Descriptive Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Joseph Schillinger Papers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection ID:</td>
<td>JPB 86-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creator:</td>
<td>Schillinger, Joseph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent:</td>
<td>17.6 linear feet (38 boxes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repository:</td>
<td>Music Division.</td>
</tr>
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<td>The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts</td>
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Abstract

The Joseph Schillinger Papers contain the composer/theorist’s writings, composition lesson texts, student notebooks, scores, charts, personal papers, clippings and promotional material.

Administrative Information

Access

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

Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Curator, Music Division.

Preferred Citation

Joseph Schillinger Papers, JPB 86-08, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Custodial History

The Joseph Schillinger Papers were donated to the Music Division in 1966 by Frances Schillinger.

Alternate Format

Some of the scores, writings and correspondence in this collection have been microfilmed. See series descriptions for more information.

Related Collections

Joseph Schillinger Collection of Sound Recordings, *L(Special) 89-16, is held by the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound.
Biographical Note

Joseph Schillinger (born Kharkiv, Russia, 31 Aug. 1895, died New York, 23 March 1943) was a theorist, composer and teacher. He studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and was also trained in mathematics. After working in Russia as a teacher and conductor he moved to New York in 1928. There he taught in universities and took on private students, usually by mail. Schillinger developed a system of composition that reduced musical elements (and rhythm in particular) to mathematical relationships. Among the many Schillinger students were Tommy Dorsey, George Gershwin, John Lewis, Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis, Oscar Levant and Carmine Coppola. Schillinger was also associated with Henry Cowell, Leon Theremin and Lev Termen and the use of the “rhythmicon”, an electronic rhythm machine invented by Termen and Cowell. Schillinger’s own works incorporated the use of the theremin within traditional orchestrations.

Scope and Content Note

The Schillinger Papers consist of Schillinger’s music composition texts and lessons, other theoretical writings, personal papers, correspondence, clippings and promotional material, scores, posters and charts used to illustrate Schillinger’s theories. The bulk of the Papers consists of Schillinger’s writings and lessons, and the notebooks of work prepared for Schillinger by his students. Schillinger’s System of Composition makes up about half of the writings. There is also extensive correspondence to and from his students, with the exception of George Gershwin, whose correspondence is held by the Library of Congress. The scores are of Schillinger’s work and of his students, including Schillinger’s scores for theremin and orchestra. Portions of the collection have been microfilmed; see the series descriptions for more information.

Organization

The collection is organized into 6 series and 5 sub-series. The series and sub-series are:

Series I: Writings, 1929-1942 and undated
  Sub-series 1 – Schillinger System of Composition, undated
  Sub-series 2 – Other Writings, 1929-1942 and undated
Series II: Student Notebooks, 1918-1942 and undated
Series III: Personal Papers and Correspondence, 1918-1993 and undated
Series IV: Promotional Material and Clippings, 1924-2000 and undated
Series V: Scores, 1918-1938 and undated
  Sub-series 1 – By Schillinger, 1918-1935 and undated
  Sub-series 2 – By Schillinger Students, 1929-1938 and undated
  Sub-series 3 – Oversized Scores, 1918-1932
Series VI: Charts, undated
Series Descriptions

Series I: Writings, 1929-1942 and undated 15.3 boxes

Sub-series 1 – Schillinger System of Composition, undated
Sub-series 2 – Other Writings, 1929-1942 and undated

This series consists primarily of the correspondence course materials Schillinger prepared for his composition students. It is divided into two sub-series based on the organization of the papers by Schillinger himself. There is some overlap between the two sub-series, and some student coursework is integrated into the papers as well. Some original manuscripts and typescripts are present, but the majority of the series consists of photostatic negative reproductions. Portions of this series have been microfilmed.

Sub-series 1 – Schillinger System of Composition, undated 7 boxes

By Topic

Schillinger divided his course into 13 topics. Each topic contains his lessons and occasional work done by students. There may be some overlap and repetition between topics, and one, General Theory of Harmony, appears twice with different content. Portions of this sub-series have been microfilmed under call number *ZB-3578.

Sub-series 2 – Other Writings, 1929-1942 and undated 8.3 boxes

Alphabetical

This sub-series is a combination of further theory and composition topics, lectures, articles and work done by Schillinger’s students. Many of the manuscripts are a combination of text, musical examples and charts. Some of the material may be related to or a repetition of that in sub-series 1. Some of the manuscripts are in Russian. Portions of this sub-series have been microfilmed under call numbers *ZB-3605 and *ZB-3316.

Series II: Student Notebooks, 1918-1942 and undated 4 boxes

Alphabetical

This series consists of correspondence and work carried out by Schillinger’s students taking his correspondence course in composition. Some student work is also in series I. Portions of this series have been microfilmed and cataloged under call number *ZB-3314.
Series III: Personal Papers and Correspondence, 1918-1993 and undated  2 boxes

Chronological

This series includes papers documenting Schillinger’s immigration to the United States and citizenship and his correspondence with colleagues, students and friends, including Henry Cowell, Leon Theremin, and George Gershwin. Most of the George Gershwin letters are reproductions; originals are held by the Library of Congress. The correspondence in this series was previously cataloged individually by the Music Division in *MNY-Amer. Photocopies of the catalog cards are attached at the end of this finding aid.

Series IV: Promotional Material and Clippings, 1924-2000 and undated  2 boxes

Chronological

This series includes material promoting Schillinger’s correspondence course, his publications, and exhibits about Schillinger, concert programs and press clippings. See also the posters and oversized clippings in Separated Material.

Series V: Scores, 1918-1938 and undated  5 boxes

Sub-series 1 – By Schillinger, 1918-1935 and undated
Sub-series 2 – By Schillinger Students, 1929-1938 and undated
Sub-series 3 – Oversized Scores, 1918-1932

This series mainly includes music and exercises by Schillinger, most of it in manuscript form. The scores that are dated are usually from 1920-1930. Portions of this series have been microfilmed under call number *ZB-3453.

Sub-series 1 – By Schillinger, 1918-1935 and undated  3 boxes

Alphabetical

There are four categories in this sub-series: instrumental music, vocal music, sketches and exercises. Instrumental music includes Schillinger’s *First Airphonic Suite* and *Melody*, both incorporating the theremin, as well as more traditional instrumentations such as orchestra, piano, and chamber pieces. Vocal music features several poem settings and another work using the theremin. Sketches and exercises are mostly undated and contain charts in addition to music manuscripts.
Sub-series 2 – By Schillinger Students, 1929-1938 and undated 1 box

Alphabetical

Clarence Cox has the most music of all the students’ work in this sub-series. Some music and exercises by Schillinger’s students can also be found in Series I and II, but this sub-series contains music in more finished form.

Sub-series 3 – Oversized Scores, 1918-1932 1 box

Alphabetical

All the music in this sub-series is by Schillinger. It includes instrumental and vocal pieces, all in manuscript form.

Series VI: Charts, undated 10 boxes

Original arrangement

The charts in this series are rolled up, and in various sizes. They are expansions and extensions of rhythm, melody and harmony charts found in smaller form in Series I and V. Twenty-eight of the charts are sequentially numbered with tags; three of the charts have no numbers assigned. Some of the charts are in fragile condition. See also charts in Separated Material.
Series I: Writings, 1929-1942 and undated

Sub-series 1: Schillinger System of Composition, undated

General Theory of Harmony

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Fol</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 1   | 1-3 | Manuscript and Charts
|     |     | Olman, Val (Student assignments.) |
| 4   | 1-2 | Part II |
| 5   | 3-5 | Two-Part Melodization |
| 6   | 6-13| Instrumental Forms |
| 8   | 1-7 | General Theory of Harmony |
| 8   | 8-9 | Applications of General Harmony |
| 10  | 11-13| Part I |
| 10  | 16-17| Part II |
| 11  | 1-9 | Part II |

Sub-series 2: Other Writings, 1929-1942 and undated

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12 Lectures on Kinetic Art Forms, undated (Hand manuscript.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Acoustics, undated (Russian manuscript and charts.)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Forms of Regularity and Coordination, undated</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Classification of Scales; Materials on Harmony, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Composition, 1942 and undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Book I</td>
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</table>
Analysis of J.S. Bach
Students
Includes exercises and compositions prepared for Schillinger.
Evans, Alfred Lewis

Orchestration: Harmonic Settings of Tone Qualities
Book II, 1941-1942 and undated (All student work.)
Cox, Clarence, undated
Royal, Ted, 1942
Crawford, Jesse, undated
Benda, Richard, 1941
Bowe, Edwin, 1941
Schramm, Rudolf, 1942

Book III
Analysis of J.S. Bach, undated
Students, 1942 and undated
Bradley, undated
Mondello, Nuncio, 1942
Benda, R., 1942

Book IV (All student work.)
Benda, R., 1942
Cox, Clarence, undated
Materials on Automatic Composition
Continuity, undated (Hand manuscript.)
Counterpoint, undated (Work by students and Schillinger.)
Maffei, Domenico

Two-part counterpoint tables and examples
De Maria, Rosolino
Kaplan, Delmer B.
Ellington, Willis and Joseph Schillinger
Maffei, Domenico
De Maria, Rosolino

Definition and Classification of Visual and Oral Arts, undated (Typescript.)
Electricity, A Musical Liberator, 1931
Reproduction of article in Modern Music, March-April 1931.
The Electrification of Music, undated (Typescript.)
Excerpts from the Outline of Projects for the Development and Advancement of Scientific Functioning of the Arts, undated
Expansions (and projections in general), undated
Forms of Musical Harmony, undated
Introduction and Continuity of Simultaneous Groups
Transformation of the Functions in Simultaneous Groups
General Harmony, undated
Tables of Structures
Table of Auxiliary Tones
Text and Tables (By student Domenico Maffei.)
Application of Harmony and Evolution of Style
Strata Harmony and Evolution of Styles and Table and Examples
General Treatment of Powers, undated (Hand manuscript. Fragile.)
27-29  Instrumental Forms of Melody and Harmony

10  1  Materials on Computing Periodic Sets, undated (Hand manuscript. Fragile.)
   2-4  Mathematical Basis of Musical Composition, undated (Hand manuscript.)
   5-8  Melodization of Harmony, undated (Mostly music manuscript exercises.)
   9-13 Melody Pitch Parameters (Hand manuscripts. Fragile.)
   14  Musical Propedentics, undated (Typescript.)
   15-18 Notes on Orchestration, 1942
   19  Orchestration, undated (Domenico Maffei exercises.)
   20-22 Periodicity, undated (Hand manuscript.)

Pitch Scales (Mostly score exercises and charts.)
   First Group
        Text
   2-3  Examples
   4   Second Group
   5   Third Group
   6-11 Fourth Group
   12-14 Formulae and Tables
   15-19 Pitch Scales in Relation to Chord Structures, 1940
   20-22 Theory of Composition and Orchestration, undated (Hand manuscript, incomplete.)

23  The Problem of Musical Education, undated (Typescript.)

11  1  The Process of Harmonic Foundation of the Musical Tissue, 1929
   (Typescript.)
   2  Project for Walt Disney, undated (Hand manuscript.)
   3  Rhumba Fantasy or Symphonic Rhumba, undated (Description of composition. Typescript.)
   4  Russian Folksongs and Theory Sketches, undated (All music examples.)

Rhythm and Melody Charts,
   5  Binomials of the First Order, undated
   6  Melody Forms and Motion
   7  Balance of Melomas
   8  Consecutive Phase Displacement

Rhythm of Pitch, undated
   9-10  Combinatory Pitch Scales
   11-13 Illustrations
   14  Rhythm Tables, 1941
   15-17 Rhythmomae, Melomae and Melorhythms, undated (Hand manuscripts. Some fragile.)

Special Theory of Harmony, undated
   18  Transformations of Simultaneous Groups
       Contains some material by Schillinger students. Manuscripts and completed exercises.
   19  Transformations of Members
   20  Texts and Tables (By student Rosolino De Maria.)
   21  Harmony of Thirds
   22  Hybrid and 4-part Symmetric Harmony (By student Edwin Gerschefski.)

13  1  Chromatic System of Harmony (By student Edwin Gerschefski.)
   2  Synopsis of the Special Condensed Course in Harmony (By student Charles Previn.)
   3  Work by student Domenico Maffei.
   4-5  Supplement to the Theory of Melody, undated

Theory of Composition manuscript, undated (Hand manuscript.)
### Part I
6 Chapters 1-5
7 Chapters 6-8

### Part II
8 Chapters 1-4
9 Chapter 5
10-13 Part III
14 *Theory of Musical Composition* (Notes only.)

*Theory of Orchestration*, undated

Part I: Instruments
15 Lessons I-II
16 Lessons III-IV
17 Lessons VI-VIII
18 Lessons IX-XI
19 Lessons XII-XIV
20 Lessons XV-XVI
21 Lesson XVII

### Part II: Instrumental Technique
14 1-4 *Twice Equal Temperament*, undated (All charts.)
5-11 *Variations of Music by Means of Geometrical Projection*, undated (Typescript with charts.)
12-15 Untitled manuscripts and charts
8 Russian manuscripts, 1931 and undated (All in pencil.)
9 Manuscript one, 1931
10-13 Manuscript three, undated

### Series II: Student Notebooks, 1918-1942 and undated

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<td>12-14</td>
<td>Coppola, Carmine</td>
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<td>Dickinson, Charles</td>
<td>1937-1939</td>
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<td>Gellert, Harry</td>
<td>1939-1941 and undated</td>
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<td>Golden, Murray</td>
<td>undated</td>
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<td>Gross, Jerome</td>
<td>1940-1941 and undated</td>
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<td>Exercises</td>
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<td>Holguin, David</td>
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<td>1940 May - June</td>
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<td>Lytle, Hub</td>
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<td>McInerney, James J.</td>
<td>1942 and undated</td>
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<td>4-6</td>
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<td>Volume I</td>
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Series III: Personal Papers and Correspondence, 1918-1993 and undated

Papers, 1918-1942 and undated
9 Immigration and Citizenship, 1928-1930
10 Passports and Visas, 1918-1942
11 Theremin, undated
   Includes certificate of stock ownership in theremin company and Russian manuscript.
12 General, 1926-1941
   Includes composition copyrights and official papers in Russian.

Correspondence, 1923-1993 and undated
13 A - Coppola, 1929-1941
14 Cowell, Henry, 1938-1946 and undated
15 Crawford - Farnsworth, 1936-1943
16 Gerschefski, Edwin, 1938 and undated
17 Gershwin, George and Ira, 1935 - 1993
18 Goetschius - Horowitz, 1923-1940
19 Kaempffert, William, 1938-1942
20 Kallen, Horace M., 1940-1943
21 Kaplan - Malko, 1940-1946
22 League of Composers, 1938
23 Murray - Reinheimer, 1928-1942
24 Schillinger, Joseph, 1929-1942
25 1929-1937
26 1938-1939

Series IV: Promotional Material and Clippings, 1924-2000 and undated

Clippings, 1924-1992 and undated
6 1924-1927
7 1928
8 1929-1934
9 1936-1945
10 1946-1947
11 1948
12 1949-1992
13 Undated
   In English
14-15 In Russian
Concert Programs, 1918-1932 and undated
16 1918-1925
17 1926
18 1927
19 1928
20 1929
21 1930-1932
22 Undated

21A 1 Oversized, 1926-1927 and undated
2 Publications and Exhibits, 1937-2000 and undated
3 Schillinger System, 1945-1977 and undated
Contains flyers and literature about the Schillinger system.

Series V: Scores, 1918-1938 and undated

Sub-series 1: By Schillinger, 1918-1935 and undated
Instrumental, 1918-1935 and undated

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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Cinq Morceaux</em> Op. 12, 1929</td>
<td>For piano. Published. Russian publisher.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><em>First Airphonic Suite</em> Op. 21, 1929</td>
<td>For RCA theremin and orchestra.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Reduced score. Pencil holograph.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><em>Marche Funèbre</em>, undated</td>
<td>For piano. Photostat and positive reproductions.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><em>Melody</em>, 1929</td>
<td>For theremin and piano. Ink holograph and photostat reproduction.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><em>North Russian Symphony</em> Op. 22, 1930</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Full score. Pencil holograph.</td>
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</table>

Sonata for piano Op. 5, 1918-1923
Title in Russian. "Sea Sonata" written in English on cover. Full score.

| 9   | Pencil holograph.                           |         |
| 10  | Ink holograph.                             |         |

Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 9, 1921-1922

| 11  | Two full scores. Ink holographs            |         |
| 12  | Violin parts. Ink holographs.              |         |
| 14  | *Study in Rhythm I*, 1935                 | For piano. Pencil holograph. |
| 15  | *Tanzsuite* Op. 20, 1928                  | For violoncello. Four holographs, two pencil, two ink. |
| 16  | *Vals*, 1926                              | For piano. Pencil and ink holographs. |

Vocal, 1926-1933 and undated

| 23  | *Khoroni, Khorem Menia Veter (Bury Me, Bury Me Wind)* Op. 23, 1930 | For voice, theremin and piano. Words by Anna Akhmatova. Two pencil holographs. See also concert program of Jan. 4, 1931, Box 21, Folder 7. |
|     | *Romanza*, undated                            |         |
Settings of poems by Shelley and Balmont. For voice and piano. Pencil holograph.

4  Songs For Children, 1933
    Settings of poems by Helen Leavitt. For voice and piano. Ink holograph and photostat reproduction. Contains letter from Leavitt with instructions for setting poems.

Veselye Pominki Op. 16, 1927
    For men's chorus, flutes, violoncello, piano and percussion.

5  Full score. (Ink holograph.)
6  Parts. (Ink holographs.)
7  Vocalises Op. 18, 1927-1928
    For mezzo-soprano or contralto and piano. Three full scores, two pencil, one ink.

Sketches, 1935 and undated (All pencil holographs.)
8  Prelude and Fugue, 1935
9  Sketches for Songs, undated
10 Varia, undated
11 Russian title, undated

24 1-5 Untitled, undated

Exercises, 1931 and undated
6  Harmony Exercises, undated
7  Harmony Exercises, Bach Analysis and Unidentified Sketches, undated
8  Melody, 1931 and undated
9  Modulational Formulas, undated
10 Rudiments and Complements of Polytonal Systems of Harmony, undated (Notebook.)
11 Rhythm (Automatic Composition), undated
12 Studies In Rhythm, undated

Sub-series 2: By Schillinger Students, 1929-1938 and undated

25  Fol
1  Cox, Clarence, undated
2  De Maria, Rosolino, undated
3  Levene, Gus, undated
4  Prawossudowitsch, Natalie, 1929
5  Roubleff, Inna, undated
6  Weiner, Lazar, 1933-1938

Sub-series 3: Oversized Scores, 1918-1932

March of the Orient Op. 11, 1922-1924
    For Two Pianos, 1922-1922 (Pencil holograph.)

26  Box  Fol
1  For Orchestra, 1924
2  Pencil holograph full score.
3  Ink holograph full score.
4  Mouvement E'letrique et Pathétique, 1932
    For theremin and piano. Photostat and positive reproductions of holograph score.
5  Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, 1918
    Pencil holograph score and ink holograph cello part.
6  Stikhotvoreniiá Grigoria Petnikova Op. 6, 1920-1921
    For voice and piano. Settingsof three poems by Gregory Petnikov. Two full scores, ink holographs.
7  Symphonic Rhapsody Op. 19, 1927 (For orchestra.)
     Sketch.
     Full scores.
8 Pencil holograph.
9-10 Two ink holographs.
11 *Venetsia*, 1918
   For voice and piano. Setting of two poems by Rainer Maria Rilke. Pencil holograph.

**Series VI: Charts, undated**

**Melody Charts**

<table>
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<td>74-76 and 79</td>
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<td>77-78 and 80-98</td>
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<td>12 and 15-18</td>
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<td>5, 13 and 14</td>
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**Separated Material**

**Posters and Clipping**

7 posters, 1 oversized clipping (All posters in Russian.)

**Charts**

2 oversized charts