

Guide to the Allen Tanner Papers

GEN MSS 368



by Kathryn Rawdon

July 1998

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: GEN MSS 368

CREATOR: Tanner, Allen, 1898-1987

TITLE: Allen Tanner papers

DATES: 1902-1986

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 1.7 linear feet (5 boxes) + 1 broadside folder, 1 portfolio

LANGUAGE: Chiefly in English. Letters from Tchelitchew and Zaoussailoff are primarily in French, with some Russian.

SUMMARY: Papers include correspondence, photographs, writings and other materials by or relating to Allen Tanner, and particularly concerning his relationship with Pavel Tchelitchew. Correspondence consists of letters to Tanner, among them letters from René Crevel, Pavel Tchelitchew, Virgil Thomson, and Alexandra Zaoussailoff. Also included are several letters from Tanner to John Torson, and one letter from Lincoln Kirstein and one brief postcard from Edith Sitwell, both to Tchelitchew. Writings include holographs and typescripts by Tanner and unidentified writers, generally concerning Tchelitchew, as well as Tanner's life in the 1920's in New York and Paris. Among the photographs are pictures of Tanner and Tchelitchew. Additional materials includes printed items and other materials primarily concerning Tanner and Tchelitchew.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.tanner>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.tanner>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of John A. Torson, 1987-1988.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Restricted Fragile materials in the portfolio and in cold storage may only be consulted with permission of the appropriate curator. Preservation photocopies and copy prints for reference use have been substituted in the main files.

Conditions Governing Use

The Allen Tanner Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Allen Tanner Papers. General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

ALLEN TANNER, 1898-1987

Allen Tanner was born on September 29, 1898. Early in life he showed signs of significant talent at the piano, and at age fifteen he went to Chicago, where he made his first appearance with an orchestra, followed by several concert tours in the West. He then moved to New York, where he worked as a concert accompanist for various vocalists, including Marguerite D'Alvarez. His talent in demand, Tanner performed often in New York and throughout the East.

In December of 1922, Tanner went to Berlin to pursue his musical career in Europe. Almost immediately he met the artist Pavel Tchelitchew, who was working as a set designer for the Russian Romantic Theatre. The two became friends, and this friendship soon grew into a relationship that would last over a decade. In early summer of 1923, they left Berlin for Paris, where they lived with Tchelitchew's sister, Alexandra Zaoussailoff, for several years. In Paris, Tchelitchew worked on his painting while Tanner took work as a piano instructor. Tchelitchew's work soon caught the interest of Gertrude Stein, and for a time the two men were a part of Stein's circle of literary and artistic friends, a group which also included René Crevel and Virgil Thomson, both represented in this collection.

In the autumn of 1934, Tchelitchew and Tanner moved to New York. By this time, Tchelitchew was involved with the poet Charles Henri Ford, and when Tanner and Tchelitchew visited Tanner's home town of Chicago for an exhibition of Tchelitchew's work, Tanner stayed when Tchelitchew returned to New York. In the following decades, Tanner continued his musical career, living in New York during the 1950's and 1960's, and later in Belleville, Illinois, where he died on October 3, 1987.

Scope and Contents

The Allen Tanner Papers document the life of the pianist Allen Tanner, particularly his life in Paris in the 1920's with the artist Pavel Tchelitchew. The Papers have been arranged into four series; *Correspondence*, *Writings*, *Photographs*, and *Additional Materials*.

[Series I, Correspondence](#), includes letters from René Crevel, Dame Myra Hess, and Virgil Thomson, and with several letters written by Tanner to John Torson. The majority of the correspondence consists of letters from Pavel Tchelitchev and from his sister, Alexandra Zaoussaïloff (nicknamed "Choura" throughout the collection), to Tanner (who is referred to as "Allousha" by both Tchelitchev and his sister). The letters from Tchelitchev date from 1928-1951, with the majority written after 1940, while Tchelitchev was living in New York. The letters discuss his life in New York, his work, the war in Europe, his travels to Arizona and Block Island, his sister Choura, and the lives of many of his friends, including Lincoln Kirstein, Edith Sitwell, Florine Stettheimer (in particular, her death), and Virgil Thomson. Included are several envelopes without corresponding letters, which have been placed with the letters according to the date of their postmark. The letters from Zaoussaïloff date from 1958-1972, after Tchelitchev's death in 1957. The letters concern her life in Paris, and her memories of Tchelitchev's life and his death. The letters also discuss the lives of many of her friends, including R. Kirk Askew, Jr. (Tchelitchev's dealer in New York), Lincoln Kirstein, Edith Sitwell, Gertrude Stein, Parker Tyler (particularly the writing of his biography of Tchelitchev, *The Divine Comedy of Pavel Tchelitchev*), and various Russian friends and relatives, in particular her (and Tchelitchev's) half-sisters Mania and Varia Tchelitchev.

[Series II, Writings](#), consists primarily of memoirs and recollections by Tanner of Tchelitchev and of his life in New York and Paris in the 1920's.

[Series III, Photographs](#), contains photographs of Tanner, Tchelitchev, and friends and relatives, taken primarily in the 1920's. Also included are several photographs of the Diaghilev Ballet production of "Ode," designed by Tchelitchev, as well as several later photographs of Margaret C. Anderson, and two most likely of Tanner taken in the 1960's.

[Series IV, Additional Materials](#), consists of printed items and other materials chiefly relating to Tanner and Tchelitchev.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1922-1986

0.8 linear feet (2 boxes)

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | D'Alvarez, Marguerite | 1930 |
| b. 1, f. 2 | Crevel, René Letters addressed to Tanner and Pavel Tchelitchew Includes: Postcard signed by Crevel, "Poupet," "Bébé" (e.g. Christian Bérard), "Tylia," and "Moma" | 1926-30, n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 3 | De Lamar, Alice | 1967 Sep 2 |
| b. 1, f. 4 | Dubal, David | n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Dungan, ---- Draft of TLS from Tanner[?] | n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Hamill, Liz | 1986 Apr |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Hess, Myra, Dame | 1922, n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 8 | Kennedy, John F. Onassis, Jacqueline Kennedy Printed card | n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 9 | Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Ethel Printed card | 1964 Jan 13 |
| b. 1, f. 10 | Kochno, Boris | 1928 Jul 17 |
| b. 1, f. 11 | Magallanes, Nick | 1968 Nov 5 |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Malone, Robert J. | 1986 Jul 2 |
| b. 1, f. 13 | Morse, Harriet Klamroth | 1985 Dec 11 |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Novaes (Pinto), Guiomar | 1962-66 |
| b. 1, f. 15 | Ranking, Patrice C. | 1974 Jul 10 |
| b. 1, f. 16 | Rothschild, Howard D. 2 drafts of letters from Tanner | n.d. |
| b. 1, f. 17 | Scott, Zachary | 1963 Jun 5 |
| b. 1, f. 18 | State of New York Executive Chamber | 1966 May 31 |
| b. 1, f. 19 | Stevens, Roger L. | 1966 Jun 9 |
| b. 1, f. 20-28 | Tchelitchew, Pavel | 1928-51 |
| b. 1, f. 29 | Thomson, Virgil | 1970-83, n.d. |

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (continued)

| | | |
|---------------------|--|----------------|
| b. 1, f. 30 | Torson, John Letters by Tanner | 1984-86 |
| b. 1, f. 31 | Turbyfill, Mark | 1967 Mar 10 |
| b. 1, f. 32 | Tyler, Parker | 1960 May 31 |
| b. 1, f. 33 | Wilhelm, Fred Wilhelm, Reta Jo | [1985] |
| b. 1, f. 34 | Yale University. Dept. of English Envelope only | 1947 May 27 |
| b. 2, f. 35-55 | Zaoussailoff, Alexandra | 1957-72, n.d. |
| b. 2, f. 56 | ----, Paula and Tim | n.d. |
| b. 2, f. 57 | Unidentified | [1985?] |
| THIRD-PARTY LETTERS | | |
| b. 2, f. 58 | Kirstein, Lincoln to Pavel Tchelitchew | 19[44?] Sep 17 |
| b. 2, f. 59 | Sitwell, Edith to Pavel Tchelitchew | 1928 Aug 16 |

Series II: Writings, 1963, n.d.*0.2 linear feet (1 box)*

WRITINGS OF ALLEN TANNER

| | | |
|-------------|--|------------|
| b. 3, f. 60 | "Corridor of Genius," 2 typescripts, both corrected | 1963 Sep 8 |
| b. 3, f. 61 | "The Early Tchelitchew," typescript, corrected | 1963 |
| b. 3, f. 62 | Holograph about Tchelitchew and Charles Henri Ford, written on the back of an envelope | n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 63 | "Tchelitschev's Parents," holograph | n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 64 | "Tschelitscheff Superstitions," holograph | n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 65 | "Visit to Belley - & Gertrude Stein," holograph | n.d. |

UNIDENTIFIED

| | | |
|-------------|--|------|
| b. 3, f. 66 | "Pavel Tchelitchew," typescript fragment | n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 67 | Untitled article about food, typescript, corrected | n.d. |
| b. 3, f. 68 | Untitled typescript fragment | n.d. |

Series III: Photographs, 1902-1967*0.4 linear feet (1 box)*

TANNER, ALLEN

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| b. 4, f. 69 | "Age 18" [?] | [1926?] |
| b. 4, f. 70-72 | As a child Also stored in: Oversize, bsd, folder 146 | [ca. 1902-06] |
| b. 4, f. 73 | Head shot | [ca. 1920?] |
| b. 4, f. 74 | In Guermantes (France) | [1926?] |
| b. 4, f. 75 | In Toulon (France) | [ca. 1925?] |
| b. 4, f. 76 | In Tunisia | [1926] |
| b. 4, f. 77 | On boat to Tunisia | 1926 |
| b. 4, f. 78 | With Charles Vincent and Alexandra Zaoussaïloff, near Guermantes (France) | 1933 |
| b. 4, f. 79 | With Pavel Tchelitchev, Paris | 1923 |
| b. 4, f. 80 | With Pavel Tchelitchev, Tunisia | 1926 |
| b. 4, f. 81 | With Alexandra Zaoussaïloff, Paris | 1923 |
| b. 4, f. 82 | With Alexandra Zaoussaïloff [?], unidentified woman, and unidentified man | |
| b. 4, f. 83 | [Tanner?] With neighbor (color print) | 1967 |
| b. 4, f. 84 | [Tanner?] With unidentified woman | [ca. 1925?] |
| b. 4, f. 85 | [Tanner?] With several unidentified women | [ca. 1920?] |

TCHELITCHEV, PAVEL

Portraits and Snapshots

| | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| b. 4, f. 86 | Age 5-6, Moscow | [ca. 1903-04] |
| b. 4, f. 87-89 | In Tunisia | 1926 |
| b. 4, f. 90 | Passport photo | ca. 1918-19 |
| b. 4, f. 91 | With Margaret Anderson | 1924 |
| b. 4, f. 92 | With Mabel Pace Tanner (Allen's mother), Guermantes (France) | ca. 1931-32 |
| b. 4, f. 93 | With Mabel Pace Tanner, Tunisia | [1926?] |
| "Ode," Diaghilev Ballet, Designed by Tchelitchev | | |
| b. 4, f. 94 | Branitzka, L. L., "Tcherkas" and "Efimov" | 1928 |
| b. 4, f. 95 | Lifar, Serge, as "The Student" | 1928 |
| b. 4, f. 96 | Unidentified dancer | 1928 |

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS

| | | |
|--------------|---|------------|
| b. 4, f. 97 | Anderson, Margaret C. and Lillian Siegel (color print) | 1967 Aug 5 |
| b. 4, f. 98 | Anderson, Margaret C. and Solita Solano, Orgeval (Yvelines, France) (color prints) Includes: Fragment of typescript letter by unidentified | 1966 |
| b. 4, f. 99 | Anderson, Margaret C. and "Fritz" (color print) | 1967 Jan |
| b. 4, f. 100 | Chauviré, Yvette | 1948 Oct |
| b. 4, f. 101 | "Douglas," "Josephine," and "Seton," Gallanach (Scotland) | 1921 Jul |
| b. 4, f. 102 | Duncan, Isadora. Photo by Arnold Genthe (postcard) | ca. 1920 |
| b. 4, f. 103 | Gallanach House, Argyllshire (Scotland) | 1921 |
| b. 4, f. 104 | Gravesite of Serge Diaghilev | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 105 | "Josephine," "Douglas," "Ruano[?]," and Gladys Waterbury, Gallanach (Scotland) | 1921 Sep |
| b. 4, f. 106 | Karsavina, Tamara | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 107 | "The Summer House," Mt. Harmony Road, Bernardsville, N.J. | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 108 | Tanner, Florence[?] (Tanner's sister) as a child | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 109 | Tanner, "Grandma" and Martin Poole | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 110 | Tanner, Mabel Pace | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 111 | Tanner, Mabel Pace and Florence, Chateau LaGrange Includes: Typescript note by Tanner explaining the photo | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 112 | Tchelitchew, Fyodor Sergeyevitch (Pavel's father) | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 113 | Toumanova[?], Tamara | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 114 | Zaoussailoff, Alexandra, Paris | 1957 |
| b. 4, f. 115 | Zaoussailoff, Alexandra[?], and unidentified man | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 116 | Unidentified building | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 117 | Unidentified house | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 118 | Unidentified woman | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 119 | Two unidentified women | n.d. |
| b. 4, f. 120 | Unidentified woman on boat [to Tunisia?] | [1926?] |

Series IV: Additional Materials, 1923-1974*0.2 linear feet (1 box)*

PRINTED MATERIAL

| | | |
|--------------|---|---------------|
| b. 5, f. 121 | "Allen Tanner, Pianiste," printed advertisement for lessons and concerts | [ca. 1923?] |
| b. 5, f. 122 | Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, printed program | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 123 | Blank card printed with picture of mother and child | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 124 | "Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Caricatures, Autographs by Pavel Tchelitchew 1923-1932, from the Collection of Allen Tanner, Brentano's," printed program | 1964 Apr |
| b. 5, f. 125 | "KWMU Magazine" Includes: photographs of Tchelitchew, 1923, and Jane Heap, n.d. | 1974 Feb 1 |
| b. 5, f. 126 | "Mme. Sarah Bernhardt (Herself)," printed program | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 127 | Newspaper clipping about a concert by Tanner | [ca. 1931-32] |
| b. 5, f. 128 | Newspaper clipping about stomach pain | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 129 | Newspaper clipping with program for a concert in homage to Claude Debussy | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 130 | "Pavel Tchelitchew, 1898-1957, Rétrospective," Galerie Lucie Weill, printed announcement | 1966 |
| b. 5, f. 131 | Postcard of Egyptian mummies, Musée Guimet (Paris, France) | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 132 | "The Spur," pp. 15-16 | 1939 Apr |
| b. 5, f. 133 | "What's in Your Name? Tanner," copy of printed article | n.d. |

OTHER PAPERS

| | | |
|--------------|--|----------|
| b. 5, f. 134 | Card with address of Hugh Ford | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 135 | Cardboard box top with holograph list of musical works | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 136 | Envelopes, photograph sleeves and miscellaneous notes Most contain writing identifying various letters and photographs in the collection; apparently at some time in the past these were separated from their original contents | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 137 | Genealogy of the Anderson and Tanner families, holograph | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 138 | Luggage identification card for Allen Tanner | n.d. |
| b. 5, f. 139 | Typescript list of Tchelitchew's works owned by Tanner, to be sold by Brentano's | 1963 Sep |

Oversize

(1 broadside)

b. bsd, folder 146 Allen Tanner as a child (in Series III)

[ca. 1902–06]

Restricted Fragile

(1 portfolio)

Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| b. port, f. 140 | Box 2, folder 42 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. port, f. 141 | Box 2, folder 51 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. port, f. 142 | Box 2, folder 58 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. port, f. 143 | Box 5, folder 127 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. port, f. 144 | Box 5, folder 128 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. port, f. 145 | Box 5, folder 132 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 146 | Box 4, folder 73 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 147 | Box 4, folder 75 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 148 | Box 4, folder 107 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 149 | Box 4, folder 117 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 150 | Box 4, folder 119 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |
| b. cs, f. 151 | Box 4, folder 120 Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator. |

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Names

Crevel, René, 1900-1935
Kirstein, Lincoln, 1907-1996
Sitwell, Edith, 1887-1964
Stein, Gertrude, 1874-1946
Tanner, Allen, 1898-1987
Tchelitchew, Pavel, 1898-1957
Thomson, Virgil, 1896-1989
Zaoussailoff, Alexandra, 1903-