



The New York Public Library Music Division

Guide to the

Ira Arthur Hirschmann papers

1934-1956

JPB 86-10

Processed by Martha Grutchfield.

Summary

Creator: Hirschmann, Ira Arthur, 1901-1989

Title: Ira Arthur Hirschmann papers

Date: 1934-1956

Source: The papers were a gift of Ira Hirschmann in 1980.

Abstract: The Ira Hirschmann Papers provide information on the founding and activities of The New Friends of Music. Hirschmann's personal correspondence with famous musicians is included as well.

Conditions Governing Use: For permission to copy or publish please contact the Music Division.

Preferred citation: The Ira Hirschmann Papers, JPB 86-10, Music Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Martha Grutchfield; machine-readable finding aid created by Robert Kosovsky.

Related Materials:

Ira Hirschmann's memoirs (typescript and published versions) are cataloged separately. See CATNYP for more information, and items not related to music.

Creator History

Ira Arthur Hirschmann was born in 1901. An American patron of the arts and department store executive, Ira Hirschmann founded the concert series New Friends of Music in 1936. Having been instrumental in the first symphonic radio broadcast in 1924, he later founded the short-lived FM station WABF.

In 1944 as Special Attaché of the State Department stationed in Ankara, Turkey, he helped to rescue

Jewish refugees from Romania. During the 1930s and 1940s he also helped establish many musicians fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe. His friends included Arturo Toscanini, Artur Schnabel, and Fiorello LaGuardia to whom he suggested founding the High School of Music and Art.

Ira Hirschmann's autobiography was published in 1994 as *Obligato: untold tales from a life with music*.

Custodial History

Gift of Ira Hirschmann, 1980.

Scope and Content Note

The Ira Hirschmann papers deal chiefly with The New Friends of Music.

Arrangement: Works are arranged alphabetically by title.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Brochures
Clippings
Letters
Press releases
Programs
Scripts

Subjects

Jewish refugees
Musicians

Names

Hirschmann, Ira Arthur, 1901-1989
Gilman, Lawrence, 1878-1939
Klemperer, Otto, 1885-1973
Mitropoulos, Dimitri, 1896-1960
Schnabel, Artur, 1882-1951
Serkin, Rudolf, 1903-1991
American Music Collection
New Friends of Music
WAFB (Radio station : New York, N.Y.)

Container List

Series 1: Correspondence

- f. 1 *Gilman, Lawrence. Letters to Ira Hirschmann*,. May 20, 1936-March 8, 1937 (5 letters, 1 postcard.)
Discusses the activities of the New Friends of Music.
- f. 2 *Klemperer, Otto. Letters to Ira Hirschmann*,. 1935-March 28, 1969 (6 letters, 1 telegram.)
Discussion topics include the New Friends of Music, Arturo Toscanini, the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Includes a signed program of Klemperer's performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio* at Covent Garden, March 24, 1969.
- f. 3 *Mitropoulos, Dmitri. Letter to Ira Hirschmann*,. September 29, 1951 (1 letter.)
Refuses additional work "at this time."
- f. 4 *Schnabel, Artur. Letters to Ira Hirschmann*,. August 8, 1934-February 19, 1950 (17 letters (2 incomplete): 2 ALS, 1 TLS; the remainder photocopies.)
Discusses musci, the nature of society, and the New Friends of Music. 1 letter gives his reaction to a Toscanini concert broadcast from Salzburg.
- f. 5 *Serkin, Rudolf. Letter to Ira Hirschmann*,. 193? (1 letter.)
In German. Sends condolences on death of Hirschmann's mother and says he will be in Salzburg in August to hear Toscanini.

Series 2: Programs

- f. 6 *New Friends of Music. Programs*,. 1938-1952
- f. 7 *Carnegie Hall. Programs*,. 1940-1941
- f. 8 *New Friends of Music Programs*,. March 26, 1944-June 5, 1946
- f. 9 *Town Hall Programs*, . *Plaza Hotel Program*,. 1936-1956, January 12, 1933, 1936-1951

Series 3: Scripts

- f. 10 *WJZ (Radio station) Scripts*,. 1940

Series 4: Press releases

- f. 11 *New Friends of Music Press releases*.

Series 5: Clippings

- f. 12 *New Friends of Music Clippings*.