

THE STEVEN KENNEDY PAPERS
1929 - 1967
FINDING AID



Archives and Special Collections



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Accession Number: 94-02

Size: 2.2614 cu. ft.

Provenance: Steven Kennedy Family

Restrictions: None.

Location: Range 3 Section 1 Shelf 6

Archivist: Prof. Julio L. Hernandez-Delgado

Assistant: Mr. Joseph Pagan

Date: April 1997

Revised: November 2014

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Steven Kennedy, whose real name was Melvin Stephen Hemphill, was born on January 1, 1912, in the Pittsburgh suburb of Avalon, but was raised in Moundsville, West Virginia. During his formative years Steven delighted in hearing soloists in churches and theatres, and at the age of six decided to become a singer. He received much of his early training as a member of his church choir and with several local glee clubs.

Steven Kennedy attended Moundsville High School in West Virginia where he developed an extraordinary voice. After high school he enrolled in the Pittsburgh Musical Institute in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to pursue studies in piano and voice. Subsequently he attended the famed Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York for post-graduate work in voice study. While attending Eastman, Kennedy appeared as a soloist with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Wheeling Symphony, and the San Bernadino Symphony.

Kennedy's first professional performances were with a Gilbert and Sullivan Company where he sang stellar roles in "The Pirates of Penzance" and "Iolanthe." After performing in New York with the Winthrop Ames Sullivan Company, he went to Europe to further his studies in voice and language. It was in Naples, Italy, where he made his debut in the role of Germont in "La Traviata." The success of this engagement allowed him to perform other roles like Sharpless in "Madame Butterfly", Valentin in "Faust", Marcello in "Boheme", Sylvio in "Pagliacci", and Enrico in "Lucia." After touring major European opera houses, Kennedy returned to the United States where he made his American debut in Town Hall, New York City, in 1936. Critical acclaim of the aforementioned recital led to tours with leading symphonies in the United States and Canada.

World War II interrupted Kennedy's career while he served two years with the U.S. Infantry. It is important to note that he became one of the first artists to sing for men in uniform and travel more than 18,000 miles to perform for wounded soldiers in many hospitals. After the war he returned to New York City and appeared in leading baritone roles with the New York City Opera Company and continued to tour throughout the United States and Canada.

In addition to his singing career, Kennedy was also devoted to teaching voice. Initially he held private sessions in his New York City studio with selected clientele. However, in 1954 he was hired by the University of Texas to teach voice. This was followed by a one-year appointment at the Jordan College of Music at Butler University (1955 - 1956) and a subsequent ten-year assignment at Hunter College, CUNY (1956 - 1966) where in addition to voice he also taught music appreciation. Kennedy passed away 1986. He will be remembered for his lovely baritone voice, and for passing on his love of music to younger generations.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Steven Kennedy Papers came to Archives & Special Collections of the Hunter College Libraries from the Peabody Institute of John Hopkins University in 1994 at the behest of Kennedy's descendants who wanted his papers deposited in our repository.

Steven Kennedy had an obscure but productive career as a baritone singer and as an instructor of music at several universities. His voice was adored by many fans as he sang stellar roles with many musical production companies. Kennedy's attraction and popularity served him well as he recorded several long playing albums with Bost Records, Melo Tone Recording Studio, Nola Recording Studios, G. Schirmer Inc. Studio, David Tribble Recordings, and WOR Recording.

Between 1954 and 1966, Kennedy accepted teaching posts at the University of Texas, the Jordan College of Music at Butler University, and at Hunter College of The City University of New York. As an instructor he taught voice and music appreciation. Kennedy enjoyed teaching and inspired his students to excel. He was a good communicator and was admired by his pupils.

These papers should attract the attention of students and music aficionados who are interested in researching the genre of music that was performed by professional soloists like Steven Kennedy from 1929 through the 1960's.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Series I – Personal and Biographical Information

This series includes newspaper clippings, correspondence, personnel records and a family scrapbook. The files are arranged alphabetically by category.

Series II – Musical Career

Subseries 2.1 Newspaper clippings

Subseries 2.2 Programs

Subseries 2.1 is an assortment of newspaper clippings which highlight many of Kennedy's concerts that were performed throughout the United States and Canada. These newspaper clippings are arranged chronologically. Subseries 2.2 consists of programs from performances that occurred from the 1930's through the 1960's. The programs are also arranged chronologically.

Series III – Academic Career

Included in this series are appointment books, copies of examinations, and lesson plans for courses taught by Kennedy at Hunter College for the years 1957, 1959, and 1961 - 1967. The files are arranged alphabetically by category and chronologically therein.

Series: IV – Photographs

Subseries 4.1 General Photographs

Subseries 4.2 Promotional Photographs

Subseries 4.1 contains black and white photographs of specific concerts, associates, and family members. The files are arranged alphabetically by category. Subseries 4.2 consists of oversized promotional photographs of Kennedy produced by the National Concert and Artists Corporation for the 1951-1952 season. In addition, there are photographs of Kennedy that appeared in *Musical America* (November 15, 1950) and in *Musical Courier* (October 1943). The photographs are arranged alphabetically by event, individual, and/or family member.

Series V – Long Playing Records

Included in this series are long playing records containing songs recorded by Steven Kennedy for the years 1943, 1945 - 1946, 1948, and 1950. The records are arranged alphabetically by recording studio and, where applicable, chronologically therein.

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I – PERSONAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	1	Biographical Information
		Correspondence
	2	Letters
	3	Postcards
	4	Kennedy, Mary Johnson
	5	Personnel File
	6	Scrapbook
	7	Miscellaneous Materials

SERIES II – MUSICAL CAREER

Subseries 2.1 Newspaper Clippings

1	8	1929 - 1956
	9	n.d.

Subseries 2.2 Programs

1	10	1930's
	11	1940's
2	1	1950's
	2	1960's
	3	n.d.

SERIES III – ACADEMIC CAREER

2	4	Appointment Book, 1963 - 1964, 1966
	5	Examinations, 1961 - 1964
		Lesson Plans
	6	Course 71.1, 1957, 1959, 1961 - 1964
	7	Course 571.5, 1961 - 1962
3	1	Course 81.19Z, 1965, 1967

SERIES IV – PHOTOGRAPHS

Subseries 4.1 General Photographs

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
3	2	Concerts and Events
	3	Family
	4	Individuals
	5	Robert Johnson and Sara G. Hamilton Johnson
	6	Steven Kennedy Portraits
	7	Unidentified Photographs

Subseries 4.2 Promotional Photographs

4		“Musical America,” November 15, 1950 “Musical Courier,” October 1943 National Concert and Artists Corporation, 1951 - 1952
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SERIES V – LONG PLAYING RECORDS

5	1	Bost Records Side A: (1) “Nightmare” song from “Iolanthe” (2) “Shoes” [Manning] Side B: (1) “Vision Fugitive”
	2	Melo Tone Recording Studio Side A: (1) “Border Ballad,” November 14, 1943 Side B: (2) “Her Name is Mary”
4	3	Melo Tone Recording Studio Side A: (1) “La Belle Jeunesse,” November 14, 1943 Side B: (2) “Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal”
	4	Nola Recording Studios Side A: (1) “If I loved You,” July 18, 1945 (2) “June is Busting Out All Over” Side B: (1) “Strange Music”
	5	Side A: (1) “If I Loved You,” July 18, 1945 (2) “Vagabonds” Side B: (1) “Strange Music”

SERIES V – LONG PLAYING RECORDS

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
5	6	Nola Recording Studios Side A: (1) "The Lord is My Lord Is My Light, July 21, 1946
	7	Side A: (1) "If I Loved You," September 1945 (2) "June is Busting Out All Over" Side B: (1) "Strange Music" (2) "Song of the Open Road"
	8	Side A: (1) "Midnight in Paris," February 2, 1946 Side B: (1) "Nemico Della Patria"
	9	G. Schirmer Inc. Studio Side A: (1) "Brothers of Romany," May 22, 1945 (2) "Salt Water" Side A: (1) "Brothers of Romany" 78rpm (2) "Salt Water"
	10	David Timble Records Side A: (1) "Chanson A Danser" (2) "Man is for Woman Made" Side B: (1) "Since From My Dear"
	11	Side A: (1) "Das Standchen," November 3, 1950 Side B: (1) "Der Schreckenberger"
	12	Side A: (1) "Il fault nous amier," November 3, 1950 (2) "Le diable dans la nuit" Side B: (1) "La ronde autour de monde"
	13	Side A: (1) "Verschwiegene Liebe," November 3, 1950 (2) "Der Tambour" Side B: (1) "Wiegenied" (2) "Das Kohlerweib is trunken"
	14	Side A: (1) "La complainte du soldat vaincu" Side B: (2) "La complainte du pont de Gien"
	15	Side A: (1) "La complainte a dieu" - Prayer I Side B: (2) "La complainte a dieu" - Prayer II

SERIES V – LONG PLAYING RECORDS

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
5	16	David Timble Records Side A: (1) “Aria of Alazim from <i>Zaide</i> ” Side B: (2) “Recit et air de Cadmus”
	17	WOR Recording Side A: (1) “Haunted Heart,” April 14, 1948 Side B: (2) “Midnight in Paris”
	18	Side A: (1) “Aria”, April 29, 1948 Side B: (1) “Sylvia” (2) “Border Ballad”