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Music Division

Guide to the

Stefan Frenkel papers

ca. 1860s, 1914-1970 (bulk 1914-1970)

JPB 11-2

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, April 2011

Summary

Creator: Frenkel, Stefan, 1902-1979

Title: Stefan Frenkel papers, ca. 1860s, 1914-1970 (bulk 1914-1970)

Size: 4.34 linear feet (16 boxes, 1 other item)

Source: Donated by Lotte Frenkel in 2007.

Abstract: The papers of the violinist Stefan Frenkel are primarily composed of scores for music by Frenkel and by other composers, many with Frenkel's performance notes. They also contain scrapbooks, clippings, photographs and programs.

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

Copyright information: For permission to publish, contact the Chief, Music Division, The New York Library for the Performing Arts.

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Custodial history

Collection has remained with Frenkel's widow since his death in 1979.

Processing note

Processing of the collection mainly consisted of rehousing fragile music scores, sorting Frenkel's music and arrangements from those of other composers, and ordering the scores.

Creator history

Stefan Frenkel was born in Warsaw, Poland on November 21, 1902 (or 1905; his family is unsure of the year). In Warsaw, Frenkel studied violin with his uncle, Maurice Frenkel. He then studied with Adolf Busch and Karl Flesch in Berlin at the Hochschule für Musik from 1919 to 1921. Frenkel was Concertmaster of the Dresden Philharmonic from 1924 to 1927. He was active in contemporary music, giving premieres of works by Suk and Hindemith. He was a close friend of Kurt Weill, and gave the premiere performances of Weill's Concerto for Violin, Op. 12. Other composers Frenkel knew and

whose music he performed included Karol Rathaus, Alexandre Tansman, Jerzy Fitelberg and Arthur Schnabel. After the rise of the Nazis, Frenkel left for Switzerland, where he became concertmaster of L'Orchestra de la Suisse Romande in Geneva. In 1936, Frenkel moved to New York City, where he became Principal Concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera from 1936 to 1940. He became a US citizen in 1944. Frenkel became best known for his violin arrangement of Mack the Knife and other music from Kurt Weill's Threepenny Opera. Later, he was Concertmaster at the Santa Fe and Rio de Janeiro Operas in off-seasons. From 1964 to 1968, Frenkel taught violin at Princeton University. He died in New York on March 1, 1979.

Sources:

"Stefan Frenkel, at 73; Ex-Met Concertmaster." The New York Times, March 5, 1979, B11.

"Metropolitan Opera Orchestra Principal Musicians," accessed April 4, 2011,
http://www.stokowski.org/Principal_Musicians_Metropolitan_Opera.htm

Scope and content note

The Stefan Frenkel papers date from 1914-1970. They mainly consist of published and unpublished scores for Frenkel's compositions and arrangements, and for music by other composers. Frenkel's arrangements include music by Jerzy Fitelberg, Heinz Teissen, Karol Rathaus, Kurt Weill, and by standard repertoire composers such as Vivaldi, Paganini, Handel, Beethoven, Brahms and Mozart.

Scores by other composers often have Frenkel's performance notes and, in some cases, inscriptions from the composers. These include music from standard repertoire composers such as Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, but also include 20th century figures such as Ferruccio Busoni, Paul Dessau, Jerzy Fitelberg, Karol Rathaus, Max Reger, Karol Szymanowski, Alexandre Tansman, Ernst Toch, Stefan Wolpe and Kurt Weill.

Frenkel's papers also include scrapbooks of programs and clippings; a small amount of photographs, loose clipping, programs, and correspondence; books inscribed to Frenkel; and audio recordings of Frenkel in performance, many published but some possibly unique. The recordings are all 78-rpm discs and include Frenkel performing the music of Bach, Vivaldi, Handel, Purcell, Beethoven, Karol Rathaus, Rudolph Goehr, Kurt Weill, Heinz Tiessen, Josef Suk, Rolf Schubert and Adolph Waterman. They also contain recordings of the violinist Carl Flesch at Carnegie Hall, and several discs of Bronislaw Huberman as both violinist and composer.

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

Key terms

Names

David, Ferdinand, 1810-1873

Dessau, Paul, 1894-1979

Fitelberg, Jerzy, 1903-1951

Frenkel, Stefan, 1902-1979

Goehr, Rudolph

Goldschmidt, Berthold

Metropolitan Opera (New York, N.Y.)

Rathaus, Karol, 1895-1954

Tansman, Alexandre, 1897-1986

Weill, Kurt, 1900-1950

Occupations

composers

violinists

Places

Dresden (Germany)

New York (N.Y.)

Special formats

black-and-white photographs

books

clippings (information artifacts)

personal correspondence

programs (documents)

Scores

Scrapbooks

Container list

Series I: Scores, ca. 1860s, 1918-1943

The scores are in two divisions: those for Frenkel's compositions and arrangements, and those for music by other composers. Some are in fragile condition.

Frenkel's compositions number around 50, and include works for solo violin, violin/piano sonatas and concerti, string quartets, works for solo instrument or voice with string orchestra, pieces for various combinations of strings, and violin studies. There are several untitled works which bear written identification numbers (as opposed to opus numbers). These numbers seem to have been assigned posthumously by Frenkel's son. A few untitled works have no numbers assigned, and there are several folders of untitled and unfinished sketches.

Frenkel's arrangements are usually for either solo violin or violin and piano. They include music by Kurt Weill (a published version of *Sieben Stücke nach der "Dreigroschenoper"* for violin and piano), Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Vivaldi, Paganini, Handel, Jerzy Fitelberg, Karol Rathaus and Heinze Teissen.

Scores by other composers are for violin concerti and sonatas, solo violin, string quartet, or arrangements of other works for violin. Most of the scores contain Frenkel's bowings and other performance notes; some are signed by the composers with dedicatory notes to Frenkel. In addition to standard repertoire figures (Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Handel, Mahler, Paganini, Ravel) the composers include Frenkel's contemporaries. These include Ferruccio Busoni, Paul Dessau, Jerzy Fitelberg, Rudolph Goehr, Berthold Goldschmidt, Paul Hindemith, Bronislaw Huberman, Frederick Jacobi, Philipp Jarnach, Alexander Jemnitz, Henry Jolles, Friedrich E. Koch, Nikolai Lopatnikoff, Marcel Mihalovich, Karol Rathaus, Max Reger, Max Schillings, Artur Schnabel, Karol Szymanowski, Alexandre Tansman, Heinz Tiessen, Ernst Toch, Stefan Wolpe, Kurt Weill, Henri Wieniawski, and Pantscho Wladigeroff. Composers with the most content are Fitelberg, Goehr, Mihalovici, Rathaus, Reger, Szymanowski and Tansman.

Most of these scores are published, but a few are in manuscript form, and may have been gifts from the composers. Composers with manuscript scores include Kurt Weill (the violin part and a published version of his *Violin Concerto, Op. 12*, both with Frenkel's notes), Paul Dessau, Jerzy Fitelberg, Rudolph Goehr, Berthold Goldschmidt, Karol Rathaus and Alexandre Tansman. The single Beethoven score is his *Romanze for Violin*, in a manuscript written by the 19th century violinist and composer Ferdinand David.

Frenkel compositions and arrangements, 1918-1943

Compositions

Titled

- b.1 f.1-10 A - K
- b.2 f.1-6 L- String Quartet
- b.3 f.1-9 String Quartet, Op. 2 - V

Untitled

- b.4 f.1-6 Numbered
- b.4 f.7 Unnumbered

- b.5 f.1-4 Sketches

- b.6 f.1-7 Arrangements

Other composers

Series I: Scores (cont.)

Other composers (cont.)

- b.7 f.1-8 A -D
- b.8 f.1-5 F - Goldmark
- b.9 f.1-13 Goldschmidt - L
- b.10 f.1-10 M - Rathaus
- b.11 f.1-12 Ravel - S
- b.12 f.1-4 T
- b.13 f.1-7 V - Z
- b.13 f.8 Unidentified

Series II: Papers, 1916-1970

Frenkel's papers consist of books, correspondence, clippings, photographs, programs and scrapbooks.

The books include four by the violinist Carl Flesch (with inscriptions), the program for the 14th Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1936 (containing many notes to Frenkel from the participating composers and musicians), and the score for Schönberg's Second String Quartet, with an unidentified inscription.

Frenkel's correspondence concerns his contribution of music manuscripts to the Treasury Department for auction to raise money for war bonds. The clippings mostly contains radio broadcast programs, but also includes a 1965 interview with Frenkel. Photographs contain several portraits of Frenkel dating from the teens to the 1920s, unidentified group photos, and two photographs of unidentified individuals with inscriptions to Frenkel. The programs date from the 1930s to the 1960s and, with the scrapbooks, provide a detailed overview of Frenkel's activities, especially from the 1920s to the 1940s. The scrapbooks are divided into clipping books and program books, and cover Frenkel's entire career.

- b.14 Books, 1925-1945, 1958
- b.14 f.1 Correspondence, 1943
- b.14 f.2 Clippings, 1930s-1940s
- b.15 f.1 Photographs, ca. 1916-1960s
- b.15 f.2-4 Programs, 1920s-1970
- Scrapbooks
 - Programs
 - b.15 1914-1924
 - b.16 1924-1934
 - Clippings
 - b.15 1916-1925
 - b.17 1923-1967