Summary

Creator: Wolff, Christian, 1934-

Title: Christian Wolff papers

Date: 1947-2017

Size: 13.37 linear feet (35 containers)


Abstract: Christian Wolff (born 1934) is an American composer and literary scholar closely associated with John Cage, Morton Feldman, David Tudor, Earle Brown, Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Lucier, Cornelius Cardew, and other mid- to late-20th century modernists. The Christian Wolff papers, dating from 1947 to 2015, document his music and professional life, primarily through scores and letters. The collection also holds programs, clippings, and writings by Wolff and others.

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 Access:

Audio and video recordings are unavailable pending digitization.


Language of the Material: Multiple languages English and German.

Processing note: Processed by Matthew Snyder, 2018.
Creator History

Christian Wolff (born 1934) is an American composer and literary scholar closely associated with John Cage, Morton Feldman, David Tudor, Earle Brown, Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Lucier, Cornelius Cardew, and other mid to late-20th century modernists.

Born in France, Wolff moved with his family to New York City in 1941, where they settled in Washington Square. A year later, his parents, Helen and Kurt Wolff, founded Pantheon Press, which published Joseph Campbell, the first English translations of Carl Jung, and other progressive European texts. Christian received no extended formal training in music, but his parents were well-immersed in the classical tradition. Kurt was the son of a professional musician who knew Johannes Brahms, a composer whom the young Kurt had met at the funeral of Clara Schumann.

After Helen and Kurt took Christian to the Tanglewood Music Festival in 1948, where he heard works composed by Viennese modernists Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, he became increasingly drawn to new types of musical composition. He immersed himself in the back issues of New Music, a journal published by the American composer Henry Cowell, where he was exposed to the first published scores of John Cage, Lou Harrison, and other American experimental composers. Via Henry Cowell, the teenage Wolff was put in touch with John Cage, 21 years Wolff's senior, who offered lessons to Wolff and brought him into the circle of artists with whom he became closely associated. This included Gordon Mumma and Merce Cunningham, with whom Wolff collaborated frequently.

Beginning in the 1960s, Wolff's interest in socialism drew him closer to iconoclastic composers such as Frederic Rzewski and Cornelius Cardew. At the same time, Wolff began teaching Classics, first at Harvard (1962-1970) and then at Dartmouth (1971-1999). He also published extensively on Greek tragedy, with a particular focus on Euripides. All of Wolff's music is published and his music has been recorded commercially by over ten different record labels.

Scope and Content Note

The Christian Wolff papers, dating from 1947 to 2015, document the composer's music and professional life, primarily through scores and letters. The collection also holds programs, clippings, and writings by Wolff and others.

Series I, Scores, presents Wolff's compositions from every stage of his career, mainly in the form of notes, sketches, and drafts, but also including some fair copies.

The letters in Series II are from such figures as John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, Merce Cunningham, Robert Ashley, Cornelius Cardew, David Tudor, Gordon Mumma, Eddie Prévost, Barbara Monk Feldman, John Ashbery, Peter Garland, and John Tilbury, among many others. Some files have return correspondence. The letters often discuss the music of Wolff and other composers, as well as professional matters.

Series III, Programs and Clippings, offers a comprehensive account of performances of Wolff's music from throughout his career, as well other events attended by Wolff. Some of the clippings that accompany the programs contain interviews with Wolff.

Series IV, Library, holds writings and scores authored or composed by Wolff's friends and associates, as well as Wolff's own writings. The writings include Wolff's essays on music in the form of edited manuscripts, as well as interview transcripts. Other authors featured here are Hans G. Helms, James
Tenney, and Alvin Lucier. The scores include teaching material by John Cage, and music by Robert Ashley, Earle Brown, Malcolm Goldstein, György Kurtág, and Gordon Mumma, among others.

The collection includes 245 audio and video recordings. Dating from 1952 to 2017, they consist of studio recordings, public performances, workshops, lectures, and interviews. Many are radio productions. Compositions featured in the recordings include *Burdocks*, the *Exercises* series, *For One, Two, or Three People*, and the *Peace March* series. Some live recordings feature Wolff as a performer.

**Key Terms**

**Subjects**
Avant-garde (Music)
Music -- United States -- 20th century
Music -- United States -- 21st century

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**
Clippings (information artifacts)
Letters (correspondence)
Programs (documents)
Scores
Writings (documents)

**Occupations**
Composers
Musicians.

**Names**
Cage, John
Rzewski, Frederic
Wolff, Christian, 1934-
Series I: Scores 1947-2015 (15 containers 5.21 linear feet)

The Scores, which represent Wolff's music at every stage of his career, are arranged in roughly chronological sequence. The earliest are for works dating from the late-1940s, and the most recent composition is from 2015. A list of most of Wolff's compositions and their instrumentations, found on his faculty website at Dartmouth College, is available as an added resource in the archival portal. Within this finding aid, only compositions that do not appear on that list have descriptions of instrumentation.

The music (in both notated and prose/narrative form) appears as notes, sketches, drafts, fair copies, and, in some cases, published scores. Not all compositions are represented in all these forms. Some have only sketches and drafts, some have only fair copies, and some have everything from sketches to published copy. Most, however, have sketches and drafts, and a smaller number have fair copies. Published copies are present for only a few of the compositions. Many works have explanatory notes by Wolff regarding history of the composition or performance directions and suggestions.


Also present are untitled sketches and orphan score pages; these can be found at the end of the series. Wolff's Library in Series III holds scores by other composers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 1</td>
<td>Juvenalia 1947-1950</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contains La Grièche D'Hiver and other short piano pieces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 2</td>
<td>Madrigals 1950-1951, 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 3</td>
<td>Duo for Violins 1950</td>
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<td>b. 1 f. 4</td>
<td>String Trio 1950</td>
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<td>b. 1 f. 5</td>
<td>Serenade 1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 6</td>
<td>Duo for Two Flutes 1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 7</td>
<td>For Prepared Piano 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 8</td>
<td>Trio I 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 9</td>
<td>Nine 1951, 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 10</td>
<td>For Magnetic Tape 1952</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 11</td>
<td>No Title 1952</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For twelve instruments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 7 f. 1</td>
<td>For Piano I 1952, 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 12</td>
<td>For Piano II 1953</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 13</td>
<td>Suite I 1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 14</td>
<td>Score for Unrealized Tape Piece 1954</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contains notes by Earle Brown.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 15</td>
<td>For Piano with Preparations 1954-1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 16</td>
<td>Duo for Pianists I 1957</td>
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<td>b. 1 f. 17</td>
<td>Sonata 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1 f. 18</td>
<td>Duo for Pianists 1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 1</td>
<td>For Six Players 1959</td>
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</table>
Series I: Scores (cont.)

b. 2 f. 2  For Pianist 1959
b. 2 f. 3  Music for Merce 1959
b. 3 f. 1  One circa 1960
b. 3 f. 2  Suite III for Horn and Piano 1960
b. 3 f. 3  Duet I 1960
b. 3 f. 4  Duo for Violinist and Pianist 1961
b. 3 f. 5  Summer 1961
b. 3 f. 6  For One or More Pianos 1961
b. 3 f. 7  Trio II 1961, 1967
b. 3 f. 8  Duet II for Horn and Piano 1962
b. 3 f. 9  Duo for Pianists I 1962
b. 3 f. 10  For Five or Ten Players 1962
b. 3 f. 11  Round 1962
b. 3 f. 12  In Between Pieces 1963
b. 3 f. 13  Septet 1964
b. 3 f. 14  For One, Two, or Three People 1964, 1988
b. 3 f. 15  Quartet 1965
b. 3 f. 16  Duet III 1966
b. 2 f. 4  Electric Spring 1966-1967, 1970
b. 3 f. 17  Toss circa 1967-1968
b. 3 f. 18  Pairs 1968
b. 3 f. 19  Realization of Cornelius Cardew’s Schooltime Compositions 1968
b. 3 f. 20  Play 1968-1969
b. 3 f. 21  Tilbury I-III 1969
b. 2 f. 5  Snowdrop 1970
b. 3 f. 22  Burdocks 1970-1971
b. 3 f. 23  Variations (Extracts) On the Carman’s Whistle Variations of Byrd 1972
b. 3 f. 24  Accompaniments 1972
b. 3 f. 25  Lines 1972
b. 2 f. 6  Prose Pieces 1973
b. 3 f. 26  Changing the System 1973-1974
b. 3 f. 27  Exercises 1-14 1973-1974
b. 3 f. 28  Song for the Rock Band (Heimlicher Kufmarsch) 1974
b. 3 f. 29  String Quartet Exercises Out of Songs 1974-1976
b. 3 f. 30  String Bass Exercise Out of Bandiera Rossa 1974-1976
b. 2 f. 7  Studies 1974-1976
b. 4 f. 1  Exercises 15-18 1975
b. 4 f. 2  Wobbly Music 1975-1976
b. 4 f. 3-4  Bread and Roses 1976
Two versions: one for solo violin, the other for piano.

b. 2 f. 8  Freedom 1976
Text by Sugiarti Siswodi.
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<th>Series I: Scores (cont.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 5-6 <strong>Dark as a Dungeon</strong> 1977</td>
<td>Two versions, one for trombone and contrabass, the other for clarinet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 7 <strong>Death of Mother Jones</strong> 1977</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 8 <strong>Cello Song Variation</strong> 1978</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 9 <strong>Braverman Music</strong> 1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 10 <strong>Stardust Pieces</strong> 1979</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 11 <strong>Hay Una Mujer Desparecida</strong> 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 12 <strong>Exercise 19 (Harmonic Tremors) and Exercise 20 (Acres of Clams)</strong> 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 13 <strong>Preludes 1-11</strong> 1980-1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 14 <strong>Exercise 21</strong> 1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 15 <strong>Exercise 22</strong> 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 16 <strong>Isn’t This A Time</strong> 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 9 <strong>Eisler Ensemble Pieces</strong> 1983</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 10 <strong>Piano Song</strong> 1983</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 11 <strong>For Cornelius</strong> 1983</td>
<td>For saxophone quartet.</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 17 <strong>Peace March 2</strong> 1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 12-13 <strong>Peace March 4 Instrumental Exercises</strong> 1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 2 f. 14 <strong>Bowery Preludes</strong> 1985-1986</td>
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<td>b. 2 f. 15 <strong>Long Peace March</strong> 1986-1987</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 18 <strong>Peace March I</strong> 1983-1984</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 19 <strong>Peace March 3 (The Sun Is Burning)</strong> 1984</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 20 <strong>I Like To Think Of Harriet Tubman</strong> 1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 21 <strong>Piano Trio</strong> 1985</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 22 <strong>Bowery Preludes</strong> 1985-1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 23 <strong>Black Song Organ Preludes</strong> 1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 4 f. 24 <strong>Exercise 24</strong> 1986</td>
<td>Contains a description only, no score.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 10 f. 1 <strong>Exercise 25 “Liyashiswa”</strong> 1986</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 24 <strong>For Morty</strong> 1987</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 24 <strong>Digger Song</strong> 1988</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 25 <strong>From Leaning Forward</strong> 1988</td>
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<td>b. 4 f. 26 <strong>Peace March I and II Snare Drum and Exercises 26-27</strong> 1988</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 1 <strong>Variation on Morton Feldman's Piano Piece</strong> 1952 1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 5 f. 2 <strong>From Leaning Forward</strong> 1988</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 3 <strong>Emma</strong> 1988-1989</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 4 <strong>Malvina</strong> 1989</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 5 <strong>Mayday</strong> 1989</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 6 <strong>Rosas</strong> 1989-1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 5 f. 7 <strong>Eight Days A Week Variation</strong> 1990</td>
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<td>b. 5 f. 8 <strong>Rukus</strong> 1990-1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 5 f. 9 <strong>Ich Den Hungrigen Dein Brot</strong> 1991</td>
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Series I: Scores (cont.)
b. 5 f. 10  Look She Said 1991
b. 5 f. 11  Jasper 1991
b. 5 f. 12  Kegama 1991
b. 5 f. 13  Ruth 1991
b. 5 f. 14  For Si 1992
b. 5 f. 15  Malvina for Two Violins 1992
b. 5 f. 16  Tuba Song 1992
b. 5 f. 17  Peggy 1993
b. 5 f. 18  Six Melodies Variation 1993
b. 5 f. 19  Flutist and Guitarist 1993
b. 5 f. 20  Merce 1993
b. 5 f. 21  Ain't Gonna Study War No More 1993
b. 5 f. 22  Exercise X 1993
b. 5 f. 23  Sketches
b. 11 f. 4  Full Score
b. 5 f. 24  Two Pianists 1993-1994
b. 5 f. 25  Or Four People 1994
b. 5 f. 26  Memory 1994
b. 5 f. 27  Aarau Songs 1994
b. 6 f. 1   Responsibility 1994
b. 6 f. 2   Percussionist Songs 1994-1995
b. 6 f. 3   En Plus (Satie) Variation 1995
b. 6 f. 4   Bratislava 1995
   Spring 1995
b. 6 f. 5   Sketches
b. 11 f. 1  Full Score
b. 11 f. 2  Pieces for Julius 1995
b. 6 f. 6   Well, Well, Cornelius by Howard Skempton 1996
   Arranged by Christian Wolff for bass clarinet, bassoon, harp, violin, and viola.
b. 6 f. 7   Untitled 1996
b. 6 f. 8   Tilbury 5 1996
b. 6 f. 9   Two Players 1996-1997
b. 11 f. 3  Violist and Percussionist 1996-1997
b. 6 f. 10  Keyboard Miscellany 1997
   Includes sketches of thirteen pieces (numbered, without titles), with fair copies of numbers 2 through 13.
b. 6 f. 11  Violist Pieces 1997
b. 6 f. 12  Untitled 1997
   "To Howard Skempton On His 50th Birthday."
b. 11 f. 5  Pulse 1998
b. 6 f. 13  Melodies One and Two for Melodica 1998-1999
Series I: Scores (cont.)

2. Ghent Song 1999
3. Pebbles 1999
4. Mosaic Trio 2000
5. Borås 2000
7. Fall I and II 2000
8. Fall III 2000
9. Cello Suite Variation 2000
10. Exercise 28 and Zither Spieler 2000

A notebook with sketches for both works.

11. Zither Spieler 2000
12. Pianist Pieces 2001
13. She Had Some Horses 2001
14. 70 (Or More) For Alvin 2001
15. Fragment 2001
17. Balancing 2002
18. Apartment House Exercise 2002
19. Peace March 8 2002
20. Touch 2002
21. Moving Spaces 2002
22. Peace March 9 2003
23. John Heartfield (Peace March 10) 2003
24. Percussionists (and) Flutist 2003
Title later changed to Flutist (with Percussionists).
25. Wesleyan Organ Song 2003
26. For E.C. 2003
27. Incidental Music 2003-2004
28. For John Ashbery’s Hoelderlin Marginalia 2004
29. Another Possibility 2004
30. One Coat of Paint 2004
31. Evening Shade, Wake Up 2004
32. Long Piano (Peace March 11) 2004-2005
33. Orchestra : Pieces 2005

Sketches

34. Full Score Reproduction
35. 37 Haiku 2005
36. Duo 6 2005
37. Microexercises 1-8, 9-22 2006
38. Trio V for James Tenney 2006
Series I: Scores (cont.)

b. 9 f. 4  Violin Quartet 2006
b. 9 f. 5  For Bob 2006
b. 9 f. 6  Quartet for Frederic, Larry, Michael, Robyn 2006-2007
b. 9 f. 7  Metal and Breath 2007
b. 9 f. 8  Duo 7 2007
b. 9 f. 9  Nocturnes 2007
b. 9 f. 10 Grete (Microexercises 23-36) 2007
b. 9 f. 11 Nocturnes, Duo 7, and Toccata 2007
b. 12 f. 2  Quodlibet 2007
b. 9 f. 12 Short Piece for Melodica 2008
b. 9 f. 13 Duo 8 2008
b. 9 f. 14 Basel 2008
b. 9 f. 15 For Two Violinists, Violist, and Cellist 2008
b. 9 f. 16 String Trio for Robert Ashley 2008-2009
b. 9 f. 17 Duo 9 2008-2010
b. 13 f. 1  Quintet for Merce 2009
b. 13 f. 2  For A Harp Player 2009
b. 13 f. 3  Rhapsody 2009
b. 13 f. 4  Music for Bertold Brecht, "The Exception and the Rule" 2009-2010
b. 13 f. 5  Accordionists 2010
b. 13 f. 6  Small Duos 2010
b. 13 f. 7  Duo 10 (Summer Days) 2010
b. 13 f. 8  Robert 2010-2011
b. 12 f. 3  Spring Two 2011
b. 13 f. 9  Exercises 29 and 30 2011
b. 13 f. 10 Exercise 31 2011
b. 13 f. 11 Song (For Six) 2011
b. 13 f. 12 Spring Two and Spring Three 2011
b. 13 f. 13 Ashbery Madrigals 2012
b. 13 f. 14 Santa Fe 2012
Individually, Collective 2012
b. 13 f. 15 Sketches
b. 12 f. 4  Full Score
b. 14 f. 1  Dijon 2012
b. 14 f. 2  For A Medley 2012
b. 14 f. 3  Exercise 32 2012
b. 14 f. 4  Merce Notes (Exercise 33) 2012
b. 14 f. 5  Trust 2012
b. 14 f. 6  For Björn Nilsson 2013
For celesta.
b. 14 f. 7  Octet (Brass players and a Violinist) 2013
Series I: Scores (cont.)

b. 14 f. 8   Going West 2013
b. 14 f. 9   Bass Drum Duo 2013
b. 14 f. 10  Winter Exercise 2013
b. 14 f. 11  One Cellist 2013
b. 14 f. 12  Pete (In Memoriam Pete Seeger) 2014
b. 14 f. 13  Hands & Others 2014
b. 14 f. 14  Sailing By 2014
b. 14 f. 15  Banjo Player 2015
b. 14 f. 16  Motto 1950s-2010s
   For keyboard and snare drum.

Series II: Letters 1950s-2013 (4 containers 1.67 linear feet)

The letters and correspondence in the collection illustrate the depth of Wolff’s interests and connections with a cross-section of composers, musicians, and artists. One portion of the letters is arranged chronologically and consists primarily of incoming mail. The other portion is filed by writer, and in some cases holds return correspondence from Wolff. Letters filed under Wolff’s name are outgoing only. Some letters in this series are in German.

Writers and correspondents include the composers John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, Gordon Mumma, Robert Ashley, Cornelius Cardew, Barbara Monk Feldman, Aki Takahashi, Larry Polansky, David Tudor, Pauline Oliveros, Howard Skempton, Tomomi Adachi, Gerhard Stäbler, Erik Ulman, and Urs Peter Schneider; choreographer Merce Cunningham; the musicians Eddie Prévost, John Tilbury, and Martin Ingenhütt; the composer, writer, and publisher Peter Garland; the poet John Ashbery; and Björn Nilsson, owner of the Swedish label Mode Records.

With the exceptions of John Cage, Frederic Rzewski, and Björn Nilsson, there is not a large amount of letters from any one figure. The Cage letters date from the mid-1950s to 1988. In addition to originals, there are copies and transcriptions of Cage-Wolff correspondence. Cage’s letters are friendly and describe events in his and Merce Cunningham’s lives, both personal and professional. Some discuss philosophical ideas, and his and Wolff’s music, as well as that of other composers. Also present is correspondence between Cage and Helen Wolff (Wolff’s mother) regarding Cage’s piece 4’33”; Cage defends it from Helen’s criticism and explains his intentions in composing it.

Correspondence with Frederic Rzewski is over a longer period (54 years) than with any other figure in the collection. Most of those letters, however, date from the 2000s and consists of printed email exchanges.

The Björn Nilsson correspondence mainly discusses recording projects on which Nilsson and Wolff collaborated.

Wolff took notes on the contents of his letters, listing correspondents, years, and number of letters. These can be found at the end of the series.
Series II: Letters (cont.)

b. 17 f. 8  Cardew, Cornelius 1969-1976
b. 17 f. 9  Cunningham, Merce 1959-1995
b. 17 f. 10 Dahinden, Roland 1991-1998
b. 17 f. 11 Feldman, Morton 1955-1973
b. 17 f. 12 Flynt, Henry 1964, 2006-2008
b. 17 f. 13 Garland, Peter 2000-2006
   Includes an article by Garland about James Tenney.

b. 17 f. 16 Kagel, Mauricio 1962-1968
b. 17 f. 17 Lucier, Alvin 1967-2000
b. 17 f. 18 Marley, Brian 1999-2000
b. 18 f. 1  Newman, Chris 2001-2012
b. 18 f. 2  Nilsson, Björn 1988-2010
b. 18 f. 3  Oliveros, Pauline 1972, 1994
b. 18 f. 4  Parsons, Michael 1986-2013
b. 18 f. 5  Philip, Thomas 1967-1970
b. 18 f. 7-8  Rzewski, Frederic 1958-2012
b. 18 f. 9  Schwertsik, Kurt 1966-1985
b. 18 f. 10  Skempton, Howard 1974, 1998-1999
b. 18 f. 11  So, Mark 2007-2010
b. 18 f. 12  Stockhausen, Karlheinz 1963, 1969
b. 18 f. 13  Tilbury, John 1969-2009
b. 18 f. 14  Tudor, David circa 1957-1989
b. 18 f. 15-18  Wolff, Christian 1989-2013
   All outgoing letters.

b. 18 f. 19  Notes on Letters 2010s
   Wolff’s inventory and notes on letters in his papers.

Series III: Programs and Clippings 1950s-2010s (15 containers 6.25 linear feet)

This series holds a comprehensive set of programs documenting performances of Wolff’s music from throughout his career. The number of programs expanded from the 1990s onward as such performances became more frequent. In many cases, Wolff participated in the performances. Some of the programs are accompanied by clippings discussing the concert or event; these may contain brief interviews with Wolff or the performers. Also present are programs for concerts or events unrelated to Wolff. Some contain Wolff’s annotations, while others may have been sent to him by friends.

b. 19 f. 1-5  1950s-1960s
b. 20 f. 1-5  1970s
b. 21 f. 1-4  1970s-1980s
b. 22 f. 1-4  1980s
Series III: Programs and Clippings (cont.)

- b. 23 f. 1-5 1990s
- b. 24 f. 1-5
- b. 25 f. 1-5
- b. 26 f. 1-4 2000s
- b. 27 f. 1-5
- b. 28 f. 1-5
- b. 29 f. 1-4
- b. 30 f. 1-5 2000s-2010s
- b. 31 f. 1-5
- b. 32 f. 1-4
- b. 33 f. 1-2

Series IV: Library 1950-2013 (5 containers 1.58 linear feet)

This series holds writings and scores authored or composed by Wolff's friends and associates, as well as Wolff's own writings.

Wolff's writings consist of essays on music, interview transcripts, and recommendation letters. They are comprised of typed manuscripts (or reproductions), most of which are annotated or have edits. The longest of these is "Experiments in Music Around 1950 and Some Consequences and Causes (Social-political and Musical).” Shorter pieces include "On Verbal Notations” and notes on Wolff's compositions Prose Collection and Burdocks.

Also present are typed notes on Wolff's colleague Cornelius Cardew, and notes on John Cage's composition Apartment House 1776. There are three interview transcripts, ranging from 9 to 19 pages. One is derived from a public conversation with Wolff, Stephen Chase, and Clemens Gresser at the 2002 Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, while the other two are one-on-one interviews. The recommendation letters are for students and colleagues, and include Wolff's own Senior Faculty Grant Proposal for the winter of 1993.

The writings also include work by the composer/critic Hans G. Helms, the composer James Tenney, the composer/poet Jackson Mac Low, and the composer Alvin Lucier. These are published items which were sent or gifted to Wolff (the latter are inscribed to Wolff). Some are in German. The pamphlet from Yoko Ono (who was associated with John Cage's circle) and John Lennon advertises an Ono-Lennon event in Coventry, England.

The scores are a mixture of manuscripts, manuscript reproductions, and published copies. Most are gifts inscribed to Wolff. The John Cage manuscripts are instructional material written for Wolff's lessons with him in 1950 or 1951; these also bear Wolff's annotations. Other composers represented here include Robert Ashley, Earle Brown, Morton Feldman, Malcolm Goldstein, György Kurtág, Gordon Mumma, Frederic Rzewski, Howard Skempton, Yoji Takahashi, and La Monte Young.

Writings

- b. 33 f. 3 Helms, Hans G circa 1973
  Contains an article (in German) about Wolff's music.
- b. 33 f. 4 Lucier, Alvin 1988, 1996
  Contains Notes in the Marquis, a memoir of a 1965 John Cage concert at Brandeis University.
- b. 33 f. 5 Mac Low, Jackson 1995
  Contains a paper about John Cage's writings.
- b. 33 f. 6 Metzger, Christoph 2000s
- b. 33 f. 7 Ono, Yoko, and John Lennon 1968
  Contains a pamphlet advertising an event, 'John' - 'Yoko', in Coventry, England.
- b. 33 f. 8 Prynne, J.H 2011
  Contains an extended essay, Kazoo Dreamboats, or, On What There Is, with a letter from Prynne.
Series IV: Library (cont.)

Writings (cont.)

b. 33 f. 9  
Tenney, James 1980  
Contains a monograph, A History of 'Consonance' and 'Dissonance', with a letter from Tenney.

Wolff, Christian

b. 33 f. 10  
Lecture notes.

b. 33 f. 11  
*Experiments in Music Around 1950 and Some Consequences and Causes (Social-Political and Musical)* 2003  
An annotated typescript.

b. 33 f. 12  

b. 33 f. 13  
Notes on Cornelius Cardew 1972

b. 33 f. 15  
*Notes on John Cage’s Apartment House 1776* 1970s-2000s

b. 33 f. 15  
*Notes on Prose Collection and Burdocks* 1977

b. 33 f. 16  
*On Verbal Notations* 2009

b. 33 f. 17  
Written for students and colleagues for academic positions, and grants. Also contains Wolff’s own Senior Faculty Grant Proposal.

b. 33 f. 18  
Incomplete Notes and Drafts 1960s-2010s

Scores

b. 34 f. 1  
Ashley, Robert 1962  
*Details for Two Pianists.*

b. 34 f. 2  
Barnard, Geoffrey 1971  
*Music of Diverse Sounds*

b. 12 f. 8  
Includes a piano reduction of *Indices for Chamber Orchestra* (manuscript reproduction), and an inscribed reproduction of *Folio*.

b. 35 f. 1  
Cage, John 1950-1951  
Contains instructional material created for Wolff’s lessons with Cage, and Cage’s notes on *Music for Changes*.

b. 35 f. 2  
Feldman, Morton 1959  
A reproduction of *Last Pieces*, inscribed to John Cage, and given to Wolff by Cage in the 1960s.

b. 34 f. 3  
Gaburo, Kenneth 1974  
*Privacy Two: ---My, My, My, What A Wonderful Fall---.*

b. 34 f. 4  
Gibson, Jon 1972  
“30s”

b. 34 f. 5  
Goldstein, Malcolm 1996  
*A Short Song For Christian.*

b. 34 f. 6  
Kurtág, György 1997-2013  
Published copies of Kurtág’s music, and copies of manuscripts.

b. 34 f. 7  
*5 Songs Without Words, un bucado de tango del primer libro de los desaparecidos, and Eleven Note Pieces & Decimal Passacaglia.* All published or copies, given to Wolff by Mumma.

b. 10 f. 3  
Newman, Chris 2009-2010  
Piano Sonatas 8B and #15. Copies of manuscripts.

b. 34 f. 8  
Patterson, Ben 1960  
*Paper Piece.*
b. 34 f. 9 Persson, Mats 2004

70 Variations for Christian, inscribed to Wolff.

b. 35 f. 3 Phillips, Tom 1966-1971

Four Pieces for John Tilbury, Music For N Players, Lesbia Waltz, And Peas, all published.

b. 34 f. 10 Polansky, Larry 2007

Christian Music I.

b. 34 f. 11 Prévost, Eddie 1967

Spirals.

b. 34 f. 12 Rzewski, Frederic circa 1957, 1972, 2011

Includes Coming Together (a manuscript copy, inscribed by Rzewski); a Wolff manuscript with notation by Rzewski; and a transcript of an interview of Rzewski.

b. 34 f. 13 Schnebel, Dieter 1989

Marsyas, with an essay by Wolff on the piece.

b. 34 f. 14 Shim, Kunso 1999

Long Life, Happy Birthday, written for Wolff.

b. 34 f. 15 Skempton, Howard 1984, 2014

Oculus and Cakes and Ale.

b. 34 f. 16 So, Mark 2007, 2010

Contains poetry and one composition by So, and an essay by So, Composition - Scores and Structure After 4'33".

b. 35 f. 4 Takahashi, Yoji 1973

Sailing The Seas Depends On The Helmsman.

b. 34 f. 17 Wolf, Dan 1995

Figure & Ground.

b. 34 f. 18 Young, La Monte 1960-1961

Several scores, some in prose, given to Wolff by John Cage.

b. 35 f. 5 Unidentified 1954, 2002

One is marked as "JC's copy."

Series V: Audio and Video Recordings 1952-2017

The collection includes 245 audio and video recordings. Dating from 1952 to 2017, they consist of studio recordings, public performances, workshops, lectures, and interviews. Many are radio productions. Compositions featured in the recordings include Burdocks, the Exercises series, For One, Two, or Three People, and the Peace March series. Some live recordings feature Wolff as a performer.

Audio and video recordings are unavailable pending digitization.