

Register of the Papers of Gabriel Astruc, 1906-1914

Collection number: *ZBD-161

Dance Collection

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Papers of Gabriel Astruc, 1906-1914

Collection number: *ZBD-161

Provenance: Purchase, 1959

Extent: ca. 1300 items in 123 folders/2 microfilm reels

Repository: Dance Collection. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: Available for use on microfilm only

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Biographical Note

March 14, 1864 Born in Bordeaux, France

ca. 1877-1881 Educated at the Lyceum of Fontanes, Paris.

1881 Briefly worked for Enoch Fregrave;res et Costallat, music publishers, in Paris.

ca. 1882-? Worked in Paris for Paul Ollendorff, publisher. Through Ollendorff, Astruc gained access to various newspapers and journals, where he undertook writing assignments. Wrote literary criticism, theatre reviews, and other articles for *le Moniteur*, *Universel*, *le Figaro*, *le Gaulois*, *l'Evening*, *la Liberte*, and *la Journee*.

- 1887-1891 Organized several circus reviews in Paris: *En Selle pour la Revue, Paris au Galop, A la Cravache, A fond de Train.*
- ca. 1889 -? Joined l'Agence Dalzial, an information and news agency, where he covered presidential activities, movements of heads of state, activities at l'Elysee and the embassies, etc. Also wrote for *le Signal* and *le Voltaire*, continuing with them when l'Agence Dalziel went out of business.
- 1890 Founded an art journal, *l'Amateur*, with Armand Levy.
- ca. 1895 Married the daughter of his cousin, Wilhelm Enoch, and rejoined the firm of Enoch Fregrave;res et Costallat, replacing Georges Costallat. The firm, which published Chabrier, Frenck, Messenger, d'Indy, Plerne and others, then became known as Enoch et Cie.
- 1900 Founded *Musica*, a weekly supplement to the publication *Fegrave;mine*.
- 1904 Established his own publishing house in Paris, la Societe Musicale G. Astruc & Cie, and secured the right to represent Edoardo Sonzogno's music publishing enterprises in France.
- 1905 Presented a Beethoven Festival at the Nouveau Theatre in Paris in May. With Edoardo Sonzogno, organized a season of Italian opera in May at the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt.
- 1906 Presented the London Symphony Orchestra at the Theatre du Châtelet (the Châtelet) in January; a Mozart Festival in March, and a production of *Le Clown* (by Victor Capoul and Isaac de Camondo) in April, both at the Nouveau Thegrave;atre; a Beethoven-Berlioz Festival at the Opera and the Châtelet in May.
- 1907 After having met Sergei Diaghilev in the spring of 1906 through la Contesse Greffuhle, he organized the Concerts Historiques Russes with Diaghilev in 1907 at the Opera. Presented Strauss's *Salome* at the Châtelet in May.
- 1908 Presented the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra at the Châtelet in April.
- 1909 Handled business details, publicity, contracts, etc., for Diaghilev's first Saison Russe (opera and ballet) at the Châtelet in May and June.
- 1910 Presented a season of Italian opera at the Châtelet with the participation of the Metropolitan Opera, Toscanini, and Caruso in May and June.
- 1911 Presented the following at the Châtelet: Beethoven Festival, May; *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien* with Ida Rubinstein; Diaghilev's Ballets

- Russes , June; *The Quaker Girl*, June. Also collaborated with Diaghilev to present three galas with the Ballets Russes at the Opegrave;ra in December.
- 1912 Presented *Helegrave;ne de Sparte* (Verhaeren) in May and *Salome* (Wilde) in June, both at the Châtelet with Ida Rubinstein. Again collaborated with Diaghilev to present a Saison Russe (ballet) in June at the Châtelet. During the summer, managed theater events at the opening of Deauville, in which Diaghilev's Ballets Russes participated.
- 1913 Supervised the opening season of the Thegrave;atre des Champs-Elysees, of which he was founder and Director. Highlights of the season were *Boris Godounov* and the Paris premiere of *Khovanshchina*, both starring Shaliapin, and a series of Ballets Russes programs which included the premiere of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. These programs of opera and ballet were Diaghilev enterprises. The season was a financial failure and Astruc resigned as Director of the theater in the fall of 1913. La Societe Musicale G. Astruc & Cie apparently ceased to exist at the same time.
- 1915 Planned a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Cocteau and Gamier to be given at the Cirque Medrano, which was never presented.
- 1923 Organized and presented a gala at versailles in the Galerie des Glaces on June 30 with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes
- 1938 Died, Paris.

Works by Astruc

- *La Materielle: Comedie en un acte*. Paris, 1903.
- *Le Pavillon des Fantomes: souvenirs*. Paris, B. Grasset. [c. 1929].
- "Le Premier Feu d'Artifice," in *Les Ballets Russes de Serge de Diaghilev. Numero Special de la Revue Musicals*, Dec. 1, 1930

Scope and Content

The papers of Gabriel Astruc number approximately 1300 items and relate primarily to the early activities of Serge Diaghilev in bringing Russian ballet and opera to Western Europe. Most of the papers fall in the years 1906-1914. There are also several items dating from 1904 in the correspondence of la Comtesse Greffuhle, and an exchange of letters between Astruc and Romola Nijinsky in 1925. The years 1915-1924 are not represented.

Astruc functioned as an impresario during the early years of his relationship with Diaghilev, 1906-1913, working through his publishing house, La Societe Musicale G. Astruc & Cie, to organize a wide variety of concerts and theatrical events. Between 1907 and 1913 Astruc handled a variety of theatrical business matters for Diaghilev, including publicity, contract negotiations, financial backing, negotiations for tours and galas, etc. After 1913, they collaborated occasionally to present special galas and benefits. Not all of the papers generated in the course of Astruc's Diaghilev-related activities are present in this collection. The Stravinski correspondence, for example, was sold separately in 1958 prior to the library's purchase of the collection.

Major correspondents in the collection are Gabriel Astruc and the members of his firm, la Societe Musicale G. Astruc & Cie; Robert Brussel; Eugene Cornu; Claude Debussy; Serge Diaghilev; la Comtesse Greffuhle; Baron Dmitri Günzburg; Reynoldo Hahn; Jules Martin; Vittorio Ningardi; Pierre Monteux; Ida Rubinstein; Boris Shidlovskii (Schidlovsky); Natasha Trouhanova; and Fedor Shaliapin. Many artists such as Vaslav Nijinsky and Anna Pavlova are represented to a lesser extent, and there is considerable correspondence from individuals involved in publicity, bookings, patronage, legal matters, etc.

The collection comprises correspondence (including telegrams, typed copies of outgoing letters, and a few typed transcripts of telegrams and letters), inventories, contracts, financial documents, notes and plans, reports, clippings, programs, and announcements. Most of the papers are grouped by year, 1906 to 1914 and no date. There are, in addition, a few subject groupings organized around a central figure (Subject file - people) or a geographic location (Subject file - places). These subject groupings have been maintained because they were established by Astruc. There is also a group of Clippings, Programs and Announcements.

A highlight of the collection is the correspondence from Diaghilev consisting of 28 letters, notes, and cards, and 228 telegrams (including some typed transcripts)

A description of outstanding aspects of the collection follows:

Groupings by year.

- 1906 Correspondence from Shaliapin regarding various singing engagements.
- 1907 Correspondence relating to the *Concerts Historiques Russes* presented at the Opera in Paris.
Diaghilev correspondence includes letters to Messrs. G. Astruc & Cie discussing terms for a concert of Russian music on May 30 and authorizing them to act on his behalf to arrange for rehearsal time and theater rental with the Theatre Sarah Bernhardt and the Salle des Agriculteurs.
- 1908 Correspondence relating to plans for 1909 season of Russian ballet and opera in Paris.
Diaghilev correspondence includes a letter to Astruc asking him to bargain over the price of the Châtelet, which is too high, especially in view of the alterations which must be made to the theater.
- 1909 Correspondence, financial papers, inventories, etc., relating to the first Saison Russe at the Châtelet in May and June. The season was a financial disaster, and the papers trace Astruc's attempts to resolve the situation, prevent Diaghilev from obtaining backing for a 1910 season in Paris, and achieve a reconciliation

with the help of Robert Brussel.

Drafts and copies of a report on the 1909 season written by Astruc and sent to Baron Frederiks, Chief Minister of the Russian Imperial Court and under whose jurisdiction the Imperial Theaters fell.

Copies of the secret code Astruc used in corresponding with Jules Martin and Robert Brussel in Russia.

Letters and Proposals from Boris Shidlovskii regarding an engagement of the Ballets Russes in New York.

Diaghilev correspondence includes letters to G. Astruc & Cie asking the return of music, costumes, and the original of a portrait of Pavlova by Serov. A letter in Nouvel's hand, signed by Diaghilev, discusses their intention of giving a gala performance for French charity at the end of their Paris stay.

- 1910 Correspondence relating primarily to attempts by Astruc and Diaghilev to come to terms after the problems of 1909 and to resolve the conflicts between the seasons they planned for 1910 in Paris. Astruc planned a season of Italian opera at the Châtelet with the participation of the Metropolitan Opera, Toscanini, and Caruso. Diaghilev planned a season of Russian opera for the same period at the Opera with Shaliapin. Diaghilev eventually decided to present a season of ballet rather than opera.

Correspondence with Vittorio Mingardi, General Director of La Scala, regarding various opera matters and the engagement of Ida Rubinstein and Fokine to do *Cleopatra* and *Sheherazade* in the winter of 1910-1911 at La Scala in Milan.

Papers relating to legal problems stemming from a contract Astruc and Diaghilev had negotiated with Thomas Quinlan (Thomas Beecham's agent and manager) which Beecham subsequently refused to honor. Diaghilev correspondence includes a copy of a 4-page letter to Giulio Gatti-Casazza of the Metropolitan Opera in New York regarding modifications to a contract between them for a visit of the Ballets Russes to America, and a copy of a letter to G. Astruc & Cie informing them that he is making alterations in the contract with the Metropolitan Opera. Other letters and signed notes discuss the need to use the Opera for an afternoon rehearsal of *Giselle*, terms of a contract with Reynaldo Hahn, the repertory for Monte Carlo, and negotiations with Paradossi regarding a South American tour.

- 1911 Correspondence about the Paris season of the Ballets Russes at the Châtelet in June.

Correspondence, plans and notes regarding various negotiations for tours in the United States and Argentina.

Notes giving future plans (for 1912?), including a tour of Germany.

Private memorandum by Morsier, of G. Astruc & Cie, relating a private conversation with Diaghilev and Günzburg about a dispute between Astruc and Diaghilev over a contract with Gatti-Casazza. Diaghilev correspondence includes a letter from Rome about finances and a letter from London engaging Pierre Monteaux and considering a tour of South America. Two long letters detail the problems involved in completing *La Peri* with Trouhanova and *Le Dieu Bleu*, and contain references to the progress of *Narcisse*, *L' Oiseau de Feu*, and *Le Martyre de San Sebastien*. A transcript of a letter to Astruc announces Diaghilev's decision

- not to carry out the contract with the Metropolitan Opera Company and his desire to meet with Gatti-Casazza and Otto H. Kahn.
Telegrams from Diaghilev and Günzburg telling of Nijinsky's dismissal from the Maryinsky Theater.
- 1912 Correspondence regarding plans for tours to the United States and Argentina, for the summer season at Deauville, and for the opening season of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 1913.
Some correspondence regarding the Saison Russe in Paris in June and the Ballets Russes in Munich.
Continuation of correspondence, begun in 1911, with Pierre Monteux.
Diaghilev correspondence includes copies of letters about *Orphee* by Roger Ducasse and *Daphnis and Chloe* by Ravel, and a letter signed by Diaghilev and Günzburg regarding a financial matter.
 - 1913 Correspondence and other documents regarding performances of Diaghilev's Russian ballet and opera in May and June at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, including financial data.
Telegram from Nijinsky following his marriage, announcing his break with Diaghilev.
Letter from E. Galiazzi regarding a possible engagement of the Ballets Russes at the Gran Teatro de Licaò in Barcelona in 1914.
Diaghilev correspondence includes a card to Fichet of G. Astruc & Cie, giving program details for some performances at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.
 - 1914 Correspondence relating to Diaghilev's rejection of collaboration with Astruc for the Saison Russe of 1914.

Subject File - People

- Debussy. Letters and telegram, 1910-11 relating to *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien*. 5 items.
- Greffuhle. Correspondence, 1904-1911, revealing the importance of the patronage and organizational talents which la Comtesse Greffuhle brought to Diaghilev's enterprises. The papers cover a variety of cultural events including the Exhibition of Russian Art in 1906 and the Concerts Historiques Russes in 1907. 69 items.
- Romola Nijinsky. Correspondence with Astruc regarding financial resources for an enterprise of Bronislava Nijinska's in 1925. 5 items.
- Ida Rubinstein. Correspondence, 1910-1914, relating to *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien*, *Helegrave;ne de Sparte*, and *Salomé*, and containing references to d'Annunzio, Bakst, Debussy, Diaghilev, and Fokine. Includes a biographical note, a transcript of a letter by d'Annunzio and Debussy protesting the position taken by the Archbishop of Paris regarding *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien*, a sonnet by Julien Ochse, a drawing by Henri Etlin, and correspondence from Rubinstien's lawyers and others to Astruc. 68 items.
- Trouhanova. Correspondence, 1906-1913, touching on a wide variety of projects, including an engagement to dance in *Tannhauser* in London in 1907, various music hall productions and ballet galas, and *La Pegrave;ri*.

Includes transcripts of letters from Vincent d'Indy (regarding *Istar* and Jacques Rouche, and other letters to or about Trouhanova. 97 items.

Subject File - Places

- Deauville Correspondence, financial data, programs and announcements regarding the opening season at Deauville, summer 1912. Astruc managed theater events, which included the appearance of the Ballets Russes.
- Germany. Several items, dated 1911 and 1913, regarding possible engagements of the Ballets Russes in Germany.
- Lyons and Marseilles. Correspondence and clippings regarding the appearance of the Ballets Russes in Lyons in 1913.
Overtures from Marseilles regarding a ballet engagement.

Clippings, Programs and Announcements

- Clippings Clippings regarding the season of Russian opera given at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt in 1911 and the engagement of Caruso to sing at Convent Garden in 1913.
- Programs and Announcements Miscellaneous items, 1906-1914, including Ballets Russes programs from 1909-1914.

Series Description and Folder List

Series I: Chronological 1906-1914

101 folders

Correspondence, Contracts, Finances, Inventories, Plans and Notes. Items are grouped by year: 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, and No Date. Within each year, correspondence is arranged alphabetically by name of writer and is in chronological order under each writer's name. Where large numbers of telegrams exist, they are separated from letters by the same correspondent and placed in a separate chronological series. Other materials, such as contracts, reports, financial data, plans and notes, etc., follow the correspondence series for the year.

r. 1	Shaliapin correspondence	1906
r. 1	Diaghilev's telegrams	1907
r. 1	Diaghilev - N correspondence	1907
r. 1	Shaliapin telegrams	1907
r. 1	Name uncertain correspondence	1907

- r. 1 Astruc, Diaghilev correspondence 1908
- r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams 1908
- r. 1 M-P correspondence 1908
- r. 1 Shaliapin telegrams 1908
- r. 1 Contracts 1908
- r. 1 A correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Astruc correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Astruc G. & Cie correspondence 1909
- r. 1 B - D correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Diaghilev correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams 1909
- r. 1 E- Ma correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Mi - N correspondence 1909
- r. 1 P - Se correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Sh - Z correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Name uncertain correspondence 1909
- r. 1 Reports, Contracts, Finances, etc. 1909
Drafts and copies of Astruc's *Rapport Confidentiel sur la Saison Russe* together with photographs of documents sent with it to Baron Frederiks, Chief Minister of the Russian Imperial Court.
- r. 1 Capital de Garantie for the 1909 season at the Châtelet. 1909
- r. 1 Contracts 1909
- r. 1 Finances 1909
- r. 1 Inventories 1909
- r. 1 Plans and Notes. 1909
Includes secret code Astruc used in correspondence with Jules Martin and Robert Brussel, 1909-1910.
- r. 1 Astruc correspondence 1910

- r. 1 Brussel correspondence 1910
- r. 1 C-D correspondence 1910
- r. 1 Diaghilev correspondence 1910
- r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams 1910
- r. 1 G - Ma correspondence 1910
- r. 1 Mingardi (la Scala) correspondence 1910
- r. 1 Mu - S, and Name uncertain correspondence 1910
- r. 1 Contracts 1910
- r. 1 London. Quinlan Beecham affair. 1910
- r. 1 Plans and notes. 1910
- r. 1 Plans and notes relating to a proposal to bring *la Scala de Milan* to Paris. 1910
- r. 1 Astruc correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Astruc telegrams 1911
- r. 1 Astruc (G.) & Cie correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Bakst correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Diaghilev 1911
- r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams 1911
- r. 1 F correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Günzburg correspondence 1911
- r. 1 H-Ma 1911
- r. 1 Mingardi (la Scala) correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Mingardi telegrams 1911
- r. 1 Monteux correspondence 1911
- r. 1 Morsier correspondence 1911
- r. 1 P - T correspondence 1911

r. 1 Contracts 1911

r. 1 Plans and notes1911

r. 1 Astruc correspondence 1912

r. 1 Astruc telegrams1912

r. 1 Astruc (G.) & Cie correspondence 1911

r. 1 B correspondence 1912

r. 1 Diaghilev correspondence 1912

r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams1912

r. 1 F - H correspondence 1912

r. 1 Monteux correspondence 1912

r. 1 Monteux telegrams 1912

r. 1 N-P correspondence1912

r. 1 Pavlova correspondence 1912

r. 1 Stravinski correspondence 1912

r. 1 Contracts1912

r. 1 Plans and notes1912

r. 1 A correspondence 1913

r. 1 Astruc correspondence 1913

r. 1 Astruc (G.) & Cie correspondence1913

r. 1 C correspondence 1913

r. 1 D correspondence 1913

r. 1 Diaghilev correspondence 1913

r. 1 Diaghilev telegrams1913

r. 1 G - N correspondence 1913

r. 1 Nijinsky correspondence 1913

- r. 1 Trubecki correspondence 1913
- r. 1 Contracts 1913
- r. 1 Finances and notes 1913
- r. 1 A - V correspondence and 1 receipt 1914
- r. 1 Astruc correspondence n.d.
- r. 1 Diaghilev correspondence n.d.
- r. 1 Günzburg, Hahn correspondence n.d.
- r. 1 Karsavina, Monteux, Sert correspondence n.d.

Series II: Subject files

Sub-series I - People
13 folders

Correspondence and miscellaneous items relating to individuals.
Arranged alphabetically by individual and then chronologically.
For both Rubinstein and Trouhanova, telegrams and letters are
arranged in separate chronological series.

- r. 1 Debussy
- r. 1 Greffuhle 1904 - 1906
- r. 1 Greffuhle 1907 - 1911
- r. 1 Greffuhle n.d.
- r. 1 Romola Nijinsky - Astruc 1925
- r. 1 Ida Rubinstein
Correspondence from her lawyers de Chauveron and Pequin
- r. 1 Ida Rubinstein letters
- r. 1 Ida Rubinstein telegrams
- r. 1 Ida Rubinstein miscellaneous
Includes biographical note, a drawing by Etlin, a sonnet by
Ochse and miscellaneous letters
- r. 1 Trouhanova letters 1906 - 1913
- r. 1 Trouhanova letters n.d.

- r. 1 Trouhanova telegrams
- r. 1 Trouhanova letters to or about Trouhanova, and miscellaneous receipts and orders

Sub-series II: Geographic Subject Files

6 folders

Correspondence and miscellaneous items.

Items grouped around a geographical area: Deauville, Germany and Italy, Lyons and Marseilles. Correspondence is further subdivided alphabetically by writer and placed in chronological order under each writer's name.

- r. 1 Deauville correspondence from Eugene; ne Cornuche
- r. 1 Deauville correspondence, D-R
- r. 1 Deauville finance and miscellaneous
- r. 1 Germany and Italy
- r. 1 Lyons and Marseilles correspondence, A - D
- r. 1 Lyons and Marseilles correspondence, S - V, and clippings

Series III: Clippings, Programs and Announcements

1906-1914

3 folders

Clippings are in original chronological arrangement, and are primarily from 1911. Programs and announcement are placed in chronological order.

- r. 1 Clippings 1911,1913
- r. 1 Programs and announcements 1906 -1914