

Guide to the Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records, 1922-1929

(S) *MGZMD 175

Jerome Robbins Dance Division

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

Contact Information

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
Jerome Robbins Dance Division
40 Lincoln Center Plaza
New York, New York 10023-7498
Phone: 212/870-1657
Email: dance@nypl.org
Web address: <http://digilib.nypl.org/dynaweb/ead/dance>

Processed by: Helice Koffler
Date Completed: June 2006

Processed and encoded through a gift from Robert W. Wilson.

© 2006 The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title:	Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records
Collection ID:	(S) *MGZMD 175
Creator:	Chicago Allied Arts, Inc.
Extent:	0.63 linear feet (2 boxes)
Repository:	Jerome Robbins Dance Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Abstract: The Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records are chiefly comprised of correspondence, contracts, financial records, and drafts of legal documents concerning the establishment and operations of the short-lived organization, which produced an innovative series of programs of new music and dance in Chicago from 1924-1927.

Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

Preferred Citation

Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records, (S) *MGZMD 175, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Custodial History

The Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records were donated to the Jerome Robbins Dance Division in 1992.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and cataloged in June 2006.

Historical Note

Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. was an organization formed in 1924 for the purpose of presenting small-scale ballet and music performances in Chicago. In doing so, it brought together Eric De Lamarter's Solo Orchestra and the Ballet Intime of Adolph Bolm. Modeled somewhat along the line of Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, the project was to be funded through the guarantees of individual sponsors. Composer John Alden Carpenter was one of the group's founders and took the lead in organizing the programs and attracting additional donors. Using his social connections, Carpenter assembled a list of supporters that included many of the most prominent names in Chicago society, including members of the Aldis, Goodman, McCormick, and Ryerson families. The earliest programs put on by Chicago Allied Arts also featured international guest stars, such as the ballerina Tamara Karsavina and flamenco dancer Maria Montero to augment the dance ensemble.

The first program, which took place at the Eighth Street Theatre on November 27, 1924, set the pattern that would be followed in subsequent seasons. The initial half consisted of orchestral works led by De Lamarter, as well as a performance of Leo Sowerby's *Rhapsody*, conducted by the composer. The ballet portion of the program offered the Chicago premiere of *Foyer de la Danse*, a ballet by Bolm, set to the music of Emmanuel Chabrier. The remainder of the dance pieces consisted of divertissements performed by Karsavina, Bolm, and soloists from Bolm's troupe, including Ruth Page, Marcia Preble, and Caird Leslie. Russian-born scenic designer Nicolas Remisoff, who had developed a reputation through his earlier work with the Chauve-Souris cabaret, created the front curtain, costumes, and sets for the entire first production, as well as the group's logo. These initial performances were met with critical praise and Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. quickly followed up with a second program in January 1925. The musical selections included performances of Stravinsky's *Pribaoutki* song cycle, sung by Mina Hager, and works by Arnold Schoenberg and Arthur Bliss. The major critical successes of the program, however, were a new ballet to Manuel de Falla's *El Amor Brujo*, choreographed by Bolm, featuring Montero and designs by Rollo Peters, and the world premiere of another Bolm ballet, *The Rivals*, which was a reworking of a Chinese legend to an original score by Henry Eichheim, in which Page had a significant part.

Much of the same creative team reunited for a second and third season of programs (1925-1927), which perhaps were even more progressive in outlook. Among the highlights were a fully staged performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, the premieres of several new Bolm ballets, including *Bal des Marionnettes* (Erik Satie) and *Visual Mysticism* (Aleksandr Scriabin), Page's *The Flapper and the Quarterback* (Clarence Loomis), and a special gala performance for the visiting Queen Marie of Romania (November 14, 1926). Although plans for an ambitious new season were announced for March 1927, that program never materialized. In July 1927, it was reported that Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. was to suspend its activities for one year, but the organization, which had been responsible for presenting some of the most innovative programs of new music and dance to take place in Chicago, never reemerged.

Scope and Content Note

The Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. Records are chiefly comprised of correspondence, but the collection also includes some contracts, financial records, and drafts of legal documents concerning the establishment and operations of the short-lived organization, which produced a series of programs of music and dance in Chicago from 1924-1927. Most of the correspondence deals with financial or administrative matters, and mainly consists of letters to and from John Alden Carpenter soliciting contributions from potential donors. Similarly, correspondence between Adolph Bolm and Carpenter and Nicolas Remisoff and Bolm primarily pertains to payments, but occasionally also touches on artistic decisions. While incomplete, these records document some of the planning and development of the ballet programs for the group's initial 1924-1925 season. With the exception of two letters and accounts submitted by conductor Eric De Lamarter (one of which contains a full listing of the orchestra members), there is very little information in the collection on the musical component of the Chicago Allied Arts, Inc. concerts. Also of interest is an unidentified letter, dated January 3, 1929 (possibly from Carpenter to Ruth Page), which chronicles a trip to Russia and Europe. Though the titles of the works often are omitted, this lengthy letter contains extended descriptions of numerous performances attended by the sender, including stagings of *The Red Poppy* and *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Bolshoi, various Moscow Art Theatre productions, and *Die Dreigroschenoper* in Berlin. Although fragmentary in nature, the collection provides an insight into a mostly forgotten episode in the development of ballet in the United States and uncovers the organization's unique contribution to the cultural and social life of Chicago.

Box/Folder	Description
Box 1	
F. 1	Announcement, 1925 (For second program.)
	Contracts
F. 2	Dancers, 1924 (For Thamar Karsavina and Maria Montero.)
F. 3	Leases, 1924-1925 and undated
	Correspondence
F. 4	A, 1924-1925
F. 5	Ba-Be, 1924-1925
F. 6	Bissell, Arthur, 1924-1925
F. 7	Bolm, Adolph, 1924
F. 8	Bor-Bu, 1924-1925
F. 9	C, 1925
F. 10	D, 1924-1925 (Includes two letters from Eric De Lamarter.)
F. 11	E-F, 1924-1925 (Includes letter from Henry Eichheim.)
F. 12	Goodman, Marjorie (Mrs. Kenneth), 1924 and undated
F. 13	H, 1924-1925 (Includes one letter from Robert B. Harshe offering the use of the theater at the Art Institute of Chicago.)
F. 14	J-L, 1924-1925 (Includes one telegram from Robert Edmond Jones)
F. 15	M, 1924-1925
F. 16	N-P, 1924-1925 and undated
F. 17	Rehm, William H., 1924-1925
F. 18	Remisoff, Nicolas, 1924-1925 (Letters from Remisoff to Adolf Bolm.)
F. 19	Ri-Ry, 1924-1925
F. 20	S-U, 1924-1925
F. 21	W, 1924-1925
F. 22	Unidentified, 1927-1929 (Includes first page of letter beginning, "Dear Ruth," which may be from Agnes De Mille to Ruth Page regarding the ballet, <i>Stagefright</i> ; also incomplete carbon copy of lengthy letter, possibly from John Alden Carpenter, detailing the sender's travels through Russia and Europe.)
	Financial records
F. 23	Operating statement, undated (For first program.)
	Receipts
	Adolph Bolm expenses
	1924
F. 24	Jan. 5 (Statement itemizing the salaries paid to each member of Ballet Intime; may be misdated.)
F. 25	Dec. 5
F. 26	1925 Jan. 5
F. 27	Miscellaneous, 1924-1925 and undated

Box/Folder	Description
Box 2	
F. 1	Ar-L, 1924-1925 and undated
F. 2	M-W, 1924-1925 and undated
F. 3	Unidentified, 1925 and undated
F. 4	Guarantor lists, 1922 and undated (One list written on flyleaf of <i>Chicago Theatre Diagrams</i> booklet.)
	Incorporation documents
F. 5	1924 (Correspondence and other materials regarding the filing of certificates of incorporation and the official adoption of the name, Chicago Allied Arts, Inc.)
F. 6	1925 (Correspondence and drafts of bylaws and board minutes drawn up by new legal advisor, Thomas H. Fisher, in response to concerns over recordkeeping practices.)
F. 7	Prospectus draft and tentative program, undated