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Music Division**

Guide to the

Walter Trampler papers

1904-2005

JPB 13-19

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, August 2013

Summary

Creator: Trampler, Walter

Title: Walter Trampler papers, 1904-2005

Size: 13.02 linear feet (36 boxes)

Source: Donated by Ruth Sumners Trampler in 2011.

Abstract: Walter Trampler (1915-1997) was an American violist of German origin. One of the defining figures of his instrument, he performed with the Beaux Arts Trio; the Budapest, Juilliard, and Guarneri String Quartets; and was a founding member of the New Music String Quartet. He was also a renowned teacher. His papers document his life and career, mainly from the early 1950s to the mid-1990s. They contain correspondence, photographs, concert programs, scrapbooks, subject files, clippings, promotional material, a file on Trampler's memorial service, and Trampler's annotated and autographed scores.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required. Inquiries regarding audio/visual materials in the collection may be directed to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound (rha@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

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Preferred citation: Walter Trampler papers, JPB 13-19. Music Division, New York Public Library.

Processing note: Physical processing consisted of foldering, arranging, and boxing papers, and boxing concert programs, photo albums, scrapbooks, and scores.

Creator history

Walter Trampler (1915-1997) was an American violist of German birth. He was taught by his father, and attended the Akademie der Tonkunst in Munich until 1934. Trampler made his debut as a violinist in Munich in 1933, playing Beethoven's concerto; his debut as a violist was in Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in Berlin in 1935. He was first solo violist with the Deutschlandsender radio network from 1935 to 1938.

In 1939, Trampler emigrated to the United States, where he was a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1942 to 1944. Later, he performed with the symphony and opera orchestra of the City Center in New York from 1946 to 1948. He was a founding member of the New Music String Quartet, which was active from 1947 to 1956. Other chamber groups he performed with over the years included the Budapest, Juilliard and Guarneri String Quartets, and the Beaux Arts Trio. From 1969 to 1994, he was a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

As a soloist, Trampler gave about 40 premiere performances, including works by Hans Werner Henze, George Perle, Vincent Persichetti, Luciano Berio, Marc Neikrug, and Simon Bainbridge. He recorded the Mozart and Brahms quintets with the Budapest Quartet, as well as the Brahms piano quartets with the Beaux Arts Trio. He also made solo recordings of works by Riegger, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. Trampler played a viola built especially for him by Samuel Zygmuntowicz, an instrument noted for its beautiful sound.

Trampler taught generations of violists who went on to become noted musicians themselves. He served on the faculties of the Juilliard School, the Peabody Conservatory, the Yale School of Music, Boston University, the New England Conservatory, and the Mannes College of Music. He died in Nova Scotia in 1997.

Source:

Watson Forbes and Dennis K. McIntire. "Trampler, Walter." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed July 23, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/28263>.

Scope and content note

The Walter Trampler papers document the violist's life and career, mainly from the early 1950s to the mid-1990s. They contain correspondence, photographs, concert programs, scrapbooks, subject files, clippings, promotional material, a file on Trampler's memorial service, and Trampler's annotated and autographed scores. Content dating from after Trampler's death was compiled by his widow, Ruth Sumners Trampler.

Correspondence is divided into two folders of General Correspondence and folders containing letters from particular individuals or groups of people. General Correspondence includes the composers William Walton, Ralph Shapey, Simon Bainbridge, Charles Eakin, Wanda Bacewicz, and Luciano Berio, whose letters discuss the performance or commissioning of their works. Also present in the General files are letters from Pablo Casals, Benny Goodman, Peter Schickele, Josef Suk, Lady Bird Johnson, and Roslyn Carter. The first folder of General Correspondence contains a detailed list of the correspondence, compiled by Ruth Sumners Trampler. Other correspondence folders hold letters from György Ligeti, letters and greeting cards from Trampler's students, and letters of thanks or congratulations from friends and colleagues.

The Memorial and Condolence files document the memorial service for Trampler held at Alice Tully Hall on March 19, 1998. They contain correspondence with memorial participants, guests, Lincoln Center staff, and others regarding the planning of the service, as well as obituaries and letters of condolence received by Ruth Sumners Trampler.

Photographs are divided into personal and professional files. The volume of personal files of photographs is far greater than that of the professional files. Personal files contain family photographs dating from Trampler's childhood in Germany to late in his life, and come in albums and as loose

photographs. Loose photographs are in four card file boxes which are arranged by subject (usually locations of family or personal travels). Box five also contains photographs of the New Music String Quartet's last tour of Europe in 1956.

Professional photographs hold performance and publicity shots of Trampler as soloist and with the various ensembles he performed with, as well as informal photographs with colleagues, including the Budapest and New Music String Quartets, Jaime Laredo, Sharon Robinson, Ani Kavafian, Morton Gould, Alexander Schneider, and Mitch Miller. They date from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Trampler's professional files contain a folder of correspondence with Simon Bainbridge, who wrote several pieces for Trampler; a biographical file on Trampler; clippings; press kits; a folder of correspondence and clippings regarding the viola built for Trampler by Samuel Zygmuntowicz; and a file of writings by Trampler, mainly an essay regarding his experience performing in Poland at the time of the Solidarity protests of 1982.

The concert programs document nearly every one of Trampler's performances, either as soloist or in an ensemble, from 1956 to the mid-1990s. They are arranged by date.

The scores are in two divisions: scores bearing Trampler's performance annotations, and scores of music written for Trampler that bear autographs or notes from the composers; some of these are manuscripts.

The scores with Trampler's notes number about 130. All are published. They include solo pieces, chamber works, pieces for viola and piano or orchestra, and other instrumentations. Notations are usually restricted to the viola parts, but occasionally appear on full scores as well. Among the composers represented are Bach, Beethoven, Luciano Berio, Ernest Bloch, Brahms, Benjamin Britten, Max Bruch, Dvořák, Fauré, Morton Feldman, Vivian Fine, Peggy Glanville-Hicks, Handel, Hindemith, György Ligeti, Bohuslav Martinu, Darius Milhaud, Mozart, George Perle, Vincent Persichetti, Walter Piston, Max Reger, Wallingford Riegger, Schubert, Schuman, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Telemann, Verdi, Villa-Lobos, Vivaldi, and Carl Maria von Weber.

The autographed scores number about 30, and hold works by Hugh Aitken, Larry Austin, Henry Brant, Simon Bainbridge, Frederick Delius, Vivian Fine, Ivo Jirásek, Harold Knapik, Vincent Persichetti, Daniel Pinkham, Gene Raskin, Alan Shulman, Carl Spannagel, William Walton, Ben Weber, and Richard Wernick. Works in manuscript form include Robert Mann's *Sonatina for Solo Viola*, and a full score for Harold Knapik's ballet, *Electra*.

The scrapbooks are in two divisions, personal and professional. The personal books hold photographs and documentation of Trampler's birth and early childhood, as well as his parents' house guestbook. The professional scrapbooks, of which there are four, all document the work of the New Music String Quartet in the 1950s. They contain clippings, photographs, and programs.

The collection holds audio and visual components. The audio portion consists of vinyl discs, open-reel tapes, and cassette tapes. The discs include 11 test pressings of the New Music String Quartet, and commercially-released vinyl recordings by the New Music String Quartet, the Juilliard Ensemble, and the Budapest String Quartet. The open-reel tapes hold recordings of Trampler performing works by Johan Vanhal, Henry Brant, Reger, Hindemith, Shostakovich, Berio, and Larry Austin.

Among the cassettes are 181 tapes of Trampler performing as a soloist, in chamber groups, or with orchestras, dating from the 1970s to the 1990s. Featured composers include J.S. Bach, Simon Bainbridge, Bartók, Beethoven, Berg, Berlioz, Brahms, Britten, Cage, Debussy, Dvořák, Haydn,

Hindemith, Kodály, Ernst Levy, Milhaud, Mozart, Mark Neikrug, Hall Overton, Vincent Persichetti, Walter Piston, Schoenberg, Gunther Schuller, Ralph Shapey, Shostakovich, Shumann, Vivaldi, and Richard Wilson.

Also present are six cassette tapes of interviews of Trampler dating from 1988 to 1993; 23 tapes of performances by Trampler's students; 18 tapes of the violist William Primrose; and 21 tapes of performances by other violists.

The visual portion of the collection includes three undated reels of 16mm film of Trampler; six undated VHS videotapes of a Trampler master class; four VHS tapes of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center on the PBS program Live From Lincoln Center, dating from 1981 to 1989; one VHS tape of Trampler on CBS Sunday Morning in 1994; one VHS tape of the Contemporary Chamber Players rehearsing Ralph Shapey's Variations for Viola with Trampler (dating from 1970); and one VHS tape of a 1996 performance by Trampler at Rutgers University.

Inquiries regarding audio/visual materials in the collection may be directed to the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound (rha@nypl.org). Audio/visual materials will be subject to preservation evaluation and migration prior to access.

Arrangement

The papers are arranged alphabetically by file title. File contents were not altered from Ruth Sumner Trampler's arrangement.

Key terms

Subjects

Chamber music
Viola

Occupations

Musicians
Violists (instrumentalists)

Names

Bacewicz, Wanda.
Bainbridge, Simon, 1952-
Beaux Arts Trio
Berio, Luciano, 1925-2003
Budapest String Quartet
Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
Eakin, Charles, 1927-
Guarneri Quartet
Juilliard String Quartet
Knapik, Harold
Ligeti, György, 1923-2006
Mann, Robert, 1920-
New Music String Quartet
Shapey, Ralph, 1921-2002
Trampler, Walter
Walton, William, 1902-1983

Special formats

78 rpm records
Audiocassettes

Black-and-white photographs
Clippings (information artifacts)
Color photographs
Commercial correspondence
Long-playing records
Moving images
Personal correspondence
Photograph albums
Press kits
Programs (documents)
Scores
Scrapbooks
Tape reels
Videotapes

Container list

Correspondence

- b.1 f.1-2 General, 1962-1997
- b.1 f.3 Ligeti, György, 1962-1995
- b.1 f.4 Students, 1989-1997
- b.1 f.5 Thank-You Notes and Congratulations, 1950s-1970s
- b.1 f.6 Xuerab, Pierre-Henri, 1981-1998
- b.2 f.1-4 Memorial and Condolences, 1997-2005

Photographs

Personal

- b.3 f.1-3 1900s-1950s
- b.4 1930s-1950s
- b.5 1950s-1980s
- b.6 1950s-1980s
- b.7 1950s-1980s
- b.8 1950s-1980s
- b.9 1970s
- b.10 1970s-1990s
- b.11 f.1 1980s-1990s
- b.11 f.2-3 Professional, 1950s-1990s

Professional Files

- b.11 f.4 Bainbridge, Simon, 1982-1994
- b.12 f.1 Biographical File, 1946-1996
- b.12 f.2-3 Clippings, 1950s-1990s
- b.12 f.4 Press Kits, 1960s-1990s
- b.12 f.5 Viola Commission, 1996
- b.12 f.6 Writings, ca. 1983

Programs

- b.13 1956-1968
- b.14 1968-1972
- b.15 1973-1978
- b.16 1973-1978
- b.17 1979-1981
- b.18 1979-1981
- b.19 1982-1984
- b.20 1982-1984
- b.21 1985-1987
- b.22 1985-1987
- b.23 1988-1989
- b.24 1990s

Scores

- b.25 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.26 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.27 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.28 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.29 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.30 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.31 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.32 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.33 Annotated by Trampler, 1950s-1990s
- b.34 Autographed by Composer and Manuscripts, 1950s-1990s
- b.35 Autographed by Composer and Manuscripts, 1950s-1990s

Scrapbooks

- b.12 f.7-8 Personal, 1904-1933, 1950s
- b.36 Professional, 1951-1956