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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.SHORTALLH
Title  Shortall, Harrington. Papers
Date  1907-1984
Size  26 linear feet (13 boxes)
Repository  Special Collections Research Center
          University of Chicago Library
          1100 East 57th Street
          Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  Harrington Shortall (1895-1984) was a music composer and educator. Shortall studied under Nadia Boulanger, and went on to compose a diverse body of musical work. As an educator, Shortall taught at the Chicago Theological Seminary, and Rosary College. Shortall’s papers contain a collection of material related to Nadia Boulanger, including correspondence; also included are teaching materials, compositions, journals and publicity material.

Information on Use

Access  The collection is open for research, with no restrictions.

Citation  When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Shortall, Harrington. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Harrington Shortall was born to a wealthy Chicago family in 1895. He attended the Thatcher School in Ojai, California and Harvard University. Like many young American composers, Shortall studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. During World War I he served in the U.S. Navy, and afterwards began a life of music composition.

During the 1930s, Shortall’s work was included as part of the Federal Music Project Composer’s Forum, an event sponsored by the Works Progress Administration. In 1939 his "The Night is Well-Nigh Spent," was conducted by Nadia Boulanger at The Library of Congress Coolidge Theater.
Shortall was a composer for most of his adult life, although he rarely had his works published or performed after the 1940s. His work is characterized by its clarity, directness, and an embrace of pre-romantic compositional models. Simultaneously, it is music grounded in the everyday life and holiday celebrations of wealthy Chicagoans.

Shortall’s work as a music educator took two forms. He produced (although never published) a piano method book, and served as a lecturer at The Chicago Theological Seminary and Rosary College (now Dominican University) in River Forest, Illinois. Additionally, Shortall copied music from the collection of Chicago’s Newberry Library and produced his own treatises on music composition and theory.

During the 1940s, Shortall briefly taught courses at the Chicago Theological Seminary, Rosary College, and the Latin School. He died in Evanston in 1984.

**Scope Note**

The Harrington Shortall Papers span the years 1907-1984, with the bulk of material dating from 1920-1960. The collection is organized into three series.

Series I: Nadia Boulanger, contains documents relating to the relationship between Harrington Shortall and his piano and composition teacher. Material in this series includes correspondence from Nadia Boulanger to Harrington Shortall and to his mother, Mary Shortall. It also includes published piano reductions of Lili Boulanger’s music, dedicated to Shortall by Nadia Boulanger; clippings of magazine and newspaper articles; and a bound copy of course notes taken by Sister Edward Blackwell while studying musical analysis with Boulanger. The material in this series ranges from 1913-1979.

Series II: Compositions, contains completed compositions, revisions, unfinished compositions, and related notes. Compositions in this series range from 1907-1981, with significant concentrations from the 1920s-1950s. This series is arranged chronologically.


Series IV: Personal, contains Shortall’s journals and other personal writings, as well as correspondence and newspaper reviews relating to Shortall’s career as a composer. Also found in this series is an obituary and a photograph of Shortall. This series contains material from 1937-1984.
Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Nef, Elinor Castle. Papers

Subject Headings

- Boulanger, Nadia
- Shortall, Harrington
- Composers -- United States

INVENTORY

Series I: Nadia Boulanger

This series contains documents relating to the relationship between Harrington Shortall and his piano and composition teacher Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979). Material in this series includes correspondence from Nadia Boulanger to Harrington Shortall and to his mother, Mary Shortall. It also includes published piano reductions of Lili Boulanger’s music, dedicated to Shortall by Nadia Boulanger; clippings of magazine and newspaper articles; and a bound copy of course notes taken by Sister Edward Blackwell while studying musical analysis with Boulanger. The material in this series ranges from 1913-1979, although the dedicated scores were likely not presented to Shortall until after 1934.

Box 1
Folder 1-2
  Harrington Shortall, correspondence, 1934-1976
Box 1
Folder 3
  Mary Shortall, correspondence, 1934-1954
Box 1
Folder 4
  Clippings, 1946-1979
Box 1
Folder 5
  Sister Edward Blackwell, notes from musical analysis class, 1941
Box 1
Folder 6
  Lili Boulanger, "Fauste et Helene," 1913
Box 1
Folder 7
  Lili Boulanger, "Vielle Priere Bouddhique," 1921
Box 1
Folder 8
Lili Boulanger, "Pie Jesu," 1922

Box 1
Folder 9
Lili Boulanger, "Psaume 24," 1924

Series II: Compositions

This series contains bound and completed compositions, revisions, unfinished compositions, and related notes. This series is organized chronologically; however, revised and alternate copies are grouped with the earliest version of the composition. Compositions in this series range from 1907-1981, with significant concentrations from the 1920s-1950s. There are multiple drafts, versions, and revisions of "Es Lachelt der See (Song in Search of English Words)," "Reed Song," "The Candidate's Daughter or Love in Politics," "The West Wind," "Stabat Mater Speciosa," "Ad Romanos XIII 11, 12, 13, 14," "Music for the Order of the Burial of the Dead," "Round a 3," "Semi sentennial Hymn," and "Peaceful Cannon."

Box 2
Folder 1
"Early Songs," 1907-1924

Box 2
Folder 2
"Ghost Story," 1908

Box 2
Folder 3
"Reed Song," 1910

Box 2
Folder 4
"Reed Song," 1910

Box 2
Folder 5
"Reed Song," 1910, revised 1978

Box 2
Folder 6
"Reed Song," 1910, revised 1980

Box 2
Folder 7
"Reed Song," 1910, revised 1981

Box 2
Folder 8
"Es Lachelt der See (Song in Search of English Words)" 1916, revised 1948

Box 2
Folder 9
"Es Lachelt der See (Song in Search of English Words)" 1916, revised 1973

Box 2
Folder 10
"Madrigal," 1917

Box 2
Folder 11
"Christmas Serenade," "The Sleighriders (For Christmas)" 1921,
  • revised 1937
Box 2
Folder 12
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," 1922
Box 2
Folder 13
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," 1923
Box 2
Folder 14
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," 1923
Box 2
Folder 15
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," 1923
Box 2
Folder 16
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," 1924
Box 3
Folder 1
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," undated
Box 3
Folder 2
"The Candidate’s Daughter or Love in Politics," undated
Box 3
Folder 3
"The West Wind," 1923
Box 3
Folder 4
"The West Wind," 1924
Box 3
Folder 5
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924
Box 3
Folder 6
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924
Box 3
Folder 7
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924, revised 1936
Box 3
Folder 8
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924, revised 1951
Box 3
Folder 9
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924, revised 1965
Box 3
Folder 10
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," 1924, revised 965
Box 3
Folder 11
"Stabat Mater Speciosa," no date
Box 3
Folder 12
"Two Sentimental Songs (Composed for Prize-money, Which They Failed to Win)," 1928
Box 3
Folder 13
"Excerpts from a Musical Diary," 1928, revised 1935
Box 3
Folder 14
"One Song from Three Poets," 1928, revised 1951
Box 4
Folder 1
"Songs," 1928-1930
Box 4
Folder 2
"Opus," 1933
Box 4
Folder 3
"Choral Memorial," 1934
Box 4
Folder 4
"27 Peaceful Canon and Rounds of Ammunition," 1934-1950
Box 4
Folder 5
"Second Rounds," 1934
Box 4
Folder 6
"The Roundhouse," 1934
Box 4
Folder 7
"Mother Goose Rhymes," 1935
Box 4
Folder 8
"Bird Songs," 1936-1938
Box 4
Folder 9
"Target Practice," 1936
Box 4
Folder 10
"The Indian Burying Ground," 1936
Box 4
Folder 11
"A Hymn," 1937

Box 4
Folder 12
"Ten Minute Trio (In One Movement)," 1937

Box 5
Folder 1
"Sketchbook," circa 1937

Box 5
Folder 2
"The Bells," 1937

Box 5
Folder 3
"New Years Antiphon," 1937-38

Box 5
Folder 4
"Semicentennial Hymn," 1939

Box 5
Folder 5
"Ad Romanos XIII 11, 12, 13, 14," 1938-1939, revised 1941

Box 5
Folder 6
"Romans XIII 11, 12, 13, 14," 1938-1939, revised 1941-1942

Box 5
Folder 7
"Advent Hymn (Epistle to the Romans XIII, 12, 13, 14)," undated

Box 5
Folder 8
"ABC (A Ballet Cantata)," 1939

Box 5
Folder 9
"Experiment in Plain Song Accompaniment (Adoro Te)," 1939

Box 5
Folder 10
"Sonata for Solo Violin (from Themes Variesly Borrowed)," 1940

Box 5
Folder 11
"Of Glad Things There Be More," 1941

Box 6
Folder 1
"Ballad Symphony," 1940

Box 6
Folder 2
"Wreath of Variations (In Memory of Thomas Jefferson)," 1942

Box 6
Folder 3
"Xmas Round," 1942
Box 6
Folder 4
"Fanfare for Those Who Will Not Return," 1942
Box 6
Folder 5
"Six Pieces in One (For Those Who Will Not Return)," 1943
Box 6
Folder 6
"Innocents’ Day Carol," 1946
Box 6
Folder 7
"Waltz in the Pluperfect Subjunctive Mood," 1946
Box 6
Folder 8
"Hymn for Uncle Sam’s Nephews and Nieces," 1946
Box 6
Folder 9
"Peaceful Canon," 1947
Box 6
Folder 10
"Requiem, Introit, Kyrie, and Graduale," 1949
Box 6
Folder 11
"A New Arrangement of the Traditional American Birthday Song," 1950
Box 6
Folder 12
"Grace Round the Board," 1950
Box 6
Folder 13
"Christmas Comes Round Again," 1950
Box 6
Folder 14
"Air, Harmony and Round for Nearly Equal Voices," 1951
Box 6
Folder 15
"Recipe (For From Three to Eight Kindred Spirits)," 1951
Box 6
Folder 16
"Music for the Order of the Burial of the Dead," 1953
Box 6
Folder 17
"Music for the Order of the Burial of the Dead," 1953
Box 6
Folder 18
"Music for the Order of the Burial of the Dead," 1953
Box 7
Folder 1
"Round a 3," 1953

Box 7

Folder 2
"Round a 3," 1954

Box 7

Folder 3
"Christmas Round," 1956

Box 7

Folder 4
"Kitchen Round for 5, 4, or 3 Chefs, Psalm LXVIII, 13 (King James)," 1959

Box 7

Folder 5
"Ichtus," 1963

Box 7

Folder 6
"Happy Birthday to You (A New Variation)," 1964

Box 7

Folder 7
"Ten Hymns," 1967

Box 7

Folder 8
"Blessing Round the Board and Singing Grace Round the Board," 1977

Box 7

Folder 9
"I Sing of a Maiden," undated

Box 7

Folder 10
"Air & Round a 4," undated

Box 7

Folder 11
"Christmas Carol," undated

Box 7

Folder 12
"Another Spring Comes Round," undated

Box 7

Folder 13
"Brownies," undated

Box 7

Folder 14
"All Hail to Thee North Shore," undated

Box 7

Folder 15
"Rounds, Canons, and Toasts, undated

Box 7

Folder 16
"Sung- Recitativo," undated
Box 7
Folder 17
"Fantasia for String Quartet," undated
Box 7
Folder 18
Music sketchbook 1, undated
Box 7
Folder 19
Music sketchbook 2, undated

Series III: Teaching and Lecture Materials
This series is organized into three subseries. Subseries 1: Piano Method, contains material relating to Shortall’s piano method book "Singing Fingers." Subseries 2: Copies of Works by Others, contains compositions in a variety of formats, many of which are organized into anthologies. These items are undated, although are likely from the 1940s-1950s when Shortall began having his work professionally bound. Subseries 3: Lecture Notes, contains drafts and notebooks pertaining to course lecture, as well as a copy of a lecture delivered by Reverend Bernard J. Sheil. Material in this series spans the 1940s and 1950s.

Subseries 1: Piano Method
Box 8
Folder 1
"Singing Fingers," 1940
Box 8
Folder 2
"Singing Fingers," 1940
Box 8
Folder 3
"Singing Fingers," 1940
Box 8
Folder 4
"Singing Fingers (A Book for Supplementary Use)," 1940

Subseries 2: Copies of Works by Others
Box 9
Folder 1
"Thou Knowest Lord," score
Box 9
Folder 2
"Meine Seele erhebt den Herrn," score
Box 9
Folder 3
"Palestrina’s Hymns I," notebook
Box 9
Folder 4
"Palestrina’s Hymns II," notebook  
Box 9
Folder 5
"Sweelinck, Palestrina, Praetorius, Schubert, de Lassus, Schutz," notebook  
Box 9
Folder 6
"Tallis, Tavener, Palestrina, de Lassus, Scheidt, Schubert, Schutz, and Schmidt," folio  
Box 9
Folder 7
"Mussorgsky, Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky," score  
Box 9
Folder 8
From Dunstable to Stravinsky: A Collection of Little Pieces for Observation, Analysis, and Comparison, folio  
Box 10
Folder 1
"Orpheo," score  
Box 10
Folder 2
"Greek Music," folio  
Box 10
Folder 3
"Come Again! Sweet Love Doth Now Invite," sheet music  
Box 10
Folder 4
"Paradise Lost," libretto  
Box 10
Folder 5
"Greek Music," pamphlet  
Box 10
Folder 6
"Folk Songs I," notebook  
Box 10
Folder 7
"Folk Songs II," notebook  
Box 10
Folder 8
"Folk Songs III," notebook  
Box 10
Folder 9
"Music of K.S Dunbaugh," notebook  
Box 11
Folder 1
"Hymnody," part 1, score  
Box 11
Folder 2
"Hymnody," part 2, score
Box 11
Folder 3
"Hymnody," part 3, score
Box 11
Folder 4
"Folk Songs," folio
Box 11
Folder 5
"Concerning Origin," folio
Box 11
Folder 6
"Greek Music," folio
Box 11
Folder 7
"Concerning Scales," folio
Box 11
Folder 8
"Rise of Harmony," folio
Box 11
Folder 9
"Troubadours- Trouveres," folio
Box 11
Folder 10
"Ars Nova," folio

Subseries 3: Lecture Notes
Box 12
Folder 1
"Religion and Music," 1946
Box 12
Folder 2
"Religion and Music Course Notes," part 1, 1946
Box 12
Folder 3
"Religion and Music Course Notes," part 2, 1946
Box 12
Folder 4
"Religion and the Arts," 1947
Box 12
Folder 5
"Religion and Music," lecture, 1947
Box 12
Folder 6
"Religion and Music II," 1947
Box 12  
Folder 7  
"Can Religion Tolerate Mediocrity?" 1948  

Box 12  
Folder 8  
"Lecture for Institute for Religious and Social Studies," 1948  

Box 12  
Folder 9  
"Hymnody," circa 1940s  

Series 4: Personal  
This series contains Shortall’s personal writings, as well as correspondence and newspaper reviews relating to Shortall’s career as a composer. The correspondence folder also includes the collection’s only photograph of Shortall. The journals include Shortall’s copies of essays and articles on history, music, psychology, theater, and politics, as well as his reflections on these subjects. This series contains material from 1937-1984.  

Box 13  
Folder 1  
Correspondence, 1946-1971  

Box 13  
Folder 2  
Concert reviews, 1937-1939  

Box 13  
Folder 3  
Concert programs, 1937-1971  

Box 13  
Folder 4  
Journal 1, undated  

Box 13  
Folder 5  
Journal 2, undated  

Box 13  
Folder 6  
Journal 3, 1965  

Box 13  
Folder 7  
Journal 4, 1966  

Box 13  
Folder 8  
Journal 5, undated  

Box 13  
Folder 9  
Travel notebook, 1964-1971  

Box 13  
Folder 10
Obituary, 1984