

# Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts

Guides to Special Collections in the Music Division of the Library of Congress



Music Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
2009

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2006577402>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu009016>

Processed by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Music Division, 2009  
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## Collection Summary

**Title:** Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts

**Span Dates:** circa 1910-1918

**Call No.:** ML31.H36

**Creator:** Hambitzer, Charles, d. 1918

**Extent:** 200 items

**Extent:** 2 containers

**Extent:** 2 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2006577402>

**Summary:** Charles Hambitzer (1878 or 1881-1918) was an American pianist, teacher, and composer. His best known piano student was the teenage George Gershwin. Hambitzer's compositions include orchestral tone poems, incidental music for plays, two operettas, and a variety of shorter pieces.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Hambitzer, Charles, -1918--Autographs.

Hambitzer, Charles, -1918--Manuscripts.

Hambitzer, Charles, -1918.

Hambitzer, Charles, -1918. Works. Selections.

### Subjects

Music--Manuscripts--United States.

## Provenance

The Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts were donated to the Library of Congress in 1991 by Marc George Gershwin and his mother, Judy Gershwin, sister-in-law of George and Ira Gershwin.

## Custodial History

Judy Gershwin found Hambitzer's manuscripts in a storage room in her Central Park West apartment, which had formerly been the home of her mother-in-law, Rose Gershwin. It is believed that George Gershwin left the manuscripts with his mother, Rose, when he moved to California in 1936. In the same trunk as the Hambitzer materials was a manuscript page of Porgy and Bess, probably dating to 1935 (this page has been retained by the Gershwin family). There is no evidence of just how George Gershwin, who was twenty when Hambitzer died, came to possess the manuscripts, although it is known that he corresponded with members of the Hambitzer family.

## Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

## Processing History

The Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts were processed in 1992 by Linda B. Fairtile and encoded for EAD by Janet McKinney in December 2009.

## Copyright Status

The status of copyright on the materials of the Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## Access and Restrictions

The Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Performing Arts Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: container number, Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Charles Hambitzer (1878 or 1881-1918) was born in Beloit, Wisconsin, to a musical family. His great-grandfather was a violinist at the Russian court and his father owned a music store in Milwaukee. After studying with Julius Albert Jahn and Hugo Kaun, Hambitzer played in the orchestra of the Arthur Friend Stock Company, and taught piano, violin, and cello at the Wisconsin Conservatory. In 1908, he moved to New York City, where he joined Joseph Knecht's orchestra at the Waldorf-Astoria, frequently appearing as a piano soloist. At the same time, he opened a music studio on the Upper West Side, and among his many pupils was the fourteen-year-old George Gershwin, who began his studies with Hambitzer in 1912. In 1914, Hambitzer's wife died of tuberculosis, and in 1918 he succumbed to the same disease, exacerbated by an emotional breakdown. It has been widely suggested that his death caused the young Gershwin to abandon his own budding career as a concert pianist.

Hambitzer's feverish approach to composition reflects a prodigious musical talent. His works include orchestral tone poems, incidental music for plays by Shakespeare and others (his *Twelfth Night Suite* was used for a Sothorn and Marlow production), two operettas, and numerous songs and short instrumental compositions. Although a number of his tone poems were performed by the New York Philharmonic and his operetta, *The Love Wager*, toured the United States, few of Hambitzer's works were ever published, since he seems generally to have lost interest in a piece upon its completion. Although he was under contract to compose theatrical music for the Shubert Organization, nothing resulted from this arrangement; this uncharacteristic lack of productivity has been attributed to creative and personal differences. In the 1930s it was reported that a number of Hambitzer's manuscripts were in the possession of his family, although some relatives believed that his most significant scores had been retained by Joseph Knecht.

## Scope and Content Note

The Charles Hambitzer manuscripts consist of sixteen orchestral scores or part sets for tone poems and incidental music, as well as several short pieces for various instruments and approximately twenty-five songs and stage numbers in piano-vocal format. Sketches and miscellaneous fragments are also represented. Although George Gershwin once recalled that Hambitzer, his first significant music teacher, "wrote what I then considered the finest light music," there appears to be no connection between these manuscripts and Gershwin's own compositions.

## Organization of the Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts

The Charles Hambitzer Music Manuscripts are organized into two series:

- Instrumental Scores and Parts
- Piano-vocal Scores

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Instrumental Scores and Parts</u>
BOX 2	<u>Piano-vocal Scores</u>

# Container List

Container	Contents
<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Instrumental Scores and Parts</b>
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/1</b>	The Bedouins Full score and parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/2</b>	Chan toy: a Chinese sketch Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/3</b>	First-born [incidental music] Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/4</b>	Hamlet [incidental music] Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/5</b>	If I were king [incidental music] Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/6</b>	[Introduction and Trio] Piano score
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/7</b>	(Mignonne) Petite valse Violin I part only
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/8</b>	Mistress Nell [incidental music] Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/9</b>	Mosquito ballet Full score Incomplete?
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/10</b>	Opening - Act I Full score
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/11</b>	Orientale Violin [?] and piano score Incomplete
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/12</b>	Out of the fold [incidental music] Piano part only
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/13</b>	Prelude - Act III Full score
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/14</b>	Quartet Violin 2 part only
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/15</b>	Quo vadis [incidental music] Parts Includes <i>Nero's song no. 1 and 2</i> and [ <i>Terpsichore, thy praise we sing...</i> ] [all for voice and lute]
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/16</b>	Romeo and Juliet selection Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/17</b>	The shaughraun [incidental music] Parts
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/18</b>	Soupirs Parts

## Instrumental Scores and Parts

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/19	Sourire - Mazurka Parts For piano, 2 violins, [and flute?]
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	The three musketeers [incidental music] Parts
BOX-FOLDER 2/1	The twelfth night suite Viola Full score and parts Malvolio Full score and parts In Olivia's garden Full score only
BOX-FOLDER 2/2	Waltz legends solo
BOX-FOLDER 2/3	[Untitled instrumental parts nos. 9, 10, 11, 13, 18, 20, 21]
BOX-FOLDER 2/4	[Untitled piece for treble instrument and piano] Score fragments
BOX-FOLDER 2/5	[Unidentified instrumental parts and sketches]
BOX-FOLDER 2/6	[Unidentified orchestral score fragments]
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	[Unidentified piano sketches and fragments]
BOX-FOLDER 2/8	[Unidentified violin? melody line sketch]
BOX 2	<b>Piano-vocal Scores</b>
BOX-FOLDER 2/9	[After the heat and the toil...]
BOX-FOLDER 2/10	The belle of a garrison town
BOX-FOLDER 2/11	A doctor Incomplete
BOX-FOLDER 2/12	A factory girl
BOX-FOLDER 2/13	Good-night song Unidentified sketches for a stage work on verso
BOX-FOLDER 2/14	His little white delight Incomplete
BOX-FOLDER 2/15	[Hurrah, hurrah...]
BOX-FOLDER 2/16	I prithee send me back my heart
BOX-FOLDER 2/17	I'm looking for a man Refrain incomplete
BOX-FOLDER 2/18	A man, a maid, and a telephone Incomplete
BOX-FOLDER 2/19	Opening - Act III
BOX-FOLDER 2/20	The song of the wind
BOX-FOLDER 2/21	Such is life
BOX-FOLDER 2/22	What do I care for a pedigree Incomplete
BOX-FOLDER 2/23	[From unidentified stage work] Grand entrance and recitative Maybe
BOX-FOLDER 2/24	[From unidentified stage work]

## Piano-vocal Scores

Container	Contents
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	[Come, come you lazy listless people...] Incomplete Includes <i>I've a drop or two of German in my veins</i> and <i>Welcome chorus</i> (incomplete) Finale - Act I [Women's chorus part, unaccompanied] Incomplete Includes <i>We'll recognize his high degree...</i> (incomplete), <i>He believed what he read in the papers</i> , <i>Sobriety</i> , <i>Naya</i> , <i>Maid and a fad</i> , <i>I've a drop or two of German in my veins</i> , <i>Welcome chorus</i> , <i>When I'm eighteen</i> , and <i>Closing chorus - Act I</i>
BOX-FOLDER 2/25	[From unidentified stage work] Dainty lace and lingerie A fair exchange It's great to have a tete-a-tete
BOX-FOLDER 2/26	[Unidentified piano-vocal sketches and fragments]