



## The New York Public Library Music Division

Guide to the

### **Frédérique Petrides papers, Additions**

1918-1983

JPB 14-27

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2014

### **Summary**

**Creator:** Petrides, Fre\_de\_rique, 1903-1983

**Title:** Frédérique Petrides papers, Additions

**Date:** 1918-1983

**Size:** .42 linear feet (1 box)

**Source:** Avra Petrides, the daughter of Frédérique, donated the collection, circa 2009.

**Abstract:** Frédérique Petrides (1903-1983) was a violinist, conductor, teacher, publisher, and pioneering advocate for women in music. The Frédérique Petrides papers, Additions, dating from 1918 to 1983, contain personal correspondence between Petrides and her husband, family and friends.

**Conditions Governing Use:** For permission to publish, contact the Chief, Music Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

**Preferred citation:** Frédérique Petrides papers, Additions, JPB 14-27. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

**Processing note:** Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2014 Original order was preserved. All contents were rehoused.

**Related Materials:**

Frédérique Petrides papers, JPB 83-3. Music Division, The New York Public Library.

### **Creator History**

Frédérique Petrides née Mayer (1903-1983) was a violinist, conductor, teacher, publisher, and pioneering advocate for women in music. Born in Antwerp, Belgium, she studied violin from a young age. In 1923, Petrides immigrated to the United States, where she worked as a teacher and freelance violinist in New York City. She married Peter Pétrides, a journalist, in 1931.

Petrides studied conducting with John Lawrence Erb and later attended New York Philharmonic

rehearsals conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos from 1950 to 1956. In 1933, she founded the Orchestrette Classique (later known as Orchestrette of New York), an ensemble for women instrumentalists. From 1934 to 1943, it performed in Aeolian Hall and Carnegie Recital Hall. Petrides commissioned new music for the group from Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, David Diamond, Gian Carlo Menotti and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Petrides also promoted the activities of professional women musicians with her publication, *Women in Music* (begun as the orchestra's newsletter).

Petrides conducted summer concerts in Washington Square Park and Carl Schurz Park, and conducted the Hudson Valley Symphony Orchestra in Tarrytown, New York; the Student Symphony Society of New York; and the West Side Community Concerts.

Frédérique Petrides died in New York City on January 12, 1983 at the age of 79.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Frédérique Petrides papers, Additions, date from 1918 to 1983. They contain personal correspondence between Petrides and her husband, family and friends. These include her brothers Jan and Gottfried Mayer, her daughter Avra, and members of her extended German family. Some letters, dating from the late 1960s to 1983, are to Avra Pétrides. About half the correspondence is in German.

**Arrangement:** Portions of the letters are in chronological sequence, though sets of letters from widely disparate decades are often found adjacent to each other. Early letters from Petrides' husband is grouped together.

## **Key Terms**

### **Occupations**

Conductors (musicians)  
Musicians  
Teachers

### **Geographic Names**

New York (N.Y.)

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Personal correspondence

### **Subjects**

Women in music  
Women musicians -- United States