Guide to the Clarence McGehee Collection on Ruth St. Denis

Collection number: MS-P 25

Special Collections and Archives
The UCI Libraries
University of California
Irvine, California

Contact Information
Special Collections and Archives
The UCI Libraries
P.O. Box 19557
University of California
Irvine, California 92623-9557
Phone: (949) 824-3947
Fax: (949) 824-2472
Email: spcoll@uci.edu
URL: http://www.lib.uci.edu/rrsc/speccoll.html

Processed by:
Laura Clark Brown
Date Completed:
November 1997
Encoded by:
Gabriela A. Montoya

© 1998 The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary
Title: Clarence McGehee collection on Ruth St. Denis
Date (inclusive): ca. 1908-1937
Collection number: MS-P025
Collector: McGehee, Clarence
Extent: 4.7 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository: University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.
Irvine, California 92623-9557
Abstract: The collection is comprised of correspondence, typescripts, manuscripts, newspaper clippings, programs and ephemera collected by Ruth St. Denis’ publicist, Clarence McGehee. Most materials, including a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, pertain to Ruth St. Denis and the Denishawn Dancers. Other materials pertain to contemporaries of Ruth St. Denis in the dance world, including Ted Shawn, members of Ballet Russe, Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, Norma Gould and Trudi Schoop. Also in the collection are clippings of an anonymous author’s newspaper column; McGehee may be the author. Items date from circa 1908 to 1937.
Language: English.
Access
Collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
Property rights reside with the University of California. Literary rights are retained by the creators of the records and their heirs. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

Preferred Citation
For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

**Acquisition Information**
Gift of Valerie Ormont in 1996.

**Processing History**
Processed by Laura Clark Brown in 1997.

**Biography**
Clarence McGehee was a writer and publicist for Ruth St. Denis in the first decade of the twentieth century. He collected materials primarily by and about Ruth St. Denis and also gathered information on many of her dance contemporaries. McGehee was a resident of Redondo Beach, California.
In 1911, several papers announced McGehee's engagement to Ruth St. Denis, but they never married.

**Collection Scope and Content Summary**
The collection is comprised of correspondence, typescripts, manuscripts, newspaper clippings, programs and ephemera collected by Ruth St. Denis' publicist, Clarence McGehee. Most materials, including a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, pertain to Ruth St. Denis and the Denishawn Dancers. Other materials pertain to contemporaries of Ruth St. Denis in the dance world, including Ted Shawn, members of Ballet Russe, Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, Norma Gould and Trudi Schoop. Also in the collection are clippings of an anonymous author's newspaper column; McGehee may be the author. Items date from circa 1908 to 1937.

The collection is organized in three series. Series 1 is comprised of correspondence received by Clarence McGehee and Ruth St. Denis. Series 2 contains writings by unknown authors and an essay purportedly written by Ruth St. Denis. Series 3, the largest series, consists of printed items, including a scrapbook of clippings on Ruth St. Denis, loose newspaper and magazine clippings, programs, playbills and flyers.
Series 3 is arranged in five subject subseries. The first three subseries overlap in subject; the materials illustrate the careers of Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn and document activities of their school, Denishawn, and the Denishawn Dancers. Subseries 3.4 represents other major dancers, choreographers and companies of the era; the materials also include information on relevant topics of world dance, including Native American and Latin American dance. McGehee's collection contains numerous playbills from dance performances held in Los Angeles area theatres. Most performances were by nationally or internationally renowned companies such as Ballet Theatre and Ballet Russe. The final subseries contains materials unrelated to dance, including articles and business cards collected by McGehee.

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

**Subjects**
St. Denis, Ruth, 1880-1968--Archival resources.
Shawn, Ted, 1891-1972--Archival resources.
Duncan, Isadora, 1877-1927--Archival resources.
Denishawn School of Dancing--Archival resources.
Dance--Archival resources.
Dance--United States--Archival resources.
Modern dance--United States--Archival resources.
Dancers--Archival resources.

**Genres and Forms of Material**
Dance programs.
Scrapbooks.

**Occupations**
Dancers.
Choreographers.

**Other Index Terms Related to this Collection**
Ormont, Valerie, former owner.
Series 1. Correspondence, 1911-1924.  
Physical Description: 0.8 linear ft.  
Scope and Content Note  
Letters received by the collector Clarence McGehee and letters received by Ruth St. Denis. Many letters to St. Denis appear to be fan mail, while correspondence to McGehee is personal. Many letters to McGehee mention Ruth St. Denis. The series is arranged into two groups by the recipients, and with each group listed alphabetically by senders’ surnames. Items date from circa 1911 to 1924.

Letters received by Clarence McGehee (1911, 1914, 1924).  
Note  
Letters sent from the following individuals:  
Jay (?)  
Kingsley, Grace  
Milhenney, Eddy (?)  
Soloducko, Henry  
Yamada, Hana

Letters received by Ruth St. Denis (1911 and undated).  
Note  
Letters sent from the following individuals:  
Buckley, Olive (?)  
Davis, Maria  
Dietz, Jr., F.W.(?)  
Fairchild, Camilla  
Grant, Lillian S.  
Hirsch, Frank A.  
Hullinger, Litta Lynn (?)  
Kreider, Emma K.  
Mayer, Charles  
Miller, Marion Mills  
Ryan, Herbert H.  
Schuster, Richard  
Siskels, M.B.  
Soho, Maroula  
Stiles (?)  
Tamfer, Edwina Dean (?)  
Ward, J. (?)

Series 2. Writings, ca. 1909 and undated.  
Physical Description: 0.4 linear ft.  
Scope and Content Note  
Typescript and manuscript writings relating to dance and art. One typescript titled "The 'Ways' of Life" was supposedly written by Ruth St. Denis. Authorship of the other items is unknown. Most items are undated, but the St. Denis piece is from circa 1909.
Series 2. Writings, ca. 1909 and undated.

Box 1 : 3
"Art and Meaning" (ca. 1909)

Box 1 : 4
"Cambodian Dancing Girls"

Box 1 : 4
"The Dancing Girls of Java"

Box 1 : 5
"The 'Ways' of Life," by Ruth St. Denis

Series 3. Printed material, ca. 1908-1937

Physical Description: 3.5 linear ft.
Scope and Content Note
A scrapbook of clippings, loose newspaper and magazine clippings, programs, playbills, flyers and ephemera related to Ruth St. Denis, Denishawn and other dance and non-dance topics. Materials are arranged in five subseries by subject matter. Items date from circa 1908 to 1937.

The series has been organized in 5 subseries:
Subseries 3.1. Ruth St. Denis material, ca. 1908-1937. 0.7 linear ft.
Subseries 3.2. Ted Shawn material, ca. 1908-1937. 0.7 linear ft.
Subseries 3.3. Denishawn material, 1916-1925. 0.7 linear ft.
Subseries 3.4. Other dance personalities and topics material, undated. 0.7 linear ft.
Subseries 3.5. Non-dance material, ca. 1909-1911. 0.7 linear ft.

Subseries 3.1. Ruth St. Denis material, ca. 1908-1937.
Physical Description: 0.7 linear ft.
Scope and Content Note
Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, loose clippings, pamphlets, brochures and ephemera reflect the dance career of St. Denis and the publicity surrounding her marriage to Ted Shawn.

Box 1 : 6-9
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Box 5 OS : 1
Oversized newspaper clippings
Box 1 : 10-12
Programs and playbills (these items also represent Ted Shawn and the Denishawn Dancers, ca. 1911-1937)
Box 1 : 13
Ruth St. Denis and Her Indian Dances, pamphlet (ca. 1908)
Box 1 : 14
Ruth St. Denis, Pioneer and Prophet, brochure for monograph by Ted Shawn (ca. 1920)
Box 1 : 15
"Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn & Their Denishawn Dancers," brochure for transcontinental American tour (1926)
Box 1 : 16
Miriam, Sister of Moses, brochure for ballet (n.d.)
Box 1 : 17
Ephemera, including announcements and invitations to events
Box 4 OS
Scrapbook of newspaper clippings (ca. 1911)
Box 4 OS: 1-2
Loose clippings from scrapbook

Subseries 3.2. Ted Shawn material, ca. 1908-1937.
Physical Description: 0.7 linear ft.
Scope and Content Note
Newspaper clippings and ephemera illustrate the dance career of Ted Shawn and his company of Men Dancers.

Box 1 : 18-19
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Box 5 OS : 1
Oversized newspaper clippings
Box 1 : 20
Ephemera, including announcements and advertisements
Subseries 3.3. Denishawn material, 1916-1925.

Physical Description: 0.7 linear ft.

Scope and Content Note
Newspaper clippings, programs, playbills, brochures and four issues of Denishawn Magazine documenting the School of Dance and Related Arts, as well as performances by the Denishawn Dancers.

Box 1: 21-22
Newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 1: 23
"Denishawn, The Ruth St. Denis School of Dancing," 2 brochures (1916-1917)

Box 1: 24
The Denishawn Magazine: A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Art of the Dance, Volume 1: Numbers 1-4 (1925)

Box 5 OS: 1
"Denishawn," pamphlet

Subseries 3.4. Other dance personalities and topics material, undated.

Physical Description: 0.7 linear ft.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged alphabetically by surnames of individuals and by topics, these materials provide a glimpse at Ruth St. Denis' dance contemporaries and relevant dance topics of the day. Items include newspaper clippings, programs, playbills, flyers and advertisements.

Box 2: 1-2
Allan, Maud
Newspaper clippings and photograph

Box 2: 1
Programs and playbills

Box 2: 3
Amaya, Carmen, programs

Box 2: 4-5
American Ballet
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Program and brochure

Box 2: 6
La Argentina, newspaper clippings and brochure

Box 2: 7
Bakst, Leon
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Oversized clippings

Box 2: 8
Balanchine, George, newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 2: 9-10
Ballet Caravan and Ballet Theatre
Newspaper and magazine clippings and flyers
Programs

Box 2: 11-12
Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Box 2: 13
Newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 2: 14
Flyers, brochures and a program

Box 2: 15-16
Bolm, Adolph, newspaper and magazine clippings
Programs

Box 2: 17
Brice, Fanny, newspaper clipping and program

Box 2: 18
Cocteau, Jean, newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 2: 19
Dance in Art and Poetry, newspaper and magazine clippings and exhibit catalog

Box 2: 20
Dancers (miscellaneous)
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Oversized clippings

Box 2: 21
de Merode, Cleo, newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 2: 22
de Mille, Agnes, newspaper and magazine clippings

Box 2: 23-24
Diaghilev, Serge
Newspaper and magazine clippings
Oversized clippings
Programs

Box 2: 25-28
Duncan, Isadora

Box 2: 29
Magazine articles
**Guide to the Clarence McGehee Collection on Ruth St. Denis**

**Series 3. Printed material, ca. 1908-1937**

**Subseries 3.4. Other dance personalities and topics material, undated.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 : 26-27</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings and ephemera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 3</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 28</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 29</td>
<td>Dunham, Katherine, program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 30</td>
<td>Enters, Agna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 28</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 31-32</td>
<td>Escudero, Vincente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 31</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 32</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 33</td>
<td>Fokine and Fokina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 2</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 34,</td>
<td>Genee, Adeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>magazine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clippings and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 35</td>
<td>Gest, Morris, newspaper, magazine clippings, and program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 36</td>
<td>Gould, Norma, brochures and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 37</td>
<td>Graham, Martha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 37</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings, flyer and program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 3</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 38</td>
<td>Guerrero, Rosario and Antonio, programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 39</td>
<td>History and criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 39</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 6</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 40</td>
<td>Hoffman, Gertrude, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 41</td>
<td>Horton, Lester, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 42</td>
<td>Humphrey, Doris, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 : 43</td>
<td>Japanese dance, postcards and brochure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 1</td>
<td>Karsavina, Tamara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 1</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 5</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 2</td>
<td>Kinch, Myra, flyer and playbill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 3-4</td>
<td>Kosloff, Theodore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 3</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 5</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 4</td>
<td>Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 5</td>
<td>Latin American dance, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 6</td>
<td>Lopokova, Lydia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 6</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 5</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 7</td>
<td>Marraci, Carma Lita, program and flyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 8</td>
<td>Massine, Leonide, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 9</td>
<td>Mills College, &quot;Creative Arts&quot; brochure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 10-11</td>
<td>Miscellaneous dance topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 10</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 6</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 11</td>
<td>Playbills, flyers and brochures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 12</td>
<td>Mordkin, Mikail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 12</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 5</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 13</td>
<td>Native Americans (of Mexico) dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 13</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 OS : 6</td>
<td>Oversized clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 14</td>
<td>Nijinsky, Kyra, newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 15</td>
<td>Nijinsky, Vaslav</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 : 15</td>
<td>Newspaper and magazine clippings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subseries 3.4. Other dance personalities and topics material, undated.

- Box 5 OS : 7 Oversized clippings
- Box 3 : 16 Oukrainsky, Serge, flyers and playbill
- Box 3 : 17 Pavley-Oukrainskey Ballet, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 18 Newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 5 OS : 7 Oversized clippings and program
- Box 5 OS : 19 Programs and pamphlet
- Box 3 : 20 Rubenstein, Ida
- Box 3 : 20 Newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 5 OS : 7 Oversized clippings
- Box 3 : 21-23 Russian ballet
- Box 3 : 21-23 Newspaper and magazine clippings and playbills
- Box 5 OS : 8 Oversized clippings
- Box 3 : 24 St. Ritus Banda, magazine clipping and brochure
- Box 3 : 25 Schoop, Trudi, flyers, broadsides and program
- Box 3 : 26 Shan Kar, Uday, newspaper, magazine clippings, and program
- Box 3 : 27 Spanish dance
- Box 3 : 27 Newspaper and magazine clippings, brochures and photograph
- Box 5 OS : 8 Oversized clippings
- Box 3 : 28 Stowitts, Hubert, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 29 Swedish ballet, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 30 Toumanova, Tamara, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 31 Vanda Hoff, Ora, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 32 Volfine, Alexander, newspaper and magazine clippings
- Box 3 : 33 Wigman, Mary, magazine clipping and brochure
- Box 3 : 34 Zorina
- Box 5 OS : 7 Oversized clippings

Subseries 3.5. Non-dance material, ca. 1909-1911.

- Box 5 OS : 9 Newspaper columns by a "Special Contributor" in the Los Angeles Times (ca. 1909-1911)
- Box 3 : 34 Poems
- Box 3 : 34 Ephemera
- Box 3 : 35, Folder 35 Magazine articles from West Coast Magazine