

Belle Brown 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: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact>

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Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu010026>

Processed by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Music Division, 2010
Revised 2012 September

Collection Summary

Title: Belle Brown Collection

Span Dates: 1865-1912

Call No.: ML31.B76

Creator: Brown, Belle

Extent: 180 items

Extent: 3 containers

Extent: 1.75 linear feet

Language: Material in English, German, and French

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2010563516>

Summary: Belle Brown was an American soprano who had a brief operatic career abroad around the turn of the twentieth century. Although little biographical information exists about her, the contents of this collection document her relationships with prominent and respected European performers of the day. She studied with many celebrated performers and pedagogues, including Désirée Artôt, Pauline Lucca, and Jean and Edouard de Reszke. The collection contains correspondence with performers and pedagogues; photographs and prints of composers, performers, musicians, and other influential figures in European musical society around the turn of the century; and miscellaneous clippings and ephemeral materials.

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

Artôt, Désirée, 1835-1907--Correspondence.

Bronsart, Hans von, 1830-1913--Correspondence.

Brown, Belle--Correspondence.

Brown, Belle--Photographs.

Brown, Belle.

Brown, Belle.

Hempel, Frieda, 1885-1955--Correspondence.

Lucca, Pauline, 1841-1908--Correspondence.

Rosé, Arnold, 1863-1946--Correspondence.

Rubinstein, Anton, 1829-1894--Correspondence.

Subjects

Opera--19th century.

Opera--20th century.

Sopranos (Singers)--United States--Correspondence.

Sopranos (Singers)--United States--Photographs.

Form/Genre

Clippings (Information artifacts)

Correspondence.

Photographic prints.

Provenance

Gift, Miss Belle G. Brown, 1933-1934

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

The Belle Brown Collection was processed by Caitlin Miller in 2009. The finding aid was coded for EAD by Janet McKinney in 2010. In 2012, Nancy Seeger revised the finding aid to include additional materials that were shelved elsewhere.

Copyright Status

Materials from the Belle Brown Collection are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The Belle Brown Collection 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], Belle Brown Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Though little biographical information exists concerning Belle G. Brown, the contents of her collection document her relationships with prominent and respected European performers at the turn of the twentieth century. Miss Brown was born in Massachusetts to Joseph and Maria Brown and, aside from her studies in Europe, remained a Bostonian until at least the early 1900s. During the decade leading up to 1900, Miss Brown enjoyed the privilege of studying with such celebrated performers and pedagogues as Désirée Artôt, Pauline Lucca, and Jean and Edouard de Reszké. In 1893, Bronsart von Schellendorf (General Intendant of the Court Theatre at Weimar from 1887-1895) offered a five-year contract to Miss Brown to perform for the Court Theatre. Two years into her contract, on December 15, 1895, the *Boston Globe* printed an announcement that “Miss Belle Brown of Newbury Street [had] received by cable an offer of an engagement at the opera house in Weimar.” Both her contract signed by Schellendorf and the cable offer to perform in Weimar reside in this collection. There is also a limited amount of information available concerning Miss Brown’s professional opera career abroad as well as the remainder of her life, which was presumably spent in Boston (correspondence indicates that she resided in Boston’s Hotel Puritan when she gifted her materials to the Music Division in 1933 and 1934).

Scope and Content Note

The Belle Brown Collection spans the years 1865-1912 and includes correspondence, newspaper clippings, Miss Brown’s contract with the Court Theatre in Weimar, a program of Anton Rubinstein concerts, and iconography related to Miss Brown’s vocal training abroad as well as her brief opera career in Weimar. The collection also documents Miss Brown’s professional and personal associations with influential European artists.

The “Correspondence” series spans 1865 to 1912 and includes letters and cards from performers and pedagogues, most notably Désirée Artôt and Pauline Lucca. There are also eight letters to Miss Brown and Lucca from Bronsart von

Schellendorf dated 1893-1894, reflecting the first years of Miss Brown's contract with the Weimar Court Theatre. Other significant musicians whose correspondence appears in the collection include Frieda Hempel, Arnold Rosé, and Anton Rubinstein. Correspondence is arranged alphabetically by correspondent and then by topic.

The second series, "Miscellaneous Documents," is comprised of a small number of newspaper clippings and obituary notices concerning musicians, most significantly Lucca. In addition, there is a program of Anton Rubinstein concerts and the contract Bronsart von Schellendorf offered to Miss Brown in 1893. This series is organized alphabetically by the subject of the document.

Finally, the "Iconography" series, which is the largest series of the collection, offers 114 prints and photographs of influential figures in European musical society around the turn of the century. Nineteen photographs are autographed by the subject of the photograph or inscribed to Miss Brown; most impressive of these signatures are those of Lola Artôt de Padilla, Leschetizky, and Liszt. The majority of these photographs are also annotated by Miss Brown, often indicating the person and his/her relationship to Miss Brown's music career. Iconography is arranged alphabetically by subject of the photograph.

Organization of the Belle Brown Collection

The Belle Brown Collection is organized into three (3) series:

- [Correspondence, 1865-1912](#)
- [Miscellaneous Documents, circa 1873-circa 1908](#)
- [Iconography](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Correspondence, 1865-1912</u> Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.
BOX 1	<u>Miscellaneous Documents, circa 1873-circa 1908</u> Arranged alphabetically by subject of the document.
BOX 1-3	<u>Iconography</u> Arranged alphabetically by subject of the photograph.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1865-1912 Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Artôt, Désirée, 1890-1892 to Miss Belle Brown (4) to Mr. and Mrs. Brown (3)
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Bronsart von Schellendorf, Hans August Alexander, 1893-1894 to Miss Belle Brown (6) to Pauline Lucca (2)
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Brown, Belle, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Ehrenstein, Gisela von, 1892
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Hempel, Frieda, 1912
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Krebs, Maria, 1893 This letter was formerly shelved under ML95.K79.
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Kullak, Franz, 1897 This letter was formerly shelved under ML95.K91.
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Leisinger, Elisabeth, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Leschetizky, Theodor, 1887 This letter was formerly shelved under ML95.L378.
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Lucca, Pauline, 1865-1900 These items include letters to Belle Brown, her mother, and Otto Gumprecht. The Lucca material was formerly shelved under ML95.L81.
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Palmer, Nevada, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Reszké, Marie de, 1912
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Rosé, Arnold Joseph, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	Rubinstein, Anton, undated This may have been formerly shelved under ML410.R89A12.
BOX-FOLDER 1/15	Schönheit, Wilhelm, 1893
BOX 1	Miscellaneous Documents, circa 1873-circa 1908 Arranged alphabetically by subject of the document.
BOX-FOLDER 1/16	Brown, Belle Contract with the Deutsches Nationaltheater in Weimar. Signed May 8, 1893 by Bronsart von Schellendorf Cable invitation to perform at the Deutsches Nationaltheater, 1895
BOX-FOLDER 1/17	Lucca, Pauline Newspaper clippings Includes clippings from 1908 and other dates. Obituary card
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Marchesi, Mathilde Newspaper clipping
BOX-FOLDER 1/19	Rubinstein, Anton

Miscellaneous Documents, circa 1873-circa 1908

Container	Contents
	Programme of the Rubinstein concerts, 1873 This may have been formerly shelved under ML410.R89A12.
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	Seidl, Anton Obituary
BOX 1-3	Iconography Arranged alphabetically by subject of the photograph.
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	Arnoldson, Sigrid 2 photographs (1 autographed)
BOX-FOLDER 1/22	Artôt de Padilla, Lola 4 photographs (2 autographed) 1 postcard
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	Bach, Johann Sebastian 1 photograph of Toby E. Rosenthal's painting "Morgen andacht bei Sebastian Bach" (1870)
BOX-FOLDER 1/24	Barblan, Otto 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/25	Beethoven, Ludwig van 2 photographs [portraits] 1 photograph of Beethoven's Geburtszimmer 1 photograph of painting by Stieler 1 photograph of Beethoven's death mask
BOX-FOLDER 3/1	Beethoven, Ludwig Van Photograph of painting by Rödigg
BOX-FOLDER 1/26	Bernhardt, Sarah 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/27	Brahms, Johannes 1 photograph 1 photograph of painting by Eichhorn
BOX-FOLDER 3/2	Brown, Belle 3 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/28	Chopin, Frédéric 1 photograph of Félix Barrias's painting "La Mort de Chopin" (1885)
BOX-FOLDER 1/29	Czesek 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Fuchs, Frau Robert 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/31	Fuchs, Robert 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/32	Gadski, Johanna Emilia Agnes 2 autographed photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/33	Goetschius, Percy 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/34	Gounod, Charles François 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/35	Krakauer, Alexander

Iconography

Container	Contents
	1 tintype Laid in: a descriptive note in the hand of Miss Brown.
BOX-FOLDER 1/36	Lebert, Sigmund 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/37	Lehmann, Lilli 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/38	Leschetizky, Theodor 2 photographs (1 autographed)
BOX-FOLDER 1/39	Liszt, Franz 2 photographs (1 autographed)
BOX-FOLDER 1/40	Löwe, Adele 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/41	Lucca, Pauline 10 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/42	Malten, Therese 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/43	Materna, Amalie Friedrick 3 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/44	Mead, Olive 2 autographed photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/45	Melba, Nellie, Dame 1 autographed photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/46	Meriam, Alice 1 photograph Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus 1 photograph of Mozart's Geburthaus
BOX-FOLDER 1/47	
BOX-FOLDER 3/3	Photograph of painting by Rödiger
BOX-FOLDER 1/48	Nilsson, Christine 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/49	Padilla y Ramos, Mariano 2 autographed photographs
BOX-FOLDER 1/50	Patti, Adelina 1 photograph 1 photograph with Patti's niece
BOX-FOLDER 1/51	Petzner 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 1/52	Plank, Fritz 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/1	Rosé, Arnold Josef 3 photographs (2 autographed) 1 postcard
BOX-FOLDER 2/2	Rosé String Quartet 1 photograph 1 photograph with Anton Door
BOX-FOLDER 2/3	Rubinstein, Anton

Iconography

Container

Contents

	1 photograph This may have been formerly shelved under ML410.R89A12.
BOX-FOLDER 2/4	San Carlo Theatre [Naples] 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/5	Scheidemantl, Karl 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 2/6	Schmerling, Mme. Pessiack 1 photograph 1 photograph with Belle and Bessie Brown
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	Schumann, Clara 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/8	Schumann, Robert 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/9	Schwarz, Franz Josef 1 autographed photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/10	Singer, Edmund 1 autographed photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/11	Speidell, Wilhelm 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/12	Staudigl, Gisele Koppmayer 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/13	Stepanoff, Varette 4 photographs (2 autographed)
BOX-FOLDER 2/14	Sucher, Rosa Hasselbeck 2 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 2/15	Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/16	Tua, Maria Felicita 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/17	Van Dyck, Ernest Marie 3 photographs
BOX-FOLDER 2/18	Verdi, Giuseppe 2 photographs 1 postcard
BOX-FOLDER 2/19	Vogl, Heinrich 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/20	Wagnertheater
BOX-FOLDER 2/21	Wallhoffen, Emil Maria 1 autographed photograph
BOX-FOLDER 2/22	Weber, Carl Maria von 1 photograph
BOX-FOLDER 3/4	Group photograph Photograph of Désirée Artôt, Carmen Artôt de Padilla, Lola Artôt de Padilla, and Belle Brown (2 copies)
BOX-FOLDER 2/23	Unidentified 6 photographs