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## Jacob's Pillow Dance Collection

### Collection number: Coll2007-007

ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives  
Los Angeles, California

Processed by:

Michael P. Palmer

Date Completed:

March 14, 2007

Encoded by:

Michael P. Palmer

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Processing this collection has been funded by a generous grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.



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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Jacob's Pillow dance collection

**Dates:** 1934-1958

**Collection number:** Coll2007-007

**Creator:** Unknown

**Collection Size:** 1 archive box.0.2 linear feet

**Repository:** ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives.

Los Angeles, California 90007

**Abstract:** Dance and souvenir programs for Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers, 1934-1938, and for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, 1954-1955 and 1957-1958; publicity materials and dance programs, circa 1940-1949, for dancers Barton Mumaw and Foster Fitz-Simons; stylized drawings, circa 1936, of Ted Shawn, Barton Mumaw, Frank Overlees, Dennis Landers, Foster Fitz-Simons, Fred Hearn, and Wilbur McCormack; and photographs of Ted Shawn (1954) and Barton Mumaw (circa 1941).

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

### Access

The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

### Publication Rights

Researchers wishing to publish materials must obtain permission in writing from ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives as the physical owner. Researchers must also obtain clearance from the holder(s) of any copyrights in the materials. Note that ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives can grant copyright clearance only for those materials for which we hold the copyright. It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain copyright clearance for all other materials directly from the copyright holder(s).

### Preferred Citation

Folder #, Jacob's Pillow dance collection, Coll2007-007, ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.

### Acquisition Information

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Name of donor and date of acquisition not known.

### Processing Information

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### History

The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and School, in Becket, Massachusetts, in the southern part of the Berkshire Hills, traces its origins to the 1930 purchase of the Jacob's Pillow farm by dance pioneer Ted Shawn (1891-1972), who was in the process of separating, personally and professionally, from his wife and dance partner, Ruth St. Denis. Shawn had long harbored a dream of forging a new style of male dance that would challenge the "sissy" image of male dancers, and would legitimize dance in America as an honorable career for men. In 1933, he recruited eight men, including Barton Mumaw, a former student at Denis and Shawn's Denishawn dance school, and several physical education students from Springfield College (then a men's school) for his new company. In July 1933, Shawn and his Men Dancers began giving public "Tea Lecture Demonstrations" to promote their work, and to raise money to pay the expenses. In addition, from 1933 to 1940, Shawn and his Men Dancers toured throughout the United States and to Canada, Cuba, and England, performing more than 1,250 times in 750 cities. By the Fall of 1939, Shawn felt his personal and professional crusade had been a success--public, press, and educators were accepting the dance as an honorable profession for men--and he announced in October that the forthcoming tour would be the last. The Men Dancers disbanded in May 1940. Shawn first leased the property, with the option to buy, to Mary Washington Ball, who produced the Berkshire Hills Dance Festival on the site in 1940. Although Shawn considered Ball's introduction of diverse programming an artistic success, the festival was a financial disaster. Shawn next leased the property to British ballet stars Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, whose 1941 International Dance Festival was so successful that local supporters formed the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Committee, raised \$50,000 to buy the property and to build a theater, and made Shawn director in 1942. The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and University of the Dance, by combining daily classes and evening performances, became the first intensive summer dance program in the United States. Shawn remained director until his death in 1972.

Source: Jacob's Pillow, <http://www.jacobspillow.org/archives/history.asp> , accessed on March 14, 2007.

### Scope and Content of Collection

The bulk of the collection consists of dance and souvenir programs for Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers, 1934-1938, and for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, 1954-1955 and 1957-1958. The collection also contains stylized drawings, circa 1936, of Ted Shawn, Barton Mumaw, Frank Overlees, Dennis Landers, Foster Fitz-Simons, Fred Hearn, and Wilbur McCormack; two photographs of Shawn taken in Florida in 1954; and clippings relating to Shawn and his early career from two unidentified publications. Materials relating to Barton Mumaw (1912-2001), originally Shawn's student, later his colleague, lover, and companion, include publicity materials prepared by his management firm when he launched his solo career shortly after Men Dancers disbanded in 1940; a dance program from April 1941; an announcement from Mumaw's 1949 South African tour; and eight 10" x 8" photographs. Materials relating to Foster Fitz-Simons (1912-1991), another member of Shawn's Men Dancers who struck out on his own after the company disbanded, includes publicity materials for Fitz-Simons and his dance partner, Miriam Winslow, prepared their management firm, and two copies (one signed "Foster Fitzsimons 1940") of a program given by the pair in New York.

### Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Fitz-Simons, Foster, 1912-1991

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival

Male dancers--United States

Mumaw, Barton, 1912-2001

Shawn, Ted, 1891-1972

Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers

Folder 1-4	<b>Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers. Souvenir Programs 1934-1938</b>
Folder 1	<b>After October 1934</b>
Folder 2	<b>Between May 1935 and June 1936</b>
Folder 3	<b>After June 1936</b>
Folder 4	<b>After summer 1938</b>

- Folder 5      **Shawn, Ted. *How Beautiful Upon the Mountain; a history of Jacob's Pillow* . 3rd edition 1946**  
**Physical Description:** At least 1 leaf missing.
- Folder 6-10    **Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 1954-1958**  
Folder 6      **13th season. Souvenir Program and History of Jacob's Pillow; program ; mimeographed program insert 1954**  
Folder 7      **14th season. Program; mimeographed program insert, 1955**  
Folder 8      **Ticket stubs 1956**  
Folder 9      **Silver Jubilee Season, 1934-1957. Souvenir Program; mimeographed program insert 1957**  
Folder 10     **Souvenir Program 1958**
- Folder 11     **Foster Fitz-Simons 1940**
- Folder 12     **Barton Mumaw circa 1941-1949**
- Folder 13     **Photographs and drawings circa 1936 1954**
- Folder 14     **Clippings no date**