The New York Public Library
Music Division

Guide to the
Oleg Felzer scores and sound recordings
1960-1998
JOB 18-02

Processed by Matt Snyder in 2019.

Summary

Creator: Felzer, Oleg, 1939-1998

Title: Oleg Felzer scores and sound recordings

Date: 1960-1998

Size: 1.17 linear feet (4 boxes)

Source: Donated by Diliara Felzer (Felzer's widow), 2017.

Abstract: Oleg Felzer (1939-1998) was a Jewish modernist composer from Azerbaijan who lived and worked in the Soviet Union before immigrating to New York City in 1988. The Oleg Felzer scores and sound recordings, dating from 1960 to 1998, consist of full scores of nearly all of Felzer's known works as well as several recordings of performances and rehearsals.

Conditions Governing Access:

Sound recordings are unavailable pending digitization.

Preferred citation: Oleg Felzer scores and sound recordings, JOB 18-02. Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Language of the Material: Multiple languages Titles and other text are chiefly in Russian. Some are in English.

Processing note: Processed by Matt Snyder in 2019.

Creator History

Oleg Felzer (1939-1998) was a Jewish composer from Azerbaijan who lived and worked in the Soviet Union before immigrating to New York City in 1988. Born in Baku, he graduated from the State Conservatory there (where he studied with Kara Kareyev), and from the Leningrad Conservatory. After teaching at the Moscow Conservatory, Felzer returned to Baku, where he became a professor of composition and music theory, and founded and conducted a chamber orchestra. His music was

published by the Soviet state publisher, which went out of business after the collapse of the Soviet Union, making much of Felzer's early music unavailable.

Felzer became a figure of renown in Azerbaijan for being one of the first composers from that republic to employ modernist, avant-garde techniques. He also studied Mugham, the traditional music of Azerbaijan, and incorporated it into his music. His students at Baku Conservatory included Franghiz Ali-Zadeh and Faradzh Karayev (son of Kara), both highly-regarded composers.

Felzer was declared a dissident in the early 1970s for writing a musical, *Woe From Wit*, which was critical of the government. It became so popular that the production was halted by the state, and Felzer's salary was frozen and his movements restricted.

In 1988, after restrictions to travel outside the Soviet Union were relaxed, Felzer obtained a visa and moved to New York City, where he rebuilt his career. He found a job as an accompanist for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and in 1989, his music was performed at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. Later, Felzer was hired as the choirmaster and music tutor at St. Ignatius Church in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. The Continuum ensemble, under Joel Sachs, commissioned *Vestige* (1993), which won the Stoeger prize of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and *Interrupted Song* (Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano), Felzer's final work (unfinished, but completed by Faradzh Karayev). Continuum began performing his work in the United States and abroad, as did the Gregg Smith Singers, the Nieuw Ensemble in Amsterdam, and other groups.

Felzer died of cancer in 1998. In the years after his death, Continuum continued to perform his music and produced first recordings for some pieces. His oeuvre includes solo pieces, piano and organ music, chamber music, works for chamber orchestra, full orchestral compositions, and choral and vocal pieces.

Scope and Content Note

The Oleg Felzer scores and sound recordings, dating from 1960 to 1998, document Felzer's music, primarily through scores. Audio recordings of performances and rehearsals are also present for a few of his works.

The scores hold nearly all of Felzer's known works from 1960 to 1998. They include the musical *Woe From Wit*; piano works such as *Four Piano Pieces*, *Polyphonic Suite*, and *Five Bagatelles*; two organ pieces; two compositions for violin and piano; music for small chamber groups, such as *Autographs on the Silhouettes* (for violin, cello, and piano) and *Three Pieces* (for flute and guitar); full orchestra compositions such as *Children Suite* and *In Memoriam of Dmitri Shostakovich*; choir music; and works for vocal soloist and orchestra or choir. No score is present for Felzer's chamber composition *Quartet "Azerbaijani"* (1971).

With the exception of *Woe From Wit* (which has both full and piano-conductor scores), all the music is composed of full scores. They are comprised mainly of manuscripts or manuscript copies, but also include a few published versions (or copies thereof); these date from Felzer's years in Moscow and Baku, and were published by the Soviet state publisher. A list of Felzer's compositions and some of their first performances is in box 3, folder 1.

The sound recordings date from 1989 to 1995 (though some may be older). They are comprised of rehearsals and performances, some by the Continuum Ensemble. Recorded works include *And Harold Again*, *Five Bagatelles*, *Quartet "Azerbaijani"*, *Five Tanka*, *Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano*, *Sonata for Solo Viola*, *Vestige*, *What Are Years?*, and *Zaboul*.

Arrangement: All content is arranged by title.

Key Terms

Occupations
Composers

Subjects
Music -- Azerbaijan -- 20th century
Music -- United States -- 20th century

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Scores (documents for music)
Sound recordings

Names
Felzer, Oleg, 1939-1998

Container List

Scores 1960-1998

b. 1 f. 1 *And Harold Again* 1982
For viola solo and chamber orchestra. Dedicated to Berlioz.

b. 2 f. 1 *Autographs on the Silhouettes* 1987
For violin, cello, and piano.

b. 2 f. 2 *Children Suite* 1978
For symphony orchestra.

b. 1 f. 2 *Dialogue* 1970
For viola, piano, and symphony orchestra.

b. 2 f. 3 *Five Bagatelles* 1986
For piano.

b. 2 f. 5 *Five Tanka* 1967
For tenor and chamber orchestra. Arranged for tenor and piano (full orchestral score is not present).

b. 3 f. 1 *Four Diary Pages* 1994
For chamber orchestra. Commissioned by the Nieuw Ensemble. This folder also contains lists of Felzer's works and first public performances.

Four Piano Pieces, Op. 1 1960-1962
The fourth piece, *March*, is not present.

b. 3 f. 2 *Watercolor, Op. 1, No. 1*
Copy of published score.

b. 3 f. 3 *Imprint, Op. 1, No. 3*

b. 3 f. 4 *Etude*

b. 3 f. 5 *Four Songs* 1969
Also holds a copy of a published piano-only arrangement of one of the songs, *Bird, Red Bird*.

b. 1 f. 3 *The House That Jack Built* 1981-1982, 1985
Two arrangements: One for mixed chorus and piano and one for children's chorus (1985).

b. 2 f. 6 *In Memoriam of Dmitri Shostakovich* 1977
For symphony orchestra.

b. 3 f. 6 *Intermezzo* 1961
For violin and piano.

b. 3 f. 7 *Interrupted Song (Sonata No. 2)* 1998
For violin and piano.

Jubilatio

b. 2 f. 7 For Violin, Viola, and Piano 1979, 1983

b. 2 f. 8 For Violin, Viola, and Strings 1991

b. 3 f. 8 *Piano Sonata No. 2* 1974

b. 3 f. 9 *Pieces for Chamber Ensembles, Installment 1* 1980
Copy of publication.

b. 3 f. 10 *Playing Bossa Nova* undated
For two pianos.

b. 3 f. 11 *Polyphonic Suite* 1965
For piano. Copy of publication.

b. 3 f. 12 *Prelude and Fugue* 1970
For organ.

Scores (cont.)

b. 2 f. 9 *Procession and Stroll* 1976, 1978
For orchestra. Includes parts for *Stroll*.
See also Two Pieces for Piano: Procession and Stroll.

b. 3 f. 13 *Protect Your Sons* 1972
For bass or baritone, chorus, and piano.

b. 1 f. 4 *Sinfonia* 1966, 1972
For chamber orchestra. Copy of published score.

b. 2 f. 10 *Sofia Waltz* 1981
For two pianos.

b. 3 f. 14 *Sonata for Harp* 1985
Published.

b. 3 f. 15 *Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano* 1993

b. 3 f. 16 *Sonata Partita* 1976
For organ.

b. 2 f. 11 *Sonata for Violin Solo* 1978

b. 3 f. 17 *Sonata for Solo Viola* 1986

b. 3 f. 18 *Sonatina* 1963
Copy of publication. Also titled *Piano Sonata No. 1*.

b. 3 f. 19 *Strange Story* 1962
For piano.

b. 3 f. 20 *String Quartet* 1968
Published.

b. 1 f. 5 *Symphony No. 2* 1970
For viola, piano, and orchestra. Arrangement for piano solo (no full score for orchestra).

b. 3 f. 21 *Three Pieces* 1978, 1987
For flute and guitar.

b. 3 f. 22 *Touching Waltz And Postlude* 1988
For piano. Copy of publication.

Two Pastorales

b. 1 f. 6 For Flute and Piano 1978

b. 1 f. 7 For Flute, Cello and Piano 1979

b. 3 f. 23 *Two Pieces for Piano: Procession and Stroll* 1976

b. 3 f. 24 *Veshomru II* 1991
For recorder and two violins.

b. 3 f. 25 *Vestige* 1993
For clarinet, violin, and piano.

b. 3 f. 26 *What Are Years?* 1994
For chorus. Poem by Marianne Moore.

Woe From Wit 1979
Musical. Libretto based on the play by Alexander Griboyedov.

b. 4 Full Score

b. 3 f. 27 Libretto

b. 2 f. 12 Piano-Vocal Score

b. 3 f. 28 *Zaboul* 1996
For chamber orchestra. Computer print.