Lynn Freeman Olson: An Inventory of Initial Deposit

Repository: The University of Texas at Austin, Fine Arts Library

Creator: Olson, Lynn Freeman, 1938-1987

Dates: 1960-1987

Extent: 10 document boxes (5 linear feet)

Abstract: The Lynn Freeman Olson collection includes music manuscripts, correspondence, production documents, and sound recordings documenting the work of the music educator and piano pedagogue. Included in the collection are numerous music manuscripts of piano solos and compilations, as well as extensive drafts, production notes, and correspondence regarding several piano instructional series.

Language: English

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Donation, 1988-1989

Processed by: Nick Homenda, 2010

Restrictions

Access: Open for research

Biographical Sketch

Lynn Freeman Olson was born on June 5, 1938 and lived in Minneapolis, MN throughout his childhood. He studied music at the MacPhail School of Music at the University of Minnesota, yet lived and worked in New York City for most of his adult life. He continued his piano pedagogy studies with Frances Clark, founder of the New School for Music Study in Kingston, New Jersey. Olson was greatly influenced by Clark as a teacher and composer, and he later composed music for the New School.

A prolific composer, he created countless piano solos, study books, and classroom methods for students of all ages. His notable compositions include songs for The Captain Kangaroo Show on CBS-TV, school and church choral music series It's Time for Music! and Make Mine Music for the Minnesota School of the Air, and Celebration! for piano and classroom percussion. He also collaborated with piano educators such as Martha

In his compositions, Olson introduced interesting meters, rhythmic patterns, and harmonies rarely found in pedagogical music for the piano. Moreover, he developed definitive courses of study for all ages, ranging from early childhood students through college-age classrooms. Besides his ability to compose music for specific ages and abilities, he was skilled in selecting and editing important pieces from the classical repertoire.

A highly-regarded music education clinician, he traveled to average of 30 states per year presenting at workshops and clinics. He also permanently taught at the International Workshops and the Caribbean Cruise Workshop for Piano Teachers. As an author, Olson regularly wrote columns for *Junior Keynotes*, and edited and contributed to *Junior Festivals Bulletin* and *Clavier*.

Olson was an important member of music organizations, including a life member of the National Federation of Music Clubs; a National Arts Associate of Sigma Alpha Iota; and on the board of directors of the New York Federation of Music Clubs.

Olson lived in New York City until his death of cancer on November 18, 1987.

**Sources**


**Scope and Contents**


The bulk of the collection comprises photocopies and facsimiles of compositions and instructional books with varying amounts of author and editor corrections. Most of the earliest music manuscripts are found within seven manuscript music notebooks that contain early drafts of solos, collections, and instructional books. Within Series II. Piano Instructional Series Production Materials, *Music Pathways, Piano for the Developing*
Musician, and Piano for Pleasure are represented, with several drafts for nearly every volume, along with correspondence, production notes, recording scripts, workshop-related material, travel itineraries, financial documents, and reviews. Of particular interest is a Flexi disc copy of a Music Pathways recording (Box 7 Folder 13).

Correspondence is found throughout the collection, though most occurs within Series II. Piano Instructional Series Production Materials, pertaining to each of the three instructional series represented. Other letters pertaining to specific musical compositions are located with those works.

Although many music manuscripts and drafts are undated, most of the documents in the collection have been identified and annotated by James Schnars, the executor of Olson’s estate, in the form of Post-It notes. These notes often identify the publisher and date of publication of each composition. In addition, the notes provide descriptive information about each item, commonly identifying which items are original manuscripts and which are copies. They have been preserved in separate paper sleeves next to the items to which they were once affixed.

An alphabetical index of musical works lists the individual pieces and compilations that can be found in the collection, also indexing identifiable titles within the seven manuscript music notebooks.

**Related Material**

Another portion of the collection has been processed separately, The Addition to the Lynn Freeman Olson Collection. It contains sound recordings, manuscript music for piano, and correspondence. Additional accession lists are available for commercially recorded phonodiscs (LPs), cassette tapes, music periodicals, books, and sheet music donated as part of the collection. There are four uncataloged oversize boxes of music manuscripts.

**Container List**

**Series I. Musical Works A-Z 1960-1987, n.d.**

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<td>Edited draft with notes, ca. 1984</td>
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2. *Sounds Sacred*, manuscript music for piano and facsimile, n.d.
3. Sq-Z
5. *The Story of Christmas*
7. Edited text, facsimile, and proof copy, n.d.

**Series II. Piano Instructional Series Production Materials 1972-1987**


**Music Drafts**

*Discovery IA*

7. Paste-up draft 1, ca. 1972
8. Paste-up draft 2, ca. 1972
9. Draft fragments from revision, ca. 1978
10. Photocopies and assorted draft material
11. Corrected print copies, 1977
12. Proof copy and page proofs, ca. 1980s

*Discovery IB*, facsimile, ca. 1970s

13. *Piano Activity 1B*, paste-up draft, ca. 1970s
14. “A Piano Course,” test printing of *Discovery IA, Discovery IB, Musicianship 1B*, 1972

*Performance 1C*, manuscript music for piano, draft material

15. Paste-up draft with manuscript music for piano and typed portions
16. Facsimile

*Performance 2A and 2B*

17. Manuscript music for piano
18. Photocopies

Working copy set of levels 1 and 2

19. *Discovery 1A*
20. *Discovery 1B*
21. *Activity 1B*
22. *Discovery 1C*
23. *Activity 1C*
24. *Discovery 2A*
25. *Activity 2A*
26. *Discovery 2B*
27. *Activity 2B*

*Musicianship 3A*

28. Manuscript music for piano with draft material
29. Edited photocopy
30. *Repertoire 3A*, draft material, two photocopy layout drafts
31. *Technique 3A*, photocopy of layout draft
Musicianship 3B
19 Manuscript music for piano
20 Photocopy

6 1 Repertoire 3B, photocopy of layout draft
2 Technique 3B, photocopy of layout draft

Musicianship 4A
3 Manuscript music for piano with draft material
4 Photocopy
5 Repertoire 4A, photocopy of layout draft
6 Technique 4A, photocopy of layout draft

Musicianship 4B
7 Draft material
8 Photocopy
9 Repertoire 4B, edited photocopy of layout draft
10 Technique 4B, edited photocopy of layout draft

Musicianship 5A
11 Draft material
12 Photocopy of layout draft
13 Repertoire 5A, edited photocopy of layout draft
14 Technique 5A, photocopy of layout draft

Musicianship 5B
15 Draft material
16 Edited photocopy of layout draft
17 Repertoire 5B, edited photocopy of layout draft
18 Technique 5B, edited photocopy of layout draft
19 Ensemble 4 and 5, draft material

7 1 Something Light 3, 4, and 5, draft material

Production
2 Discovery layout materials, n.d.
3 Sample assignments, paste-up drafts and working copies, n.d.
4 Assorted music draft material
5 Assorted text draft material
6 Introduction drafts
7 Assorted Musicianship draft material
8 Element charts
9 Style sheets
10 Production notes
11 Art notes
12 Financial papers and contracts, 1974-1975
13 Recordings
14 Research and reports, 1973-1975
15 Promotional material
Workshops
16 Draft material
17 Assorted workshop material

Correspondence
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18 1971-1973
19 1974-1976

8 1 1977-1987, n.d.
2 Corrections, 1975-1985
3 Reviews, 1974-1976, n.d.
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Music Drafts
Piano for the Developing Musician I
5 Draft material, ca. 1982-1984
6-7 Photocopy of edited draft, 1984
8-9 Photocopy of edited working copy, 1984
10 Proofreader copy, 1984

9 1 Corrected page proofs, 1984
2-4 Piano for the Developing Musician II, photocopy of working copy
5 Assorted music
6-7 Assorted draft and discarded material

Piano for the Developing Musician Rapid Guide
8-9 I, edited proof copy, n.d.
10 II, corrected galley page proofs, n.d.

Production
10 1 Instruction manual draft, n.d.
2 Editor’s check chart, n.d.
3 Recordings, n.d.
4 Reviewer’s comments, ca. 1984-1987

5 Correspondence, 1982-1987

Subseries C. Piano for Pleasure (1986), 1984-1986

6-8 Music draft
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Junior Keynotes articles by Olson, 1964-1973
“Syllabus for Piano Classes” report by The Canadian Bureau for the Advancement of Music

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My First Keyboard Solos
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