

**The New York Public Library
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center
Music Division**

Guide to the
George Rochberg papers, Additions
1937-2006
JPB 13-04

Compiled by Philip Heslip, February 2013

Summary

Creator: Rochberg, George

Title: George Rochberg papers, Additions, 1937-2006

Size: 7.56 linear feet (19 boxes)

Source: Donated by George Rochberg and his family in multiple accessions between 1990 and 2011.

Abstract: The George Rochberg papers, Additions document the professional activities, theoretical writings, and personal life of the American composer. Personal material includes letters to and from family members, documents, photographs, and Rochberg's sketches of his family members. Professional records comprise letters from fellow composers and academics, writings on composition and musicology, photographs, and files relating to live performances of his compositions.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photography and photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

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

Preferred citation: George Rochberg papers, Additions, JPB 13-04. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

Processing note: The initial accession of George Rochberg papers, ca. 1936-1976, is cataloged under call number JPB 86-19. In 1996, George Rochberg donated many of his manuscript scores to the New York Public Library. These are cataloged individually under call numbers JPB 98-45 and JPB 86-18.

This collection of additions were partially processed by the Music Division in the 1990s. The final arrangement and description of the collection took place in the Manuscripts and Archives Division in 2013.

Related collections

George Rochberg papers, ca. 1936-1976. JPB 86-19. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

Creator history

George Rochberg (1918-2005) was an American composer of classical music, and a music author, theorist, and educator. Born Aaron George Rochberg in Paterson, New Jersey, he served in the 261st Infantry during World War II. After the war, Rochberg studied with George Szell and Leopold Mannes at the Mannes School of Music and earned his bachelor's degree in music from the Curtis Institute of Music in 1947. He received a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1948, and soon after began teaching composition at the Curtis Institute. In the 1950s, while working for the Theodore Presser Company, Rochberg became one of the most prominent American serialist composers. Major symphony orchestras of Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh premièred many of his symphonic works, and he received numerous honors, including the 1956-1957 Guggenheim Fellowship. During the 1950s, Rochberg also published several musical treatises on twelve-tone composition. In the early 1960s, however, he became disenchanted with the strictures of serial and atonal composition that had dominated the academy. Rochberg embraced the language of tonal music and thus led the way for other academic composers to break from serial orthodoxy.

Rochberg chaired the music department at the University of Pennsylvania from 1960 until 1968 and continued as a professor there until his retirement in 1983. The year following his retirement, he published the book *The Aesthetics of Survival: A Composer's View of Twentieth-Century Music*. Rochberg continued composing and writing on music and aesthetics throughout the 1990s.

Rochberg married Gene Rosenfeld in 1941, and together they had two children, Paul and Francesca (Chessie). Paul died of a brain tumor in 1964. George Rochberg died in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, in 2005.

Scope and content note

The George Rochberg papers, along with these additions, document the professional activities, theoretical writings, and personal life of the composer. The additions are grouped into two series: Personal and Family Papers and Professional Records. The Personal and Family Papers series contain letters between George Rochberg and his wife Gene, as well as other family members; documents related to Rochberg's wife and children; photographs; and pencil and pen sketches by George Rochberg of family members. The Professional Records series consist of files documenting live performances of Rochberg's compositions, letters from fellow composers and academics, diploma and honor certificates, photographs, and writings on composition and musicology.

Arrangement

The George Rochberg papers, Additions are organized into the following series:

Series I: Personal and Family Papers, 1942-1999

Series II: Professional Records, 1937-2006

Key terms

Subjects

World War, 1939-1945 -- United States

Occupations

Composers -- United States

Music critics

Names

Anhalt, István

Bolcom, William

Briner, Andres, 1923-

Darack, Arthur, 1918-2007

Gradenwitz, Peter, 1910-2001

Kay, Ulysses, 1917-1995
Kobialka, Daniel
Rochberg, Gene
Rochberg, George
Rochberg, Paul, 1944-1964
Somers, Harry, 1925-1999

Special formats

Black-and-white photographs
Clippings (information artifacts)
Color photographs
Drafts (documents)
Manuscripts for publication
Programs (documents)
Sketches

Container list

Series I: Personal and Family Papers, 1942-1999 (2 boxes)

This series is arranged alphabetically by document genre and ordered chronologically within each section. The bulk of the Personal and Family Papers consists of letters between George Rochberg and his wife Gene throughout various separations, including his military service in France during World War II. Also present are letters to and from various family members, and a small number of documents related to Rochberg's wife and children, including poems written by Paul Rochberg. The photographs are primarily family snapshots spanning 1933 to 1949, with a few pictures taken in the 1990s. The sketches are pencil and pen drawings by George Rochberg of family members.

Correspondence

- b.1 f.1-9 Letters between George and Gene Rochberg, 1942-1964, undated
- b.1 f.10 Letters from Family and Friends, 1945-1950
- b.2 f.1-4 Family Documents, 1950-1987
- b.2 f.5-6 Photographs, 1933-1949, 1990s
- b.2 f.7 Sketches, undated
- b.18 f.10-13 Sketches, 1953-1964

Series II: Professional Records, 1937-2006 (15 boxes)

This series, which is arranged alphabetically by genre, contains files documenting live performances of his compositions (ordered by title); letters from fellow composers and academics (ordered alphabetically by name); diploma and honor certificates; photographs of live events, Rochberg with his colleagues, and professional portraits; and his writings on composition and musicology (ordered by title). Among the letter writers are Istvan Anhalt, Milton Babbitt, William Bolcom, Andres Briner, Elizabeth Gentry Colman, Aaron Copland, Luigi Dallapiccola, Arthur Darack, Aurelio de la Vega, Ernest Gold, Peter Gradenwitz, Ulysses Kay, Daniel Kobialka, William Schuman, Walter Sear, Harry Somers, John Tagliabue, and Douglas Townshend. Also present are letters to and from the Theodore Presser Company (1951-1966). The writings include drafts of his published and unpublished essays and books. Of note are the drafts of *Chromaticism: Symmetry in Atonal and Tonal Music*, a theoretical and historical exploration of composition that was posthumously published in 2012 as *A Dance of Polar Opposites*; and the notes for the unpublished book *Iconography of the Mind*, of which some drafts are located in the original George Rochberg papers accession (JPB 86-19).

Composition Performance Files

- b.2 f.8 General, 1937-1938
- b.3 f.1-3 General, 1956-1993
- b.3 f.4-37 A-S, 1949-1995
- b.4 f.1-13 S-Z, 1949-1995

Correspondence

- b.4 f.14-47 A-Br, 1948-1968
- b.5 f.1-55 Br-E, 1948-1968
- b.6 f.1-33 F-KI, 1948-1968
- b.7 f.1-47 Ko-St, 1948-1968
- b.8 f.1-14 Su-Y, 1948-1968
- b.8 f.15-16 Unidentified, undated

Honors and Diplomas

Series II: Professional Records, 1937-2006 (cont.)

Honors and Diplomas (cont.)

- b.8 f.17-18 1952-1983
 - b.18 f.1 1985
 - b.19 f.1 1985
- b.8 f.17-31 Photographs, 1933-2006
 - b.18 f.4-9 Photographs, 1998, undated
- Writings, 1949-1997
 - b.9 f.1 General, 1997, undated
 - b.18 f.2 General--Notes on Possible Works, undated
 - b.9 f.2-12 A-Be, undated
 - b.10 f.1-6 Bi-C, undated
 - b.10 f.7-9 *A Dance of Polar Opposites or Chromaticism*, 1996
 - b.11 f.1-3 *A Dance of Polar Opposites or Chromaticism*, 1996
 - b.11 f.4-11 E-H, undated
 - b.18 f.3 The Hexachord and its Relation to the Twelve Tone Row, 1956
 - b.12 f.1-9 *Iconography of the Mind: Inward Seeing and Iconic Thinking*, 1985-1986
 - b.13 f.1-9 *Iconography of the Mind: Inward Seeing and Iconic Thinking*, 1985-1986
 - b.14 f.1-2 *Iconography of the Mind: Inward Seeing and Iconic Thinking*, 1985-1986
 - b.14 f.3-7 In-Na, undated
 - b.14 f.8-10 *The New Image of Music*, 1963-1964
 - b.15 f.1-10 *The New Image of Music*, 1963-1964
 - b.15 f.11-13 No-Pr, undated
 - b.15 f.17 "Problems With Textures in Music", undated
 - b.16 f.1-4 "Problems With Textures in Music", undated
 - b.16 f.5-9 R-T, undated
 - b.16 f.10-12 University of Pennsylvania Class Notes, Research Notes, and Prospectus, undated
 - b.17 f.1-11 University of Pennsylvania Class Notes, Research Notes, and Prospectus, undated
 - b.17 f.12 Wartime Writings, 1942-1945