

**Chester Kessler Dance Photography Collection
San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum**

INTRODUCTION

Provenance

This collection of dance photographs by Chester Kessler was received as a gift to the library from Robert Johnson on July 14, 1987.

Restrictions

Entire collection is open for research use.

Publication Rights

Literary, property, and publication rights have been assigned to the San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum.

Collection Number

981.41

Size

No. of containers: 7 boxes

Linear feet: 2.3

Processed by

Lotte Shustak and Marianne Carden

Date Completed

November 1994

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BIOGRAPHY

Chester Monroe Kessler was born in New Melle, Missouri, on May 6, 1919. Kessler was raised in Missouri and went to high school in St. Louis. After World War II, Kessler moved to Los Angeles. He studied photography at the Art Center School in Los Angeles and animation and film making at the University of Southern California. After moving to San Francisco, Kessler studied with Minor White, Bill Grant Jr., and Oliver Gagliani.

Since 1954, Kessler has had three one-man shows at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Kessler has also exhibited at U.C. Berkeley, U.C. Davis, The University of Indiana, The Oakland Museum, Gotham Bookmart Gallery in New York City, Light Sound Dimension in San Francisco, and the Focus Gallery in San Francisco.

Kessler is represented in the Theatre Arts Collection of the New York Public Library, in the Erotica Collection of the Kinsly Institute, and in numerous private collections.

Chester Kessler died in San Francisco on May 6, 1979.

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SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection consists of photographs of important local dancers and dance companies, negatives and transparencies, and biographical information. The photographic materials feature such notables as George Balanchine, Ruth Beckford, Carlos Carvajal, Lew Christensen, Anna Halprin, Welland Lathrop, and Zack Thompson. They cover the period between 1949 and 1974.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL
1 folder

Consists of biographical notes on Kessler's life and work.

SERIES II. SAN FRANCISCO BALLET

Contains photographs of San Francisco Ballet productions taken by Kessler in the late fifties and early sixties. Arranged alphabetically by ballet name.

SERIES III. RUTH BECKFORD COMPANY
4 folders

Includes photos and transparencies of Ruth Beckford Co. performances taken by Kessler in Berkeley in 1959. Arranged by format.

SERIES IV. DANCE SPECTRUM
5 folders

Consists of proof sheets, photos, and negatives of Dance Spectrum's production of Wintermas in 1974. Arranged by format.

SERIES V. GENERAL MOTORS SHOW
2 folders

Contains transparencies and photos of a theatrical production staged to promote General Motors in 1961. Arranged by format.

SERIES VI. WELLAND LATHROP COMPANY
4 folders

Includes photos of Welland Lathrop Company's performance of White Writing in 1961. Arranged by format.

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SERIES VII. WELLAND LATHROP PERSONAL
1 folder

Consists of negatives of Welland Lathrop participating in a protest with an environmental group.

SERIES VIII. ANNA HALPRIN
19 folders

Contains photos and transparencies of various performances by Anna Halprin and the San Francisco Dancers' Workshop in the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Some items arranged alphabetically by ballet name, some alphabetically by name of institution, and some numerically.

SERIES IX. SAN FRANCISCO PLAYHOUSE GROUP
1 folder

Includes photos of the San Francisco Playhouse Group at the Alcazar Theatre in 1962.

SERIES X. ZACK THOMPSON
1 folder

Consists of photograph of Zack Thompson in an unknown performance in 1959.

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CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	1	2 pages of biographical information	1987

SERIES II. SAN FRANCISCO BALLET

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	2	<u>Caprice</u> by Christensen, 54 4 x 5 in. photos	1959?
	3	<u>Caprice</u> by Christensen, 37 4 x 5 in. photos	1959?
	4	<u>Caprice</u> by Christensen, 8 8 x 11 in. photos	1959?
6	7	<u>Caprice</u> by Christensen, 4 11 x 14 in. photos	1959?
1	5	<u>Con Amore</u> by Christensen, 58 4 x 5 in. photos	1953?
	6	<u>Con Amore</u> by Christensen, 29 4 x 5 in. photos	1953?
	7	<u>Danses Concertantes</u> by Christensen 38 4 x 5 in. photos	1959?
	8	<u>Danses Concertantes</u> by Christensen 32 4 x 5 in. photos and one enlarged photo	1959?
	9	<u>Divertissement d'Auber</u> (Pas de trois) by Christensen 18 4 x 5 in. photos	1959?
	10	<u>Esmeralda</u> by Christensen 26 4 x 5 in. photos and 3 enlarged photos	1960?
	11	<u>Jinx</u> by Christensen 86 4 x 5 in. photos and 2 enlarged photos	1959?
2	1	<u>Lady of Shalott</u> by Christensen 49 4 x 5 in. photos	1958?
	2	<u>A Masque of Beauty and the Shepherd</u> by Christensen 35 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	3	<u>A Masque of Beauty and the Shepherd</u> by Christensen 16 enlarged photos	1961?
6	6	<u>A Masque of Beauty and the</u>	1961?

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
		<u>Shepherd</u> by Christensen 1 11 x 14 in. photo	
2	4	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from Dress Circle, series 1) 35 4 x 5 in. photos and 2 enlarged photos	1961?
	5	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from Dress Circle, series 2) 35 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	6	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from Dress Circle, series 1) 36 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	7	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from stage, series 2) 17 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	8	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from stage, series 3) 36 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	9	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen (from stage, series 4) 30 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
6	5	<u>Nutcracker</u> by Christensen 1 11 x 14 in. photo	1961?
3	1	<u>Original Sin</u> by Christensen 90 4 X 5 in. photos and 1 enlarged photo	1961?
	2	<u>Sinfonia</u> by Christensen 36 4 x 5 in. photos	1959?
	3	<u>St. George and the Dragon</u> by Christensen 32 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	4	<u>Swan Lake</u> by Balanchine 47 4 x 5 in. photos	1953?
7		<u>Swan Lake</u> by Balanchine 1 enlarged photo	1953?
3	5	<u>Symphony in C</u> by Balanchine (1st and 2nd movement) 34 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	6	<u>Symphony in C</u> by Balanchine (Series A: 3rd movement) 36 4 x 5 in. photos and 1 enlarged photo	1961?
	7	<u>Symphony in C</u> by Balanchine (Series B) 35 4 x 5 in. photos	1961?
	8	<u>Variations de Ballet</u> by Balanchine and Christensen 31 4 x 5 in. photos	1960?
	9	<u>Variations de Ballet</u> by	1960?

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Balanchine and Christensen
31 4 x 5 in. photos

SERIES III. RUTH BECKFORD COMPANY

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	1	Berkeley, Series A 3 enlarged photos	1959
	2	Berkeley, Series M 10 5 x 7 in. photos and 6 8 x 10 in. photos	1959
	3	Berkeley, Series M 73 5 x 4 in. photos	1959
	4	Berkeley, Series M 21 transparencies	1959

SERIES IV. DANCE SPECTRUM

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	5	<u>Wintermas</u> by Carvajal 9 proof sheets	1974
	6	<u>Wintermas</u> by Carvajal 4 8 x 10 in. photos	1974
	7	<u>Wintermas</u> by Carvajal 14 5 x 4 in. photos	1974
	8	<u>Wintermas</u> by Carvajal Negatives	1974
	9	<u>Wintermas</u> by Carvajal Negatives	1974

SERIES V. GENERAL MOTORS SHOW

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	10	29 transparencies	1961
	11	35 4 x 5 in. photos	1961

SERIES VI. WELLAND LATHROP CO.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	12	<u>White Writing</u> 35 4 x 5 in. photos	1961
	13	<u>White Writing</u> 7 8 x 10 in. photos and one 5 x 7 in. photo	1961
6	3	<u>White Writing</u> 2 11 x 14 in. photos	1961

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4 14 2 4 x 5 in. photos ?

SERIES VII. WELLAND LATHROP PERSONAL

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	15	Negatives of Lathrop and environmental group	?

SERIES VIII. ANNA HALPRIN

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
5	1	<u>Birds of America?</u> 18 4 x 5 in. photos	1960?
	2	<u>Birds of America?</u> 5 8 x 10 in. photos and 3 6 x 11 in. photos	1960?
	3	<u>Birds of America?</u> 9 4 x 5 in. photos 6 4 x 5 in. photos 1 8 x 8 in. photo	1960?
	4	<u>Birds of America?</u> 20 transparencies	1960?
7	1	<u>Birds of America?</u> 3 enlarged photos	1960?
5	5	<u>Five-legged stool</u> 8 5 x 7 in. photos	1962
	6	<u>Opus Venice</u> 27 transparencies	?
	7	S.F. State University 36 transparencies	?
	8	U.C. Berkeley Museum 23 8 x 10 in. photos	1970
6	4	U.C. Berkeley Museum 24 11 x 14 in. photos	1970
5	9	Untitled, Series #1 15 4 x 5 in. photos	?
	10	Untitled, Series #2 5 8 x 10 in. photos	?
	11	Untitled, Series #3 24 transparencies	?
	12	Untitled, Series #4 25 transparencies	?
	13	Untitled, Series #5 17 transparencies	?
	14	Untitled, Series #6 30 transparencies	?
	15	Untitled, Series #7 28 transparencies	?

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
6	2	<u>Improvisations</u> 11 11 x 14 in. photos	1962
7	2	<u>The Inheritance</u> 2 enlarged photos	1959

SERIES IX. S.F. PLAYHOUSE GROUP

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
6	1	Alcazar Theatre 1 11 x 14 in. photo	1962

SERIES X. ZACK THOMPSON

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
7		Zack Thompson dancing 1 7 x 10 in. photo	1959