

Guide to the

Richard Hundley papers

1900s-2014 [bulk 1950s-2014] JPB 16-09

Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2016.

Summary

Creator: Hundley, Richard

Title: Richard Hundley papers

Date: 1900s-2014 [bulk 1950s-2014]

Size: 21.9 linear feet (66 boxes); 13.3 mb (2 computer files)

Source: Donated by Christopher Berg for Richard Hundley, 2016.

Abstract: Richard Hundley (1931-) is an American composer of vocal music. The Richard Hundley papers, dating from the early 1900s to 2014 (bulk dates 1950s-2014), document the composer's career through scores, subject files, performance files, photographs, letters, and datebooks.

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Sound and video recordings are unavailable pending preservation transfer.

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Processing note: Compiled by Matthew Snyder, 2016.

Creator History

Richard Hundley (1931-) is an American composer of vocal music. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, he studied music from the age of seven after he was observed creating his own piano pieces. In his early teens, he was enrolled in the Cincinnati Conservatory, where he studied with Illona Voorm. His concert premiere took place at the age of 14 with the Northern Kentucky Symphony Orchestra, and at 16, he performed Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major* with the Cincinnati Symphony.

Hundley moved to New York City in 1950 to study at the Manhattan School of Music, but was forced to

withdraw after a year due to lack of funds. He took on whatever work he could find and started studying composition with Israel Citkowitz. Hundley continued to compose over the next decade, primarily vocal music. In 1960, he joined the Metropolitan Opera as a tenor in the chorus. Over the next four years, he met several major singers who began to perform his songs, including Annalese Rothenberger, Rosalind Elias, and Anna Moffo. Moffo was at the height of her fame at the time and included Hundley's music on tours of the United States and Europe, where it attracted good reviews. The exposure Hundley's songs received resulted in his first publications in 1962 with General Music Publishing. His other publishers included Boosey and Hawkes and G. Schirmer.

Hundley met the composer and critic Virgil Thomson, who became a good friend, in 1962. He left the Met in 1964 to have more time to compose, after which he studied with William Flanagan (1966), and spent two summers as a fellow at the MacDowell Colony. Hundley has had residencies and taught master classes at many schools and universities, and has received commissions from the Clarion Music Society, the Robert Page Singers, and the Marilyn Horne Foundation, among other organizations. His works include over 50 songs or song cycles for voice and piano. Hundley has set texts from many twentieth century poets, and he collaborated for many years with the novelist and poet James Purdy (1914-2009).

Scope and Content Note

The Richard Hundley papers, dating from the early 1900s to 2014 (bulk dates 1950s-2014), document the composer's career through scores, subject files, performance files, photographs, letters, and datebooks.

Scores comprise the majority of the collection. Nearly all of Hundley's output is present, from the 1950s to the 2010s. Arranged by title, the scores contain sketches, manuscripts, drafts, publishing proofs, and various final versions of compositions. Most are songs for voice and piano, but Hundley often rearranged them for multiple voices or choir, and he may have further edited songs when they were republished in collected editions. Some songs appear in the container list as separate compositions and as part of song cycles or published collections. The songs include settings of poetry by James Purdy, Edgar Allan Poe, Marianne Moore, Langston Hughes, Christopher Marlowe, Wallace Stevens, William Blake, Allen Ginsberg, Robert Louis Stevenson, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Jose Garcia Villa, Gertrude Stein, D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, among others.

Compositions with substantial documentation include "Arise, My Love" (in several arrangements), "Ball," "Come Ready And See Me," "Jenny Wren," the cantata *The Sea Is Swimming Tonight*, and the song cycle *Octaves And Sweet Sounds*. The scores also include Hundley's harmony and orchestration studies; music and studies by Theodore Newman; and sketches by John Fletcher.

The Subject Files hold information on master classes; notes on compositions; lectures and essays by Hundley; interview transcripts, including a joint interview with Hundley and James Purdy; biographies and autobiographies (which also hold lectures by Hundley); and business correspondence with the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), the publisher Boosey and Hawkes, and people and organizations that commissioned work from Hundley. Also present are academic writings about Hundley's work; poetry considered by Hundley for songs; and files on vocalists and other figures associated with Hundley, some of which contain letters. These include Carl Van Vechten, Paul Sperry, James Purdy, and Zinka Milanov. Researchers should also consult the Letters file. The lecture file on Virgil Thomson contains correspondence with Thomson. Other lecture topics include "How I Began To Compose Music," "How To Set Words To Music," and "The Art Song In New York, 1955-1965." The file on Carl Van Vechten holds the transcript of a conversation between Hundley and Clare Fischer about Van Vechten.

The Performance Files contain programs, clippings, press releases, letters, and notes dating from 1946 to 2014. Arranged roughly chronologically, they document performances, festivals, master classes, residencies, lectures, and other events featuring Hundley or his music.

The Letters are mostly organized by date, but include files of letters from family, friends, and colleagues including Anna Moffo, Lee Hoiby, Dana Gioia, and Rick Bogard. They also hold letters of recommendation written for and by Hundley. Those writing in support of Hundley include Zinka Milanov, John Corigliano, James Purdy, and J.W. Fulbright. Most of the remainder of the letters are professional in nature and discuss commissions, performances, scheduling, contracts, travel arrangements, and other business.

The Photographs contain formal and informal portraits of Hundley from throughout his career; informal shots of Hundley with friends and collaborators, including Rosalind Elias, Anna Moffo, Teresa Stratas, and Jeanette Scovotti; and photographs from Hundley's time with the Metropolitan Opera. These include group photos and opera scenes with Hundley, Ada Calabrese, Laurel Hurley, and George London. Also present is a small collection of family photographs, some dating to the early 1900s.

The Datebooks offer spotty chronological coverage (1969-1975, 1989-1991, 2005-2007); Hundley did not use them consistently.

The collection also includes sound and video recordings dating from 1960 to 2012. The sound recordings contain performances of Hundley's work, some with the composer at the piano; home recordings of works-in-progress; interviews with Hundley; and interviews with the pianist Bertha Melnick and the artist Clarence H. Carter (interviewed by Hundley). Performers include Paul Sperry, Anna Moffo, Jeanette Scovotti, Billie Lynn Daniel, the Robert Paige Singers, Jeanne Ommerlee, Frederica Von Stade, Judith Nicosia, Christopher Trakas, and Dawn Kotoski. The video recordings are of a Hundley master class and a performance at the Newport Music Festival. Sound and video recordings are unavailable pending preservation transfer.

Arrangement: The papers are arranged in the following divisions: Datebooks, Letters, Performance Files, Photographs, Scores, and Subject Files.

Key Terms

Genre/Physical Characteristic

Appointment books
Clippings (information artifacts)
Interviews
Letters (correspondence)
Photographs
Press releases
Programs (documents)
Scores

Occupations

Composers Musicians

Subjects

Music -- United States -- 20th century Music -- United States -- 21st century

Geographic Names

New York (N.Y.)

Names

Hoiby, Lee (1926-) Milanov, Zinka Moffo, Anna Purdy, James Thomson, Virgil, 1896-1989 Van Vechten, Carl, 1880-1964 Metropolitan Opera (New York, N.Y.)

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b. 53 f. 7	The Solo Vocal Repertoire of Richard Hundley by Esther Jane Hardenbergh 1997 Doctoral dissertation.
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b. 57 f. 9-10	Biographies and Autobiographies 1970s-2000s Includes lectures and essays by Hundley.

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b. 61 f. 8	Introductions to Published Song Collections 1980s-2000s
b. 61 f. 9	Jenkins, J. Daniel 2013 Correspondence pertains to a letter Hundley wrote to Arnold Schoenberg.
b. 61 f. 10	John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation 1965-1966
b. 61 f. 11	Joy In Singing 1999-2001, 2009
b. 61 f. 12	Kirshbaum, Randa 2002-2004 Music copyist.
b. 61 f. 13	Kotoski, Dawn 1990-1991
b. 61 f. 14	Larmore, Jennifer 1997-1998
	Lecture Notes and Essays
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b. 61 f. 16	"Composers In The West Village" 1960s
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b. 62 f. 1	"How I Began To Compose Songs" 2010
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b. 62 f. 3	"How To Treat An Artist" 2000
b. 62 f. 4	Thomson, Virgil 1994, 1998-2000 Contains notes on Hundley's history with Thomson.
b. 62 f. 5	"What Does A Singer Look For In A Song?" 1950s-2014
b. 62 f. 6	1950s-2014
b. 62 f. 7	Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts 1995
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	Master Classes
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Virginia Art Song Society 2002

William Appling Singers 1983

b. 66 f. 5

b. 66 f. 6