

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 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 Tchelitchew and from his sister, Alexandra Zaoussaïloff (nicknamed "Choura" throughout the collection), to Tanner (who is referred to as "Allousha" by both Tchelitchew and his sister). The letters from Tchelitchew date from 1928-1951, with the majority written after 1940, while Tchelitchew 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 Tchelitchew's death in 1957. The letters concern her life in Paris, and her memories of Tchelitchew's life and his death. The letters also discuss the lives of many of her friends, including R. Kirk Askew, Jr. (Tchelitchew's dealer in New York), Lincoln Kirstein, Edith Sitwell, Gertrude Stein, Parker Tyler (particularly the writing of his biography of Tchelitchew, *The Divine Comedy of Pavel Tchelitchew*), and various Russian friends and relatives, in particular her (and Tchelitchew's) half-sisters Mania and Varia Tchelitchew.

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

[Series III, Photographs](#), contains photographs of Tanner, Tchelitchew, and friends and relatives, taken primarily in the 1920's. Also included are several photographs of the Diaghilev Ballet production of "Ode," designed by Tchelitchew, 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 Tchelitchew.

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 Sergeyeitch (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?]

OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS (continued)

Nitrate negatives (surrogates)

[1920-1926],
undated

Images of negatives from the following folders: b. 4, f. 73, Head shot, [ca. 1920?]; b. 4, f. 75, In Toulon (France), [ca. 1925?]; b. 4, f. 107, "The Summer House," Mt. Harmony Road, Bernardsville, N.J., undated; b. 4, f. 117, Unidentified house, undated; b. 4, f. 119, Two unidentified women, undated; b. 4, f. 120, Unidentified woman on boat [to Tunisia?], [1926?].

Original nitrate negatives were discarded in 2023 in accordance with Yale University policy. Digital surrogates are available.

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

Allen Tanner papers
GEN MSS 368

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.

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-