Emil Breitenfeld Papers, 1952-1959

Collection number: MSS 332

Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections
University of the Pacific Library
Stockton, California

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Emil Breitenfeld Papers
Dates: 1952-1959
Collection number: MSS 332
Creator: Breitenfeld, Emil 1888-1964
Collection Size: 1 linear foot
Repository: University of the Pacific. Library. Holt-Atherton Dept. of Special Collections
Stockton, California 95211
Abstract: Papers consist of arrangements of popular songs for the O'Neill Sisters School of Dance (Helen & Peggy O'Neill) from the 1950's in San Francisco. Performances were most likely held at the Golden Gate Theater, State Fairs, San Francisco nightclubs, and Fireman/Policeman Balls.
Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library’s online catalog.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
Collection open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
Emil Breitenfeld Papers. MSS 332. Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections, University of the Pacific Library.
Biography / Administrative History
Emil (pronounced Ay'-muhl) Aaron Breitenfeld (1888-1964) was a pianist, arranger, composer, and theater organist who accompanied silent films in movie theaters. He is the father of Paul Desmond, the jazz alto saxophonist of the Dave Brubeck Quartet. He was described as a “sarcastic, very smart, extraordinarily talented musical guy.” He enlisted in the army during World War I and exited the army in May 1919. By spring of 1920, he settled in San Francisco with his wife, Shirley King, playing for silent films and writing arrangements for stage shows.
Scope and Content of Collection
Papers consist of arrangements of popular songs for the O'Neill Sisters School of Dance (Helen & Peggy O'Neill) from the 1950's in San Francisco. Performances were most likely held at the Golden Gate Theater, State Fairs, San Francisco nightclubs, and Fireman/Policeman Balls.
Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Desmond, Paul, 1924-1977
O'Neill, Helen
O’Neill, Peggy
O’Neill Sisters School of Dance - San Francisco
Dave Brubeck Quartet
Dance schools San Francisco
Paul Desmond Papers, Brubeck Collection

“Amoureuse”
“Babalu”
“Bishop’s Blues”
“Can-Can”
“Dance of the Hours Tap (Jean Devlin)”
“Dance of the Hours”
- Time On My Hands (Specialty)
- Dance of the Hours
“Fire-Dance”
Helen O’Neill
- Sing Me A Song of the Islands
- Little Brown Gal
- Hawaiian War Chant
“Lover”
“Lullaby of Broadway”
“Skaters—New Colonial March”
“Skaters Waltz—Set #1”
“Skaters Waltz—Set #2”
“Swanee River—Dinah”
“Sweet Georgia Brown”