



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Klarna Pinska photographs

1920s-1987

*MGZEB 21-0039

Processed by Heather Lember in 2021.

Summary

Creator: Pinska, Klarna

Title: Klarna Pinska photographs

Date: 1920s-1987

Abstract: Klarna Pinska was a dancer, choreographer, and teacher. Her collection dates from the 1920s to 1987, and contains photographs depicting her dance classes, performances, and training at the Denishawn School.

Preferred citation: Klarna Pinska photographs, *MGZEB 21-0039. Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Heather Lember in 2021.

Related Materials:

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

Creator History

Klarna Pinska was born in the Ukraine and immigrated to Canada with her family at a young age. They relocated to San Francisco in 1919, and soon after Pinska began studying with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn at the Denishawn School in Los Angeles, California and New York City. In the early 1930s, Pinska became the head teacher at the Ruth St. Denis School of Dance in New York. In this role she choreographed a number of performances, and collaborated with St. Denis on a ballet that was performed at the New York World's Fair. During this time Pinska also studied with Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Louie Horst, Jane Dudley, and Sophia Maslow.

Pinska moved back to California in 1941, where she taught dance therapy to adults and children, and collaborated with doctors at the University of California Medical School to find ways to use dance to

assist in patients' recovery. She worked as a dance therapist throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and taught children's classes at the Walter Beggerstaff Studio between 1960 and 1964. Pinksa spent three years serving as Ruth St. Denis' assistant, and conducted master classes, lectures, and performances in the 1970s on Denishawn techniques. She also choreographed and directed *The Spirit of Denishawn* in 1977.

Pinksa continued to set up performances and teach classes throughout the 1980s. She died in 1994 in San Francisco, California.

Scope and Content Note

The collection dates from the 1920s to 1987, and holds photographs of Pinksa's dance classes, performances, and dance training. The photographs are arranged alphabetically by name or topic, and also contain a large assortment of images depicting Pinksa in unidentified performances and classes. The most prevalent photographs in the collection are those of Pinksa's dance classes. Other individuals depicted in the collection include Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and Martha Graham.

Key Terms

Subjects

Dance -- Photographs

Dance -- Study and teaching

Dance teachers -- United States -- 20th century

Occupations

Dancers.

Names

Pinska, Klarna

St. Denis, Ruth, 1880-1968

Denishawn School of Dancing

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1-13 1920s-1987
 - b. 1 f. 14 Cole, Jack 1930s
- b. 2 f. 1-12 Dance Classes 1930-1987
 - b. 3 f. 1-6
 - b. 3 f. 7 Dance Therapy at University of California Medical Center 1970
 - b. 3 f. 8-9 Denishawn 1927-1934
 - b. 3 f. 10 Graham, Martha
 - b. 3 f. 11 Humphrey, Doris
 - b. 3 f. 12 Javanese Dancers 1969
- b. 4 f. 1-4 Mill Valley Dance Therapy 1969-1970
 - b. 4 f. 5 *Red and Gold Sari* 1941
 - b. 4 f. 6 *Rondo* 1931
 - b. 4 f. 7 Shalom Aleichem Children 1932
 - b. 4 f. 8 Shawn, Ted
 - b. 4 f. 9 Spirit of Denishawn 1979
Contains a contact sheet and program.
- b. 4 f. 10-13 St. Denis, Ruth 1923-1978
Also contains some photographs of Ted Shawn.
 - b. 4 f. 14 Stick Dance
 - b. 4 f. 15 UCLA Dance Therapy 1986
 - b. 4 f. 16 Weidman, Charles