

Rudolf Kolisch Collection

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



Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2010

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

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Collection Summary

Title: Rudolf Kolisch Collection

Span Dates: 1921-1943

Call No.: ML31.K63

Creator: Kolisch, Rudolf, 1896-1978

Extent: 31 items

Extent: 1 container

Extent: 1 linear foot

Language: Collection material in German.

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2010561022>

Summary: Rudolf Kolisch was a Viennese-American violinist and string quartet player. The collection contains thirty-one items, principally holograph manuscript correspondence, that provide insight into the professional relationship between Kolisch and composers Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern. Included among these are two Berg manuscripts that present analysis and musical examples from his *Lyric suite* and *String quartet, op. 3*.

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

Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827--Criticism and interpretation.

Berg, Alban, 1885-1935--Correspondence.

Berg, Alban, 1885-1935--Criticism and interpretation.

Berg, Alban, 1885-1935--Performances.

Berg, Alban, 1885-1935. *Lyrische Suite*.

Berg, Alban, 1885-1935. *Quartet, strings, op. 3*.

Kolisch, Rudolf, 1896-1978--Correspondence.

Kolisch, Rudolf, 1896-1978.

Kolisch, Rudolf, 1896-1978.

Schoenberg, Arnold, 1874-1951--Correspondence.

Schoenberg, Arnold, 1874-1951--Criticism and interpretation.

Schoenberg, Arnold, 1874-1951--Performances.

Webern, Anton, 1883-1945--Correspondence.

Webern, Anton, 1883-1945--Criticism and interpretation.

Webern, Anton, 1883-1945--Performances.

Form/Genre

Correspondence.

Provenance

Gift, Lorna Kolisch, 1983.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

Juliette Appold processed the Rudolf Kolisch Collection in 2010 and Christopher Hartten encoded the finding aid.

Other Repositories

Harvard University holds the Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886-1978; the Lorna Kolisch Photographs and Papers, circa 1896-2008; and the Eugene Lehner Papers, 1920-1997.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright on the materials of the Rudolf Kolisch Collection is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The Rudolf Kolisch Collection is 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.

Certain restrictions to use or copying of materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

Rudolf Kolisch (1896-1978) was a prominent Viennese-American violinist and string quartet player who played his instrument left-handed as a result of a childhood injury. His Kolisch Quartet gave seminal performances and premieres of chamber music that included compositions by Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern. In the late 1930s Kolisch immigrated to the United States, where he became the leader of the Pro Arte Quartet (1944-1967) and professor of music at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the New England Conservatory of Music, and other institutions.

Date	Event
1896 July 20	Born in Klamm, Austria
1913	Graduated from Vienna Music Academy and Vienna University
1919	Studied composition with Arnold Schoenberg
1919-1921	Played a leading role in Schoenberg's "Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen" (Society for Private Musical Performances)
1921	Formed the Neue Wiener Streichquartett (Rudolf Kolisch, Fritz Rothschild, Marcel Dick, Joachim Stutschewsky)
1924	Arnold Schoenberg married Kolisch's sister Gertrud
1927	Formed the Kolisch Quartet (Rudolf Kolisch, Felix Khuner, Eugene Lehner, Benar Heifetz)
1935 April	Kolisch Quartet made its American debut performance at the Library of Congress
1940	The Kolisch Quartet was on tour in the United States and did not return to Europe
circa 1941	Began teaching at the New School for Social Research in New York
1943	Published his best known article, <i>Tempo and Character in Beethoven's Music</i>
1944-1967	Served as first violinist of Pro Arte Quartet
1944-1967	Taught at the University of Wisconsin in Madison
1953-1958	Taught at the Akademie für Tonkunst and Ferienkurse für neue Musik in Darnstadt, Germany
1967	Began teaching at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston
1974-1977	Taught chamber music performance at the annual Schoenberg Seminars in Mödling, Austria
1978 August 1	Died in Watertown, Massachusetts

Scope and Content Note

The Rudolf Kolisch Collection contains thirty-one items, principally manuscript correspondence, that provide insight into the professional relationship between Kolisch and composers Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, from 1921 to 1943. The Musical Analysis and Examples series includes materials related to Berg's *Lyric suite* and *String quartet, op. 3*. The Correspondence series consists of postcards and letters, chiefly from Webern to Kolisch, that discuss compositional progress and upcoming performances. Among the works mentioned are Webern's *String trio, op. 20*, *String quartet, op. 28*, *Six bagatelles, op. 9*, *Fünf Sätze, op. 5*, *Symphony, op. 21*, and *Variations for piano, op. 27*, as well as various compositions by Schoenberg, Berg, and Beethoven.

Organization of the Rudolf Kolisch Collection

The Rudolf Kolisch Collection is organized in 3 series:

- Musical Analysis and Examples
- Correspondence
- Miscellaneous

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Musical Analysis and Examples</u>
BOX 1	<u>Correspondence</u>
BOX 1	<u>Miscellaneous</u>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Musical Analysis and Examples
BOX 1	Berg, Alban
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Analysis of Lyric suite [9] p. Principally tone rows and scales from movements nos. 1-6 with analytical commentary
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Fragebogen [2] p. 11 measures for String quartet, op. 3, (including an "ossia" line for violoncello) and 6 additional measures for one unspecified instrument Both pages contain questions and comments concerning performance practice and playability
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Arnold Schoenberg to RK, 1943 Dec. 2 [2] p. Contents: expresses thanks for a gift; mentions work on "Counterpoint"; discusses RK's essay on tempo markings in Beethoven; asks if RK considered performing his "Ode"; asks for the source of a Beethoven quote
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1921 July 25 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: expresses thanks for a gift; mentions Schoenberg and his [AW's] orchestration of Schoenberg's "Glückliche Hand" for chamber orchestra
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 Aug. 13 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: mentions sending his music for printing to Universal Edition; references "Trio" premiere on Oct. 1
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 Aug. 23 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: references "Trio" premiere on Oct. 1 and Universal Edition
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 Sept. 7 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: references "Trio" performance on Oct. 1; responds to RK's concern of not being able to play; asks RK to return the original score if possible
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 Sept. 21 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: mentions "Bagatellen" and performance suggestions for the work; references "Trio" performance in Cologne
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 July 14 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink Contents: mentions "Trio" performance in Siena; RK's pleusiry; Fr. Herlinger; performance of an evening song recital in London
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 July 19 Holograph manuscript postcard blue-purple pencil

Correspondence

Container

Contents

	Contents: mentions possible meeting with RK in Aussee
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 Sept. 22 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink
	Contents: mentions performance of "Trio" in Siena and possible meeting in Aussee
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Anton Webern to RK, 1929 Apr. 1 Holograph manuscript postcard in black ink
	Contents: mentions rescheduled choir rehearsal and possible meeting
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Anton Webern to RK, 1921 Aug. 8 [2] p.
	Contents: encourages RK to stay with the theater; mentions Schoenberg
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Anton Webern to RK, 1924 Mar. 4 [2] p.
	Contents: mentions performance opportunity mediated by Loos, suggesting the first "Quartet" and "Violinstücke"
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 June 13 [1] p.
	Contents: mentions accompanying letter of recommendation for Fr. Rosanska to Koussevitzki [missing]; discusses possible rehearsal date of Schoenberg's "Suite"
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Anton Webern to RK, 1927 Oct. 9 [2] p.
	Contents: mentions possible premiere of "Trio" at the end of Nov.; references "Bagatellen" and Schoenberg
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 Jan. 20 [2] p.
	Contents: expresses thanks to RK, Mr. Khuner, and Heifetz for a great first performance of "Trio"
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 Mar. 11 [2] p.
	Contents: mentions "Trio" and issues with A.D.M.V. and city of Schwerin concerning an upcoming performance
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Anton Webern to RK, 1928 Mar. 17 [1] p.
	Contents: summarizes aforementioned issue with Schwerin/A.D.M.V.; references accompanying response letter [missing]
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Anton Webern to RK, 1929 July 1 [1] p.
	Contents: mentions his involvement with the radio station Ravag and invites RK to perform a cycle of contemporary chamber music, specifically quartets by Schoenberg
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Anton Webern to RK, 1931 Mar. 21 [2] p.
	Contents: mentions "5 Sätze" and "Quartet"; references to Schoenberg, Beethoven, Ast, Ms. Herlinger, Frl. Michalski, and Frl. Rozanska
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Anton Webern to RK, 1934 Oct. 4 [2] p.
	Contents: mentions gala event for Schoenberg ("Schoenberg-Feier") in the "Verein für neue Musik"; references to Jalowetz, Steuermann, and Stein; asks if RK can play "Quartet I and III" for the occasion
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Anton Webern to RK, 1936 Nov. 7 [3] p.

Correspondence

Container

Contents

	Contents: mentions success of RK's quartet in the U.S.; talks about "Verein für neue Musik" and Schoenberg gala event that will feature his latest "Quartet" and "Waldtaube", with Klemperer conducting "Streicher-Suite"; references to Berg's violin concerto, his own symphony; completion of a variation composition for piano and work on a string quartet; mentions Peter and Steuermann
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Anton Webern to RK, 1937 Mar. 31 [2] p. Contents: references messages from London and discusses public performance of his "Quartet IV" by RK in Vienna; suggests Berg's "Quartet" for performance and mentions possibility of Steuermann playing his "Variationen"; asks for possible dates for performances
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Anton Webern to RK, 1937 May 31 [2] p. Contents: mentions possible meeting the following Monday in Vienna and RK's quartet performance of his "5 Stücke"
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Anton Webern to RK, 1937 Dec. 22 [2] p. Contents: mentions "Wind quintet" and "Quartet"; references to RK's performance of the "5 Sätze" in New York, E.S. Coolidge, and Schoenberg
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Anton Webern to RK, 1938 Apr. 19 [4] p. Contents: description and analysis of his String quartet, op. 28 in folder entitled: "Analyse Streichquartett"
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Anton Webern to RK, 1938 Dec. 1 [2] p. Contents: mentions Schoenberg, E. S. Coolidge, Boosey and Hawkes, Steuermann, daughter Christl and grand-daughter; discussion of first performance of "Quartet" (Sept. 22) and a later performance in NY (Nov. 1); talks about possibly recording the "Quartet"
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Anton Webern to RK, 1938 Aug. 17 [2] p. Contents: mentions his "Quartet", work on a symphony, Greissle, Steuermann, and financial matters
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Anton Webern to RK, 1939 Mar. 30 [1] p. Contents: mentions Coolidge Medal, Schoenberg, an upcoming performance of his [AW's] "Quartet" in Warsaw, and work on a symphony with text by Hildegard Jone [op. 29]
BOX 1	Miscellaneous
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	[Unidentified drawing of a stage?] [2] boards