

# Rolf de Maré

**Art Collector - Ballet Director - Museum Founder**

**A unique biography portrays Rolf de Maré, one of Sweden's most prominent cultural figures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a man who had the whole world as his sphere. As a follow-up to the biography, the Dance Museum in Stockholm is holding an exhibition on his cosmopolitan life in art, dance and the legendary Paris of the 1920s.**

Rolf de Maré was raised in Stockholm's aristocratic quarters as the grandson of Wilhelmina von Hallwyl. But rather than settle into a conventional upper-class existence he chose an exciting lifestyle within modern art. In the 1910s he put together a large art collection focusing on the then contemporary style of art, Cubism. Works by Picasso, Braque and Léger found their way from Paris to his Hildesborg estate in the Scanian province of southern Sweden, likewise artist Nils Dardel, who became his close friend and confidant.

Rolf de Maré moved to Paris where he mingled in international high society with contemporary artists of the period. In 1920 he founded the Ballets Suédois. For five years it would be the centre of contemporary art, attracting world-famous artists, musicians and authors. At his theatre, Théâtre de Champs-Élysées, he launched the young Josephine Baker. "Monsieur Rolf" became a renowned cultural figure in France.

In Paris in 1933 he founded the world's first dance museum and research institute, Les Archives Internationales de la Danse. Rolf de Maré travelled the world as an ambassador for dance and, when not on his coffee farm in Kenya, as an explorer. His dance archives in Paris later continued in the Dance Museum in Stockholm, which he founded in 1953.

His name is known by many, but his destiny has never previously been portrayed. Erik Näslund's voluminous biography portrays him for the first time as a full figure in all his roles; as art collector, ballet director, museum founder, dance ambassador ... and also as a candid homosexual. Behind the work, which thereby also portrays an essential part of 20<sup>th</sup> century gay history, lies many years of research. The book will be published simultaneously in Swedish, English and French.

The exhibition of the same name includes works by the many artists in his close circle, and several of his paintings and dance documentaries from around the world. The book and exhibition has already attracted a great deal of media attention, including an article in the ACNE PAPER art and fashion magazine.

**The book will be published in September. The exhibition opens on September 19, 2008 and closes on February 1, 2009.**

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