

Guide to the Joseph Schillinger Papers, 1918-2000

JPB 86-08

Music Division

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

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Descriptive Summary

Title:	Joseph Schillinger Papers
Collection ID:	JPB 86-08
Creator:	Schillinger, Joseph
Extent:	17.6 linear feet (38 boxes)
Repository:	Music Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

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*

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1-3	Manuscript and Charts
		Olman, Val (Student assignments.)
	4	Lessons I-II
	5	Lessons III-IV
	6	Additional Text
	7-11	<i>Theory of Pitch Scales</i>
	12-14	<i>Geometrical Projections of Music</i>
		<i>Theory of Melody</i>
	15-17	Part I
2	1-3	Part II
		<i>Special Theory of Harmony</i>
	4-8	Part I
	9-13	Part II
3	1-4	Part III
	5-7	Part IV
	8-12	<i>Melodization of Harmony and Harmonization of Melody</i>
		<i>Theory of Counterpoint</i>
	13-15	Part I
	16-17	Part II
4	1-2	Part II
	3-5	<i>Two-Part Melodization</i>
	6-13	<i>Instrumental Forms</i>
5	1-7	<i>General Theory of Harmony</i>
	8-9	<i>Applications of General Harmony</i>
	10	<i>Evolution of Styles</i>
		<i>Theory of Composition</i>
	11-13	Part I
6	1-9	Part II
		<i>Theory of Orchestration</i>
	10-13	Part I: Instruments
7	1-3	Part I: Instruments
	4-9	Part II: Instrumental Technique

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

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
8	1	<i>12 Lectures on Kinetic Art Forms</i> , undated (Hand manuscript.)
	2	<i>Acoustics</i> , undated (Russian manuscript and charts.)
	3	<i>Basic Forms of Regularity and Coordination</i> , undated
	4	<i>Classification of Scales; Materials on Harmony</i> , undated
		<i>Composition</i> , 1942 and undated
		Book I

5	Analysis of J.S. Bach
	Students
	Includes exercises and compositions prepared for Schillinger.
6	Evans, Alfred Lewis
7-9	Gerschefski, Edwin
10	Schwichtenberg, Wilbur
11	<i>Orchestration: Harmonic Settings of Tone Qualities</i>
	Book II, 1941-1942 and undated (All student work.)
12-14	Cox, Clarence, undated
15	Royal, Ted, 1942
16	Crawford, Jesse, undated
17	Benda, Richard, 1941
18	Bowe, Edwin, 1941
19	Schramm, Rudolf, 1942
	Book III
20	Analysis of J.S. Bach, undated
	Students, 1942 and undated
21	Bradley, undated
22-24	Mondello, Nuncio, 1942
25-26	Benda, R., 1942
	Book IV (All student work.)
9 1-3	Benda, R., 1942
4	Cox, Clarence, undated
5	Materials on Automatic Composition
6-7	<i>Continuity</i> , undated (Hand manuscript.)
	<i>Counterpoint</i> , undated (Work by students and Schillinger.)
8	Maffei, Domenico
	Two-part counterpoint tables and examples
9	De Maria, Rosolino
10	Kaplan, Delmer B.
11	Ellington, Willis and Joseph Schillinger
12	Maffei, Domenico
13	De Maria, Rosolino
14	<i>Definition and Classification of Visual and Oral Arts</i> , undated (Typescript.)
15	<i>Electricity, A Musical Liberator</i> , 1931
	Reproduction of article in <i>Modern Music</i> , March-April 1931.
16	<i>The Electrification of Music</i> , undated (Typescript.)
17	<i>Excerpts from the Outline of Projects for the Development and Advancement of Scientific Functioning of the Arts</i> , undated
18	<i>Expansions (and projections in general)</i> , undated
	<i>Forms of Musical Harmony</i> , undated
19	<i>Introduction and Continuity of Simultaneous Groups</i>
20	<i>Transformation of the Functions in Simultaneous Groups</i>
	<i>General Harmony</i> , undated
21	<i>Tables of Structures</i>
22	<i>Table of Auxiliary Tones</i>
23	Text and Tables (By student Domenico Maffei.)
24	<i>Application of Harmony and Evolution of Style</i>
25	<i>Strata Harmony and Evolution of Styles and Table and Examples</i>
26	<i>General Treatment of Powers</i> , 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
- 11 1 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.)
- 12 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		<i>Theory of Musical Composition</i> (Notes only.)
		<i>Theory of Orchestration</i> , 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
14	1-4	Part II: Instrumental Technique
	5-11	<i>Theory of Rhythms</i> , undated
	12-15	<i>Three- and Four-Part Counterpoint</i> , 1942
15	1	<i>Twice Equal Temperament</i> , undated (All charts.)
	2-3	<i>Variations of Music by Means of Geometrical Projection</i> , undated (Typescript with charts.)
	4-7	Untitled manuscripts and charts
		Russian manuscripts, 1931 and undated (All in pencil.)
	8	Manuscript one, 1931
	9	Manuscript two, undated
	10-13	Manuscript three, undated
16	1-3	Manuscripts with charts, undated
	4-11	Notes and Ideas, undated (Notes in English and Russian. Some fragile.)

Series II: Student Notebooks, 1918-1942 and undated

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
16	12-14	Coppola, Carmine, 1938
	15	Dickinson, Charles, 1937-1939
	16	Gellert, Harry, 1939-1941 and undated
	17	Golden, Murray, undated
		Gross, Jerome, 1940-1941 and undated
17	1	Correspondence, 1940-1941
	2-14	Exercises, undated
18	1-10	Exercises, undated
		Holguin, David,
	11	1918 - 1940 May
	12	1940 May - June
	13	1940 July
	14	1941-1942
	15-18	Undated
19	1-3	Lytle, Hub, 1939 and undated
		McInerney, James J., 1942 and undated
	4-6	Volume I

- 7-9 Volume II
- 20 1 Norvell, Harry, 1942
 2-3 Olman, Val, 1938-1939
 4 Previn, Charles, 1937-1939
 5 Radtke, Hil, 1940
 6 Schaeffer, Myron, 1937-1939
 7 Stoloff, Morris, 1938-1939
 8 Other Students, 1937-1942

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 Kaempfert, William, 1938-1942
 20 Kallen, Horace M., 1940-1943
 21 Kaplan - Malko, 1940-1946
 22 League of Composers, 1938
 23 Murray - Reinheimer, 1928-1942
- Schillinger, Joseph, 1929-1942
- 24 1929-1937
 25 1938-1939
- 21 1 1940
 2 1941-1942
 3 Shilkret - Taylor, 1930-1942
 4 Theremin, Leon, 1932
 5 Upton - Yasser, 1933-1942

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
- Undated
- 13 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
<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	<i>Cinq Morceaux</i> Op. 12, 1929 (For piano. Published. Russian publisher.)
22	1	
	2	<i>First Airphonic Suite</i> Op. 21, 1929 (For RCA theremin and orchestra.) Full score. Pencil holograph.
	3	Reduction score. Pencil holograph.
	4	<i>Marche Funebre</i> , undated (For piano. Photostat and positive reproductions.)
	5	<i>Melody</i> , 1929 For theremin and piano. Ink holograph and photostat reproduction.
	6	<i>North Russian Symphony</i> Op. 22, 1930 Full score. Pencil holograph.
	7	Piano transcription. Pencil holograph.
	8	<i>Poème nocturne</i> Op. 7, 1921 (For contrabass and piano. Pencil holograph.)
	9	<i>Sonata for piano</i> Op. 5, 1918-1923 Title in Russian. "Sea Sonata" written in English on cover. Full score. Pencil holograph.
	10	Ink holograph.
	11	<i>Sonata for Violin and Piano</i> Op. 9, 1921-1922 Two full scores. Ink holographs
	12	Violin parts. Ink holographs.
	13	<i>Sonate - Rhapsodie</i> Op. 17, 1925 (For piano. Ink holograph.)
	14	<i>Study in Rhythm I</i> , 1935 (For piano. Pencil holograph.)
	15	<i>Tanzsuite</i> Op. 20, 1928 For violoncello. Four holographs, two pencil, two ink.
	16	<i>Valse</i> , 1926 (For piano. Pencil and ink holographs.)
		Vocal, 1926-1933 and undated
23	1	<i>Khoroni, Khorem Menia Veter (Bury Me, Bury Me Wind)</i> 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.
	2	<i>Orientalia</i> Op. 10, 1926 For voice and piano. Published score. Russian publisher.
	3	<i>Romanza</i> , 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.)
Box Fol
26 1 For Orchestra, 1924
2 Pencil holograph full score.
3 Ink holograph full score.
4 *Mouvement E'lectrique 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 Grigoriia Petnikova* Op. 6, 1920-1921
For voice and piano. Settings of 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

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
27	1	Melody Charts Numbers 30-73
	2	Numbers 74-76 and 79
	3	Numbers 77-78 and 80-98
	4	Rhythm Charts (20) Numbered (No subject designation)
28		Numbers 1-4
29		Numbers 6-8 and 10-11
30		Number 9
31		Numbers 12 and 15-18
32		Numbers 5, 13 and 14
33		Numbers 19-24
34		Numbers 25-28
		Unnumbered
35		Three charts
36		Two charts
37		Two charts

Separated Material

Posters and Clipping

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

Charts

2 oversized charts