



The New York Public Library  
Music Division

Guide to the

**Correspondence and scores belonging to Carlos Chavez**

1907-1979

JOB 93-4

## Summary

**Creator:** Cha\_vez, Carlos, 1899-1978

**Title:** Correspondence and scores belonging to Carlos Chavez

**Date:** 1907-1979

**Source:** This collection was a gift from the composer's daughter, Ana Chávez in September 1993. It complements her previous gifts to the Music Division of Chávez's music manuscripts.

**Abstract:** This collection partly documents Chávez's career as a conductor, composer, and as a leading musical figure in Mexico.

**Access:** Some collections held by the Dance, Music, Recorded Sound, and Theatre Divisions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. For general guidance about requesting offsite materials, please consult:  
<https://www.nypl.org/about/locations/lpa/requesting-archival-materials>

**Conditions Governing Use:** For permission to copy or publish please contact the Music Division.

**Preferred citation:** Correspondence and Scores Belonging to Carlos Chávez, JOB 93-4, Music Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

**Language of the Material:** Correspondence mostly in English with several in French, and a few replies in Spanish English

**Processing note:** Robert Kosovsky.

### Related Materials:

The bulk of Carlos Chavez's papers resides in the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico City. Chavez's music manuscripts are cataloged individually and may be found in the online catalog CATNYP:  
<http://catnyp.nypl.org>.

## Creator History

Carlos Chávez was born June 13, 1899, in Calzada de Tacube (near Mexico City). As a child he studied piano with Pedro Luis Ogazon, and harmony with Juan B. Fuentes and Manuel Ponce. He was already composing elaborate works in his teens. In 1922-23 he traveled in France, Austria, and Germany, and became acquainted with modern musical developments. He returned briefly to Mexico where he introduced works of contemporary composers, among them Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Varese. From 1926-28 he lived in New York City, returning in 1928 to create the Orquesta Sinfónica de Mexico. (In 1949 it was renamed Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional.) From 1928-35 Chávez was the director of the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, and was general director of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes from 1946 to 1952. Chávez published his *Toward a New Music* (New York: Norton, 1937). His second book, *Musical Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961) was an outgrowth of his Charles Eliot Norton lectures, given at Harvard University in 1958-59. Carlos Chávez died on August 2, 1978, in Mexico City.

### **Scope and Content Note**

This collection offers a partial view of Chávez's career as the leading musical figure in Mexico -- as conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Mexico and as a composer. The correspondence contains letters from Béla Bartók, Leonard Bernstein, Nadia Boulanger, Aaron Copland, Rudolf Firkusny, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky and Edgard Varèse. The many letters from Copland are particularly fascinating as they reveal a friendship based on mutual respect and concern for each others' lives. Nearly all scores are inscribed by their composers, and in several cases (particularly those by Varèse) Chávez's conductor-markings are entered in red pencil. Holograph scores by Orbón, Revueltas, and Ponce are included. Most of Chávez's holograph musical scores and sketches are located in the Music Division of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. They are cataloged individually in CATNYP, the library's online catalog (<http://catnyp.nypl.org>).

**Arrangement:** This collection is arranged in two series. Series 1 contains correspondence, arranged alphabetically by sender. Series 2 contains published and unpublished scores that were presented to Chávez. Detailed and individual cataloging for each of these scores may be found in CATNYP, the New York Public Library's online catalog. For convenience, author and title listings are included here and are arranged alphabetically by composer.

### **Key Terms**

#### **Names**

Cha\_vez, Carlos, 1899-1978  
Barto\_k, Be\_la, 1881-1945  
Bernstein, Leonard, 1918-1990  
Boulanger, Nadia  
Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990  
Firkus\_ny\_, Rudolf, 1912-1994  
Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974  
Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971  
Vare\_se, Edgard, 1883-1965

## Container List

### Series 1: Correspondence

- f. 1 **Bartók, Béla, 1881-1945. Letter to Otto Mayer-Serra 1944 March 30.**  
[MAI-17882] (3 leaves (1 letter, 1 article).)  
Includes *Relation between rural folkmusic and contemporary Hungarian art music* [article], originally published as *Musica popular y culta en Hungria* in *Nuestra Música*1, no. 1 (March 1946), 14-19.
- f. 2 **Bernstein, Leonard, 1918-1990. Letters to Carlos Chávez,. 1952-1964**  
[MAI-17883] (3 leaves, 1 envelope (3 letters from Bernstein).)
- f. 3 **Boulanger, Nadia. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez,. 1949-1974**  
[MAI-17884] (Association des Amis de Lilli Boulanger)  
In French, English and Spanish. Also contains material relating to the Association Des Amis de Lili Boulanger.
- f. 4 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez;  
correspondence with Ana Chávez 1973 November - 1979 March**  
[MAI-17885] (11 leaves, 4 envelopes.)  
Correspondence from November 1, 1973 to June 26, 1977: 5 letters from and 2 letters to Copland. From August 5, 1978 to March 1, 1979: 3 letters from and 1 letter to Copland from Ana Chávez.
- f. 5 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1968 April 4  
- 1972 June 27**  
[MAI-17886] (10 leaves, 5 envelopes (8 letters from and 1 letter to Copland).)
- f. 6 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1960  
October 13 - 1964 February 19**  
[MAI-17887] (13 leaves (8 letters from and 4 letters to Copland).)
- f. 7 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1955 June  
13 - 1959 June 1**  
[MAI-17888] (12 leaves (6 letters from and 5 letters to Copland).)
- f. 8 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1944 July  
11 - 1954 December 9**  
[MAI-17889] (10 leaves (10 letters from Copland).)
- f. 9 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez [1937] -  
1943 April 2**  
[MAI-17890] (15 leaves (9 letters from and 4 letters to Copland).)
- f. 10 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez [1934] -  
1936 December 11**  
[MAI-17891] (19 leaves (10 letters from and 2 letters to Copland).)
- f. 11 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez [1932] -  
1933 December 16**  
[MAI-17948] (16 leaves (8 letters from and 2 letters to Copland).)
- f. 12 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez [1930] -  
[1931] December 26**  
[MAI-17951] (13 leaves (5 letters from Copland).)
- f. 13 **Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez [1928] July  
18 - [1929] December 5**  
[MAI-17952] (18 leaves (9 letters from and 1 letter to Copland).)

Series 1: Correspondence (cont.)

- f. 14 Firkusny, Rudolf, 1912-. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1965 October 14 - 1968 August 31  
[MAI-17954] (5 leaves (3 letters from and 2 letters to Firkusny).)  
In English, French, and Spanish.
- f. 15 Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974. Letter to Carlos Chávez 1930 April 15.  
[MAI-17971] (1 leaf.)
- f. 16 Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1940 June 10 - 1952 March 1  
[MAI-17972] (12 leaves, 1 envelope (10 letters and 1 note from and 1 letter to Stravinsky), 2 programs.)  
In English and French. Programs: *The Rake's Progress* (Sante Fe Opera, 1962), and Orquesta Sinfonica de Mexico, August 1940 (Stravinsky program conducted by the composer). Both are inscribed and signed by Stravinsky.
- f. 17 Varèse, Edgard, 1883-1965. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1927 August 20 - 1960 July 30  
[MAI-17973] (11 leaves (8 letters from and 2 letters to Varèse).)  
In English and French.
- f. 18 Varèse, Edgard, 1883-1965. Correspondence with Carlos Chávez 1921 February-1926 September 22  
[MAI-17974] (13 leaves, 1 photograph (12 letters from Varèse).)  
In English, French and Spanish. Contains photocopy made by Chávez of letter dated July 14, 1925. Photograph inscribed, signed and dated by Varèse February 1921.

Series 2: Scores

- f. 19 *Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974. [Symphonies, no. 10] Xe symphonie, Paris: Heugel c1961.*  
[MAI-17975] (Miniature score (160 p.); 19 cm.)  
Inscribed by Milhaud on t.p.: Au cher grand Carlos Chavez - souvenir de Paris, 1962.
- f. 20 *Orbón, Julián, 1925-. [Cánones retrógrados] n.d.*  
[MAI-17976] (4 p. of ms. music; 35 cm.)  
Holograph in pencil; for piano. Inscribed to Carlos Chavez.
- f. 21 *Orbón, Julián, 1925-. String quartet no. 1 for 2 violins, viola and cello. New York: Southern Music Pub. Co. c1959.*  
[MAI-17977] (Miniature score (32 p.); 23 cm.)  
Inscribed to Carlos Chavez.
- f. 22 Ponce, Manuel M. (Manuel María), 1882-1948. [Piano music. Selections (sketches)] 1910-1914  
[MAI-17978] (16 p. of ms. music; 33 cm. or smaller.)  
Holographs in pencil and ink. Partial contents: Berceuse (1909) -- El Riego (April 20, 1908) - Canciones Mexicanas -- Petit prélude (December 13, 1907).
- "Classmark">JOB 92-60 *Prokofiev, Sergey, 1891-1953. [Semero ikh. Polyglot] 19--*  
[MAI-17986] (1 ms. score (47 p.); 42 cm.)  
For tenor solo, chorus and orchestra. French, English and Spanish words. Photoreproduction of hand-copied score. Text by C. Balmont [Balmont, Konstantin Dmitrievich, 1867-1942].

Series 2: Scores (cont.)

- f. 23 *Revueltas, Silvestre, 1899-1940. [Quartets, strings, no. 1]* 1930 June 21.  
[MAI-17979] (13 p. of ms. music; 36 cm.)  
Holograph in ink.
- f. 24 *Shostakovich, Dmitrii Dmitrievich, 1906-1975. [Symphonies, no. 7, op. 60]*  
*Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykalnoe Izdatelstvo* c1942.  
[MAI-17980] (1 score (177 p.); 31 cm.)  
Inscribed to Carlos Chavez and dated 12.IV.1943, Moskva. See: "Shostakovich presents a copy of his seventh symphony to Mr. Carlos Chavez" in: *Boletín de la Orquesta Sinfónica de México* 1943, 10-18.
- f. 25 *Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. [Pribaoutki. French and Russian] Genève: Ad. Henn* c1917.  
[MAI-17981] (1 score (22 p.); 19 x 28 cm.)  
Texts translated into French by C. F. Ramuz.
- f. 26 *Varèse, Edgard, 1883-1965. Intégrales : for small orchestra and percussion. London: J. Curwen and Sons Ltd.* c1926.  
[MAI-17982] (1 score (47 p.); 31 cm.)  
Inscribed to Carlos Chavez, signed by Varèse and dated N.Y., 20.IX/1926.
- f. 27 *Varèse, Edgard, 1883-1965. Octandre* 1923 December 25.  
[MAI-17983] (1 photostat score (18 p.) + 8 ms. parts; 34 cm.)  
Photostat of holograph with conductor's markings by Chavez in red and blue pencil. Inscribed to Carlos Chavez and signed by Varèse and dated N.Y., Mars 1924.
- f. 28 *Varèse, Edgard, 1883-1965. Offrandes : for voice and chamber orchestra. Boston: C. C. Birchard* c1927.  
[MAI-17984] (Score (13, 14 p.); 33 cm.)  
Chanson de Là-haut / poème de Vicente Huidobro -- la croix du sud / poème de José Juan Tablada. Inscribed to Carlos Chavez and signed by Varèse. Related names: Huidobro, Vincente, 1893-1948; Tablada, José Juan, 1871-1945.