

# Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence



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

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

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014572455>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu021016>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Anthony Edwards and Rachel McNellis, 2021

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence

**Inclusive Dates:** 1945-1948

**Call No.:** ML31.P33

**Creator:** Packer, Dorothy Slepian, 1923-2014

**Extent:** approximately 50 items

**Extent:** 1 container

**Extent:** .5 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

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

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014572455>

**Summary:** Dorothy Slepian Packer (1923-2014) was a musicologist, educator, and violinist from Boston, Massachusetts. The collection consists of Packer's correspondence with prominent composers between 1945 and 1948. Significant writers and recipients include Samuel Barber, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Deems Taylor, Darius Milhaud, Morton Gould, William Grant Still, and Virgil Thomson.

## Acquisition Information

Gift, Dorothy Slepian Packer, 1988

## Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

## Processing History

Music Division staff processed the Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence from 1988-1989. Anthony Edwards and Rachel McNellis coded the finding aid in 2021.

## Other Repositories

The Theology Library Archives at Boston University houses notes, publications, papers, music, and other materials related to Packer's research.

## Copyright Status

Materials from the Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence 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 Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence 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 on using or copying materials may apply.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container or reel or digital ID number], Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Dorothy Slepian Packer was born on April 23, 1923, in Boston, Massachusetts, and became a musicologist, educator, and violinist. She studied with music historian Karl Geiringer and earned her Ph.D. at Boston University in 1948. That November, she married Leo S. Packer (August 5, 1920-January 14, 2016), who was studying engineering at Harvard University. They had three children: Janet Susan Packer (died 2014), Alex J. Packer, and Michael Packer (died September 11, 2001). In 1976, she moved to Paris with her husband for fifteen years, where he worked in several positions as a consultant and United States diplomat. Dorothy gave frequent guest lectures across the United States and was a prolific scholar. Her published research encompassed diverse topics related to twentieth-century American music, sixteenth and seventeenth-century French song, and eighteenth-century French vaudeville. She taught at Boston University, Nazareth College in Rochester, New York, and the State University of New York at Buffalo. Packer died in Boston on March 28, 2014.

## Scope and Content Note

The Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence spans the years 1945 to 1948. It consists solely of [Correspondence](#) between Dorothy Packer and composers and contains several responses to a survey she sent while conducting research for her dissertation. Significant correspondents include Samuel Barber, Robert Russell Bennett, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Deems Taylor, Morton Gould, Darius Milhaud, Wallingford Riegger, William Grant Still, and Virgil Thomson.

## Organization of the Dorothy Slepian Packer Correspondence

The collection is arranged in one series:

- [Correspondence, 1945-1948](#)

## 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

Antheil, George, 1900-1959--Correspondence.

Antheil, George, 1900-1959.

Barber, Samuel, 1910-1981--Correspondence.

Barber, Samuel, 1910-1981.

Bloch, Ernest, 1880-1985--Correspondence.

Bloch, Ernest, 1880-1985.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 1895-1968--Correspondence.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 1895-1968.

Creston, Paul, 1906-1985--Correspondence.

Creston, Paul, 1906-1985.

Gould, Morton, 1913-1996--Correspondence.

Gould, Morton, 1913-1996.

Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974--Correspondence.

Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974.

Packer, Dorothy Slepian, 1923-2014--Correspondence.

Packer, Dorothy Slepian, 1923-2014.

Schuman, William, 1910-1992--Correspondence.  
Schuman, William, 1910-1992.  
Still, William Grant, 1895-1978  
Still, William Grant, 1895-1978--Correspondence.  
Taylor, Deems, 1885-1966--Correspondence.  
Taylor, Deems, 1885-1966.  
Thompson, Randall, 1899-1984--Correspondence.  
Thompson, Randall, 1899-1984.  
Thomson, Virgil, 1896-1989--Correspondence.  
Thomson, Virgil, 1896-1989.

**Subjects**

Composers--Correspondence.

**Titles**

*Dorothy Slepian Packer collection of correspondence, circa 1946*

**Form/Genre**

Business correspondence.

## Description of Series

**Container**  
BOX 1

**Series**  
Correspondence, 1945-1948

This series consists of correspondence between Dorothy Packer and well-known composers.

Packer sent a questionnaire about compositional practices to composers while conducting research for her dissertation *The Use of Polyphonic Forms and Devices by Contemporary American Composers* (Boston University, 1948). Included here are responses to that survey from Robert Russell Bennett, Frederick Jacobi, Douglas Moore, Deems Taylor, and Randall Thompson. Other notable correspondents include George Antheil, Samuel Barber, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Morton Gould, Robert McBride, Darius Milhaud, Wallingford Riegger, William Schuman, William Grant Still, and Virgil Thomson.

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent's last name.

# Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	<b>Correspondence, 1945-1948</b> This series consists of correspondence between Dorothy Packer and well-known composers. Packer sent a questionnaire about compositional practices to composers while conducting research for her dissertation <i>The Use of Polyphonic Forms and Devices by Contemporary American Composers</i> (Boston University, 1948). Included here are responses to that survey from Robert Russell Bennett, Frederick Jacobi, Douglas Moore, Deems Taylor, and Randall Thompson. Other notable correspondents include George Antheil, Samuel Barber, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Morton Gould, Robert McBride, Darius Milhaud, Wallingford Riegger, William Schuman, William Grant Still, and Virgil Thomson. Arranged alphabetically by correspondent's last name.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Antheil, George, 1946 October 19-1947 March 2
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Balogh, Ernő, 1947 February 13
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Barber, Samuel, 1945 April 19
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Bennett, Robert Russell, undated Questionnaire
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Bloch, Ernest, 1945 June 4
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 1947 August 12
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Cohn, Arthur, 1947 June 9-1947 June 29
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Creston, Paul, 1945 March 26-1946 October 14
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Gould, Morton, 1945 March 8
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Green, Ray, 1948 February 12
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Gruenberg, Louis, 1945 April 4-1947 June 27
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Hanson, Howard, 1945 March 16
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Inch, Herbert, 1947 June 18
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	Jacobi, Frederick, undated Questionnaire
BOX-FOLDER 1/15	Janssen, Werner, 1947 July 5
BOX-FOLDER 1/16	Kramer, A. Walter, 1947 June 23
BOX-FOLDER 1/17	Kurtz, Edward, 1947 June 24
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	La Violette, Wesley, 1947 June 28
BOX-FOLDER 1/19	Lockwood, Norman, 1947 August 2
BOX-FOLDER 1/20	McBride, Robert, 1945 February 7-1947 July 1
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	McDonald, Harl, 1947 June 12
BOX-FOLDER 1/22	McKinly, Carl, 1947 June 30
BOX-FOLDER 1/23	Milhaud, Darius, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/24	Moore, Douglas, 1945 February 14 Questionnaire
BOX-FOLDER 1/25	Morris, Harold, 1945 March 31-1947 July 29
BOX-FOLDER 1/26	Palmer, Robert, 1948 September 4
BOX-FOLDER 1/27	Piston, Walter, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/28	Porter, Quincy, 1945 February 21-1947 June 5
BOX-FOLDER 1/29	Rapoport, Eda, 1947 June 3

## Correspondence, 1945-1948

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/30	Read, Gardner, 1946 September 2
BOX-FOLDER 1/31	Riegger, Wallingford, 1945 April 1-1947 May 24
BOX-FOLDER 1/32	Rogers, Bernard, 1945 February 19-21
BOX-FOLDER 1/33	Schuman, William, 1945 March 16-1947 May 20
BOX-FOLDER 1/34	Scruggs, Philip Lightfoot, 1947 July 21
BOX-FOLDER 1/35	Smith, David Stanley, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/36	Sowerby, Leo, 1947 June 4
BOX-FOLDER 1/37	Still, William Grant, 1945 April 4
BOX-FOLDER 1/38	Taylor, Deems, undated Questionnaire
BOX-FOLDER 1/39	Thompson, Randall, 1945 April 17 Questionnaire
BOX-FOLDER 1/40	Thomson, Virgil, 1945 March 15