

LOUIS SIEGEL COLLECTION

Special Collections 2003.2

RUTH T. WATANABE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

SIBLEY MUSIC LIBRARY

EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

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DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTION

Shelf location: M3B 2,3-4

Extent: 4 linear feet

Biographical Sketch



*Photograph from publicity circular,
from Louis Siegel Collection, Box 7, Folder 2.*

Louis Siegel (b. April 6, 1886; d. June 23, 1955), a native of Indiana, began studying the violin at the age of six. He worked for several years with a Mr. Schliewen of Indianapolis, and subsequently with Ovide Musin in New York City. On Musin's recommendation, the eleven-year-old Siegel moved to Belgium with his mother and enrolled in the conservatory at Liège. During his years there, Siegel garnered the school's most prestigious awards and, perhaps most significantly, attracted the attention of Eugène Ysaÿe. Siegel spent the five years following his graduation as a protégé of Ysaÿe, taking lessons from the master and performing as soloist under Ysaÿe's baton in concert halls across Europe. Subsequently, he spent two years studying with Otakar Ševčík and another year studying with Pablo Casals in Spain. The First World War, in which Siegel served as an agent for the U.S. Intelligence Department, put an end to Siegel's burgeoning concert career. To avoid utter financial ruin following the war, Siegel returned to Rochester, where his parents were resident, and embarked on a career as a pedagogue. Despite several offers of

faculty positions, including that of the founding chairmanship of the Eastman School of Music's violin department, Siegel never affiliated himself with an educational institution. Rather, he taught violin and music interpretation in Buffalo, Ithaca, Ann Arbor, Detroit, New York City, and Rochester until his death in 1955. He also continued to perform occasionally, the most notable series of concerts being his 1929 tour of Czechoslovakia. Siegel composed several dozen instrumental works, including the score for Sibley Watson, Jr.'s art film "Lot in Sodom." Although none of Siegel's compositions appear to have been published, his will specified provisions under which they were to have been recorded.

Provenance

The Louis Siegel Collection was the gift of Mr. Siegel's great niece, Linda Gordon (Newport, Rhode Island), in June, 2002.

Scope and Content

The Louis Siegel Collection comprises the personal and professional papers of the violinist and composer Louis Siegel (1886-1955). The bulk of the collection consists of manuscript sketches—in various states of completion, ranging from sketches to final scores—for at least two dozen of Siegel's compositions, none of which, apparently, were ever published. Other items in the collection document Siegel's career as a concert violinist in the early decades of the twentieth century, during which he performed widely in the northeastern United States as well as in France, Germany, and Eastern Europe. Programs and press reviews in a variety of languages are preserved herein, along with Siegel's personal mementos. Finally, the Louis Siegel Collection contains personal and professional correspondence between Siegel and various other performers, including Pablo Casals.

Restrictions and Use

The donor of the Louis Siegel Collection placed no restrictions upon the use of its materials; reproduction of the contents will, however, be provided to patrons only in accordance with the provisions of the United States Copyright Law (1976) and its revisions.

Associations

Louis Siegel was a close associate of the celebrated young Rochester violinist David Hochstein, whose papers are preserved in the Sibley Music Library. In addition, as an adopted native son of Rochester, notices of Siegel's activities appear in the Sibley Music Library's Rochester press scrapbooks.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

The Louis Siegel Collection has been organized into two major series: compositions, and personal papers. These series are further subdivided as described below.

Series 1: Compositions

This body of materials consists of music manuscripts and manuscript sketch materials created by Louis Siegel. Roughly a third of the items in this series are complete compositions that can be identified by title; the remaining items, however, have been classified in this collection as “miscellaneous” or “unidentified” material, even though individual pages may carry identifications. The orchestration of Siegel’s compositions, where specified, is almost exclusively for instrumental ensemble or for solo instrument with piano.

Series 2: Personal Papers

The following categories of items are subsumed under the rubric Personal Papers: personal and professional correspondence; concert programs from Siegel’s performances; photographs of Siegel and other musicians; critical reviews of Siegel’s performances culled from national and international serials; and a variety of memorabilia including decorative sashes presented to Siegel during his concert tour of Central and Eastern Europe.

INVENTORY

Series 1: Compositions

Box 1

- folder 1 American Scenes sketches. Manuscript in pencil. Three spiral-bound notebooks of music.
- folder 2 American Scenes sketches. Manuscript in pencil. Three spiral-bound notebooks of music.
- folder 3 Bach prelude transcriptions. Manuscript in pencil. Prelude No. 16 in G minor, 6 pp. of music. Prelude in B-flat minor, 14 pp. of music.
- folder 4 Blue Serenade sketches. Manuscript in pencil. Three notebooks of music.
- folder 5 Carpenter, John Alden. Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. New York: G. Schirmer, 1939. 46 pp. Inscribed to Louis Siegel by the composer.
- Cadenza to Carpenter concerto. Manuscript in pencil. 8 pp. of music.
- folder 6 Debussy, Claude. The Dance of Puck. Transcribed for violin and piano by Louis Siegel. Manuscript in ink (8 pp.) and manuscript facsimiles (27 pp.).
- folder 7 Debussy, Claude. The Dance of Puck. Orchestrated by Louis Siegel. Manuscript in pencil. 19 pp. of music.
- folder 8 Funeral March sketches. Five notebooks of music.

Box 2

- folder 1 Funeral march sketches. Three notebooks of music.
- folder 2 Funeral March sketches. 18 quarto notebooks of music.
- folder 3 Incidental music for Hamlet. Sketches.
- folder 4 Jazzprovisation. Sketches. 8 quarto notebooks of music.
- folder 5 Mauve Serenade. For orchestra. Manuscript score in pencil (33 pp.) and manuscript reproduction short score (15 pp.)
- folder 6 Mauve Serenade. Manuscript reproduction short score. 25 pp. of music.
- folder 7 Musette en Rondeau. Manuscript in ink (11 pp.); manuscript reproduction (9

pp.); sketches (2 notebooks).

- folder 8 Musette en Rondeau. Sketches. 1 notebook of music.
- folder 9 Music type materials. "For use in making dummies [sic]"
- folder 10 My Golden Dream. For voice and piano. Manuscript in ink. 2 pp. of music.
- folder 11 Nocturne. Sketches of beginning material. 1 notebook.

Box 3

- folder 1 Rivers and Rails. Sketches. 6 notebooks.
- folder 2 Rivers and Rails. For orchestra. Score. Manuscript in pencil. 22 pp. of music.
- folder 3 Rivers and Rails. Piano version. Sketches. 2 notebooks.
- folder 4 Thrush. Sketch copy. 1 notebook.
- folder 5 The Trap Drummer. For orchestra. Manuscript score (15 pp.); sketches.
- folder 6 The Trap Drummer. Second version. Sketches.
- folder 7 Xmas Chant. Sketches. 7 quarto notebooks.
- folder 8 Unidentified instrumental parts. 9 notebooks.

Box 4

- folder 1 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 2 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 3 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 4 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 5 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 6 Circus. Sketches.
- folder 7 Circus Finale: Victory. Sketches.

Box 5

folder 1 Unidentified scores.
folder 2 Unidentified sketches.
folder 3 Unidentified manuscripts.
folder 4 Unidentified manuscripts.
folder 5 Unidentified manuscripts.
folder 6 Unidentified manuscripts.
folder 7 Unidentified manuscripts.

Box 6

folder 1 Unidentified sketches.
folder 2 Unidentified scores.
folder 3 Unidentified scores.
folder 4 Unidentified scores.

Series 2: Personal papers

Box 7

folder 1 Programs (ca. 1906-38)
folder 2 Photographs
folder 3 Violin information and correspondence
folder 4 Original reviews (domestic)
folder 5 Original reviews (foreign)
folder 6 Original reviews (foreign and domestic)
folder 7 Transcriptions/translations of foreign reviews
folder 8 Transcriptions/translations of foreign reviews

folder 9 *The Saturday Evening Post*

folder 10 Scrapbook

folder 11 Baton

folder 12 Wanda Chambliss LP recording

Box 8

folder 1 Biographies, Obituaries

folder 2 Miscellaneous papers

folder 3 Reviews: Lot in Sodom (film)

folder 4 Correspondence: H. L. Watson

folder 5 Correspondence: Pablo Casals (photocopies)

folder 6 Correspondence: Composition-related

folder 7 Correspondence: Tour-related

folder 8 Correspondence: Mr. and Mrs. John Alden Carpenter

folder 9 Correspondence: Miscellaneous

folder 10 Correspondence: Miscellaneous

Box 9

folder 1 Mementos

folder 2 Mementos

loose items Five commemorative taffeta sashes