



Guide to the Nathan Ockman program collections, 1949-2006

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American Dance Festival Archives

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Summary

Collection Title:

Nathan Ockman programs collection, circa 1949-2006

Abstract:

Nathan Ockman was born on December 29, 1926 in New York City. As a child in the 1930s, he was brought by his parents to an event that featured pioneering choreographers in modern dance, among them Anna Sokolow and Sophie Maslow. Though he received no formal dance training himself, this childhood exposure to modern dance sparked a lifelong passion for dance spectatorship. The collection contains the dance-related memorabilia (circa 1949-2006) saved by Nathan Ockman. Materials include performance programs and newspaper clippings, which are arranged chronologically. Many of the materials are annotated by Mr. Ockman.

Extent:

1 Linear Feet

Language:

English

Mixed Materials [D0254655T] [box]:

1

Collection ID:

ADF.020

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1kt7g>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Nathan Ockman Papers, circa 1949-2006, American Dance Festival Archives.

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Background

Scope and Content

The collection contains the dance-related memorabilia (circa 1949-2006) saved by Nathan Ockman. Materials include performance programs and newspaper

clippings, which are arranged chronologically. Many of the materials are annotated by Mr. Ockman.

Mr. Ockman collected the accompanying programs for each dance performance he was in attendance for throughout six decades. The earliest programs, dated from the late 1940s and early 1950s, are from performances at the University of Michigan during Mr. Ockman's time as a graduate student at the university. Following Mr. Ockman's subsequent move to New York City, the vast majority of the collection is comprised of performances at notable New York venues and performing arts festivals. Though there are several programs from performances by ballet companies, the collection largely reflects Mr. Ockman's personal penchant for modern dance.

Newspaper clippings of performance reviews and promotions of upcoming premieres are included within the collection. More often than not, they correspond to a performance that Mr. Ockman was in attendance for, and so they are organized alongside accordingly.

Of the programs dating from 1958 onwards, nearly all are decorated with Mr. Ockman's personal annotations, which make note of extraordinary pieces, performers, and his general perception of the performances. Though the notes were made for Mr. Ockman's own enjoyment, he was aware that they may someday hold some historical significance. It was always his hope that he might, as a dutiful and attentive audience member, discover an emerging dance talent.

Biographical/Historical

Nathan Ockman was born on December 29, 1926 in New York City. As a child in the 1930s, he was brought by his parents to an event that featured pioneering choreographers in modern dance, among them Anna Sokolow and Sophie Maslow. It was the politically engaged nature of the works being presented that Mr. Ockman found most intriguing. Though he received no formal dance training himself, this childhood exposure to modern dance sparked a lifelong passion for dance spectatorship.

A physicist by trade, Mr. Ockman received a Bachelor of Science from Purdue University, a Master of Science from University of California, Berkeley, and a Doctor of Philosophy from University of Michigan before returning to New York for much of his professional life. While living there, Mr. Ockman was a consistent audience member at an array of contemporary dance performances. As was true during his childhood, he remained most interested in how modern dance could reflect the cultural and political mood of the time in which it lived. After several decades in New York, Mr. Ockman and his wife moved to Sante Fe, New Mexico before finally settling in Sarasota, Florida.

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Arrangement

This collection has been arranged into three series: Overview of Collection, Programs, and Publications.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

American Dance Festival Archives

Access Restrictions

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Acquisition Information

The Nathan Ockman Papers, circa 1949-2006 were received by the American Dance Festival Archives as a gift in 2018.

Processing Information

Processed by Olivia Berkey, June 2019 Encoded by Olivia Berkey, June 2019

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Names and Subjects

- Modern dance

Collection Inventory

Series I: Overview of Collection

Language: English.

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Handwritten Inventory of Programs

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General

Nathan Ockman's handwritten list of programs in the collection, indicating which programs have notes and annotations.

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