

# **Inventory of the Klarna Pinska Papers, 1919-1986**

**\*(S) MGMZD 141**

## **Jerome Robbins Dance Division**

**The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts  
New York, New York**

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## Descriptive Summary

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Klarna Pinska Papers, 1919-1986</b>
<b>Collection ID:</b>	<b>*(S) MGMZD 141</b>
<b>Creator:</b>	<b>Pinska, Klarna</b>
<b>Extent:</b>	<b>3.5 linear feet (8 boxes)</b>
<b>Repository:</b>	<b>Jerome Robbins Dance Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts</b>

## Administrative Information

### Abstract

Klarna Pinska was a dancer, instructor and choreographer who studied under Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn at the Denishawn School in California and New York. She studied further under Charles Weidman and Doris Humphrey. Pinska was committed to teaching dance and movement and influenced a generation of young children through her instruction and productions.

The Klarna Pinska Papers contain materials from most of her professional career, and focus on her time working as Ruth St. Denis' assistant and her teachings in the 1960s and 1970s. The collection also contains correspondence and photographs providing insight into the life of 20<sup>th</sup> century modern dance. The music scores were used in Pinska's works, teaching as well as her own career as a dancer. Some of the scores were property of the Denishawn School.

### Access

Collection is open to the public. Photocopying prohibited. Advance notice required.

### Publication Rights

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### Preferred Citation

The Klarna Pinska Papers, (S) \*MGZMD 141, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

## **Biographical Note**

Klarna Pinska was born in 1904, and moved to the United States as a young girl. She studied under Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn at the Denishawn School of Dance from 1920-1926 both in Los Angeles and New York. In the early 1930s, following some professional experiences in theater, Pinska went on to become head teacher at the Ruth St. Denis School of Dance in New York. Pinska's position at the Ruth St. Denis School allowed her to put on performances featuring her own choreography and direction. During this period, Pinska assisted Ruth St. Denis with the choreography of a ballet, which premiered at Boston Symphony Hall, and additionally directed with Harry Losee and Lenore Shaffer a dance composition that premiered at Carnegie Hall. In 1940, Pinska and St. Denis directed a ballet that was featured at the New York World's Fair. Pinska was also a student herself, and in the 1930's studied under Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Louie Horst as well as learning the Martha Graham Method with teachers Jane Dudley and Sophia Maslow.

In 1941, Klarna Pinska relocated to the west coast where she worked as a welder in the shipyards and taught dance and dance therapy to adults and children. Dance therapy interested Pinska so much that she worked for three years under the guidance of Dr. John Cowan, bone specialist and Dean of U.C. Medical School. Pinska demonstrated dance for doctors and attempted to use dance to help aid in the recovery of patients. She produced plays for and taught dance movements to the cast of the North Beach Players from 1941-1949. Pinska was a dance therapist at the U.C. Medical School throughout the 1950s and 60s. She also taught children's classes at the Walter Beggerstaff Studio from 1960-1964. Pinska reunited with Ruth St. Denis and served as her assistant from 1963-1966, scheduling performances and promoting events.

In the 1970s, Klarna Pinska gained recognition for reviving the spirit of Denishawn by conducting master classes, lectures and performances at college and universities. Pinska was awarded the title of dance historian by UCLA in 1975, and was honored by Abraham D. Beane, mayor of New York City for her contributions to modern dance and dance education. She choreographed and directed *The Spirit of Denishawn* in 1977, which was well received by the dance community. Pinska worked to set up performances with the American Dance Festival in 1980. Klarna Pinska died in 1994 in San Francisco.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Klarna Pinska Papers contain materials documenting her life in modern dance. Pinska attended the Denishawn School in her youth and remained affiliated with dance in the style of Ruth St. Denis into the 1980s. The collection's correspondence is mostly of a professional nature. Teaching dance and movement was important to Pinska, and the collection contains notes from various phases of her teaching career. Pinska worked for Ruth St. Denis during the 1960s. Publicity and other professional papers of St. Denis are present in this collection, as well as correspondence between Pinska and other individuals working with St. Denis. The photographs capture Pinska at various points of her career from 1919 to 1982. The music scores are mostly printed and were used by Pinska for dance instruction. Some of the scores were used in classes taught by the Denishawn School.

## **Organization**

The collection is organized into seven series:

- Series I: Correspondence, 1945-1986, undated
- Series II: Biographical Papers and Journals, 1937-1986, undated
- Series III: Teaching Materials, 1935-1981, undated
- Series IV: Subject Files, 1931-1987, undated
- Series V: Photographs and Artwork, 1919-1982, undated
- Series VI: Music Scores, 1901-1934, undated
- Series VII: Oversized Materials, 1966-1980

## **Series Descriptions**

### **Series I : Correspondence, 1945-1986, undated**

**1 box**

Arrangement: Alphabetical

The correspondence is mostly professional and dates from the late 1960s to 1970s. Pinska's professional engagements with universities and dance groups are documented in the correspondence. The personal correspondence includes short notes to and from Pinska. Much of the correspondence from the years 1962 to 1966 deals with Ruth St. Denis.

### **Series II : Biographical Papers and Journals, 1937-1985, undated**

**11 folders**

Arrangement: Alphabetical

The biographical papers contain materials covering Pinska's personal life and career as a dancer and dance instructor. There are many versions of her resume and personal statements written at various points in her life for grant and job applications. The journals contain personal notes and writings.

**Series III : Teaching Materials, 1935-1981, undated** **10 folders**

Arrangement: Chronological

The teaching materials contain notes on posture from the 1930s to Pinska's teaching of dance and dance history at UCLA in the early 1980s. There is a notebook with choreographic notes on dances associated with Ruth St. Denis and the Denishawn School.

**Series IV: Subject Files, 1931-1987, undated** **13 folders**

Arrangement: Alphabetical

The subject files concern professional relationships with Ruth St. Denis, WPA Theater Projects of the 1930s and Charles Weidman. The programs in this series are of dance events from the 1960s through 1980s.

**Series V: Photographs and Artwork, 1919-1982, undated** **1 box**

Arrangement: Chronological

The photographs span Pinska's life. Early photographs of the Denishawn School feature Pinska and her peers as young students. There are also photographs of Ruth St. Denis taken from various engagements in the 1960s. Many of photos show Pinska in the role of instructor including photos of dance classes and performances in the 1970s.

**Series VI: Music Scores, 1901-1934, undated** **3 boxes**

Arrangement: Alphabetical

Contains manuscript scores, copies of scores, and printed scores. The earliest of the scores were possibly used at the Denishawn School, other scores may have been used by Pinska for instruction of dance at various points of her career. Includes some incomplete scores.

**Series VII: Oversized Materials, 1966-1980** **1 box**

Arrangements: Chronological

The oversized materials consist of journals and images saved from a scrapbook. There are two awards that Pinska received in the later years of her life from the mayor's of New York City and Los Angeles.

**Series I: Correspondence, 1945-1986, undated**

**Box 1**

- F. 1 American Dance Festival, 1980-1983, undated
- F. 2 A-C, 1960-1983
- F. 3 Mitchel Chetel, 1977-1987, undated
- F. 4 John Dougherty, 1964-1978, undated
- F. 5 D-F, 1960-1982
- F. 6 Eleanor Frampton, 1963-1968, undated
- F. 7 G-O, 1960-1982
- F. 8 Rosemary Glenn, 1964-1966
- F. 9 Joyce Trisler Dance Company, 1975-1976
- F. 10 Barton Mumaw, undated
- F. 11 New York Public Library of Performing Arts, 1976-1986 (Letters from Genevieve Oswald.)
- F. 12 P-R, 1946-1981
- F. 13 Harry Rubenstein, 1976-1979
- F. 14 S-W, 1945-1986
- F. 15 Ted Shawn, 1960-1970
- F. 16 Ruth St. Denis, 1962-1967, undated
- F. 17 Alfred Stury, 1964, undated
- F. 18 University of California Los Angeles, 1957-1982
- F. 19 Charles Weidman, 1964-1974, undated
- F. 20 Unidentified correspondence, 1960-1986, undated
- F. 21 Unidentified greeting cards, 1971-1982, undated

**Series II: Biographical Papers and Journals, 1937-1985, undated**

- F. 22 Clippings, 1937-1981
- F. 23 Grant Applications, 1981-1983, undated
- F. 24 Handwritten Notes, 1978-1985, undated
- Journals, 1966-1982, undated

**Box 2**

- F. 1 1966, Apr.-May
- F. 2 1966, June-Sept.
- F. 3 1979-1982
- F. 4 Undated
- F. 5 Legal documents, 1927-1982 (Contains job contracts, will of Max Lipman and identification cards of Pinkska including union membership and US passport.)
- F. 6 Personal statements, undated (Various brief biographical statements by Pinkska.)
- F. 7 Programs, 1969-1981, undated (Programs of dance events featuring Pinkska as a performer or choreographer.)
- F. 8 Resumes, undated

**Series III: Teaching Materials, 1935-1981, undated**

- F. 9 Early posture work, 1935 (Contains notes, instructions and diagrams detailing Pinkska's early instructions in posture technique.)
- F. 10 Youth guiding, 1965-1966, undated
- F. 11 Denishawn Dance, 1979 (A notebook of choreography.)
- UCLA, 1980-1981
- F. 12 Class rosters, 1980-1981
- F. 13 Clippings and reviews, 1980-1981
- F. 14 Programs, 1980-1981

**Box 3**

- F. 1-2 General teaching materials, undated (Includes images, and notes used to instruct dance class.)
- F. 3 Notes on teaching posture class, undated
- F. 4 Yoga exercises, undated

**Series IV: Subject Files, 1931-1987, undated**

- Assorted programs (Contains programs to events and performances attended by Pinksa)
  - F. 5 1961-1979
  - F. 6 1980-1985, undated
  - F. 7 Denishawn souvenirs, 1931-1964, undated
  - F. 8 Federal Theater Project, undated (Notes from a oral history project from George Mason University.)
- Ruth St. Denis, 1947-1969
  - F. 9 Clippings, 1947-1969, undated
  - F. 10 Promotional Materials, 1962-1966, undated
  - F. 11 Contracts and agreements with Klarna Pinska, 1964-1966
  - F. 12 Interview, 1964
  - F. 13 Klarna and Miss Ruth Ballet, 1966
  - F. 14 *The Divine Dance*, undated
- Charles Weidman, 1969-1987
  - F. 15 Promotional materials, 1969-1987, undated
  - F. 16 Programs, 1969-1971, undated (Includes programs of Charles Weidman and his Theater Dance Company.)
- F. 17 WPA, undated (Materials from Pinska work in the WPA Federal Theater)

**Series V: Photographs and Artwork, 1919-1982, undated**

- Photographs, 1919-1982, undated
    - Klarna Pinska, 1919-1982, undated
    - Snapshots, 1919-1980
- Box 4**
- F. 1 1919-1928
  - F. 2 1936-1949
  - F. 3 1962-1966
  - F. 4 1970-1978
  - F. 5 1979-1980
  - F. 6 Headshots, 1928-1981, undated
  - Group Instruction and Performance, 1930-1982
    - F. 7 Group instruction, 1930-1970 (Photos of Pinska working with young girls.)
    - F. 8 Group instruction, undated
    - F. 9 Youth Guidance Center, 1966
    - F. 10 Group Performance, 1976
    - F. 11 American Dance Festival, 1982
    - F. 12 Children's Class Neighborhood Arts Center, undated
    - F. 13 Outdoor Group Performance, undated
  - Ruth St. Denis
    - F. 14 Lectures at college, 1964
    - F. 15 Assorted Photographs, 1964, undated
    - F. 16 Birthday Photographs, 1966, undated
  - F. 17 Charles Weidman, undated
  - Artwork, undated
    - F. 18 Artwork, undated (From a book on the Spanish Civil War.)

F. 19 Fabric samples, undated (Fabric samples attached to business cards.)

**Series VI: Music Scores, 1901-1934**

**Box 5**

- F. 1 Johan Sebastian Bach, *Bouree in B Minor*, undated (Arranged by Berthold Tours.)  
Bela Bartok
- F. 2 *A Gyermekeknek*, undated (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 3 *Allegro Barbaro*, 1918 (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 4 Marion Bauer, *Six Preludes for the Pianoforte*, 1922 (Published score.)
- F. 5 Ludvig Van Beethoven, *Sonate Pathetique*, undated (Published score.)
- F. 6 Irene Berge, *Suite Orientale for Pianoforte*, 1918 (Published score.)
- F. 7 Arthur Bergh, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, 1914 (Published score booklet.)
- F. 8 Mario Castlenuovo-Tedesco, *Corale Su Una Melodia Ebraica*, 1927  
(Published score with annotations.)
- F. 9 Barbara Lee Chadwick, *Arabian Music*, undated (Ms. score.)
- F. 10 Frederic Chopin, *Preludes*, 1915 (Works for the pianoforte. Published score.)
- F. 11 Bainbridge Crist, *Egyptian Impressions*, undated (Piano suite. Published score.)
- F. 12 Claude Debussy, *Courtege* and *La Plus Que Lente*, 1906-1910  
(Published scores.)
- F. 13 Del Valle De Paz, *Works for Piano*, undated (Published music booklet.)
- F. 14 Leo Delibes, *Passepied*, undated (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 15 David Diamond, *Duet, Counterpoint, Space for the Dance*, 1926-1936  
(Incomplete ms. scores)
- F. 16 Antonin Dvofak, *Silhouetten Op. 8*, undated, (Published score.)
- F. 17 Duke Ellington, *Blue Light*, 1939 (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 18 Lehman Engel, untitled, 1935 (Score reproduction with annotations. Used in choreography by Charles Weidman. )
- F. 19 Zdenko Fibich, *My Moonlight Madonna Waltz*, 1933 (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 20 Arthur Foote, *Five Poems for the Pianoforte*, undated (Published score booklet with annotations.)
- F. 21 Rudolf Friml, *La Danse de Damoiselles Op. 48*, 1908 (Published score.)
- F. 22 E. Granados, *Danzas Españolas*, undated (Published score.)
- F. 23 Louis Gregh, *Nuits Algeriennes*, 1904 (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 24 Charles T. Griffes, *The White Peacock*, 1917 (Published score.)

**Box 6**

- F. 1 Charles Haubiel, *Dance of the Dorian Youths*, 1935 (Published score)
- F. 2 Wells Hively,
- F. 3 Louis Horst, *Babylonian Dance*, undated (Ms. score.)
- F. 4 Richard Kleinmichel, *National-Album*, undated (Published score.)
- F. 5 Anatole Liadow, *Biroulki*, undated (Published score.)
- F. 6 G. Lubomirsky, *Dance Orientale*, 1925 (Published score.)
- F. 7 Th. Michaelis, *The Turkish Reveille*, 1902 (Published score with annotations.)
- F. 8 Moritz Moszkowski, *Liebeswalzer*, 1924 (Published score with annotations.)  
Modest Moussorgsky
- F. 9 *Joshua*, 1910 (Chorus for mixed voices. English version by Henry G. Chapman. Published score.)
- F. 10 *Song of Solomon*, undated (Ms. score reproduction)  
W. A. Mozart



- F. 11 *Eight Piano Trios*, undated (Published score with annotations)  
 F. 12 *Serenade*, undated, (Published score with annotations)  
 F. 13 Walter Nieman, *Altgyptischer Tempeltanz*, 1922 (Published score with annotations.)  
 F. 14 Riccardo Pick-Mangigalli, *Mignardises*, 1908 (Published score.)  
 F. 15 Serge Prokofieff, *Marche Op. 12 No. 1, Conte Badinage, Marche and Fantome*, 1907-1911 (Published score with annotations)  
 F. 16 Maurice Ravel, *The Fountain*, 1913 (Published score.)  
 F. 17 Fabian Rahfeld, *Spanish Dance*, 1920 (Published score with annotations.)  
 F. 18 Nikolas Rimksy-Korsakoff, *A Song of India*, 1921 (Published score)  
 Domenico Scarlatti  
 F. 19 *Capriccio*, 1901 (Arranged by Carl Tausig. Published score.)  
 F. 20 *Pastorale*, 1902 (Arranged by Carl Tausig. Published score.)  
 F. 21 Paul Seelig, *Lagoe-Lagoe* 1922 (Published score with annotations.)  
 F. 22 R. S. Stoughton, *In the Palace of the Rajah*, 1918 (Published score.)  
 F. 23 Richard Strauss, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, 1930 (Published score with choreography for group performance by Ted Shawn.)  
 Lily Strickland  
 F. 24 *Dance Moods, Oriental Dances, Dance of India*, undated. (Ms. scores.)  
 F. 25 *Indienne*, 1927 (Published score.)  
 Peter Tschaikovsky  
 F. 26 *The Seasons, Op. 37A*, undated (Published score with annotations.)  
 F. 27 *June Op. 37 No. 6*, undated (Published score.)  
 Clifford Vaughn  
 F. 28 *Mexican Hat Dance, Summerdance*, undated (Ms. scores.)  
 F. 29 *Nautch Music*, 1926 (Ms. score.)  
 F. 30 Harry Von Tilzer, *A Bird in a Gilded Cage*, 1927 (Published score. Words by Arthur J. Lamb.)  
 F. 31 Paul Wachs, *Nadia*, undated

**Box 7**

- F.1-7 Unidentified and Incomplete Scores  
 F. **Series VII: Oversized Materials, 1966-1980, undated**  
 Journals, 1966-1968

**Box 8**

- F. 1 1966, Apr.  
 F. 2 1966, May  
 F. 3 1968, Dec.  
 F. 4 Scrapbook, undated (Contains clippings and images of dancers.)  
 F. 5 Awards and honors, 1976-1980

**Separated Materials**

Audiotapes sent to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division. 54 music tapes cataloged as \*MGZT 7-1722. Interviews with Klarna Pinska cataloged as \*MGZTL 4-1726 through \*MGZTL 4-1730, \*MGZTL 4-1732 through \*MGZTL 4-1735, and \*MGZTL 4-2963 through \*MGZTL 4-2965.