

American Music Loan Libraries Project Records



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

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Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Jane Cross and Anthony Edwards, 2021 July

Collection Summary

Title: American Music Loan Libraries Project Records

Inclusive Dates: 1941-1948

Call No.: ML31.A46

Creator: American Music Loan Libraries Project

Extent: approximately 1,800 items

Extent: 6 containers

Extent: 3 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020570115>

Summary: The American Music Loan Libraries Project, originally established as the Music Distribution Project, was one of many initiatives conceived by the United States Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs to promote inter-American cooperation and boost the United States image in the Americas beginning in the 1940s. The reports, correspondence, repertoire lists, and other files help document the project's work to supply depositories with music, recordings, and books on music from the United States and to provide access to the materials.

Acquisition Information

Henry Cowell transferred records from the Music Distribution Project office at the New School for Social Research to the Library of Congress in 1943. The remaining records were created at the Library of Congress as part of the American Music Libraries Loan Project and retained in the Music Division's archives.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

Jane Cross and Rachel McNellis processed the American Music Loan Libraries Project Records in 2021. Cross and Anthony Edwards coded the finding aid in 2021.

Related Material

The [Seeger Family Collection](#) contains writings and correspondence regarding Inter-American music topics during the 1940s. Tours by [Aaron Copland](#) and the [American Ballet Caravan](#) to Latin America in 1941 were sponsored by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

Other Repositories

More information about the American Music Loan Libraries Project may be found at the National Archives and Records Administration in Record Group 229, Records of the Office of Inter-American Affairs, in the Nelson A. Rockefeller Papers at the Rockefeller Archive Center in New York, and in the Gilbert Chase Papers at New York Public Library.

Copyright Status

Materials from the American Music Loan Libraries Project Records 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 American Music Loan Libraries Project Records 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], American Music Loan Libraries Project Records, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Historical Note

In the era of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) was established in 1940 [its responsibilities were transferred to the State Department in 1946]. Led by businessman and philanthropist Nelson A. Rockefeller, the OCIAA's mission was to help coordinate economic policies for stabilization, to deepen the United States' influence in the region, and to counter Axis influences. The OCIAA's cultural initiatives included film studios, actors, radio stations, and tours by musicians, dance companies, and other prominent goodwill ambassadors. Within three months of assuming leadership, Rockefeller established a Music Committee and appointed Marshall Bartholomew (Yale University Glee Club director), William Berrien (American Council of Learned Societies representative), Evans Clark (Twentieth Century Fund executive director), Carleton Sprague Smith (New York Public Library, Music Division chief), and Aaron Copland (composer and American Composers Alliance president) as its members. The committee's work was absorbed by the State Department's Advisory Committee on Music in 1941. One of the projects to survive the transition was the establishment of depositories in the capitals of twenty American republics to receive and distribute music, recordings, and books on music representing a cross-section of symphonic works, band works, jazz, operas, chamber music, choruses, instrumental solos, folk music, popular songs, journal subscriptions, and teaching materials. The focus of this Music Distribution Project (MDP) was on works by, or as interpreted by, United States musicians. A later iteration of the advisory committee had as its members Aaron Copland, Gustave Duran, John Tasker Howard, Otto Luening, Lilla Belle Pitts, Russell V. Morgan, Ruth Crawford Seeger, and Carleton Sprague Smith.

The New School for Social Research received a grant from OCIAA to run the MDP and engaged Henry Cowell to manage it from 1941 to 1943. The office was located in New York City near music publishers from whom Cowell was able to secure discounts. The MDP was transferred to the State Department on June 30, 1943. Upon taking over, the State Department issued the policy that the project "shall serve as a center to acquaint the peoples of the Other American Republics with the musical resources of the U.S." The materials on deposit were intended to be loaned to clubs, bands, orchestras, choirs, soloists, radio stations, schools, and other organizations, institutions, and individuals who otherwise might have difficulty in obtaining them. The goal was to include a wide and balanced selection of materials "to present a complete picture of the musical life of the United States," indexed and arranged for easy access. The name of the program changed to the American Music Library Loan Project (AMLLP).

Later in 1943, the State Department asked the Music Division of the Library of Congress to become responsible for choosing, collecting, and distributing relevant materials to the depositories while the State Department provided proper utilization at points of distribution. Gilbert Chase, music supervisor for NBC's University of the Air, was appointed as a special consultant to the Music Division for the AMLLP. Among other duties, he traveled to nine American countries in 1945 to survey the American Music Loan Libraries. Project leaders expressed hopes that, in a reciprocal move, music by composers in those countries would be made more readily available to musicians of the United States. In one report, the author wrote: "Such an interchange of music, music information, and methods should bring into even closer friendship the peoples of our countries through a mutual knowledge and appreciation of the creative efforts of each nation."

The AMLLP was not without its challenges. Hurdles with cataloging, shelving, administration, and circulation by trained librarians are mentioned. Later reports indicate consolidation efforts, "several depositories that will serve several countries each," as well as a new focus on selecting and distributing educational materials and orchestral works with complete sets of parts for performance.

In September 1946, the State Department took over purchasing materials and other administrative duties, leaving only completion of the AMLLP collection catalog to the Library of Congress. Gilbert Chase resigned his appointment as consultant the following month. By October 1947, Lee Fairley was the only Library of Congress representative still working on the AMLLP. In November 1947, the State Department established three major depositories of serious American orchestra music in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Montevideo, Uruguay; and Santiago, Chile. This effort seems to have coincided with the end of the Library of Congress Music Division's involvement with the American Music Loan Libraries Project.

Bibliography

- Burgin, Miron. *Handbook of Latin American Studies, 1944, Issue 10*. University Press, 1947.
- Campbell, Jennifer L. *Shaping Solidarity: Music, Diplomacy, and Inter-American Relations, 1936–1946*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2010.
- Cowell, Henry. "Music Distribution Project" *Acquaints Latin America with U. S. Publishers*. Music Journal, New York, New York, 1943, Vol. 1, Issue 2, p. 12.
- Cramer, Gisela and Ursula Prutsch. *Nelson A. Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs (1940–1946) and Record Group 229*. Hispanic American Historical Review, November 2006, pp. 785-806.
- The Department of State. *The Record*. Vol. III, No. 1, January 1947.
- Fern, Leila. *Origin and Functions of the Inter-American Music Center*. Music Library Association journal Notes, December 1943, Second Series, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 14-22.
- Hicks, Michael. *The Imprisonment of Henry Cowell*. Journal of the American Musicological Society, Spring 1991, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp. 92-119.

Scope and Content Note

The American Music Loan Libraries Project Records span the years 1941 to 1948. These records help document the project's work under the aegis of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, the State Department, the New School for Social Research, and the Library of Congress to supply depositories in American republics with music, recordings, and books on music created or as interpreted by United States musicians. The [Administrative Files](#) illuminate many of the administrative aspects of running the project through address lists, reports, proposals, policy documents, catalogs, financial information, lists, and questionnaires, among other documents. The [Country Files](#) contain correspondence, lists, and other documents specific to certain cities and countries, while the [Correspondence](#) series primarily contains letters between representatives of the Library of Congress and the State Department. The [Repertoire Lists](#) collate works for large and small instrumental and vocal ensembles, as well as recordings, that administrators used when considering materials to distribute to American Music Loan Libraries Project depositories.

Organization of the American Music Loan Libraries Project Records

The collection is arranged in four series:

- [Administrative Files, 1942-1948](#)
- [Country Files, 1941-1946](#)
- [Correspondence, 1943-1948](#)
- [Repertoire Lists, 1942-1946](#)

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

Chase, Gilbert, 1906-1992.
Cowell, Henry, 1897-1965.
Spivacke, Harold, 1904-1977.

Organizations

American Music Loan Libraries Project--Archives.
American Music Loan Libraries Project.
United States. Department of State.

Subjects

Music libraries--South America.
Music libraries--United States.

Form/Genre

Bibliographies.
Business correspondence.
Inventories.
Library catalogs.
Lists (Document genres)
Purchase orders.
Records (Documents)
Reports.

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1, 5

Administrative Files, 1942-1948

This series includes address lists, reports, proposals, policy documents, catalogs, financial information, lists, and questionnaires that illuminate many of the administrative aspects of the American Music Loan Libraries Project.

Arranged alphabetically.

BOX 2-3

Country Files, 1941-1946

This series contains correspondence, price lists, and repertoire lists specific to particular American cities and countries.

Arranged alphabetically.

BOX 3-4

Correspondence, 1943-1948

This series primarily contains correspondence between representatives at the State Department; Harold Spivacke, Gilbert Chase, and others at the Library of Congress; and Henry Cowell. Other organizations corresponding about the project include the American Music Center, ASCAP, NBC, and SESAC.

Arranged alphabetically

BOX 6

Repertoire Lists, 1942-1946

This series contains correspondence, price lists, and lists of repertoire for orchestra, band, chorus, chamber ensembles, jazz ensembles, and piano, as well as lists of recordings.

Administrators used these lists when considering materials to purchase and ship to depositories established by the American Music Loan Libraries Project.

Arranged alphabetically.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1, 5	Administrative Files, 1942-1948 This series includes address lists, reports, proposals, policy documents, catalogs, financial information, lists, and questionnaires that illuminate many of the administrative aspects of the American Music Loan Libraries Project. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1, 5/1	Address lists, 1945 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Address lists and official correspondence, 1944-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Address lists and questionnaire, 1944-1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Annual report, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Authorization, proposal, policy, and correspondence, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 5/2	Books on jazz, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Budget information, 1944-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Catalog, manual, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Catalog cards and duplication, 1946-1947
BOX-FOLDER 5/3	Catalog cards on materials received in South America, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Early history, 1944-1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Equipment, 1947, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Invoices, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 5/4	Material awaiting filing in MDP files, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Music distribution project, 1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/13	Music publications, 1943-1947
BOX-FOLDER 5/5	Musical periodicals, 1944-1945
BOX-FOLDER 5/9	Opinions expressed about American Music Loan Libraries, 1943
BOX-FOLDER 5/10	Organization policies (Chase), 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 5/6-8	Popular music publications, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 5/11	Price quotes, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/14	Printing office, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/15-17, 5/12-14	Project reports, 1942-1947
BOX-FOLDER 5/15	Purchase lists, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 5/16	Purchase orders, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Questionnaires, 1944-1945
BOX-FOLDER 5/17	Special orders, 1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/19-20	Supply office - orders, 1945-1948
BOX-FOLDER 5/18	Transmission of materials, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/21	United States Dispatch Agency, 1945-1946
BOX 2-3	Country Files, 1941-1946 This series contains correspondence, price lists, and repertoire lists specific to particular American cities and countries. Arranged alphabetically.

Country Files, 1941-1946

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 2/1	Argentina: Buenos Aires, 1942-1946 and undated Bolivia
BOX-FOLDER 2/2	Cochabamba, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/3	La Paz, 1943 and undated Brazil
BOX-FOLDER 2/5	Curitiba, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/6	Florianopolis, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/7	Fortaleza, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/4	Miscellaneous, 1943
BOX-FOLDER 2/8	Porto Alegre, 1944-1946 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/9	Rio de Janeiro, 1941-1946 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/10	Sao Paulo, 1945 and undated Chile
BOX-FOLDER 2/12	Concepción, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/11	Miscellaneous, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 2/13	Santiago, 1943-1946 and undated Colombia
BOX-FOLDER 2/15	Bogotá, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 2/16	Medellín, undated
BOX-FOLDER 2/14	Miscellaneous, 1943
BOX-FOLDER 2/17	Rosario, undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/1	Costa Rica: San Jose, 1943
BOX-FOLDER 3/2	Cuba: Havana, 1945 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/3	Dominion Republic: Ciudad Trujillo, 1943-1946
BOX-FOLDER 3/14	El Salvador, 1943-1944
BOX-FOLDER 3/4	Ecuador: Quito, 1943-1946 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/5	Guatemala, 1943-1946 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/6	Haiti: Port-au-Prince, 1943-1946 and undated
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BOX-FOLDER 3/8	Mexico, 1943-1945
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BOX-FOLDER 3/11	Paraguay: Asunción, 1943-1945
BOX-FOLDER 3/12	Peru: Lima, 1944-1945
BOX-FOLDER 3/13	San Salvador, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 3/15	Uruguay: Montevideo, 1942-1946 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 3/16	Venezuela: Caracas, 1943 and undated
BOX 3-4	Correspondence, 1943-1948 This series primarily contains correspondence between representatives at the State Department; Harold Spivacke, Gilbert Chase, and others at the Library of Congress; and Henry Cowell. Other organizations corresponding about the project include the American Music Center, ASCAP, NBC, and SESAC. Arranged alphabetically
BOX-FOLDER 3/17	American Music Center, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 3/18	American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, 1946

Correspondence, 1943-1948

Container	Contents
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BOX-FOLDER 3/20 to 4/1	Chase, Gilbert, 1944-1946
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BOX-FOLDER 4/3	Cowell, Henry and Gilbert Chase and Harold Spivacke, 1942-1943
BOX-FOLDER 4/4	Evans, Luther, 1945-1948
BOX-FOLDER 4/5	Fairley, E. Lee, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 4/6	Fox, Harry, 1944-1947
BOX-FOLDER 4/7	General correspondence, 1944-1946
BOX-FOLDER 4/8	Kerr, Harrison, 1944-1946
BOX-FOLDER 4/9	National Broadcast Company, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 4/10	Pfutzner, Helen, 1945-1947
BOX-FOLDER 4/11	Sauer, Carl A., 1945-1948
BOX-FOLDER 4/12	SESAC, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 4/13	Smith, Carleton Sprague, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 4/14	Spivacke, Harold, 1944-1946
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BOX 6	Repertoire Lists, 1942-1946 This series contains correspondence, price lists, and lists of repertoire for orchestra, band, chorus, chamber ensembles, jazz ensembles, and piano, as well as lists of recordings. Administrators used these lists when considering materials to purchase and ship to depositories established by the American Music Loan Libraries Project. Arranged alphabetically.
BOX-FOLDER 6/1	American orchestral repertory, 1944-1945
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BOX-FOLDER 6/8	Fall music recordings, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 6/9	Jazz records, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 6/10	Lists (miscellaneous), 1945
BOX-FOLDER 6/11	Lists of music, 1946
BOX-FOLDER 6/12	Masterworks recordings, 1945
BOX-FOLDER 6/13	Piano music for the A.M.L.L., 1945
BOX-FOLDER 6/14	Refugee composers (orchestral works for A.M.L.L.), 1945
BOX-FOLDER 6/15	Repertoire list, 1942-1943