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INVENTORY

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Biographical Sketch

Eugene Allen Kurtz was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on December 27, 1923. He began his musical studies on piano at the age of 10 and began writing music soon after. In 1941, he entered the Eastman School of Music with a major in composition. However, his studies were interrupted by his service in the Heavy Weapons Company of the 104th infantry in the army from 1942 to 1946. Kurtz’ service sent him to Europe, where he served primarily in Normandy, Belgium, Holland and Germany. After the war, Kurtz, who had studied German since high school, served as an army interpreter in Germany until 1946.

After completing his service, Kurtz returned to the Eastman School of Music in February 1946 and received the diploma of Bachelor of Arts in Music in 1947. He remained at Eastman for his Master of Arts degree. While completing his graduate studies, he attended Tanglewood in the summer of 1948 and studied with Darius Milhaud. While at Tanglewood Kurtz also met Aaron Copland, with whom he would study several years later. Kurtz went on to complete his Master of Music degree from Eastman in 1949. His principal teachers were Allen McHose,
Elvera Wonderlich, Gustave Soderlund, Harry Watts, and most notably Bernard Rogers, who had a particularly profound influence on his musical thought and evolution.

After graduation, Kurtz decided to return to Europe for his final year on the G.I. Bill., and studied with Arthur Honegger at the École Normale de Musique in Paris. While in Paris, he also re-established contact with Darius Milhaud and attended classes given by Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatory. Kurtz decided to remain in Paris, living as a pianist and arranger for Music Hall singers.

In 1953, he continued his studies with Max Deutsch, a Viennese pupil of Schoenberg, who greatly influenced Kurtz during a turning point in his musical thinking. In the summer of 1957, Kurtz studied with Aaron Copland at the Dartington School of Music and received guidance from Ross Lee Finney. In 1962, Kurtz signed a contract with the Société des Editions Jobert for the publication of his music and a year later was appointed a member of the Board of Administrators.

Aside from his serious compositional efforts, Kurtz also wrote music for theater, film, radio and television and served as guest lecturer in composition at Michigan State University.


Provenance

These papers were received on March 27, 2008, from the family of Eugene Kurtz.

Scope and Content Note

The Eugene Kurtz Papers preserves various papers, including concert programs, program notes, press clippings, publicity materials, correspondence, library catalogue cards, and other documents, pertaining to Kurtz’s compositional output and professional activities. Kurtz preserved these items in three dossiers or expanding file folders. Inside each dossier are several folders or partitions, each of which is labeled with the title of a composition or group of compositions by Kurtz. This original organization has been fully preserved in the collection with only minor adjustments in physical housing in consideration of the acidity of the original folders.

Restrictions and Use

There are no restrictions on the use of the Eugene Kurtz Papers.
Associations

The Sibley Music Library houses a growing number of collections documenting the composition careers of Eastman School of Music alumni. Included among them are the collections of Alexander Courage (BM 1941), Gordon Binkerd (MM 1941), William Bergsma (BA 1942, MM 1943), John LaMontaine (BM, 1942), Francis James Brown (BM 1947), Donald H. White (MM 1947, PhD 1952), Will Gay Bottje (DMA 1955), Sydney Hodkinson (BM 1957, MM 1958), David Geepert (PhD 1958), and Malcolm Seagrave (DMA 1962).

Elsewhere, the Eugene A. Kurtz Collection at the Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, contains additional professional and personal papers pertaining to the composer. That collection, 2.75 linear feet in extent, consists primarily of correspondence but also contains some concert programs, press clippings, publicity materials, lecture notes and writings, personal records, and one folder containing musical scores.
DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

The Eugene Kurtz Papers are arranged chronologically and divided into three series that directly reflect the three dossiers in which the collection was originally organized. All post-it notes left within the papers are original to their initial organization. Furthermore, all items clipped together have been kept as such to retain the original compilation; in the case of correspondence, all letters in the same conversation have been compiled together, and for performances, all relevant materials i.e. any programs, notes, ads, newspaper clipping, etc. all relating to one performance have been grouped together. It follows that each item may not necessarily be in exact chronological order. Each dossier is contained within an expanding folder and is further subdivided into individual files containing concert programs, correspondence and other memorabilia relating to each piece as labeled on the corresponding folder. The original labeled folders within each dossier have been replaced with new folders due to their acidity and are now housed within their own separate folders following each dossier.

Series 1: Dossier Nº 1

This series contains the Catalogue editions Jobert which can be used as a reference for the dossiers, and the following partitions I – XI, dating from 1949-1966:

I. Three songs for Medea
II. *Quatre movements pour piano*
III. *Le Capricorne*
IV. *Symphonie pour orchestra et cordes*
V. *Sonate pour violon seul.*
VI. *Symphonie du chambre*
VII. Concert Nocturne
VIII. *Suite Parisienne*
IX. *Motivations pour piano*
X. *Le Marcheur Solitaire*
XI. *Conversations pour 12 instrumentistes*

Series 2: Dossier Nº 2

Dossier 2 contains the following partitions XII –XVII and XIX-XXVI from years 1967-1997:

XII. *Improvisations pour contrebasse*
XIII. Animations
XIV. Three songs from Medea (*version soprano dramatique et orchestra*)
XV. Ça…*diagramme pour orchestra*
XVI. *Le Derniere contrabasse a Las Vegas*
XVII. *Mécanique*
XIX, XX, XXI. Logo I, Logo II, Logo III
XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI. Five-sixteen, Time and Again, From time to time, The broken world, ICARE

**Series 3: Dossier № 3**

Dossier No 3 contains the following partition XXVII, French and English autobiographies, chansons and film music:

*Autobiographie*

*Chansons*

XVII. Elysian Fields

*Le Gisant*

*Dernier Saut*
Select press clippings, concert programs, and other materials pertaining to Symphonie pour orchestre à cordes by Eugene Kurtz.
Items from Eugene Kurtz Papers, Dossier No. 1, Box 1, Folder 5.
INVENTORY

Series 1: Dossier № 1

Box 1


Folder 2  Three songs from Medea pour soprano dramatique et piano (ou orchestra) Version contralto.
21 items
- Timeline. One page; in ink.
- “Medea” script. Typescript; one page.
- “Trois chants de Médée” Program notes and text. Typescript; 2 pages.
- Card catalogue listing
- Letter of acceptance for broadcast of the piece on France-Culture. Typescript and ink; one page. Notes in pencil and ink.
- Program note. French.
- Concert program. The Department of Music Emory University. Jean Lemonds, soprano; Jeanette Robinson, piano. October 18, 1968.
- Letter from Janet F. Buehler (Secretary to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lewis, director of The New Jersey Symphony). May 5, 1971. Typescript; one page.
- Letter to Lorin Maazel from Eugene Kurtz RE: Corrections to score and parts. Typescript; 4 pages
• Concert program. The Cleveland Orchestra. Lorin Maazel, conductor; Jeanne Distell, soprano. Thursday, April 15 and Saturday April 17, 1976.

Folder 3  
**Quatre movements pour piano**

Three items
• Timeline. In ink; one page.

Folder 4  
**Le Capricorne**

2 items
• Timeline

Folder 5  
**Symphonie pour orchestre a cordes**

17 items
• Timeline. In ink; one page.
• Card catalogue listing
• Folder containing:
  o Performance records. Typescript; one page
  o Program notes. *Orchestra Philhamonique de la R.T.F.* Typescript; 4 pages.
  o Newspaper articles. 10 clippings in French.
  o Program notes in French
  o Performance records. Typescript; one page
  o Program notes. *Orchestra Philhamonique de la R.T.F.* Typescript; 4 pages.
  o Newspaper articles. 10 clippings in French.
• Program notes in French
  • Notes in French. Written on scrap of printed sheet music. In ink.
  • Notice from Société des Editions Jobert. Typescript; one page.
  • Letter. From Martin Allheilig, the delegate of the director general and the head of artistic services at Radiodiffusion-Television Française, to Eugene Kurtz. Notice of impending broadcast for March 21, 1970. Sent February 18, 1970. Typescript; one page.

Folder 6  Sonate pour violon seul.
9 items
• Timeline
• Announcement of audition for the concerts of France-Culture, “Ten years of creation in the letters and the arts.”
• Concert program, L’heure musicale de Montmartre. 1966-67 season. Accompanied by newspaper articles. Also two copies included in typescript

Folder 7  Symphonie du chambre.
15 items
• Timeline
• Folder containing:
  o “Performance problem” Chamber Symphony for the 4th of July (1958-59) by Eugene Kurtz. Typescript; one page.
  o Letter. From William to Eugene Kurtz typed on Coca Cola Company stationary. Three pages. Accompanied by two copies of the following concert review:
• Concert program. Les grands concerts de la Sorbonne. May 27, 1968.
• Flier for Les Grands Concerts de la Sarbonne au Théâtre de la Musique gaité lyrique. February 6, 1969.

Folder 8 Concert nocturne
16 items
• Timeline. Typescript; 2 pages.
• Instrumentation list. In ink; two pages.
• Letters. From G. Canard, Secretary to the committee of Radiodiffusion-télévision Française to Eugene Kurtz. Two letters noting receipt of scores to be examined by the committee. July 11, 1962 and November 15, 1962. Typescript; 2 pages.
• Program notes. Typescript; two pages.
• Three letters from L. Courtinant, Le chef de programmation de R.T.F. October 27, 1970 - Typescript and ink, one page; August 19, 1971 – Typescript and ink, one page; August 7, 1973 – Typescript and ink, one page.

Folder 9 Suite parisienne
29 items
• Timeline. In ink; one page
• Instrumentation list. Typescript; one page and ink; one page.
• 16 letters between Madame Jobert and Monsieur Denizard.
  o March 18, 1966. In ink; one page.
  o March 22, 1966. Typescript; one page.
• March 17, 1966. Typescript; one page.
• March 16, 1966. In ink; 2 pages.
• March 14, 1966. Typescript; 2 pages.
• January 26, 1966. In ink; one page.
• January 31, 1966. In ink; one page.
• March 2, 1966. In ink; 2 pages.
• February 10, 1966. Typescript; one page.
• December 7, 1965. In ink; one page.
• November 29, 1965. Typescript one page.
• October 27, 1965. In ink; 2 pages.
• November 8, 1965. In ink; one page.
• November 16, 1965. Typescript; 2 pages. Accompanied by separate page of performance notes in ink; one page.

• Letters from Pol Mule
  • December 4, 1965. Typescript; one page.
  • July 25, 1966. In ink; one page.
  • [undated] In ink; 3 pages.

• Atlanta Memorial Arts Calendar. Atlanta Symphony Orchestra performance February 27, 1969 and March 2, 1969.

• Program notes by John Schneider, Music Department, Georgia State College.

• Newspaper articles.

Folder 10 Motivations pour piano
27 items

• Timeline. In ink; 3 pages.
• Ad. Les grandes concerts de la Sorbonne. Lucienne Dumont, piano. May 10 [no year].
• Motivations pour piano. Title page printed on vellum paper.

Folder 11  Le marcheur solitaire
17 items
• Timeline. In ink; one page.

Folder 12  
*Conversations pour douze instrumentistes*  
16 items

- Timeline. In ink; one page.
- Letter. ?
- Program notes. Typescript; one page.

Folder 13 Original folders for Dossier Nº 1.

Series 2: Dossier Nº 2

Box 1 [cont.]

Folder 14 Dossier No. 2 – Sommaire. In ink; one page.

Folder 15 Improvisations pour contrebasse.
27 items
- Program. The New Music Circle presents An Afternoon with Bertram Turetzky, contrabassist. St. Louis, MO. March 15, 1970.
- Program. Walker Art Center and Schubert Club present three concerts featuring Bertram Turetzky. April 15, 1972.
- Program. The first national bass workshop sponsored by the Los Angeles Bass Club. July 3 [no year].
- Program note with correction in red ink. One page.
- Program notes. Typescript; one page. French
- Program notes. Typescript; one page. English.
- Program notes. In ink; one page. English.
Folder 16  
*Animations pour piano.*

23 items

- Timeline. In ink; one page.
- Letter. From Eugene Kurtz to SACEM. September 26, 1972. Typescript; one page.
- Program. SMU Meadows School of the Arts. February 3, 1974.
• Program notes and biography. Typescript; one page. French.

Folder 17  
Three songs from Medea. Version soprano dramatique et orchestra (Voir I). 1 item
• Timeline. In ink; one page.

Folder 18  
Ça…diagramme pour orchestra. 22 items
• Timeline. In ink; one page.
• Kennedy, Mary E. “Eugene Kurtz, American Composer Living in France.” Typescript; 6 pages.
• “An analysis of the formal structure of ‘Ça… Diagramme pour orchestre’ (1971-72) by Eugene Kurtz.” Typescript; 5 pages.
• Program notes. In ink and typescript; one page.
• Performance note. On The University of Michigan School of Music stationary. Typescript; one page.


**Folder 19**

*Le derniere contrebasse a Las Vegas*

15 items

- Timeline. In ink; one page.
- Press release by Francis Crociata, Director of Public Relations. October 16, 1975. Typescript; one page.

Folder 20  
*Mécanique pour orchestra*  
3 items  
• Timeline. In ink; one page.  

Folder 21  
*Logo I, Logo II, Logo III.*  
8 items  
• Logo I and III timeline. In ink; one page.  
• Timeline Logo II. In ink; one page.  

Folder 22  
*Five-sixteen, Time and time again, From time to time, The broken world, ICARE*  
2 items  
• Timeline. In ink; 2 pages.  
• Program note for ICARE. Written by Goodman, Craig. Typescript; one page.

Folder 23  
Original folders for Dossier Nº 2.

**Series 3: Dossier Nº 3**

**Box 1 [cont.]**

Folder 24  
*Autobiographie.*  
4 items  
- “Biographie” and “Comandes.” Typescript; 4 pages. French.

Folder 25  Chansons
2 items
- “Minutage Chansons E.K.” Typescript; one page.

Folder 26  Elysian Fields
9 items
- Notes written by Eugene Kurtz? In ink; 2 pages.
- Contract. Miss Jean Cooper and la Société des Editions Jobert. Typescript; one page.
- Miss Jean Cooper’s address on scrap of paper.
- Projected earnings. One page in ink and one page in pencil.

Folder 27  Musiques de film
1 item

Folder 28  Le Gisant
15 items
- “Le Gisant Musique de Eugene Kurtz.” In ink; one page.
- “Avis de credit” Radiodiffusion-télévision Française. Typescript.
- Letter. From Eugene Kurtz to Suzanne Menard. December 1, 1965. Typescript; 1 page
• Letter. From Eugene Kurtz to Suzanne Menard. November 12, 1965. Typescript; 1 page
• Letter. From Eugene Kurtz to Hélène Strassova. September 23, 1965. Typescript; 1 page
• Notes in pencil on Société Général envelope
• Contract. “Contrat d’édition No1 œuvres musicales.” Typescript; 5 pages.
• “Convention Compositeurs.” Typescript; 3 pages. French.

Folder 29  Le Dernier Saut
21 items
• “Entre les soussignes” Typescript; 3 pages. French.
• Letter. From Unknown [Jobert?] to S.A.C.E.M. September 8, 1970. Typescript; one page.
• Newspaper clipping. “Complicité provisoire.” Photo with caption.
• Cover of Une semaine de Paris Pariscpe” may 13-19, 1970.
• Letter. From unknown to S.A.C.E.M. September 22, 1970. Typescript; one page.
• Ledger. In ink; one page.

Folder 30 Original folders for Dossier Nº 3