Iphigenia in Aulis) (Humphrey - Academy of Music - Philadelphia* [1935]
Includes 2 photographs of newspaper photographs; King pictured.

- Japan 1952-circa 1976
- b. 2 f. 1-2 1952-1980 - Color Slides
- b. 2 f. 3 1958 - Kyoto
- b. 2 f. 4 circa 1958-1980s
Also includes some photographs of Rankei Fujima, Yoshimaro Hanayagi.

- b. 2 f. 5-6 circa 1976
Includes some photographs by Susumo Tamatani.

- b. 2 f. 7 [Costumes - Museum?] circa 1960s
Fulbright Grant
- b. 2 f. 8-12 1967
Mostly black and white photographs; some postcards, notes, flyer re: folk dances of northern Japan performance.

- b. 2 f. 13 Izumo-San-Kyoto 1967
Kyoto
- b. 2 f. 14-15 1967
- b. 5 f. 5 Album 1967-1968
"Concert at Yasaka Kai Kan;" also some loose photographs.

- b. 2 f. 16 Mibu-Dera Temple Booklet circa 1960s
In Japanese; fragile.

- b. 3 f. 1 **Later Years** circa 1980-1990
- b. 3 f. 2 **Miscellaneous Photographs** circa 1935-1979
Includes mostly black and white photographs of King training actors outdoors at Barr Theatre, New London, New Hampshire, 1935; at Bar Harbor, 1935; with Mary Jo Shelly at Bennington, [circa 1938]; 2 copies of 1 still from film *Modern Dance - A Technical Approach*, 1941; at Italian Freedom Rally, Madison Square Garden, New York City, 1942 (photograph of newspaper photograph); teaching, possibly in Amsterdam [1978-1979]; 1 color slide at Palais Royal [Paris], 1952.

- Korea** circa 1976-1982
- b. 3 f. 3-4 **circa 1976-1982**
Includes sheet with photo identifications on verso.

- Seoul** 1976-1979
- b. 3 f. 5 **1978 - Color Slides**
- b. 3 f. 6 **Korean Dance Festival; Korean Folk Festival - Color Slides** 1976-1979
- b. 3 f. 7 **Kut - Country; City - Confucian - Fulbright Grant** 1976-1979
- b. 3 f. 8 **Korean Art - Color Slides** 1979, undated
King in some.

- b. 3 f. 9 **Korean Historical Costumes - Color Slides** 1976-1977
Mostly commercial slides.

- b. 3 f. 10 *Life of the Bee (Humphrey) - Seattle Repertory Playhouse* 1949
- b. 3 f. 11 *Limín, José - Two Preludes and Portrait* [1931]
Includes 2 photographs by Marcus Blechman.

- b. 3 f. 12 *Marche Funebre (The Little Group)* 1931
- b. 5 f. 3 *Mazurka (King and Limín)* 1931
Photograph by Helen Hewitt.

- b. 3 f. 13 *Miracles (King) - University of Arkansas* 1959
- b. 3 f. 14 *Moon Dances (King)* 1944
Photographs by Thomas Bouchard; "Premiere Seattle" also on 1 verso.

- Mother of Tears** 1935-1936
- b. 3 f. 15 **Photographs with Negative** 1935-1936
Includes photographs by Edward Moeller; 3 are mounted.

- b. 5 f. 4 **Photographs Mounted on Board** 1936
Includes 4 photographs (approximately 3 1/2 by 5 1/2 inches) mounted, then mounted on 10 x 12 1/2 inch board.

- b. 3 f. 16 **National Association of Dance Artists of Japan - Color Slides - University of Arkansas** 1970
- b. 3 f. 17 **New Orleans - Performing in Gymnasium** 1981
- b. 3 f. 18 **Nihon Buyo Research Center - Los Angeles** 1982
- b. 3 f. 19 *Northwest Indian Spirit Dance (King)* [1945]
Includes 1 photograph by Tom Bouchard.

- b. 3 f. 20 *Nuna Da Ut Sun Yi (Trail of Tears; King)* 1966
"Indian Symphony" also on some versos.
- b. 3 f. 21 *Ode to Freedom (King) - Bennington Festival* 1938
Also includes 4 negatives.
- b. 3 f. 22 *Odyssey (King)* circa 1954-1956
Includes 1 photograph by Howard Whitlatch.
- Parodisms (King)* 1938-circa 1949
- b. 4 f. 1 Theatre Dance Company - YMHA - New York City 1938
- b. 4 f. 2 Eleanor King and Dance Company - Seattle Repertory Playhouse 1949
Includes Van Ness photographs.
- b. 4 f. 3 *Partita No. 6 in E Minor (King) - Seattle* 1945-1948
Includes photographs by Ernst Kassowitz (signed).
- b. 4 f. 4 *Peace--An Allegory (King)* 1937
Includes 1 mounted photograph by Marcus Blechman.
- b. 4 f. 5 Portraits 1929-1939, 1987
Includes photograph by Louis H. Dreyer of sculpture by Grace Helen Talbot (for which King posed); also photographs by Marcus Blechman, Jane Grossenbacher, Robert McAfee, Edward Moeller (mounted, also 1 negative); Victoria Rogers.
- b. 4 f. 6 Retrospective - Miami Dade College - New World School of Arts 1988 March 30
- b. 4 f. 7 *Rhapsodic Suite (King) - Photograph and Color Negatives* [circa 1957]
Includes 1 photograph by Howard Whitlatch.
- b. 4 f. 8 *Roads to Hell (King)* 1941, [1945]
Includes 2 copies of photograph by Thomas Bouchard, 1 mounted.
- b. 4 f. 9 *Les Romanesques (Humphrey) - Interludes - Newport, Rhode Island* 1930 July 18
- b. 4 f. 10 *Le Sacre du Printemps (Massine)* 1930
Also includes 1 photocopy of photograph of Martha Graham.
- b. 4 f. 11 [Santa Fe Dance Umbrella?] 1979
- b. 4 f. 12 *(The) School for Husbands (Humphrey-Weidman)* 1933
Includes 1 Vandamm photograph of Humphrey, Weidman; also includes 1 newspaper clipping of caricature of cast.
- b. 4 f. 13 *(The) Shakers (Humphrey) - Seattle Repertory Playhouse* 1949
- b. 4 f. 14 *She (King) - Seattle Dance Theatre; University of Arkansas* 1947-1955
Includes 4 photographs by Ernst Kassowitz.
- b. 4 f. 15 *Song of Earth (King)* 1935-circa 1953
Includes 1 mounted photograph at University of Arkansas.
- b. 4 f. 16 *Study (Later Edward Ballade; The Little Group) - Provincetown Playhouse* 1931
Includes photographs by Helen Hewitt, Marcus Blechman.

- b. 4 f. 17 *Symphonic Etudes (King) - University of Arkansas - Color Slides* 1969
- b. 4 f. 18 *Temptation of St. Anthony (King)* 1970
- b. 4 f. 19 *Theatre Dance Company - New York City* 1938-1939, 1940-1941
Includes 35 mm prints; with Fe Alf, Louise Allen, William Bales, George Bockman, Kenneth Bostock, Betty Colman, John Colman (music director), Alice Dudley, Eleanor King, William Miller, Sybil Shearer.

Three Poems [E.E. Cummings] (King) [circa 1969?]
- b. 4 f. 20 *Photographs*
Also includes 6- 4 x 5 inch photographs, possibly Cummings.
- b. 4 f. 21 *Color Slides - University of Arkansas*
- b. 4 f. 22 *Three Ritual Figures from Hellas (King)* [1955]
- b. 4 f. 23 *To the West (King)* 1943-1963
Includes 2 photographs by Thomas Bouchard; also 1 photograph at University of Arkansas.
- b. 4 f. 24 *Trojan Women (King) - Earlham College - Color Slides* 1974
- b. 4 f. 25 *(The) Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore (King) - University of Arkansas*
1958 January 10-1958 January 11
- b. 4 f. 26 *Vivace - Dance Workshop - Theatre of the Imagination - University of Arkansas* 1971
- b. 4 f. 27 *Unidentified* circa 1940s-1980s, undated 1940
Includes photograph of costume shop?, snapshot of man and woman near Shanghai, postcard from Egypt, handwritten note from "Jim," and fragment of note card with typed quotation from "Stephen."