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Guide to the

Leon Kirchner papers

1939-2009 JPB 11-14

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, November 2011

Summary

Creator: Kirchner, Leon, 1919-2009

Title: Leon Kirchner papers, 1939-2009

Size: 12.72 linear feet (40 boxes)

Source: Donated by Leon Kirchner.

Abstract: The Leon Kirchner papers document the career of the composer, conductor and pianist from the 1950s to the early 2000s. They include scores and sketches, correspondence with important musical figures, writings, programs, clippings, photographs and posters.

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

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Processing note

Processing consisted of foldering and arranging correspondence, and foldering and arranging scores.

Creator history

Leon Kirchner (1919 - 2009) was an American composer, pianist and conductor. Born in Brooklyn, NY, to Russian Jewish immigrants, his family moved to Los Angeles when he was nine years old. He studied with Ernst Bloch while attending the University of California at Berkeley. Bloch recommended Kirchner to Arnold Schoenberg, who became Kirchner's primary mentor and influence; he also studied with Roger Sessions. Kirchner was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1948, after which he taught at the University of Southern California until 1954, when he was awarded a professorship at Mills College. In 1961 he was recruited by Harvard University, where he remained until his retirement in 1989. There, he founded and conducted the Harvard Chamber Orchestra, which grew out of a course Kirchner taught combining musical analysis with performance. Kirchner was an annual participant for many years in the Marlboro Music Festival.

i

Among his works are two piano concertos; three piano sonatas; four string quartets; two trios for piano, violin and cello; an opera, *Lily*, based on Saul Bellow's *Henderson, the Rain King*; and several pieces for orchestra including Music for Orchestra, N.Y. Connotations, Music for Cello and Orchestra, and Music for Flute and Orchestra. Kirchner's String Quartet No. 3 was the first composition with electronics to win the Pulitzer Prize. He continued composing until his death at home in New York City.

Sources:

Alexander L. Ringer. "Kirchner, Leon." In Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15048 (accessed October 3, 2011).

Griffiths, Paul and Alison Latham. "Kirchner, Leon." In The Oxford Companion to Music, edited by Alison Latham. Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3703 (accessed October 3, 2011).

Scope and content note

The Leon Kirchner papers document the career of the composer, conductor and pianist from the 1950s to the early 2000s. They include published and unpublished scores and sketches, many with corrections and annotations, documenting the creation of most of his output; correspondence from many prominent figures including Aaron Copland, Rogers Sessions, Arnold Schoenberg, Darius Milhaud, Richard Franko Goldman, Virgil Thomson, Yo-Yo Ma, Dmitri Mitropolous and Saul Bellow; Kirchner's writings about his work; concert programs from throughout his career, including many for the Harvard Chamber Orchestra; clippings from throughout his career; photographs; and posters.

The collection also contains audio and video recordings. The video recordings consist of a half-hour documentary of Kirchner at the Marlboro Music Festival, ca. 1976, in its original 16mm print, a beta transfer, and a DVD transfer; and a VHS recording of a performance of Kirchner's *For Solo Cello* by Bion Tsang with the Omsk Philharmonic Orchestra. The audio recordings include 32 CD-Rs of the Harvard Chamber Orchestra under Kirchner's direction from 1980 to 1993. Performances of Bach, Mozart, Handel, Brahms, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bruckner, Shostakovich, Beethoven, Haydn, Mahler, Paul Hindemith, Roger Sessions and Arthur Berger are held here. One CD-R contains performances by the Marlboro Music Festival orchestra in 1971 and 1972 under Kirchner's direction performing music by Webern and Hindemith. There is also a CD-R of Kirchner's second piano concerto, performed by Marc-André Hamelin, under Kirchner's direction, with the Harvard Chamber Orchestra and the Philadelphia orchestra in 1988.

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

Arrangement

The Leon Kirchner papers are organized into the following series:

Series I: Personal Files, 1942-2009 Series II: Scores, 1939-2008

Key terms

Names

Adams, John, 1947-

Amram, David

Associated Music Publishers

Babbitt, Milton, 1916-2011

Bellow, Saul

Berger, Arthur, 1912-2003

Berio, Luciano, 1925-2003

Bernstein, Leonard, 1918-1990

Boston Philharmonic Society

Boston Symphony Orchestra

Broadcast Music, inc.

Cage, John

Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990

Del Tredici, David

Eldridge, William

Feldman, Morton, 1926-1987

Finney, Ross Lee, 1906-1997

Fromm Music Foundation

Fromm, Paul, 1906-1987

G. Schirmer, Inc.

Goldman, Richard Franko, 1910-1980

Harvard Chamber Orchestra

Harvard University

Kirchner, Leon, 1919-2009

Laredo, Jaime

Lieberson, Peter, 1946-2011

Ma, Yo-Yo, 1955-

Mercury Music Corp.

Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974

Mills College

Mitropoulos, Dmitri, 1896-1960

Ozawa, Seiji, 1935-

Perlis, Vivian

Schoenberg, Arnold, 1874-1951

Serkin, Peter, 1947-

Sessions, Roger, 1896-1985

Shifrin, Seymour, 1926-1979

Spivakovsky, Tossy, 1907-1998

Stein, Leonard

Steinberg, Russell

Stern, Isaac, 1862-1932

Tcherepnin, Ivan

Trampler, Walter

University of Buffalo

University of California (1868-1952)

University of Chicago

Occupations

Composers

Conductors (musicians)

Pianists

Special formats

Black-and-white photographs
Clippings (information artifacts)
Color photographs
Contracts
Military records
One-sheet posters
Personal correspondence
Programs (documents)
Scores

Container list

Series I: Personal Files, 1942-2009

25 boxes. This series contains correspondence, clippings, programs, publishing files, Kirchner's writings, commission and performance contracts, posters, photographs and military records.

Kirchner filed most of his correspondence alphabetically under the heading of "Correspondence", but letters also appears under other headings such as Commissions, Former Students, Publishing, and Guest Appearances.

Under the heading of Correspondence, the largest files are those for Paul Fromm and Harvard University. The Fromm files contain personal letters from Fromm as well as official correspondence from the Fromm Music Foundation. The Harvard files contain personal and official letters from colleagues and administrators at the university, and departmental memos and correspondence pertaining to the Harvard Chamber Orchestra. The files for the Boston Philharmonic Society and the Boston Symphony Orchestra document Kirchner's involvement and work with both organizations. Other correspondents include Roger Sessions, Arnold Schoenberg, Richard Franko Goldman, David Amram, Ned Rorem, Peter Serkin, Isaac Stern, Virgil Thomson, Walter Trampler, the Continuum music ensemble, Marlboro Music, Mills College, the University of California, Luciano Berio, Leonard Bernstein, John Cage, Aaron Copland, Morton Feldman, Milton Babbitt, Ross Lee Finney, Leonard Stein, Yo-Yo Ma, Darius Milhaud, Dmitri Mitropoulos, Vivian Perlis and Tossy Spivakosky. Though letters from Kirchner can be found throughout the correspondence files, most are filed under his name. Additional correspondence from some composers is in a file Kirchner maintained for Former Students. Correspondence from Janet Baker-Carr contains has a transcript of an interview with Kirchner.

Clippings are in two divisions, one for the Harvard Chamber Orchestra and one for general clippings. They extensively document Kirchner's career from 1949 until his activities slowed in the mid-2000s, and consist primarily of concert previews and reviews. The concert programs are also divided into groupings for the Harvard Chamber Orchestra and general programs, which document performances in which Kirchner was either pianist or conductor, or in which his music was performed. The programs extensively document Kirchner's career from the 1940s onward and include performances by orchestras, chamber groups and soloists across the country.

Publishing files contain correspondence and contracts with Kirchner's publishers, Associated Music Publishers (later bought by G. Schirmer), and Mercury Music, as well as with the rights organization BMI. They also contain correspondence with the Pulitzer Prize committee.

Two of Kirchner's compositions, *Lily* and *Of Things Exactly As They Are*, have files of correspondence relating to them. These are filed in this series under Compositions. Other information on his compositions can be found in the Discography file, which lists compositions and recordings.

Kirchner's writings include his program notes for each of his string quartets and for *Music for Orchestra*; speech and lecture notes for instructional and public occasions; and essays on musical and non-musical topics.

The Guest Appearances file contains correspondence and contracts with performing ensembles and organizations that engaged Kirchner as conductor or commissioned compositions from him.

Photographs document Kirchner from the 1950s to late in his life and include solo portraits as well as group photographs. There are also pictures of Kirchner with Aaron Copland, Seiji Ozawa, Yo-Yo Ma, Darius Milhaud and Jaime Laredo, among others. Photographs of other people consist of autographed pictures of Milhaud and Dmitri Mitropoulos, a portrait of Arnold Schoenberg, and a photo of Gertrude Kirchner with John Kenneth Galbraith.

The posters primarily advertise performances by the Harvard Chamber Orchestra, but also include occasions on which Kirchner was featured as guest conductor or composer.

The file for Kirchner's 70th Birthday Celebration contains birthday notes and cards and the program for the concert held in his honor, on which music composed for him was played. See also scores by other composers in Series II.

b.1 f.1	70th Birthday Celebration, 1988-1989
	Clippings
	General
b.1 f.2	1949-1959
b.1 f.3-7	1959-1995
b.2 f.1	1959-1995
b.2 f.2-6	1970s-2000s
b.3 f.1-3	Harvard Chamber Orchestra, 1964-1991
b.3 f.4	Commissions, 1960-1994
	Compositions
	<i>Lil</i> y, 1976-1977
b.4 f.1	Correspondence
b.4 f.2-5	Libretto Drafts
b.5 f.1	Of Things Exactly As They Are, 1997
	Correspondence
b.5 f.2-3	A, 1948-1993
b.5 f.4	Academy of Arts and Letters, 1951, 1998, 2009
b.5 f.5	American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1963-2008
b.5 f.6-8	B, 1948-2005
b.5 f.9	Boston Philharmonic Society, 1968-1972
b.6 f.1	Boston Symphony Orchestra, 1959-1996
b.6 f.2-3	C, 1949-1995
b.6 f.4	Chamber Music Society of Baltimore, 1958-1961
b.6 f.5	Cole, Toby, 1963-1970
b.6 f.6	Continuum, 1969-1999
b.6 f.7-8	D, 1952-1989
b.6 f.9	E, 1941-1975

Series I: Personal Files (cont.)

Correspondence (cont.)

	Correspondence (cont.)
b.7 f.1	F, 1946-2000
b.7 f.2	Ford Foundation, 1958-1975
b.7 f.3-4	Fromm, Paul / Fromm Music Foundation, 1953-1980
b.7 f.5-6	G, 1946-2003
b.7 f.7	Goldman, Richard Franko, 1950-1966
b.8 f.1	H, 1948-2007
b.8 f.2-4	Harvard University, 1957-2001
b.8 f.5	I, 1957-2003
b.8 f.6	J, 1948-1999
b.8 f.7-8	K, 1946-2008
b.9 f.1	Kirchner, Leon, 1955-2007
b.9 f.2	L, 1950-2009
b.9 f.3-4	M, 1948-1996
b.9 f.5	Marlboro Music, 1964-1973, 1996
b.10 f.1	Mills College, 1954-1962
b.10 f.2	N, 1959-2003
b.10 f.3	O, 1953-1993
b.10 f.4	P, 1947-2009
b.10 f.5-6	R, 1946-2009
b.10 f.7	Ross, Gilbert, 1955-1958
b.10 f.8	S, 1946-2009
b.11 f.1-3	S, 1946-2009
b.11 f.4	Sessions, Roger, 1948-1973
b.11 f.5	Shapiro, Jean, 1948-1959
b.11 f.6-7	T, 1946-1993
b.12 f.1	U-V, 1949-2008
b.12 f.2	University of Buffalo, 1958-1959
b.12 f.3	University of California, 1942-1979
b.12 f.4	University of Chicago, 1960-1974
b.12 f.5	W, 1951-2008
b.12 f.6	Y-Z, 1958-2008
b.12 f.7	Yale University, 1974-1985
b.12 f.8-10	Unidentified, 1946-2009
b.13 f.1	Discography, ca. 2008
b.13 f.2	Former Students, 1978-2002
b.13 f.3-4	Guest Appearances, 1983-1993
b.13 f.5	Military Records, 1943-1946
	Photographs
b.13 f.6	Leon Kirchner, 1950s-2000s

Series I: Personal Files (cont.) Photographs (cont.) b.14 f.1 Leon Kirchner, ca. 1950 b.15 f.1 Kirchner with Others, 1950s-2000s b.15 f.2 Other People, 1950s-1980s b.16 f.1 Posters, 1961-2009 **Programs** General b.17 f.1-3 1940s-1970s b.18 1980s b.19 1980s b.20 1990s b.21 1990s b.22 1990s b.23 1990s b.17 f.4 2000s b.24 f.1 2000s b.24 f.2 Undated b.24 f.3-4 Harvard Chamber Orchestra, 1964-1994 Publishing Associated Music Publishers / G. Schirmer, Inc. b.24 f.5 1961-1965 b.25 f.1-2 1966-2007 b.25 f.3 Broadcast Music, Inc., 1960-1998 b.25 f.4 Mercury Music Corporation, 1950-1959 b.25 f.5 General, 1961-2001 b.25 f.6 Pulitzer Prizes, 1977-1993 b.25 f.7-8 Writings, 1968, 1995

Series II: Scores, 1939-2008

15 boxes. The scores are in two divisions: those by Kirchner and those by other composers. Kirchner's work is arranged alphabetically by title. Most of his major works are present, including String Quartets 1, 3 and 4; the two piano concertos; the three pianos sonatas; the Sonata Concertante, the orchestral works Music for Orchestra (I and II), N.Y. Connotations, Music for Cello and Orchestra and Music for Flute and Orchestra; the opera Lily (based on Saul Bellow's *Henderson The Rain King*); smaller ensemble pieces such as Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds and Percussion; and solo works for piano, cello, and violin. Also among the scores is a folder of exercises Kirchner did for Arnold Schoenberg in 1939, and annotated by Kirchner in 1993.

The score files include varying combinations of sketches, manuscript scores and parts, and publisher proofs and final published versions, often containing written corrections and annotations. Notes with each composition or folder specify exact content. The series also contains two boxes of unfinished sketches, and two folders of orphan score or part pages.

The scores by other composers consist primarily of pieces written by friends and former students in honor of Kirchner's birthdays, mostly for his 70th, for which a celebratory concert was held (see also 70th Birthday Celebration in Series I). These include short pieces by David Del Tridici, Ivan Tcherepnin, Arthur Berger (who also wrote a birthday piece for Kirchner's wife, Gertrude), William Eldridge, Russell Steinberg and Peter Lieberson. The 70th birthday scores were gathered in a decorated gift box for presentation to Kirchner. This gift box is in box 32. The one non-birthday related score is *Lament for Oedipus* by Seymour Shifrin, which is autographed to Kirchner.

By Kirchner

b.15 f.3	Combatimento di Tancredi et Clorinda For voice and piano. Full score manuscript.
b.15 f.4	Concerto for Violin, Cello, Ten Winds and Percussion, 1960 Manuscript (incomplete), and published score, violin and cello parts, all with notes and corrections.
b.14 f.2	Dawn, 1943 For chorus and keyboard. Words by F. Garcia Lorca. Full score and choral part.
b.15 f.5	Dialogues for Piano and Orchestra Published score and parts with notes. Also contains arrangement for seven brass.
b.15 f.6	Duo for Violin and Piano, 1947 Full score manuscript and reproduction with notes
	Duo No. 2 for Violin and Piano, 2001-2003
b.15 f.7	Sketches
b.15 f.8-9	Manuscript Scores
b.26 f.1	Publication Proofs (Contain corrections and notes)
b.14 f.3	Fanfare for Brass Trio, 1965 For two trumpets and horn. Score and parts. Also contains arrangement for seven brass.
b.14 f.4	Fanfare III, 2000 For trumpet, horn, trombone and tuba. Sketch and score.

Series II: Scores (cont.) By Kirchner (cont.) b.26 f.2 Five Pieces for Piano, 1985 Reproduction of published score with notes. b.26 f.3 Flutings for Solo Flute and Optional Percussion, 2007 From the opera Lily. Annotated manuscript and published score. b.26 f.4 For Arthur Berger On His 80th, 1992 (For piano. Manuscript reproduction.) b.26 f.5 For Cello Solo, 1986 (Manuscript) b.26 f.6 For My Dearest Russel On His 70th!, 2000 (For piano. Manuscript reproduction) b.26 f.7 For Violin Solo, 1985 Reproduction of copyist score, with notes b.26 f.8-9 Illuminations, 1986 For three trumpets, two horns, three tenor trombones and bass trombone. Sketches, score manuscript and published score and parts b.26 f.10 Interlude, 1989 For piano. Manuscript and reproduction with corrections b.26 f.11 Interlude II. 2003 For piano. Manuscript reproduction and publishing proofs with corrections Lily, 1970-1977 (Opera. Music and libretto by Kirchner.) b.26 f.12-13 Sketches b.27 f.1-4 Sketches Scores in Progress b.27 f.5 Piano-Vocal b.14 f.5-6 Full Score **Final Scores** b.28 f.1 Full Score b.28 f.2 Parts (Cello, flute, horn and oboe only) b.28 f.3 Vocal Score (Published, with notes) b.25 f.9 Vocal Score Reproduction of published score, with notes Music for Cello and Orchestra, 1996-2003 (See also sketch in box 35, folder 10) b.27 f.6 Sketch b.29 f.1 Full Scores (Publication proofs with corrections) Music for Flute and Orchestra b.29 f.2 First Edition, 1978 Sketches, manuscript score and published full score b.29 f.3 Revised Editions, 1993, 1999 (Full scores and flute parts) Music for Orchestra, 1969-1970 b.30 f.1 **Published Score Parts** b.27 f.7 Woodwinds and Brass b.31 f.1 Piano and Percussion b.31 f.2-3 Strings

Series II: Scores (cont.) By Kirchner (cont.) xxMusic for Orchestrayy (cont.) Parts (cont.) b.32 Corrections b.30 f.2 Music for Orchestra II, 1990 (Published scores with notes) b.30 f.3 Music for Twelve, 1985 For flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone, piano/celeste, violin, viola, cello and bass. Manuscript score b.16 f.2 N.Y. Connotations, 1988 For orchestra. Manuscript scores, with corrections Of Things Exactly As They Are, 1996 For soprano solo, baritone solo, chorus and orchestra b.31 f.4 Sketches **Full Scores** b.30 f.4 Manuscript b.31 f.5 Corrected Manuscript Reproduction b.33 f.1 Corrected Published Scores b.34 f.1 Piano Concerto No. 1, 1953 (Corrected manuscript reproduction) Piano Concerto No. 2 **Full Scores** b.33 f.2 First Edition, 1985 (Published, with notes) b.33 f.3 Revision, 1988 (Published) b.33 f.4 Reduction Score for Two Pianos (Reduction by Mark Pevsner) b.34 f.2 Piano Sonata No. 1, 1950 Manuscript and published scores with corrections and notes Piano Sonata No. 2 b.33 f.5 Publishing Proofs with Corrections, 2002 b.34 f.3 Publishing Proofs with Corrections, 2003-2008 Piano Sonata No. 3: "The Forbidden", 2008 b.34 f.4 Sketch b.35 f.1 Manuscript and Publishing Proof b.36 f.1-2 Manuscript and Publishing Proofs b.35 f.2 Prelude (For piano. Manuscript) b.35 f.3 A Rhapsodic Valse For My Dear Friend Mark (For piano. Manuscript reproduction) b.35 f.4 The Runner For voice and piano. Text by Walt Whitman. Manuscript and reproduction with notes b.35 f.5 Schoenberg Studies, 1939, 1993 b.36 f.3 Sonata Concertante, 1990 Reproduction of published violin part with bowings and fingerings by Eudice Shapiro b.35 f.6 String Quartet No. 1 (Manuscript score and parts) String Quartet No. 3, 1969 (For string quartet and electronic tape) b.36 f.4 Sketch and score b.36 f.5 Parts (Violin II and viola only)

Series II: Scores (cont.) By Kirchner (cont.) String Quartet No. 4, 2006-2008 b.35 f.7 Manuscript (Incomplete) b.37 f.1 **Published Scores** Drafts with corrections and final version with parts b.37 f.2 String Trio (1961-1963), 1963 (For violin, viola and cello. Manuscript) b.35 f.8 Toccata for Orchestra (Manuscript) b.37 f.3 Toccata for Strings, Solo Winds and Percussion, 1955 (Manuscript) b.35 f.9 Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello, 1954 Manuscript and published scores and parts with notes Trio No. II for Piano, Violin and Cello b.35 f.10 Sketches, 1992 Also contains sketch for Music for Cello and Orchestra b.35 f.11 Scores, 1993 Manuscript and publication proofs, with notes Triptych (For violin and cello) b.37 f.4 Sketches b.38 f.1 Manuscript Reproduction The Twilight Stood, 1981-1992 For voice and piano. Text by Emily Dickinson b.37 f.5 Sketches and Manuscript Score b.38 f.2 **Publishing Proofs** Sketches, undated Titled b.38 f.3 Les Adieux b.38 f.4 Suite for Orchestra b.38 f.5-11 Untitled b.39 f.1-5 Untitled b.37 f.6 Untitled b.39 f.6 Orphan Score Pages b.37 f.7 Orphan Score Pages By Other Composers Kirchner Birthday Tributes Some scores are manuscripts, others are computer prints 60th, 1979 b.39 f.7 A Birthday Greeting for Leon Kirchner on the Occasion of His 60th by David Del Tridici (For voice and piano) b.39 f.8 Happy Birthday #60 by Ivan Tcherepnin (For piano) 70th, 1988-1989 b.39 f.9 Eight Views for Piano by John Clement Adams b.39 f.10 Encore Encore for Leon by Ivan Tcherepnin For two unspecified instruments and piano

Series II: Scores (cont.) By Other Composers (cont.) Kirchner Birthday Tributes (cont.) 70th (cont.) b.39 f.11 Fantasy for L.K. by Hsueh-Yung Shen (For vibraphone and marimba) b.39 f.12 Homage by Eric Sawyer (For piano) b.39 f.13 Impromptu for Cello and Piano by John Thow b.39 f.14 Leomezzo! by Russel Steinberg (For piano) b.39 f.15 Leon 70 ("Flutings" from Billy) by William Eldridge (For flute) b.40 f.1 Leon K by David Del Tridici, Text by Joel Conarroe (For voice and piano) b.40 f.2 A Little Night Music by Peter Lieberson (For piano) b.40 f.3 Little Overture by Tison Street (For piano (four hands)) b.40 f.4 Little Piece for Piano by David Myska b.40 f.5 Sea by David Patterson (For piano) b.40 f.6 Sephardic Lament by Joel Kabakov (For cello and piano) b.40 f.7 Special K Variations by Robert Ceely (For piano) b.32 Gift Box b.40 f.8 For Leon At 75 by Arthur Berger, 1994 (For piano)

Prelude In E by Ned Rorem, 1997 (For piano, for Kirchner's 78th birthday)

Lament for Oedipus by Seymour Shifrin, 1955 For women's voices, string quartet and piano

A Birthday Greeting to Gertrude by Arthur Berger, 1989 (For piano. Written for Kirchner's

b.40 f.9

b.40 f.10

b.40 f.11

wife)