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George Antheil papers 4078528

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

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Summary Information

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Repository: | Rare Book and Manuscript Library |
| Creator: | Antheil, George, 1900-1959 |
| Title: | George Antheil papers |
| ID: | 4078528 |
| ID: | MS#0037 |
| Date [inclusive]: | 1919-1959 |
| Physical Description: | 3.92 linear feet 4 document boxes 2 custom made boxes 1 oversized folder |
| Language of the Material: | English . |
| Abstract: | The George Antheil Papers are composed primarily of correspondence, both professional and personal. |

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); George Antheil papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical sketch

George Antheil was born on July 8, 1900 in Trenton, New Jersey. His parents were Henry William and Wilhelmine Huse Antheil. Although Antheil claimed to be of Polish descent, he was actually German and grew up speaking both German and English. He attended Trenton Central High School, but there is no indication that he graduated. Antheil studied piano lessons at an early age and in 1919 began to study with Constantin Ivanovich Edler von Sternberg at the Sternberg School of Music. He also briefly studied piano at the Settlement Music School. In his autobiography, *Bad Boy of Music*, Antheil claimed to have been a student alternately at the Curtis Institute of Music and what he refers to as the "Curtis Settlement School" which did not exist. Both of these statements were untrue.

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Biographical sketch

Antheil traveled around Europe as a concert pianist playing "modern music" as well as his own compositions. Antheil became friends with many of the important intellectuals of that time, including Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, and Ezra Pound. During this time, and for quite a few years after, Antheil was financially subsidized by Mary Louise Curtis Bok (who founded the Curtis Institute of Music). While in Europe, Antheil met a student named Böski Marcus from Hungary. They married in 1925. Antheil's best known piece during the 1920s was a composition entitled Ballet Mécanique scored for piano and percussion. The American premiere of this piece was deemed a failure and Antheil's reputation was never the same.

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Biographical sketch

In the 1930s, Antheil moved to California and concentrated on writing film scores for such directors as Man Ray and Cecil B. DeMille. He continued to compose symphonies during this time. His 1953 opera, Volpone, opened to mixed reviews, but Antheil continued to write.

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Biographical sketch

In addition to composing, George Antheil was interested in writing in general. He was a music critic, contributed columns to Esquire and other periodicals, and wrote two detective novels based on his hobby of studying glandular endocrinology. His autobiography, *Bad Boy of Music*, was a bestseller. Antheil is also credited to co-inventing (with Hedy Lamarr) a torpedo guidance system.

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Biographical sketch

George Antheil died of a heart attack in 1959.

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Scope and Content

The George Antheil Papers consists primarily of correspondence with a small amount of documents including music scores. Formerly cataloged individuals are listed below. Please note that there is not necessarily correspondence from or to the listed individuals. In some cases, there is only a signature.

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Scope and Content

Adrian, Gilbert; Antheil, George; Balanchine, George; Bates, Peggy; Bing, Sir Rudolf; Bloach, Ernest; Boulanger, Nadia; Bowles, Paul; Brandt, Carl; Britten, Benjamin; Bullitt, William C.; Buñel, Luis; Cage, John; Calder, Alexander; Cocteau, Jean; Copland, Aaron; Cowell, Henry; Cravath, Paul D.; Dali, Salvador; Dallapiccola, Luigi; Davies, Joseph; DeMille, Cecil B.; Dorati, Antal; Erskine, John; Ferrer, José; Fiedler, Arthur; Germain, André; Gershwin, George; Goldovsky, Boris; Golschmann, Vladimir; Goossens, Eugene; Grainger, Percy A.; Hanson, Howard; Heap, Jane; Hecht, Ben; Hemingway, Ernest; Hindemith, Paul; Hoover, J. Edgar; Hopper, Hedda; Hotchner, Aaron Edward; Huebsch, Ben W.; Hutcheson, Ernest; Jeritza, Maria; Joyce, James; Kahn, Otto; Kierstein, Lincoln; Knight, Eric M.; Kostelanetz, Andre; Koussevitzky, Serge; Kramer, Stanley; Krenek, Ernest; Lambert, Constant; Léger, Fernand; Leinsdorf, Erich; Lenya, Lotte; Léon, Paul; Lewis, Wyndham; Lieberson, Goddard; Lin, Yutang; Luening, Otto; MacLeish, Archibald; Malko, Nicolai; Michonze; Milhaud, Darius; Miró, Joan; Monotti, Francesco; Mitropoulos, Dimitri; Monteux, Pierre; Moore, Douglas; Norris, Charles G.; Ormandy, Eugene; O'Sullivan, John; Picasso, Pablo; Post, Marjorie Merriweather; Putnam, George P.; Reed, Ruth; Reiner, Fritz; Reiter, Max; Rhee, Syngman; Riegger, Wallingford; Schnitzler, Arthur; Selznick, David O.; Sessions, Roger; Sternberg, Constantin von; Stoessel, Albert F.; Stokowski, Leopold; Stravinski, Igor; Szell, George; Tanner, Allen; Taylor, Deems; Thompson, Randall; Van Vechter, Carl; Wallenstein, Alfred F.; Weaver, Harriet Shaw; Weill, Kurt; Winchell, Walter

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in two series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

File created. xml document instance created by Lea Osborne EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2009-07-07 2010-07-27 2019-05-20

Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. The RBML maintains ownership of the physical material only. Copyright remains with the creator and his/her heirs. The responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Unpublished music may not be photocopied without permission. Authorization to perform the music of George Antheil must be obtained from Music Sales Corporation, 225 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003. Phone (212) 254 2100.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--Antheil, Peter; Purchase. Method of acquisition--Gift; Purchase (297-11/23/87); Date of acquisition--12/31/1984. Accession number--M-84-12-31.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection of 78 letters, postcards and notes from famous friends of George Antheil: Source of acquisition--297-3/16/90. Method of acquisition--Purchase; Date of acquisition--03/16/1990.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Papers: Source of acquisition--297-3/16/91. Method of acquisition--Purchase; Date of acquisition--03/16/1991. Accession number--M-91-03-16.

Custodial History

Donation by Peter Antheil, 1984.

Custodial History

Purchase from Peter Antheil, 1990.

Custodial History

Gift of Mrs. Mira Gerstmann, 1989.

Processing Information

Processed RE/BC 04/01/1988.

Processing Information

Collection of 78 letters, postcards and notes from famous friends of George Antheil
Processed MJT 04/02/1990.

Processing Information

Papers Reprocessed Lea Osborne 2010/07/27.

Processing Information

Papers Processed HR 10/29/1991.

Processing Information

Collection was part of AMI digitization, 2021. It was noted that the collection contains 2 cassettes in Box 6, but no cassette was found within the collection.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

[Lynn Garafola Research Files on George Antheil](#). Columbia University Libraries.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Avant-garde (Aesthetics) -- France -- Paris
- Composers -- United States -- Correspondence
- Endocrinology
- Motion picture music
- Music
- Music -- France -- Paris -- 20th century
- Orchestral music
- Pianists -- United States
- Correspondence
- Scores (documents for music)
- Antheil, George, 1900-1959
- Heinsheimer, Hans W., 1900-1993
- Sternberg, Constantin von, 1852-1924
- Stokowski, Leopold, 1882-1977

- Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970

Collection Inventory

Series I: Correspondence, 1919-1959

Scope and Contents

Series I contains letters exchanged between George Antheil and his colleagues. Many of the correspondents are conductors, music directors, and other individuals involved in the music business. There are also letters from some of George's companions during his time in Europe, such as Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, and Kurt Weill. The correspondence with Constantin von Sternberg illustrates Sternberg's admiration for Antheil as a young musician while the letters with Mary Louise Curtis Bok Zimbalist illustrate Antheil's financial strain and his need for recognition. Several of the letters are from or to his wife, Böske.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| A, 1930-1931, 1949-1957, 1930-1931, 1949-1957 | box 1 | folder 1 |
| Antheil Family, 1956-1957 | box 1 | folder 2 |
| Baker through Boddy, 1920-1926, 1934-1956, 1920-1926, 1934-1956 | box 1 | folder 3 |
| Bomhard through Butts, 1933-1956 | box 1 | folder 4 |
| C1929-1955 | box 1 | folder 5 |
| D1937-1956 | box 1 | folder 6 |
| Dyne, Michael, 1954-1957 | box 1 | folder 7 |
| E, 1929, 1939-1955, 1929, 1939-1955 | box 1 | folder 8 |
| F1945-1957 | box 1 | folder 9 |
| G1930-1957 | box 1 | folder 10 |
| Golschmann, Vladimir, 1937-1959 | box 2 | folder 1 |
| H1932-1958 | box 2 | folder 2 |
| Heinsheimer, Hans, 1928-1931, 1942-1957, 1928-1931, 1942-1957 | box 2 | folder 3 to 4 |
| <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders) | | |
| J, 1930-1941, 1952-1955, 1930-1941, 1952-1955 | box 2 | folder 5 |
| K1932-1957 | box 2 | folder 6 |
| L1940-1956 | box 2 | folder 7 |
| Levine, Joseph and Mary, 1952-1959 | box 2 | folder 8 |
| Levy, Edwin, 1954-1957 | box 3 | folder 1 |

| | | |
|---|-------|-----------|
| Lewis, E. Henry, 1955-1957 | box 3 | folder 2 |
| M1931-1959 | box 3 | folder 3 |
| Mills, Ted, 1940-1941 | box 3 | folder 4 |
| N1946-1955 | box 3 | folder 5 |
| O, 1930, 1945-1949, 1930, 1945-1949 | box 3 | folder 6 |
| P1938-1955 | box 3 | folder 7 |
| Perry, Elaine and Alfred, 1953-1955 | box 3 | folder 8 |
| R1925-1957 | box 3 | folder 9 |
| Sabatini through Siegel, 1923-1958 | box 3 | folder 10 |
| Signal through Szell, 1923-1958 | box 3 | folder 11 |
| Sternberg, Constantin Ivanovich Edler von, 1919-1921 | box 4 | folder 1 |
| Stokowski, Leopold, 1926-1932, 1943-1949, 1926-1932, 1943-1949 | box 4 | folder 2 |
| T1930-1956 | box 4 | folder 3 |
| U through V, 1928-1930, 1945, 1928-1930, 1945 | box 4 | folder 4 |
| W through Z, 1930, 1941-1957, 1930, 1941-1957 | box 4 | folder 5 |
| Weintraub, Eugene, 1951-1956 | box 4 | folder 6 |
| Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1933-1945, 1955, 1933-1945, 1955 | box 4 | folder 7 |
| Unidentified Correspondence, 1941 | box 4 | folder 8 |

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Series II: Subject Files, 1919-1955

Scope and Contents

This small series holds articles, printed material, such as a music program, and several scores. Of interest are the documents relating to Antheil's piece *Railroad Theme* in which he claims that his work has been plagiarized.

| Title/Description | Instances | |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| About George Antheil, 1940, undated, 1940, undated | box 4 | folder 9 |
| Printed Material, 1926-1932, 1955, 1926-1932, 1955 | box 4 | folder 10 |
| Scores | | |
| <i>Railroad Theme</i> , 1939 | mapcase 14- | P-2 |

Scope and Contents

(with notes)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| <i>Sonata Number One</i> , 1919 | box 5 |
| <i>Symphony Number Four</i> , 1942 | box 6 |

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