

George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok

Processed by the Music Division of the Library of Congress



Music Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

2010

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Division, 2010

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Collection Summary

Title: George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok

Span Dates: 1921-1940

Call No.: ML31.A59

Creator: Antheil, George, 1900-1959

Creator: Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970

Extent: approximately 500 items ; 3 containers ; 2.0 linear feet

Language: Material principally in English

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Summary: George Antheil was a composer, pianist, author, and inventor. He first gained fame and notoriety in the 1920s for his mechanistic compositions. This collection principally consists of letters between George Antheil and his longtime patron, Mary Louise Curtis Bok. Other items include several writings by Antheil, photographs of his staged works, promotional materials, and clippings.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Antheil, George, 1900-1959--Correspondence.

Antheil, George, 1900-1959--Criticism and interpretation.

Antheil, George, 1900-1959.

Antheil, George, 1900-1959.

Antheil, George, 1900-1959. Antheilized notation.

Friede, Donald--Correspondence.

Pound, Ezra, 1885-1972--Correspondence.

Sternberg, Constantin von, 1852-1924--Correspondence.

Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971--Correspondence.

Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970--Correspondence.

Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970.

Zimbalist, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, 1876-1970. George Antheil correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok. 1921-1940.

Subjects

Composers--United States--Correspondence.

Titles

George Antheil collection, 1921-1940

Form/Genre

Clippings (Information artifacts)

Correspondence.

Photographic prints.

Programs (Documents)

Administrative Information

Provenance

Gift, Mrs. Cary William Bok, 1975.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

George Antheil's correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok and Stanley Hart was processed in 1992 by Claudia Widgery as a single collection, called the George Antheil Collection, which also included the composer's music manuscripts received by the Library of Congress between 1964 and 1975. These original and photo-reproduced manuscripts, donated principally by Böske Antheil, were cataloged in ML 96.A723 and ML 96.5.A62, respectively. In 1968, Mrs. Stanley Hart donated approximately 140 letters between her husband and Antheil. These were followed by Mrs. Cary William Bok's 1975 gift of approximately 500 letters and other items related to Antheil's relationship with her patron mother-in-law. A finding aid for the George Antheil Collection was publicly available until 2009.

The Music Division has since reprocessed these materials to more accurately reflect their original provenances. The George Antheil Collection no longer exists. The cataloged manuscripts have been returned to the general collections under their original ML call numbers. A handful of cataloged letters previously associated with the Bok correspondence, but unrelated, can be found in ML 95.A726. The remaining batches of Bok and Hart correspondence have been processed as two distinct collections, this one, the George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok and the [George Antheil Correspondence to Stanley Hart](#).

In 2006 to 2007, the Music Division purchased additional Antheil materials, which have been processed as the [George and Böske Antheil Papers](#). References to the ML 96.A723 scores received between 1964 and 1975 are present in the George and Böske Antheil Papers finding aid in order to convey their shared provenance and to provide researchers with a more comprehensive list of Antheil music manuscripts available at the Library of Congress.

This finding aid was revised by Meghan Sommers and coded for EAD by Christopher Hartten in 2010.

Other Repositories

Additional materials can be found in the UCLA Performing Arts Special Collections and the New York Public Library.

Related Material

The Music Division holds numerous special collections that contain Antheil correspondence, including the [George and Böske Antheil Papers](#); [George Antheil Correspondence to Stanley Hart](#); Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Collection; Irving Schwerké Collection; [Nicolas Slonimsky Collection](#); Percy Aldridge Grainger Collection; [Serge Koussevitzky Archive](#); [Leonard Bernstein Collection](#); [Aaron Copland Collection](#); and the [Modern Music Archives](#). A small quantity of cataloged letters are available in ML 95.A726.

Copyright Status

The George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time.

Certain restrictions to use or copying of materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Mary Louise Curtis Bok, founder of the Curtis Institute of Music, served as patron to George Antheil throughout much of his career. Antheil first made the acquaintance of Bok in 1921 through former theory and composition teacher Constantin von Sternberg. Despite her generous financial support, Bok was not, as she wrote in a letter to Antheil dated April 13, 1931, "in sympathy with the so-called modern trend," and generally disapproved of Antheil's music. Antheil dedicated a number of his musical works to Bok, including *Night Piece*, *Six Little Pieces for String Quartet*, and *Symphonie in Fa*.

Scope and Content Note

The George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok spans the period 1921-1940. The primary series consists chiefly of letters and telegrams between the composer and his patron. Correspondence between Bok and others regarding Antheil, namely Ezra Pound, Donald S. Friede, and Constantin von Sternberg, is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Clippings and other enclosures are scattered among these materials. Additional items of note include a letter from Pound to Antheil and a telegram from Igor Stravinsky to the composer.

"Writings" contains two substantive, titled works by Antheil. *Antheilized Notation, or, Music for everybody who can tell one from two and two from three* provides an explanation of the composer's intriguing "See-Note" method of piano pedagogy. This subject is described at great length in the George and Böske Antheil Papers, as well. The second work, *Many Thoughts to M.L.B. and a Key to My Music (To Be Remembered While Listening to It)*, is a reproduction of a lengthy piece enclosed in Antheil's February 1926 letter to Bok. "Miscellany" comprises assorted newspaper clippings, promotional materials, and photographs of the *Transatlantic* sets by Ludwig Sievert. These items are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Organization of the George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok

The George Antheil Correspondence with Mary Louise Curtis Bok is organized in 3 series:

- Correspondence, 1921-1940
- Writings, undated
- Miscellany, 1927-1930

Description of Series

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Series</i> |
|------------------|---|
| BOX 1-2 | <u>Correspondence, 1921-1940</u> Letters and telegrams with enclosures, sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and chronologically therein. |
| BOX 3 | <u>Writings, undated</u> |
| BOX 3 | <u>Miscellany, 1927-1930</u> |

Container List

| <i>Container</i> | <i>Contents</i> |
|-------------------|--|
| BOX 1-2 | Correspondence, 1921-1940 Letters and telegrams with enclosures, sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and chronologically therein. |
| | Antheil, George |
| BOX-FOLDER 1/1-14 | 1921-1930 |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/1-13 | 1931-1940 |
| | Erskine, John |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/14 | Erskine to Antheil, 1929-1932 |
| | Friede, Donald S. |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/15 | Friede to Antheil and Bok, 1927 |
| | Graf, Herbert |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/16 | 1930 |
| | Hammer, Mrs. William C. |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/17 | Hammer to Antheil, Bok, and John Erskine 1932, |
| | Hanson, Martin H. |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/18 | 1922-1929 |
| | Hofmann, Josef |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/19 | 1927 |
| | Konzertdirektion Leonard |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/20 | 1923 |
| | Lucas, Clarence |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/21 | 1927 |
| | Pound, Ezra |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/22 | Pound to Bok and Antheil, 1923-1927 |
| | Reiner, Fritz |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/23 | 1927 |
| | Robinson, Lennox |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/24 | Robinson to Antheil, 1928 |
| | Sternberg, Constantin von |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/25 | 1921 |
| | Stokowski, Leopold |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/26 | Stokowski to Antheil and Bok, 1927-1929 |
| | Stravinsky, Igor |
| BOX-FOLDER 2/27 | Stravinsky to Antheil, 1922, undated |
| BOX 3 | Writings, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 3/1 | Antheilized notation, or, Music for everybody who can tell one from two and two from three, undated Holograph manuscript; [5] p. |

Writings, undated

Container

Contents

| | |
|----------------|--|
| BOX-FOLDER 3/1 | Many thoughts to M.L.B. and a Key to my music (to be remembered while listening to it), undated Holograph manuscript; [10] p. |
| BOX 3 | Miscellany, 1927-1930 |
| BOX-FOLDER 3/2 | Clippings, 1927, undated |
| BOX-FOLDER 3/3 | Programs, 1927 |
| BOX-FOLDER 3/4 | Transatlantic, undated 4 black and white photographs, 1 negative Images by Ludwig Siefert |