

# Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence



**Music Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
2024**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018571988>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu024015>

Prepared by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Maya Lerman, 2024 May

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence,

**Inclusive Dates:** 1943-1976

**Bulk Dates:** 1943-1949

**Call No.:** ML31.P35

**Creator:** Park Avenue Synagogue

**Extent:** approximately 200 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/2018571988>

**Summary:** The Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence consists of approximately 200 letters, telegrams, contracts, and other documents relating to a commissioning program for Jewish liturgical music.

## Acquisition Information

Purchase, Madison Council, 2024

## Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

## Processing History

Maya Lerman processed the Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence and created the finding aid in 2024.

## Copyright Status

Materials from the Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project 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 Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project 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.

Some of the materials in this collection may be fragile and patrons are asked to use extreme care in handling them.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, or container number], Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Related Material

The published compilation [Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers](#) (1951) was the outcome of the Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project. It includes reproductions of manuscript scores by participating composers.

## Organizational History

The Park Avenue Synagogue is a congregation in New York City that is part of the Conservative movement of Judaism. After merging with other congregations during its earliest years, in 1927 the synagogue adopted the name Park Avenue Synagogue and dedicated its building on East 87th Street. Cantor David Putterman conceived the Park Avenue Commissioning Project to encourage composers to write music to be set to ancient prayers for the synagogue's prayer services. According to the preface of [Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers](#), the commissioned works were meant to contribute to and enhance the synagogue's music while also being worthy additions to the "main stream of contemporary music." Notable composers who produced commissioned works as part of the project are Leonard Bernstein, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Paul Dessau, Lukas Foss, Morton Gould, Darius Milhaud, Leo Sowerby, Alexandre Tansman, and Kurt Weill.

## Bibliography

*Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers*. New York: G. Schirmer, [1951].

## Scope and Content Note

The Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence spans the years 1943 to 1976, the bulk of which dates from 1943 to 1949. The materials consist of approximately 200 letters and other communications between Park Avenue Synagogue cantor David Putterman and composers he solicited to compose new music for the synagogue's prayer services. Although many of them were unable to compose pieces for the synagogue, the letters provide insights into their careers and any connection to Judaism. The resulting compositions from the commissioning project were published in the compilation [Synagogue Music by Contemporary Composers](#).

## Organization of the Park Avenue Synagogue Commissioning Project Correspondence

The collection is arranged in one series:

- [Correspondence, 1943-1976](#)

## 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

Bernstein, Leonard, 1918-1990.

Bloch, Ernest, 1880-1959.

Bloch, Suzanne, 1907-2002.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 1895-1968.

Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990.

Dessau, Paul, 1894-1979.

Foss, Lukas, 1922-2009.

Gould, Morton, 1913-1996.

Milhaud, Darius, 1892-1974.

Putterman, David.  
Schoenberg, Arnold, 1874-1951.  
Secunda, Sholom, 1894-1974.  
Sowerby, Leo, 1895-1968.  
Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971.  
Tansman, Alexandre, 1897-1986.  
Weill, Kurt, 1900-1950.

**Organizations**

Park Avenue Synagogue--Correspondence.  
Park Avenue Synagogue.

**Subjects**

Synagogue music--New York (State)--New York--History and criticism.

**Form/Genre**

Business correspondence.  
Contracts.  
Telegrams.

## Description of Series

### Container

### Series

#### Correspondence, 1943-1976

Letters and other communications between cantor David Putterman and composers solicited for the commissioning project. Notable correspondents include Leonard Bernstein, Ernest Bloch, Suzanne Bloch, Aaron Copland, Arnold Schoenberg, Shalom Secunda, and Igor Stravinsky.

Arranged alphabetically by last name.

# Container List

Container	Contents
	<b>Correspondence, 1943-1976</b>
	Letters and other communications between cantor David Putterman and composers solicited for the commissioning project. Notable correspondents include Leonard Bernstein, Ernest Bloch, Suzanne Bloch, Aaron Copland, Arnold Schoenberg, Shalom Secunda, and Igor Stravinsky.
	Arranged alphabetically by last name.
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/1</b>	Avshalomov, Jacob, 1948
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/2</b>	Barber, Samuel, 1945
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/3</b>	Berezowski, Nicolai, 1945-1946
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/4</b>	Berger, Arthur, 1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/5</b>	Bergsma, William, 1946
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/6</b>	Bernstein, Leonard, 1943, 1969, 1976
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/7</b>	Bernstein, Samuel, 1969
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/8</b>	Binder, A.W., undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/9</b>	Blitzstein, Marc, 1946, 1948
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/10</b>	Bloch, Ernest, 1943-1948
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/11</b>	Bloch, Marguerite, 1959
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/12</b>	Bloch, Suzanne, 1971 and undated
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/13</b>	Brant, Henry, 1945-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/14</b>	Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, 1943-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/15</b>	Chajes, Julius, 1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/16</b>	Copland, Aaron, 1943-1945, 1970
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/17</b>	Creston, Paul, 1945
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/18</b>	Damrosch, Walter, 1944
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/19</b>	Dello Joio, Norman, 1945
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/20</b>	Dessau, Paul, 1943-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/21</b>	Diamond, David, 1943-1948
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/22</b>	Ewen, David, 1943
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/23</b>	Foss, Lukas, 1945-1969
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/24</b>	Hatikva Music Publishing Co., 1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/25</b>	Freed, Isadore, circa 1946
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/26</b>	Fromm, Herbert, 1946-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/27</b>	Gitelberg, Jerzy, 1946
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/28</b>	Gould, Morton, 1946-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/29</b>	Gretchaninoff, Alexandre, 1944-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/30</b>	Helfman, Max, 1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/31</b>	Herrmann, Bernard, 1946-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/32</b>	Hindemith, Paul, 1945
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/33</b>	Jacobi, Frederick, 1943-1949
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/34</b>	Levi, Ernst, 1946-1947
<b>BOX-FOLDER 1/35</b>	London, George, 1976

## Correspondence, 1943-1976

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/36	Lopatnikoff, Nicolai, 1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/37	Mannes, David and Clara, 1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/38	Martinelli, Giovanni, 1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/39	de Menasce, Jacques, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/40	Milhaud, Darius, 1944-1947 and undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/41	Moore, Douglas, 1945-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/42	Peerce, Jan, 1969, 1976, and undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/43	Pisk, Paul, 1946-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/44	Rogers, Bernard, 1946-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/45	Rosowsky, Salomo, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/46	Saminski, Lazare, 1946-1949
BOX-FOLDER 1/47	Schalit, Heinrich, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/48	Schoenberg, Arnold, 1944-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/49	Schuman, William, 1944-1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/50	Secunda, Sholom, 1964
BOX-FOLDER 1/51	Shapero, Harold, 1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/52	Sharett, Moshe and Zipporah, 1948
BOX-FOLDER 1/53	Sowerby, Leo, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/54	Starer, Robert, 1948-1949
BOX-FOLDER 1/55	Still, William Grant, 1945-1949
BOX-FOLDER 1/56	Stravinsky, Igor, 1944, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/57	Tansman, Alexandre, 1946-1949
BOX-FOLDER 1/58	Taylor, Deems, 1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/59	Toch, Ernst, 1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/60	Thomson, Virgil, 1945-1946
BOX-FOLDER 1/61	Weill, Kurt, circa 1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/62	Weinberg, Jacob, 1947
BOX-FOLDER 1/63	Wise, Stephen S., 1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/64	Wolpe, Stefan, circa 1945
BOX-FOLDER 1/65	Wyner, Yehudi, 1964
BOX-FOLDER 1/66	Zilbertz, Jacob, 1947