

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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THE ART OF ISADORA DUNCAN SHOWN AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
IN EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA

The impact of the art of Isadora Duncan on artists who work with line and form has been unique. The excitement and freedom of her dance movements were caught by Rodin, Segonzac, Bourdelle, Grandjouan, the Spanish artist José Clara and the American watercolorist, Walkowitz. Drawings by these artists plus an etching by John Sloan, a pencil study by Leon Bakst and a pastel drawing by E. Gordon Craig comprise the major part of the exhibition Isadora Duncan, Drawings, Photographs, Memorabilia, which will open to the public at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Wednesday, October 22.

The material has been assembled by the Dance Archives of the Museum and in addition to the drawings, includes photographs by Arnold Genthe and Edward Steichen, and letters, documents and memorabilia relating to Isadora Duncan's life and art. Paul Magriel, Librarian of the Museum's Dance Archives, has arranged the exhibition, which will be on view through December 2.

Of particular interest are the drawings made of her by Rodin during her early years in Paris. He wrote of her: "Isadora has achieved in sculpture feeling without effort." Among the other drawings on exhibition are the fine pencil drawings of Segonzac, the watercolor drawings of Bourdelle and the chalk drawings by Grandjouan. A large section of the exhibition is devoted to drawings and watercolor drawings by Abraham Walkowitz, selected from the many thousands that he made over a period of twenty years. These comprise the most complete artist's record of the work of any dancer. In 1916, while Isadora was dancing in New York, she said to the artist: "You have written my biography in lines without words. I can pass on."

Also on exhibition is a pencil study of the dancer by Leon Bakst and a pastel drawing by E. Gordon Craig, and a series of pen drawings by the Spanish artist José Clara which are particularly illuminating documents of the dancer's art. The notable camera studies

of Isadora by Edward Steichen taken at the Parthenon are on view, as well as the photographs by Arnold Genthe of which Isadora said: "He has taken many pictures of me which are not representations of my physical being but representations of my soul, and one of them is my soul indeed." The memorabilia include photographs taken during various stages of her career as well as programs and autograph letters.

Isadora Duncan was the daughter of Irish pioneers and was born in San Francisco on September 27, 1878. Her first stage dancing was with the Augustin Daly production of Midsummer Night's Dream in New York in 1898. She rebelled at all notions of theatrical dancing and, unable to find in this country an audience for her unusual art, she left for England and later appeared on the Continent. Her success in Europe was unequalled by that of any other American dancer of our generation. Subsequent visits to the United States were overwhelming triumphs and few other theatrical artists have been so widely acclaimed. Her influence on the theatre through her association with Gordon Craig, Stanislavsky and others was significant. Her historic meeting with Fokine early in her career brought notable changes in the future development of the Russian Ballet.

Isadora Duncan's death at Nice, France, on September 14, 1927, was as spectacular as her life. Just as she was starting for a drive in her car with a friend, a scarf which she wore caught in the wheels and she was instantly strangled to death. In a letter to Mary Desti, Glenway Wescott wrote: "I feel that none other than her tragic genius could have imagined such a perfect and terrible end."