



The New York Public Library Music Division

Guide to the

Éva Gauthier collection of published scores

circa 1905 - 1958

JPB 13-29

Summary

Creator: Gauthier, Eva, 1885-1958

Title: Éva Gauthier collection of published scores

Date: circa 1905 - 1958

Size: 20.0 linear feet (80 boxes)

Abstract: Éva Gauthier (1885-1958) was a Canadian-American vocalist best known for her performances of contemporary music and her associations with George Gershwin, Igor Stravinsky, and other composers. Her collection of published scores documents her vast repertoire, musical interests, and versatility.

Preferred citation: Éva Gauthier collection of published scores, JPB 13-29. Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: English

Related Materials:

Éva Gauthier papers, JPB 13-29.

Creator History

Josephine Éva Phoebe Gauthier (1885-1958) was a Canadian-American vocalist best known for her performances of contemporary music, as well as her associations with George Gershwin, Igor Stravinsky, and other composers. She was born in Ottawa, Ontario, and began studying piano, harmony, and voice as a child.

In 1902, at age 17, she travelled to Europe for further study and to launch her career. She trained in Paris under the voice teachers Auguste-Jean Dubulle and Jacques Bouhy. Gauthier performed as a contralto at first, but expanded her range to include the soprano and coloratura registers, though she became known primarily as a mezzo-soprano.

By 1905, she had toured the United Kingdom and Canada with the famed singer Dame Emma Albani, who publically endorsed Gauthier as her successor. She toured Europe as a soloist for a few years before her 1909 opera debut in Pavia, Italy. The following year, Gauthier was scheduled to premiere in Britain with the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, but was replaced at the last minute. She resigned from the company and never attempted to perform opera again.

After the Covent Garden incident, Gauthier moved to Java, Indonesia, to live with her future husband, Frans Knoote, with whom she had a son named Evan. She stayed for four years, learning the music of Java and studying with a Gamelan orchestra (Gauthier may have been among the first classically trained western artists to do so). She also toured other countries in the region and performed recitals in China at a time when western classical music was rarely heard there.

Gauthier left Indonesia for New York when the First World War started. She began performing annually at Aeolian Hall, and a recital there in 1917 proved to be her breakthrough. She sang works of Stravinsky and Ravel, after which Stravinsky chose Gauthier to debut all his concert vocal compositions; she quickly became known for her associations with contemporary composers, who regularly submitted new works for her to perform.

Through the 1920s, Gauthier toured North America and Europe with a piano accompanist (usually Celius Dougherty), and occasionally performed with orchestras. She became attracted to jazz at that time, and in November 1923, at her annual Aeolian Hall recital, became the first classical musician to perform songs of Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, and George Gershwin (accompanied by the composer). The program also included music by Schoenberg, Milhaud, Bartok, and Hindemith, and proved to be historic; it directly led to Gershwin's own premiere at Aeolian Hall a few months later, when he debuted his *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra.

Gauthier took a hiatus from performance in the late 1920s because of health and financial issues, but resumed her career from 1931 to 1937, after which she retired to concentrate on teaching private students and giving master classes. She maintained a presence in the arts and music scene of New York, attending performances of her students and other vocalists; she was also a founding member of the American Guild of Musical Artists, and served on its board of governors.

In her final years, Gauthier wrote articles about her life and career for *The Musical Record* and *Musical Courier*, and also wrote for radio. She died in New York on December 20, 1958.

Source: "Éva Gauthier, mezzo-soprano and voice teacher (1885-1958)." Library and Archives Canada, accessed June 13, 2019. <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/gramophone/028011-1009-e.html>

Scope and Content Note

The Éva Gauthier collection of published scores contains a huge variety of music for piano and vocalist that demonstrates Gauthier's vast repertoire, musical interests, and versatility. The scores include work by composers from the Western canon such as Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, and Fauré, as well as by 20th century composers, including Henry Cowell, Carlos Chavez, George Gershwin, Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Charles Ives, Elliott Carter, Paul Hindemith, Béla Bartók, Ned Rorem, and John Duke. Also present is music by many lesser-known composers, as well as arrangements of traditional songs. Most of the scores do not have annotations. Although the vast majority of the music is published, there are manuscripts present from composers (none well-known), or for arrangements of traditional songs (the arranger unidentified). A set of compositions, titled "A Garland of Songs for Éva Gauthier", was compiled by an unknown friend.

Arrangement: The scores are arranged by composer.

Key Terms

Subjects

Music -- United States -- 20th century

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Scores (documents for music)

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Gauthier, Eva, 1885-1958

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