

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum

INTRODUCTION

Provenance

The Boehm/de Leon collection was donated to the San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum by Marissa de Leon and Leah Marie Boehm in December 1990.

Restrictions

Entire collection is open for research use.

Publication Rights

Publication rights vary with materials.

Collection Number

990.112-3

Size

Number of containers: 1 box
Linear feet: 0.5

Processed by

Marianne Carden

Date completed

April 21, 1994

Preferred Citation

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Separated Materials

4 photos of La Argentina and promotional pamphlet have been transferred to the biographical files. The following books were removed from the collection and transferred to the library shelves:

La Musica en Iboamerica
El Folklore Musical Uruguayo

Danzas Regionales del Folklore Argentino
Folk Songs and Dances of the Americas
Some Latin American Festivals and Folk Dances
Vamos Brincar de Roda?
El Carnavalito
El Gato
La Condicion
El Escondido
La Mariquita
El Triunfo
La Sajuriana
La Chacarera
El Cuando

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Marisa de Leon

Marisa Luisardo de Leon was born in 1911 in Montevideo, Uruguay. She attended a private school run by evangelicals, where she first came to love gymnastics and dance. At the local YWCA, she had the opportunity to take dance lessons and to learn more about native folk dances, such as the Pericon. Although many women in Montevideo possessed a great deal of independence, Marisa came from a very conservative family and was expected to get married and run a household after finishing her education. However, Marisa admired women outside her social circle who obtained college degrees and pursued careers. She therefore began researching scholarship opportunities and in 1935, received funding from the Institute of International Education to study abroad.

While a student at the College of Industrial Arts (now called Texas Womens' University), Marisa's interest in the study of South American folk dancing increased. She began compiling information on the folk dances of Argentina and Uruguay to share with students in her Spanish conversation class. This marked the beginning of her efforts to collect materials on the history of South American dance forms. After finishing her program in Texas, Marisa returned to Montevideo and began teaching native folk dances at the YWCA. During this time, she continued to gather materials on different folk dance forms.

A scholarship from the University of California at Berkeley enabled Marisa to return to the United States and study rehabilitation. As a resident of the International House, she participated in many ethnic festivals and also taught folk dancing. Her interest in the native dance forms of South America and Mexico continued throughout her life and she often organized dance classes at community centers.

Marisa met her husband, Frank de Leon, when she was thirty-four. Originally from Guatemala, he served in the United States Secret Service in Uruguay. He supported Marisa's efforts to improve education for handicapped children and she was eventually able to open the Franklin Roosevelt School, the first Uruguayan school for disabled children.

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum

Leah Marie Boehm

Leah Marie Boehm was born in San Francisco in 1911. She attended public elementary schools and graduated from Lowell High School. Although little dance was taught at the high school, aside from some Scandinavian folk dancing, Leah developed an interest in dance. As a student at San Francisco State University, Leah studied education, physical education, and music in preparation for becoming a teacher. She was active in both sports and music and played the violin and the viola in the university's orchestra. Very little dance instruction was offered at the university at this time, except in conjunction with P.E. classes. One popular offering was clog dancing and this gave Leah an introduction to folk dance.

Leah completed her graduate work in dance education at San Francisco State University, Mills College, Stanford University, Bennington School of Dance, and the University of Mallorca in Spain. In the early 1930s, Leah became a member of Mama Gravander's Folk Dance Group, one of the few folk dancing organizations in the Bay Area. This group taught and performed traditional Swedish dances.

In 1937, Leah attended summer school at U.C. Berkeley and enrolled in a modern dance class. To her surprise, at the end of the session she was invited to join the prestigious Berkeley Choreography Group. Along with five other members, including the professor, Dr. Lois Ellfeldt, the group gave lecture demonstrations all over the Bay Area. They served as pioneers in the modern dance movement in the Bay Area.

After summer school, Leah returned to her post as a physical education teacher at Everett Junior High School. In addition to teaching tap, acrobatics, folk and square dancing, Leah introduced modern dance. She inaugurated the first modern dance group in the San Francisco Public School system. Her modern dance troupe received invitations to perform all over the Bay Area and in 1939, danced at the National Convention of A.A.H.P.E.R. The group of junior high school girls presented two original modern dances.

In January 1941, Leah returned to Lowell High School as a teacher in the Physical Education Department, where as an afternoon activity she once again started a modern dance group. The group grew and grew and performed all over the Bay Area. Boehm also used summer trips to Mexico as an opportunity to gather information about Mexican and early Californian folk dances. She then incorporated these into her curriculum, as well.

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum

Eventually, dance became popular at Lowell and a second afternoon was added after school. Several years later, dance was incorporated into the regular Lowell P.E. program. The advanced class was held daily for one hour instead of regular P.E. Many who started as beginners eventually appeared on various T.V. stations, such as Channel 4 and Channel 7. They also performed regularly for school programs and for the Lowell Christmas Varieties. In 1953, Boehm's students gave a performance at the state P.T.A. Conference at the Civic Auditorium, at the San Francisco Teachers' Institute, and at in-service training courses.

For the entire school year of 1946-47, Leah and her friend, Margaret Poole, were granted sabbatical leaves to travel in Latin America and investigate the art, music, and dance of those countries. State Department officials assisted them in meeting the outstanding authorities in the fields of art, music, and dance in each city they visited. Although they had not planned to teach, they were invited to demonstrate American square dances in return for receiving instruction in the native dances of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina.

Each woman took eight millimeter color movies of local performers and gathered information on the folk dances of each Latin American country visited. Margaret Poole showed her movies and native costumes to students in her Spanish classes at George Washington High School. Leah Boehm taught many of the folk dances she had learned, such as the Peruvian Huayne, to students at Lowell High School. She also oversaw the production of a program focusing upon the dance and music of Peru.

In 1952, Leah taught the regional dances of Latin America to a Teachers' Group at Mills College. When the Lowell campus moved to a new location in 1962, a new building was erected which included a dance studio as well as a gym. Leah was very honored to have this studio named after her in 1971. Several years later, in 1986, she was inducted into the Physical Education and Athletic Hall of Fame at San Francisco State University.

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Boehm/de Leon Collection was assembled by Marissa de Leon and Leah Marie Boehm during the 1930s-1950s to assist them in their study of South American dance forms. It includes newsclippings, notated scores, dance diagrams, brochures, pamphlets, reports, illustrations and photos, songbooks, notes, and sound recordings. The materials focus upon the dance forms of various Central and South American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Types of dances encompassed in the collection include the Pericon, the Cuando, the Media Cana, the Gato, the Punto, the Cueca, the Santa Fe, the Sombrerito, the Triunfo, the Cielito, the Bailecito, the Quadrilha Brasileira, the Huayno, the Marinera, the Ranchera, the Tango, the Zambita, the Choclo, and the Firmeza. In most instances, music, dance notes, and diagrams are present for each type of dance. A few folders also contain information about the costumes worn by performers of a particular dance. Scholarly discussions of the origins and development of South American dance forms are present in the form of newspaper and journal articles. Notably, there are writings by Carlos Vega, who served as Director of Music in Buenos Aires during the 1940s. The collection also encompasses songbooks and recordings of the folk songs which accompany many South American folk dances.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
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SERIES DESCRIPTION

- SERIES I. ARGENTINA
5 folders
- Contains newsclippings, songbooks, pamphlets, photos, and dance notes.
- Some material arranged by dance type.
- SERIES II. BRAZIL
1 folder
- Contains dance notes and diagrams.
- Arranged by dance type.
- SERIES III. CHILE
1 folder
- Contains songbooks, music scores, and articles.
- No discernible arrangement.
- SERIES IV. COLOMBIA
1 folder
- Contains songbooks, music score, and map.
- No discernible arrangement.
- SERIES V. COSTA RICA
1 folder
- Contains songbooks and dance notes.
- No discernible arrangement.

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library

SERIES VI. ECUADOR

1 folder

Contains songbook and music score.

No discernible arrangement.

SERIES VII. PARAGUAY

1 folder

Contains dance notes and diagrams.

No discernible arrangement.

SERIES VIII. PERU

1 folder

Contains costume diagrams, notes and music.

No discernible arrangement.

SERIES IX. URUGUAY

1 folder

Contains costume diagrams and notes, newsclippings,
and report.

No discernible arrangement.

SERIES X. SOUTH AMERICA (GENERAL)

1 folder, 7 records

Contains illustrations, pamphlets, notes on dances,
articles, songbook, and records.

No discernible arrangement.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

CONTAINER AND FOLDER LIST

SERIES I		ARGENTINA		
<u>Container</u>		<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Box 1	1		"Historia de la Musica Argentina" by Prof. A.C. Schianca	n.d.
			Diagram and description of Pericon	n.d.
			Music and lyrics for Pericon	n.d.
			List of parts of Pericon	n.d.
			"Apasionante historica de Pericon"	n.d.
			"Contradanza y Pericon" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
			illustration of Pericon	n.d.
			"El Pericon del Circo" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
			"La Forma del Pericon" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
			"El Pericon y su Origen" por Ernesto Morales	n.d.
			"El Pericon" por Gerardo Grasso	n.d.
			"Danzas y Canciones Argentinas" por G. Ricardi	n.d.
			"A Few Words on Argentina Music" por C.J. Videla-Rivera	n.d.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Box 1	Folder 1	illustration of Pericon	n.d.
		postcards of Pericon	1963; 1978; 1980
		photograph of Pericon	n.d.
	Folder 2	"El Triunfo"	n.d.
		dance diagram, notes & costume diagram for El Gato	n.d.
		notes on El Cuando	n.d.
		notes on El Sombrerito	n.d.
		notes on El Cielito	n.d.
		notes and music for Zapatero	n.d.
	Folder 3	"Contradanza y Cielito" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
		Cielito music/diagrams	1933
		Pericon music	n.d.
		Firmeza music/diagrams	n.d.
		Escondido music/diagrams	1933
		Triunfo music/diagrams	1932
		Palito music/diagrams	1933
		Sombrerito music	1933
		Pollito music/diagrams	n.d.
		Gato music/diagrams	1931
		"Fina Union de Minuet y Gato"	n.d.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

Despedida music/diagrams n.d.

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Box 1	Folder 4	Notes on la Media Cana	n.d.
		Media Cana music/diagrams	n.d.
		"La Media Cana" por Lauro Ayestaran	n.d.
		"Contradanza y Media Cana" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
		"La Forma de la Media Cana" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
		Cuando music/diagrams	1931
	Folder 5	Vidalita music	1940
		Bailecito music/diagrams	1932
		Huella music/diagrams	1931
		Escondido music/diagrams	1933
		Zambita music/diagrams	1931
		Chacarera music/diagrams	1932
		Sombrerito music/diagrams	n.d.
		Firmeza music/diagrams	1933
		Choclo music/diagrams	n.d.
		Caminito music	n.d.

SERIES II. BRAZIL

Box 1	Folder 6	Notes on Na Baia Tem	n.d.
		Notes on Quadrilha Brasileira	n.d.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
SERIES III. CHILE			
Box 1	Folder 7	"La Importancia de la Danza Folklorica" por Emilia Garnham	1944
		"Aires tradicionales y folkloricos de Chile"	n.d.
		program for "la semana del folklore chileno"	1946
		music for "Asi son mis penas" por A.M. Olando	n.d.
		music for "Guiereme Asi" por Miguel Jaramillo	n.d.
		music for "Ya no he de Volver"	n.d.
		music for "Cholita Alegre"	n.d.
		music for "Sedasero Chachuillapi"	n.d.
		article on "La Cueca Chilena"	n.d.
SERIES IV. COLOMBIA			
Box 1	Folder 8	"Cancionero Tipico Colombiano" por Roberto Zuluaga Gutierrez	1945
		music for "No Quieras mas Corazon"	n.d.
		"Programas de Musica Colombiana"	1945
		"Himnos y Canciones para Ninos"	1941

Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library

"Musica Colombiana:
 Canciones de Carlos Vieco
 O." 1943

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Box 1	Folder 8	music for "Tisquesusa Bambuco" por J. Baez	n.d.
		map of dances of Colombia	n.d.

SERIES V. COSTA RICA

Box 1	Folder 9	"El Punto Guanacasteco" por Prof. Evangelina de Nunez	n.d.
		"Musica Folklorica de Costa Rica"	n.d.
		"Cantos de Autores Nacionales"	1942
		"La Patria Canta: Canciones Populares de Costa Rica"	1944

SERIES VI. ECUADOR

Box 1	Folder 10	"Album Musical Guayaquil" 1938- 1939	
		Music for "Cumanda"	n.d.
		Music for "No sales lo que es llorar"	n.d.
		Music for "Proseccion Indigena"	n.d.

SERIES VII. PARAGUAY

Box 1	Folder 11	Notes/diagrams for "El Santa Fe"	n.d.
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SERIES VIII. PERU

Box 1	Folder 12	Costume diagram/notes for Huayno	n.d.
		"No Me Olvides. Huayno"	n.d.

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

"Palmero sube a la Palma.
Marinera." 1941

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
		"Estancias. Bunde" por Carlos Vieco O.	n.d.
		"Instantaneas Musicales Andinas"	1944

SERIES IX. URUGUAY

Box 1	Folder 13	Notes/diagrams on "El Sombrerito"	1953
		"Uruguayan Music"	1932
		"Del Folklore Musical Uruguayo"	n.d.
		"La Muzurca O Ranchera"	n.d.
		Report on Uruguay by Marisa Luisardo (incl. section on music, songs, and dance)	1940

SERIES X. SOUTH AMERICA (GENERAL)

Box 1	Folder 14	Illustrations of various dances	n.d.
		"Folk Dances of Spanish America"	1939
		Notes on El Triunfo	n.d.
		Notes on the Tango	n.d.
		"Historia del Tango"	n.d.
		"El Candombe"	n.d.
		"Vida y Costumbres de las Danzas" por	

**Boehm/de Leon Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library**

		Carlos Vega	n.d.
		"Contradanza y su Familia" por Carlos Vega	n.d.
<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Dates</u>
		"The South American Way"	n.d.
		"Album de Musica Nativa"	n.d.
	Record 1	"Los Troveros Argentinos: El Coronel Negro y Duerme, Duerme Nina"	n.d.
	Record 2	"Jose Gerez y su Conjunto Folklorico: El Carisumaj y Ay Paloma"	n.d.
	Record 3	"Duo-Ruiz-Acuna: El Cielito y El Tremendo"	n.d.
	Record 4	"Julio J. Martinez Oyanguren: Pericon y El Pancho"	n.d.
	Record 5	"Andres Chazarreta y su Orquesta Tipica: El Gato de More y La Media Cana"	n.d.
	Record 6	"Hermanos Abalos: Santiagueno Soy"	n.d.
	Record 7	"Danzas Regionales del Folklore Argentino"	n.d.