Finding Aid for the Harry Pilcer papers, 1911-1940s

Processed by Michele James with assistance from Julie Graham; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé after initial encoding by Julie Graham.

UCLA Library Special Collections
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Title: Harry Pilcer papers
Collection number: 1941
Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 linear ft. (2 boxes and 1 flat box)
Date (inclusive): 1911-1940s
Abstract: Harry Pilcer was an American dancer and entertainer. The collection consists of papers and photographs pertaining to his life and career, particularly the time he spent partnering with Gaby Deslys, the French dancer and actress.
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact UCLA Library Special Collections for paging information.
Creator: Pilcer, Harry, 1885-1961
Restrictions on Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Harry Pilcer papers (Collection 1941). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.
Biography
Harry Pilcer was born in 1885 in New York and debuted on Broadway when he was 14 years old. He was an American dancer and entertainer who spent a good deal of time in France. He was known through his partnership with Gaby Deslys, who was a well-known French actress and dancer in the early 1900s. Together, they popularized a dance named after Deslys, called The Gaby Glide. Pilcer's stage credits include Vera Violetta (1911), Stop! Look! Listen! (1915), Laissez-Les Tomber (1917) and Pins and Needles (1922). He also appeared in the films Her Triumph (1915) and Infatuation (1918). After Deslys's death in 1920, Pilcer partnered with the French dancer Mistinguett for ten years. In 1930, he began working as master of ceremonies and entertainer at French casinos owned by Francois Andre and remained a popular entertainer in France throughout the 1930s. He was a choreographer for and appeared in the film The Razor's Edge (1946). Pilcer continued to work as an entertainer until his death in 1961.
Scope and Content
The collection consists of photographs, correspondence, writings, and ephemera related to the career of entertainer and dancer Harry Pilcer. The bulk of the material represents Pilcer's partnership with French dancer and actress Gaby Deslys. The photographs include images of Deslys and Pilcer alone and together as well as what appear to be personal photographs of Pilcer and others. The correspondence is primarily letters, notes and telegrams to Pilcer; a number of the telegrams and notes are from Deslys. The writings include typescript and holograph versions of a story that appears to be about Pilcer and to some degree his association with Deslys. The small amount of ephemera includes invoices billed to Pilcer, music and other miscellany. Additionally there are two employment contracts. A small portion of the collection is in French.
Organization and Arrangement
Arranged in the following series:
1. Photographs
2. Contracts
3. Correspondence
4. Writings
5. Ephemera

UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 6982571
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Deslys, Gaby, 1881-1920.
Pilcer, Harry, 1885-1961 --Archives.
Dancers--Archives.
Photographs.

Photographs.
Scope and Content
The bulk of the photographs are images of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer, alone and together. Although the photographs are not dated, many appear to embody their professional partnership as dancers in the early 1900s. Additionally there are a small number of photographs with Pilcer and other unidentified individuals. There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 2, Folder 6
Photographs (16 items). no date.
Additional Note
Mostly of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer.

Box 2, Folder 7
Photographs (24 items). no date.
Additional Note
Some of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer.

Box 2, Folder 1
Photographs of Gaby Deslys (47 items). no date.
Additional Note
Some with Harry Pilcer.

Box 3, Folder 1
Photographs of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer (11 items). no date.

Box 3, Folder 3
Photographs of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer (15 items). no date.

Box 2, Folder 10
Photographs of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer (16 items). no date.

Box 2, Folder 9
Photographs of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer (17 items). no date.

Box 2, Folder 5
Photographs of Gaby Deslys and Harry Pilcer (18 items). no date.

Box 2, Folder 8
Photographs of Harry Pilcer and others (16 items). no date.

Box 2, Folder 2
Photographs of Harry Pilcer and others (35 items). 1947, no date.

Box 2, Folder 4
Photographs of Harry Pilcer and others (39 items). 1918, 1947, no date.

Box 2, Folder 3
Photographs of Harry Pilcer and others (92 items). no date.

Box 3, Folder 2
Photographs of others (8 items). no date.
Additional Note
Including autographed photographs from Olympe Bradna and [Glam] Pop Lee.

Box 1, Folder 13
Unidentified Photograph. no date.
Contracts.

Box 1, Folder 7
Deslys and Pilcer Agreements (2 items). 1915, 1919.
Correspondence.
Scope and Content
The correspondence is primarily telegrams, letters and notes to Pilcer. The bulk of the telegrams and notes are from Gaby Deslys. Some of the material is written in French. There is no specific arrangement to the series.

Box 1, Folder 6
Cards to Pilcer. 1948, no date.

Box 1, Folder 14
Additional Note
Many in French.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder Details</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Box 1, Folder 15** | Letters to Harry Pilcer. no date.  
Additional Note  
Many in French. |
| **Box 1, Folder 4** | Notes to Harry Pilcer. 1919, 1920, 1946, no date.  
Additional Note  
Some in French. |
| **Box 1, Folder 5** | Telegrams. 19-teens, 1948.  
Additional Note  
Many from Gaby Deslys. Some in French. |
| **Box 1, Folder 1** | Gaby and Harry Outline - typed manuscript. no date.  
Additional Note  
Appears to be biographical information. |
| **Box 1, Folder 3** | Holograph manuscript (no title). no date.  
Additional Note  
Appears to be biographical story about Pilcer. Possibly related to Typescript manuscript in box 1 folder 2. |
| **Box 1, Folder 2** | Typescript manuscript (no title). no date.  
Additional Note  
Appears to be biographical story about Pilcer. Possibly related to Holograph Manuscript in box 1 folder 3. |
| **Box 1, Folder 12** | Business Cards. no date. |
| **Box 1, Folder 8** | Clippings about Pilcer. 1945-1947, no date.  
Additional Note  
Some in French. |
| **Box 1, Folder 16** | Invoices billed to Harry Pilcer. 1940s, no date.  
Additional Note  
Appears related to living expenses; two billed to Fannie Brice. |
| **Box 1, Folder 9** | Programs. 1916, 1949, no date.  
Screen Actors Guild Membership and Receipts. 1943-1945.  
Sheet Music and lyrics. c. 1911, c.1920, c. 1947, no date.  
Additional Note  
The Gaby Glide, Mam'selle, J'aime Ta Pomme from The Razor's Edge, and Mon Homme. |
| **Box 1, Folder 10** | Sketches, drawings and printed art work. no date. |