



The New York Public Library Jerome Robbins Dance Division

Guide to the

Humphrey-Weidman photographs

1900s-1950s

*MGZEB 21-0031

Processed by Heather Lember in 2021.

Summary

Creator: Humphrey-Weidman Company

Title: Humphrey-Weidman photographs

Date: 1900s-1950s

Size: 1.08 linear feet (3 boxes)

Source: Source of acquisition is unknown.

Abstract: The Humphrey-Weidman Company was founded by the choreographers, dancers, and teachers Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. The Humphrey-Weidman photographs contain prints of performances by both the company and the founders, as well as images of dancers and other individuals affiliated with Humphrey and Weidman.

Preferred citation: Humphrey-Weidman photographs, *MGZEB 21-0031. 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.

Creator History

Doris Humphrey (1895-1958) and Charles Weidman (1901-1975) were choreographers, dancers, and teachers. They met in the 1920s at the Denishawn School, when Humphrey was Weidman's dance teacher. Both dancers toured internationally with the Denishawn company before forming their own school and the Humphrey-Weidman Company in New York City in 1928. The company performed such works as *Chorale Prelude*, *Day on Earth*, *Flickers*, *Life of a Bee*, *Inquest*, *Opus 51*, *The Shakers*, and *With My Red Fires* throughout the 1930s and 1940s. The Humphrey-Weidman Company disbanded in 1945, after Humphrey retired from dancing due to arthritis.

Humphrey went on to work as artistic director for the José Limón Dance Company, and began teaching at the Juilliard School in 1951. She also wrote a book on choreography entitled, *The Art of Making Dances*, which she completed just prior to her death in New York City in 1958.

After the dissolution of the Humphrey-Weidman Company, Weidman went on to choreograph *Fables of Our Time* in 1947. He formed the Expression of Two Arts Dance Theatre with the sculptor, Mikhail Santaro, in 1960, which was later renamed The Charles Weidman School of Modern Dance, Inc., and then the Charles Weidman Foundation. Weidman died in 1975, but the foundation remains operational today.

Scope and Content Note

The Humphrey-Weidman photographs date from the 1900s to 1950s, and contain prints of the Humphrey-Weidman Company, the company's performances, individuals affiliated with the company, and personal photographs of Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. There is a small selection of unlabeled and unidentified images, and the rest of the collection is arranged into photographs of Performances and photographs of People.

The photographs of Performances are arranged alphabetically by performance name and contains images of performances by the Humphrey-Weidman Company, as well as some dance productions Weidman worked on after the dissolution of the company, including *Fables For Our Time*. The Humphrey Weidman performances include *Chorale Preludes*, *Flickers*, *Inquest*, *Life of the Bee*, *Opus 51*, *Shakers*, *Theatre Piece*, *To the Dance*, and *Red Fists*. Also of note is an image from a 1923 Denishawn production of *Siamese Ballet* featuring Lenore Scheffer, Ted Shawn, Charles Weidman, and George Steares.

The photographs of People are arranged alphabetically by name, and includes images of individuals affiliated with the Humphrey-Weidman Company, as well as a large selection of photographs of both Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. Others depicted include Pauline Lawrence, José Limón, Edith Orcutt, Ted Shawn, Ruth St. Denis, and Virginia Tanner.

Key Terms

Subjects

Choreographers -- United States -- 20th century
Choreography -- Study and teaching -- United States -- 20th century
Dance -- Photographs
Dance companies -- Photographs

Occupations

Dancers.

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Photographs

Names

Humphrey, Doris, 1895-1958
Weidman, Charles
Denishawn School of Dancing
Humphrey-Weidman Company

Container List

- b. 1 f. 1 1900s-1950s
- b. 3 f. 1 Contains an assortment of unlabeled and unidentified photographs.
- Performances
- b. 3 f. 2-3 1930s-1950s
- b. 1 f. 4 *Chorale Preludes* 1942
Contains photographs of Doris Humphrey and José Limón.
- b. 3 f. 6 *Day On Earth* 1947
- b. 3 f. 7 *Duke of Sacramento* 1940s
- b. 1 f. 5 *Fables For Our Time* 1947
- b. 1 f. 6 *Flickers* 1942
Contains photographs of Charles Weidman and Lila Lewis.
- b. 1 f. 7 *Happy Hypocrite* 1930s
- b. 1 f. 8 *Inquest* 1944
- b. 1 f. 9 *Life of the Bee* 1930
- b. 1 f. 10-11 *New Dance* 1930s
Contains photographs of Charles Weidman, José Limón, George Bockman, and Bill Bales.
- b. 1 f. 12-13 *Opus 51* 1938
- b. 1 f. 14 *Passacaglia* 1951
- b. 1 f. 15 *The Passion* 1930s
- b. 1 f. 16 *Quest*
- b. 1 f. 17 *Race of Life* 1937
- b. 1 f. 18 *The Shakers* 1930s
- b. 3 f. 8 *Siamese Ballet* 1923
Includes photographs of Lenore Scheffer, Ted Shawn, Charles Weidman, and George Steares.
- b. 1 f. 19 *Theatre Piece* 1936
- b. 1 f. 20 *To the Dance* 1930s
- b. 3 f. 9 *Variations and Conclusion From New Dance* 1930s
- b. 1 f. 21 *With My Red Fires* 1936
- People
- b. 1 f. 22 Chillis, Pauline
- b. 1 f. 23 Ide, Laetitin
- b. 1 f. 24 Lawrence, Pauline
- b. 1 f. 25 Limón, José 1946
- b. 1 f. 26 Litz, Kathi
- b. 1 f. 27-28 Humphrey, Doris
- b. 2 f. 1-8
- b. 3 f. 10
- b. 2 f. 9 Humphrey, Doris and Weidman, Charles
- b. 3 f. 11
- b. 2 f. 10 Orcutt, Edith
- b. 2 f. 11 Shawn, Ted and St. Denis, Ruth
- b. 3 f. 12
- b. 3 f. 13 St. Denis, Ruth

People (cont.)

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| b. 2 f. 12 | Tanner, Virginia |
| b. 2 f. 13-15 | Weidman, Charles |
| b. 3 f. 14 | |