

# Robert Parris Music Manuscripts



**Music Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
2021**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020570114>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu021012>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Melissa Capozio Jones, 2021

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Robert Parris Music Manuscripts

**Inclusive Dates:** 1959-1972

**Creator:** Parris, Robert

**Extent:** 22 items

**Extent:** 1 container plus 6 bound scores

**Extent:** 1.5 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020570114>

**Summary:** Robert Parris (1924-1999) was an American composer who specialized in small ensembles. After studying at the Juilliard School of Music with Peter Menin and William Bergsma and completing a Fulbright Scholarship with Arthur Honegger in France, Parris settled in the Washington, D.C., area where he taught at George Washington University for more than three decades. His works have been performed by the National Symphony Orchestra, including the world premiere of his Concerto for Five Kettledrums and Orchestra, which brought him international recognition. The collection contains manuscript scores, parts, and sketches for original compositions by Parris.

## Acquisition Information

Gift of Robert Parris, 1967 and 1969. The manuscript for Pasture Management was gifted in 1972 by Elmira Bier.

## Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

## Processing History

The Music Division classed the Robert Parris Music Manuscripts in ML96.P36 (Case) as they were received in 1967, 1969, and 1972. Melissa Capozio Jones coded the finding aid in 2021.

## Other Repositories

Additional Robert Parris materials can be found in the Robert Parris papers at the University of Maryland, College Park.

## Copyright Status

Materials from the Robert Parris Music Manuscripts 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 Robert Parris Music Manuscripts are 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 on using or copying materials may apply.

## Preferred Citation

Materials described in this finding aid should be cited using the following information: Last name, first name. Title of work, year. Format of material. Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

American composer and professor Robert Parris (1924-1999) was born and raised in Philadelphia. He attended the University of Pennsylvania, earning a degree in Music Education before studying at the Juilliard School of Music with Peter Mennin and William Bergsma. He also studied under Otto Luening and spent two years at Tanglewood with Jacques Ibert and Aaron Copland from 1950 to 1951. Parris later concluded that the teachings of these composers did not significantly influence the direction of his own work. In 1952, he completed a year of study with Arthur Honegger in Paris on a Fulbright scholarship. After a temporary stint teaching at Washington State College, Parris moved to Washington, D.C., in 1953. He taught briefly at the University of Maryland and worked as a contributing music critic for the *Washington Post* and *Washington Star* until 1975. In 1963, he joined the faculty at George Washington University and remained a professor of music there until his death.

Parris was known as a music colorist, and the majority of his compositions focused heavily on small ensembles and solo instruments. He gained international recognition in 1958 with the premiere of his Concerto for Five Kettledrums and Orchestra by the National Symphony Orchestra and timpanist Fred Begun. He received additional commissions from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Contemporary Music Forum. Parris continued to compose solo and ensemble works until his death in 1999, with the American Composers Alliance publishing more than sixty of his titles.

## Bibliography

American Composers Alliance. "Robert Parris." Accessed March 2022. <https://composers.com/composers/robert-parris>  
Duffie, Bruce. "Composer / Pianist Robert Parris: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie." Accessed March 2022. <http://www.bruceDuffie.com/parris.html>

## Scope and Content Note

The Robert Parris Music Manuscripts consist of holograph scores, sketches, and parts for titled and unfinished works. Many of the scores and sketches include extensive annotations and marginalia. Titles of note are the Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra and the Sonata for Solo Violin.

## Organization of the Robert Parris Music Manuscripts

The collection is arranged in one series:

- [Music, 1959-1972](#)

## 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

Parris, Robert, 1924-1999.

Parris, Robert, 1924-1999.

### Subjects

Chamber music.

Choral music.

Musical sketches.

**Form/Genre**

Art music.

Autographs (Manuscripts)

Chamber music.

Concertos.

Musical sketches.

Parts (Music)

Scores.

Sonatas.

Vocal scores.

## Description of Series

### Container

### Series

#### Music, 1959-1972

The series contains titled and unfinished holograph manuscripts by the composer, including full scores, sketches, and piano parts.

Arranged alphabetically by title.

# Container List

Container	Contents
	<b>Music, 1959-1972</b>
	The series contains titled and unfinished holograph manuscripts by the composer, including full scores, sketches, and piano parts. Arranged alphabetically by title.
LCCN: <a href="#">75760305</a>	Cadenza, Caprice, and Ricercar for Cello and Piano. Cadenza, 1960? Scores; sketches
LCCN: <a href="#">75760413</a>	Concerto for Percussion, Violin, Cello, and Piano, 1967 Score; sketches
LCCN: <a href="#">75760412</a>	Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra, 1964 Full score
LCCN: <a href="#">75760410</a>	Duo for Flute and Violin, 1965 Sketch
LCCN: <a href="#">75760414</a>	Flute Concerto, 1963 Score
LCCN: <a href="#">unk84100442</a>	Four Pieces for Brass and Woodwind Trio, 1965 Scores
LCCN: <a href="#">75760406</a>	The Golden Net, 1968 Full score; sketches
LCCN: <a href="#">75760306</a>	Jesu dulcis memoria, 1966 Vocal score
LCCN: <a href="#">74213170</a>	Pasture Management, 1972 Vocal score
LCCN: <a href="#">75760479</a>	The Phoenix, 1968-1969 Scores; sketches
LCCN: <a href="#">75760405</a>	Reflections on Immortality, 1966 Scores
LCCN: <a href="#">75760366</a>	Reflections on Immortality, 1966 Scores
LCCN: <a href="#">75760368</a>	St. Winafred's Well, 1967 Full score
LCCN: <a href="#">75760369</a>	Sinfonia for Brass Quintet, 1963 Full score
LCCN: <a href="#">75760425</a>	Sinfonia for Brass Quintet, 1963 Score (incomplete)
LCCN: <a href="#">75760424</a>	Sonata for Violin Solo, 1965 Score
LCCN: <a href="#">75760423</a>	Sonata for Solo Violin. Fantasia, 1963-1965 Score; sketch
LCCN: <a href="#">75760422</a>	A Teaching Fugue, 1969 Piano part <i>Note:</i> Includes a fugue written and crossed out on the third and fourth pages titled "Ghoti"

## Music, 1959-1972

Container	Contents
LCCN: <a href="#">75760419</a>	Vesilla regis prodeunt and Madrigal, 1968 Score (incomplete)
LCCN: <a href="#">75760408</a>	Unidentified chamber work, undated Score (incomplete)
LCCN: <a href="#">75760407</a>	Unidentified chamber work, undated Score (incomplete)
LCCN: <a href="#">75760420</a>	Unidentified piano work, 1959? Piano part
LCCN: <a href="#">75760421</a>	Unidentified work, for mezzo-soprano and chamber orchestra, 1968 Score (incomplete) <i>Note:</i> Unfinished setting of a poem by Guillaume Apollinaire