

Guide to the Hugo Kaun Papers, 1882 – 1980 and undated

JPB 04-5

Music Division

**The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, New York**

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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Hugo Kaun Papers
Collection ID:	JPB 04-5
Creator:	Weiss, Margaret
Extent:	2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
Repository:	Music Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Administrative Information:

Acquisition: Materials were donated from 1980-1988 by Hugo Kaun's grandson and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Harald Weiss.

Access Restrictions: Collection is open to the public

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Biography

Hugo Kaun, composer and choral conductor, was born on March 21, 1863 in Berlin, Germany. Although born into a merchant family, he composed prolifically as a youth. He studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin (1879–80) and in 1881 began a determined study of the piano with Oscar Raif. At the same time he attended the composition classes of Friedrich Kiel at the Prussian Academy of Arts. Kaun busied himself with piano teaching, composition and conducting a mixed chorus, but following his father's death in 1886, he went to the USA, settling in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where there was a large German community; while there, Kaun associated with, among others, the music theorist Bernhard Ziehn. A hand injury forced him to give up thoughts of a career as a pianist, and so he spent his years in the USA teaching, composing and directing a choral society, the Milwaukee Liederkranz. Some of his works were performed by the Chicago SO under Theodore Thomas, who was one of the early champions of Kaun's music.

Kaun returned to Berlin in 1902, and by the 1920s his fame as a composer had spread throughout German-speaking Europe. In 1912 he was elected a member of the Academy of Arts and in 1922 he joined the composition staff of the Berlin Conservatory. Kaun was a prolific composer whose output embraces most genres. Of his four neo-Wagnerian operas, *Der Fremde* (1920) was regarded as the most significant, though in the more radical cultural climate of the Weimar Republic, it quickly disappeared from the repertory, and attempts to revive it during the Third Reich faltered. Although Kaun died one year before Hitler came to power, his nationalist choral works, particularly those for unaccompanied male chorus, enjoyed great popularity throughout Germany after his death. He was out of sympathy with the modernist climate of the 1920s, and was one of a number of neo-Wagnerian composers who were espoused by the Nazis.

Hugo Kaun died on April 2, 1932 in Berlin.

Sources:

- W.D. Gudger and E. Levi: 'Kaun, Hugo', *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 23 February 2005), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Hugo Kaun (1882 – 1980 and undated) consist of correspondence, professional files (clippings, programs, and writings) and scores. Most of the letters within the collection are directed to Margaret (Putti) Weiss, Hugo Kaun's 3rd child—both Clara (Klex) and Hugo (Hucksie) consistently wrote to her during the 1920s. The scrapbook, most likely created by Margaret Weiss, contained photographs of Kaun's family and social life. Due to its perishable construction, the scrapbook was photocopied and its photographs deposited within subject related folders.

This collection does not provide insight into the development of Kaun's compositions.

Organization:

The Hugo Kaun Papers are organized in the following series:

- Series I: Correspondence, 1918 – 1935 and undated
- Series II: Professional files, 1915 – 1938 and undated
- Series III: Photographs, 1890 – 1980 and undated
- Series IV: Scores, 1906 – 1940 and undated
- Series V: Oversized, 1882 – 1915 and undated

Series Descriptions:

Series I: Correspondence, 1918 – 1935 and undated **1 box**
Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series primarily contains the letters that Margaret Weiss (née Kaun) received from her family. All of the letters are written in German.

Series II: Professional files, 1915 – 1938 and undated **.3 box**
Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series contains the clippings, ephemera and programs that reveal information on Kaun's professional life as a composer. The documents, with the exception of one clipping, are written in German. For a fully documented list of Kaun's compositions see the end pages of *Aus Meinem Leiben* (box 2 folder 8).

Series III: Photographs, 1890 – 1980 and undated **.7 box**
Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series contains the personal photographs found within the collection. The sole production photograph is of *Menandra* (1925) contained within folder 28.

Series IV: Scores, 1906 – 1940 and undated **2 boxes**
Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series primarily contains the compositions of Hugo Kaun. The other artists whose work is represented within this series are: Bernhard Kaun (Hugo Kaun's fifth child) and Erich Anders.

Series V: Oversized, 1882 – 1915 and undated **1 box**
Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series contains two oversized scores written by Hugo Kaun, as well as an oversized draft in ink of Kaun's *Harmonie—und Modulationslehre* (ca. 1915).

Box/Folder	Description
<u>Series I: Correspondence, 1918 – 1935 and undated</u> (Arrangement: Alphabetical by recipient; German language)	
Box 1	
F. 1	Ernest Weiss, 1923-1929 Ernest and Margaret Weiss (Putti)
F. 2	1923-1924
F. 3	1925-1926 Margaret Weiss (Putti) Clara Kaun (Klex)
F. 4	1923 - 1928
F. 5	1929 – 1932 (Letter concerning Hugo Kaun’s death)
F. 6	1933 - 1935 Clara and Ella Kaun
F. 7	1932 – 1933
F. 8	1935 Clara and Hugo Kaun (Klex and Hucksie, respectively)
F. 9	1923 – 1925 (Clippings and 1 photograph)
F. 10	1926 - 1931 Hugo Kaun (Hucksie)
F. 11	1924 – 1925 (Clippings)
F. 12	1926 – 1927 (Clippings)
F. 13	1928
F. 14	1929 - 1931
F. 15	Kaun family, 1923 – 1934 (Multi-correspondants for each letter; Clara (Klex), Hugo (Hucksie), Marie (Niko), Ella and Bernhard; 2 photographs and clippings)
F. 16	General, 1918 – 1932 and undated (2 letters sent to the Weifs family; 1 postcard from unidentified individual to Hugo Kaun)
<u>Series II: Professional Files, 1915 – 1938 and undated</u> Clippings	
Box 2	
F. 1	Compositions performed, 1932? (English language) German
F. 2	1924 – 1929
F. 3	1931 – 1938
F. 4	Undated
F. 5	Ephemera, undated Programs
F. 6	America, 1935 (<i>Mutter Erde</i> – Chicago Singverein)
F. 7	Germany, 1924 – 1935 (Included: <i>Kritiken uber Auffuehrungen der Oper ‘Mendandra’ von Hugo Kaun</i>)
Writings	
F. 8	<i>Aus Meinem Leiben</i> , 1932 (Autographed by Hugo Kaun to his daughter Margaret; complete list of works composed at end of book)
F. 9	<i>Harmonie—und Modulationslehre</i> , 1915 (Margaret Kaun’s signature on title page)
<u>Series III: Photographs, 1890 – 1980 and undated</u>	
F. 10	Kaun, Bernhard, ca. 1899 – 1980 (Hugo Kaun’s fifth child; composer)
F. 11	Kaun, Clara, 1940 – 1948 and undated
F. 12	Kaun, Ella, 1948 and undated (Hugo Kaun’s fourth child)
F. 13	Kaun, grandmother, undated

Box/Folder	Description
F. 14	Kaun, Hugo, 1895 – 1929 and undated (Letter written on back of one photo from Hugo Kaun to Harald Weiss, Ernest Weiss' father[?])
F. 15	Kaun, Hugo and stepsister, 1892 (Handle carefully—ferrotype photograph)
F. 16	Kaun, Hugo with friends and colleagues, 1909 – 1927 (Letter from Hugo Kaun to Emma Kaun, his mother, on back of photograph)
F. 17	Kaun, Margaret (Putti), 1899 – 1911 and undated (Martha Kaun in one photograph; Hugo Kaun's 3 rd child)
F. 18	Kaun, Marie (Niko), 1961 and undated (Hugo Kaun's 2 nd child)
F. 19	Kaun, Martha (Mutzi), 1925 and undated (Hugo Kaun's 1 st child; pictures of her husband within folder)
F. 20	Kaun children, 1899 - 1911 and undated Kaun family
F. 21	And friends, 1909 – 1953 and undated
F. 22	At home in Zehlendorf Germany, 1913 – 1940 and undated
F. 23	On board ship, 1933 and undated (Trips from and to Germany) Scrapbook, 1911 – 1961 and undated
F. 24	Part 1 of 2
F. 25	Part 2 of 2
F. 26	General, 1890 and undated
F. 27	Stobie, Jeanette, undated (Infant in picture; daughter of Bernhard Kaun)
F. 28	General, 1919 – 1931 and undated (Unidentified individuals and 1 production photograph of <i>Menandra</i>)

Series IV: Scores, 1906 – 1940 and undated

Box 3

F. 1	Anders, Erich— <i>Aus dem Kinderleben</i> (Vocal and piano score), c. 1918 Kaun, Bernard
F. 2	<i>Quintet</i> (oboe and strings), c. 1940 (5 parts: oboe, 2 violins, viola and violioncello)
F. 3	<i>Sinfonia Concertante</i> (horn solo and orchestra), c. 1940 (Contrabassi part only) Kaun, Hugo
F. 4	<i>Festmarsch: fur grosses Orchester</i> (Op. 29), undated (Arranged for 2 pianos; manuscript in ink) <i>Der Fremde: Phantastische</i> (Franz Rauch)
F. 5	Libretto, undated (Manuscript in ink)
F. 6	Piano and vocal score, c1919 (Microfilm *ZB-571 no. 6)
F. 7	<i>Menandra</i> —Opera in 3 Acts (Ferd. Janden), c. 1925 (Front cover detached—handle carefully)
F. 8	<i>Mummelmann</i> (piano score), c. 1919 (Bound autographed copy)

Box 4

F. 1	<i>Mutter Erde</i> (SATB vocal and piano score), c. 1912 (English and German text; English version arr. By M.D Calvocoressi)
F. 2	<i>Sappho: Musik-Drama in 3 Akten nach Franz Grillparzer's Trauerspiel</i> (Vocal and piano score), c. 1917
F. 3	<i>Sir John Falstaff</i> Op. 60 (Orchestra score), 1906 May (“Manuscript-Partitur” written on cover)

Series V: Oversized, 1882 – 1915 and undated

Scores

Box 5

F. 1	<i>Sonatas</i> Op. 18 (violin and piano), 1882 May (Manuscript in ink; handle carefully)
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Box/Folder	Description
F. 2	<i>Suite No. 4 Nachtgesang</i> , 1915 (Op. 92 No. 4 written on top right hand corner of first page of this orchestra score)
F. 3	Writings— <i>Harmonie—und Modulationslehre</i> , undated (Draft written in ink)