Finding aid for the Erna Reich papers 6091

Reich (Erna) papers

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USC Libraries Special Collections
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Doheny Memorial Library 206
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URL: http://www.usc.edu/libraries/locations/special_Collections/
Language of Material: German
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Title: Erna Reich papers
creator: Marcuse, Sascha
Identifier/Call Number: 6091
Physical Description: 0.42 Linear Feet 1 box
Date (inclusive): 1885-1956
Date (bulk): bulk
Abstract: Papers of Erna (Sascha) Marcuse, nee Reich (1905-1967). They consist predominantly of her correspondence with a boyfriend, Emil Kuehne, during the early 1920s, but also include other miscellaneous personal effects from her years in Los Angeles. Erna Reich was a native Berliner who resided there throughout her early life until her marriage in 1928 to Ludwig Marcuse. In 1933, the couple moved to France; in 1939 they relocated to Los Angeles where Marcuse took up a teaching position at the University of Southern California.

Biographical / Historical
Erna Reich, known later as Sascha Marcuse, was born in Berlin on 1905 August 27. However, throughout the 1920s she made regular trips to a Polish town named Polajewo, perhaps to visit family. From about 1920-1925, she kept up a regular correspondence with her boyfriend, Emil Kuehne Jr. Kuehne, who worked at the N. Israel Department Store in Berlin (likely the location at Alexanderplatz), was somewhat well-to-do. Their letters often discuss personal subjects, as well as places to meet next. In late 1924, however, a mutual friend introduced Erna to Ludwig Marcuse, and soon she had broken ties with Emil to be with him. By 1928, she and Marcuse were married, and from then on she went by “Sascha,” making Erna her middle name. Because Marcuse was Jewish, the two moved to France not long afterward, living there from 1933 until 1939. In 1939, the couple moved to Los Angeles, California, where Marcuse eventually took up a position as a professor of German and philosophy at the University of Southern California. While they were fortunate enough to be able to relocate when they did, their lives were still marked with some tragedy: the couple narrowly survived a 1940 car crash in Los Angeles that left Ludwig near death in the hospital and Erna with severe poison ivy and shock. After years of life in her adopted home of California, Erna died of cancer while still residing in Los Angeles on 1967 February 20, at the relatively young age of 62. Marcuse survived her, eventually making his way back to Germany. While very little is known of Erna Reich’s life outside of these elementary facts, this collection of her correspondence and other effects provides a window into her life, as well as the world of early 1920s Berlin. [Some of this information was gathered through the Ludwig Marcuse Papers, Collection no. 0209, USC Special Collections.]

Scope and Contents
The Erna Reich papers are predominantly composed of her correspondence with her boyfriend, Emil Kuehne, from 1920-1925. These letters are personal in subject and frequent in number, with the occasional telegram interspersed among them when Emil was waiting for a reply impatiently. The letters often mention meeting points and other such locations throughout Berlin, giving them an interesting historical relevance in terms of the cityscape of Berlin in the 1920s. There is a small amount of other correspondence with assorted people as well as some of Erna’s personal notes and effects from both early on and the later years in Los Angeles. The other three items (the Perpetual Calendar, the issue of Atlantis magazine, and the screenplay) were found with the Erna Reich materials, but it is unclear how or why they may be related to her.

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Preferred Citation
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Related Materials
Ludwig Marcuse Papers, Collection no. 0209, Feuchtwanger Memorial Library, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Correspondence
Marcuse, Sascha
Marcuse, Sascha -- Archives

Box 1, Folder 1  The Hasty Perpetual Mental Calendar 1885
Scope and Contents
Full frontispiece: "The Hasty Perpetual Mental Calendar, for practical use every day. A simple, easy method which will enable any one to dispense with a printed calendar for all time to come. Also furnishing a mental calendar for every year of the Christian era. Valuable in detecting or correcting errors in days, dates of months and years." Handwritten note on page 5, small notes throughout.

Box 1, Folder 2  [Miscellaneous correspondence and personal effects of Erna Reich] ca. 1917-1956
Scope and Contents
Folder includes notes, photographs, business correspondence, as well as some letters from family and friends.

Box 1, Folder 3  [Correspondence with Emil Kuehne] 1920 April 20-1922 May 6
Scope and Contents
Emil Kuehne signed his letters either as "Emil," "Mile," "Milchen," or some other similar derivative.

Box 1, Folder 4  [Correspondence with Emil Kuehne] 1923 January 30-1925 February 12
Scope and Contents
Emil Kuehne signed his letters either as "Emil," "Mile," "Milchen," or some other similar derivative.

Box 1, Folder 5  Atlantis [magazine] 1934 April
Scope and Contents

Box 1, Folder 6  [Screenplay for Film 46: "Philine," renamed "Komoedianten 1941"] ca. 1941