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| Archives Internationales de la Danse [International Archives of the Dance (AID)] (1931-1952) |
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| The Archives Internationales de la Danse (AID) was a pioneering dance foundation created by Rolf de Maré in Paris in 1931. Devoted to dance in all its forms and global manifestations, this unique venue comprised a dance museum, library, archive, a sociology and ethnography section, conference hall and an exhibition and performance space. Created as a response to the institutional void for dance, AID focussed its activities in four general areas – exhibitions, choreography competitions, research and publication. Between 1932 and 1947 AID produced thirteen exhibitions and three international choreographic competitions, in addition to promoting research through its collections and ethnographic projects, and publishing a quarterly journal, *La Revue des A.I.D.* (*The AID Review),* from 1933-37. In a landscape marked by the pre-eminence of classical dance, AID supported modern forms of choreography, the exploration of non-Western traditions and the creation of an innovative research environment. |
| Summary  The Archives Internationales de la Danse (AID) was a pioneering dance foundation created by Rolf de Maré in Paris in 1931. Devoted to dance in all its forms and global manifestations, this unique venue comprised a dance museum, library, archive, a sociology and ethnography section, conference hall and an exhibition and performance space. Created as a response to the institutional void for dance, AID focussed its activities in four general areas – exhibitions, choreography competitions, research and publication. Between 1932 and 1947 AID produced thirteen exhibitions and three international choreographic competitions, in addition to promoting research through its collections and ethnographic projects, and publishing a quarterly journal, *La Revue des A.I.D.* (*The AID Review),* from 1933-37. In a landscape marked by the pre-eminence of classical dance, AID supported modern forms of choreography, the exploration of non-Western traditions and the creation of an innovative research environment.  File: DeMare.jpg  Figure Portrait of Rolf DeMaré  Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolf\_de\_Mar%C3%A9 Founding and Key Figures On 16 June 1931, Rolf de Maré founded the Archives Internationales de la Danse (AID)in memory of the Ballets Suédois and its principal dancer/choreographer Jean Börlin. Situated at 6 rue Vital in the heart of the 16th arrondissement, it challenged the city’s traditional dance centre represented by the Paris Opéra in the 9th. AID identified itself with the cosmopolitan, bourgeois milieu of the 16th’s many dance studios and with the intellectual elite which gravitated to the Musée d’Ethnographie in the same neighbourhood.  This groundbreaking foundation, directed by Pierre Tugal (né Ilia Mikhaïlov Epschtein), a doctor of law of Russian Jewish descent, was the first such organisation devoted exclusively to dance. The executive team which ran AID included Tugal’s wife, the musician Thérèse Tugal (of Polish origin), the architect Stanislas Landau, the composer Alexandre Tansman (Thérèse’s brother), and the theatre photographer Max Erlanger de Rosen, joined by contributors to AID’s quarterly review. Contribution to the Field and to Modernism From the start, AID set out to collect as many dance-related materials as possible by soliciting objects from the heirs of renowned dancers and collectors – books, photographs, images, programmes, costumes and memorabilia of all kinds. The museum, which had wings devoted to Anna Pavlova, Marie Taglioni and the Ballets Suédois, established what de Maré and Tugal considered dance’s patrimonial status, while offering spectators a link to the quotidian lives of the various subjects. The collections themselves, organised around major subjects and in national sections, were intended to engender ‘scientific’ or scholarly discourse.  Conscious of the limits of such heterogeneous collections and seeking to distinguish itself from a traditional archive, AID from the outset engaged dancers, choreographers and teachers, emphasising dance’s critical relationship to the present through an eclectic programme of dance recitals and lecture-demonstrations (such as Robert Quinault’s ‘Dance in France During the Third Republic’) which became a ‘collection’ in its own right. When planning its 1932 choreographic competition, a memorial for Jean Börlin, and its 1934 competition for young dancers, AID surveyed more than a dozen teachers and choreographers, including Bronislava Nijinska, Alexandre Volinine, Nathalie Boutkovsky and Alice Vronska – about the rules that should be set for the two different events.  The choreographic competitions, which were international and open to all styles and techniques, lay at the heart of AID’s aesthetic project. Paradoxically, in spite of de Maré’s wealth and interest in film, there are no recordings of these competitions, although AID went to great lengths to document them. But archiving was not the institution’s sole goal. More important was creating the conditions to foster new work. In 1932 Kurt Jooss’ *The Green Table* (1932) won AID’s first competition. Its second, held in Stockholm in 1945, saw the victory of Julian Algo’s *Visioner* (*Visions*). Jean Weidt’s *La Cellule* (*The Cell*), with Françoise and Dominique Dupuy, pioneers of modern dance in France, won the third, held in Copenhagen in 1947. In making Börlin the symbolic godfather of these competitions, AID proposed an alternative to ballet as the foundation for a new choreography: remembering his experimentalism became a strategy for creating new work.  Another major pillar of the AID project was research and publishing. The goal was to fill the intellectual lacunae associated with dance by placing its study on a rational basis and by writing its complete history. *La Revue des A.I.D.* not only offered its readers access to contemporary research (substantial articles on major dance protagonists and dance history) but also sparked debate on different topics. In 1935, following lecture-demonstrations by more than thirty teachers (including Julia Marcus, Irène Popard and Heinz Finkel) and their students, the review published a special issue on new aesthetic approaches emerging in France and Central Europe.  The origin of dance and the universality of a dance language were questions addressed through the creation of a section dedicated to ethnography, an emerging discipline in the 1930s. In 1934 *La Revue* dedicated a special issue on ‘Danses populaires’ (‘Popular Dances’), inaugurating the first of many publications on folklore and world dance. Always an avid traveller, de Maré conducted a series of study trips in 1934 that took him to Hungary, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union (among other countries of Central and Eastern Europe) to document popular dances in a region where they were thought to be more vibrant because of the population’s predominantly rural character. This was followed by four important exhibitions: ‘Les Vieilles Danses de France’ (‘Old Dances of France’, 1935), which documented a repertoire of endangered dances; ‘Les Danses populaires d’Europe’ (‘Popular Dances of Europe’, 1937) and ‘Théâtre et danses des Indes néerlandaises’ (‘Theatre and Dance of the Netherlands’ Indies’) and ‘La Danse japonaise à travers les âges’ (‘Japanese Dance Through the Ages’), both in 1939.  The 1938 ethnographic mission to the Dutch East Indies – now Indonesia – led by de Maré and Claire Holt resulted in the publication of *Dance Quest in Celebes* (1939), one of the first studies of its kind. AID’s archives of the late 1930s were substantially enriched by material from this expedition – Holt’s dance notations, the collection of photographs by Hans Evert and, most importantly, the dozens of films by de Maré with explanatory text by Holt, housed today at the Dansmuseet in Stockholm. The goal of this expedition was to collect as much documentation as possible and formulate the principles of a methodology applicable to the study of the region’s dances which would ultimately serve as a broader theoretical model.  Even if Holt’s work did not become the model for post-World War II anthropologists, the creation of an ethnographic collection specific to dance was a major contribution to dance research. The idea itself of archiving choreographic works and dance-related objects of all kinds represents the foundation of a dance-specific museology. However, the scholarly need for methodological classification also testifies to the need to preserve collective memory. In this sense, AID was inspired by the ancestral quest: to get to the origin of man through dance. With its broad vision to give all dance forms the status of an independent discipline, AID remains a unique adventure in the history of dance in France.  After the Second World War, AID and especially Pierre Tugal promoted modern dancers such as Jacqueline Robinson, Anne Gardon, Geneviève Mallarmé and Jerome Andrews, offering them a stage for experimentation at a time when modern dance had yet to be recognised by the French state. One of the last lecture-demonstrations organised by AID was Françoise and Dominique Dupuy’s ‘Vers l’élaboration de la danse moderne’ (‘Toward the Elaboration of Modern Dance’) in 1949, the first of their long career.    In 1951, after twenty years of activity, the Foundation was dissolved. De Maré’s loss of interest and postwar financial difficulties as well as conflicts with his head curator, Pierre Tugal, contributed to its slow decline and eventual demise. With Ferdinando Reyna, Tugal established the Centre International de Documentation pour la Danse (International Documentation Centre for Dance), but it was short-lived, and its failure left France without any comparable institution until the creation of the Centre National de la Danse (National Dance Centre) in 1998.  With the Foundation’s demise, the AID collections were split between France and Sweden. The donation to the Bibliothèque Nationale took place in January 1952, after a protracted legal procedure, while the East Asia and Ballets Suédois collections served as the basis for the Dansmuseet – or Dance Museum – established in Stockholm in 1953. Today the materials from the old AID collection constitute one of the most important collections within the Bibliothèque-Musée de l’Opéra in Paris. Moving Image Material <http://nypl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/12159735052_sumatra_dances_%28motion_picture%29>  *Dances from Sumatra* (1938) Produced and directed by Rolf de Maré, with a text in French by Claire Holt and photography by Hans Evert. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.  <http://nypl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/12159734052_java_dances_%28motion_picture%29>  *Java Dances* (1938) Produced and directed by Rolf de Maré, with a text in French by Claire Holt and photography by Hans Evert. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.  <http://nypl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/12159736052_bali_-_celebes_%28motion_picture%29>  *Bali-Celebes* (1938) Produced and directed by Rolf de Maré, with a text in French by Claire Holt and photography by Hans Evert. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.  On-line Revue des Archives Internationales de la Danse including 19 issues from 1932 to 1936  <http://mediatheque.cnd.fr/spip.php?page=documents_et_archives> |
| Further reading:  (S. Andus L’Hotellier)  (S. Andus L’Hotellier, Etre danseur et chorégraphe au début des années 30: retour sur une enquête des Archives Internationales de la Danse)  (Baxmann, Rousier and Veroli)  (Holt)  (Lind)  (Näslund)  (Tugal)  (Tugal, Préface)  (Tugal, Initiation à la danse)  (Tugal, Petite histoire de l’art et des artistes, la danse et les danseurs)  (Tugal, Jean-Georges Noverre, Der groβe Reformator des Balletts) |