

INTRODUCTION

Provenance

The Leonora Wood Armsby Papers were donated to the San Francisco Performing Arts Library (now Museum of Performance + Design) on August 3, 1991 by George Paul Lechich, former City Librarian of Burlingame, California.

Restrictions

None

Collection Number

991.071

Size

Number of containers: 2 cartons, 3 boxes
Linear feet: 3

Processed by

ALANM

BIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Armsby was born in Springfield, Illinois, circa 1880. In 1898, she married George Newell Armsby (1876-), a banker in Chicago. They moved to Hillsborough, California where she had a son and a daughter. Mr. Armsby was involved with the fruit packing and canning industries, and when his career took him to New York, Mrs. Armsby enrolled in the Walter Damrosch Institute to learn about music. Some compositions and lyrics she wrote during this time were published in a book called *Birdland Melodies*. Mrs. Armsby continued her studies of music in Paris at the Ecole Normale de Musique before settling permanently in Hillsborough in 1926.

During her life, Leonora Wood Armsby was known in San Francisco society as the "First Lady of Music". From 1935-1953 she served first as Managing Director and then as President of the San Francisco Symphony Association. Her involvement with the Orchestra began in 1926 when, under her direction, the Philharmonia Society of San Mateo sponsored its first concert in the open-air Woodland Theatre. In 1935, she became the Managing Director and was responsible for engaging Pierre Monteux as the Symphony's conductor that same year.

Leonora Wood Armsby died January 20, 1962.

Biography by Paul Padgette

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection consists mainly of autographed photographs of famous musicians who knew Mrs. Armsby during her long association with the San Francisco Symphony. There are also portrait photos and sculpture reproductions of her, in addition to her writings on music and the many citations to her from world-wide organizations. Lastly, the collection has some original artwork by Antonio Sotomayor and two watercolor prints from France.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| SERIES I. | Biographical
Awards, Citations, and Diplomas |
| SERIES II. | Writings by
Music, books, and papers |
| SERIES III. | Writings about |
| SERIES IV. | Photographs of Leonora Wood Armsby |
| SERIES V. | Photographs of performers |
| SERIES VI. | Photos – Orchestra |
| SERIES VII. | Photos – Miscellaneous |
| SERIES VIII. | Artwork |
| SERIES IX. | Miscellaneous |

CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I. Biographical

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	1	Clippings & notes made by LWA	n.d.
	2	Awards and Honors Award for her interest in French art (9"x11") (Le Sauvegarde De l'Art Francais),	1933-1953 N.D.
5	4	Diploma for Doctor of Music, honoris rausa (University of San Francisco)	5 Jun 1949
1	2	A "tribute" 8"x10" (Head Waiter and his musical friends, WMOH)	6 Dec1940
		Award for distinguished service (9"x12") (USTreasuryDept,NorCal War Finance Committee)	31 Dec1945
		Birthday tribute (8.5"x14") (from Symphony personnel)	9 May1940
		Citation (8.5"x11") (University of San Francisco)	5 Jun 1949
		M.A. diploma, honoris rausa (6'x8") (Mills College)	7 Jun 1942
1	10	Citation (16"x21") (Golden Gate International Exposition)	1940
5	10	Citation for 17 years of service (12"x18") (SF Symphony Association)	25 Aug 1953
		Diploma (17"x20") (Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur)	29 Dec 1947
5	9	An appreciation (13"x18") (Philharmonic Society of San Mateo (members of orchestra))	6 Aug 1933

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1 2 Papers, *Birthday tribute (10"x13")* (from
Albert M.Binder), 9may1940

SERIES II. Writings by

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
2	1	Sheet music, <i>As Heaven Sings & Bird Land Melodies (two copies of each)</i> (Mrs. Armsby)	1920
2	2	Book, <i>Musicians Talk</i> (Mrs.Armsby)	
2	3	Papers, <i>The SFSO: First Decade for Calif Historical Society, Vol XXV, #3</i> (Mrs. Armsby)	Sept 1946
2	4	Papers, <i>So Near to My Heart, chapters 1-4 (an autobiography serialized in the SFChronicle) (two copies)</i> (Mrs. Armsby),	1952
2	5	Papers, <i>So Near to My Heart (chapters 5-11) (two copies)</i> (Mrs. Armsby),	1952
2	6	Book, <i>We Shall Have Music</i> (Mrs. Armsby),	n.d.

SERIES III. Writings about

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
2	7	Papers (Clippings & Opera House News (Vol.3 #5)),	May 1939
2	8	Papers, <i>articles and photos about LWA</i> (San Francisco Quarterly),	1952-3

SERIES IV. Photographs of LWA

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1		Photo, <i>Photographic book w/ LWA,</i>	n.d.

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3	1	Photo, 20 portraits of LWA (mostly 8"x10"),	1920-30
3	1a	Photo, LWA w/ Monteux, w/ Olin Downs, w/ Walter Damrosch,	n.d.
4	1	Photo, 4 Oversized Portraits (various sizes),	n.d.

SERIES V. Photographs of performers

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
3	2	Photo, Albert Spaulding, inscribed (8"x10"),	n.d.
		Photo, Alec Templeton (8"x10"),	1933
		Photo, Alfred Hertz, inscribed (8"x10"),	1929
		Photo, Arturo Toscanini, inscribed (8"x10"),	1928
		Photo, Chester W. Nimitz, inscribed (8"x10"),	n.d.
		Photo, E. Fernandez Arbos (inscribed)(8"x10"),	1930
		Photo, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (inscribed photo of drawing),	n.d.
		Photo, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge (inscribed)(8"x10"),	n.d.
		Photo, Ernest Bloch (inscribed)(8"x10"),	1929
		Photo, Frederick Stock, inscribed (8"x10"),	1942
		Photo, Fritz Reiner, inscribed (8"x10"),	1934
		Photo, Harold Bauer (inscribed)(8"x10"),	1935
		Photo, Igor Stravinsky, inscribed (8"x10"),	n.d.
		Photo, Laurence Tibbet w/unid. man,	1933
		Photo, Leon Fleisher, inscribed (8"x10"),	1943
		Photo, Monteux, conducting in Santa suit,	n.d.
		Photo, Nellie Melba, signed (8"x10"),	1910
		Photo, Olin Downes, inscribed (8"x10"),	n.d.

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		Photo, <i>Oscar Levant, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Ossip Gabrilowitch at piano</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Ossip Gabrilowitch, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Ossip Gabrilowitch, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1932
		Photo, <i>Ossip Gabrilowitch, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1933
		Photo, <i>Pierre Monteux w/wife's daughter (2) (8"x10")</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Pierre Monteux, , inscribed (8"x10") (2)</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Pierre Monteux, drawing</i> ,	n.d.
		Photo, <i>Serge Rachmaninoff, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1940
		Photo, <i>Serge Rachmaninoff, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1941
		Photo, <i>Walter Damrosch, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1931
		Photo, <i>Willem Van Hoogstraaton, inscribed (8"x10")</i> ,	1930
3	2	Photo, <i>Clara Clemens-Gabrilowitsch (inscribed)(8"x10")</i> ,	1927
4	2	Photo, <i>Albert Coates (inscribed)(8"x10")</i> ,	1928
		Photo, <i>Artur Rodzinski, inscribed (9"x14")</i> ,	1930
		Photo, <i>Ernest Ansermet (inscribed)(10"x14")</i> ,	1936
		Photo, <i>Eugene Gossens, inscribed (10"x14")</i> ,	1929
		Photo, <i>Organist sitting @ organ, inscribed, signature illegible (11"x14") (sepia)</i> ,	Jan 1923
5	2	Photo, <i>Joan Fontaine & Brian Aherne (7.5"x10')(b&w) (Hurrell)</i>	
5	3	Photo, <i>Monteux (10"x14") (b&w)</i> ,	n.d.

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SERIES VI. Photos - Orchestra

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	3	Photo, <i>Philharmonic Society of San Mateo</i> @ <i>Woodland Theater in Hillsborough,</i>	1932
5	6	Photo, <i>SFSO w/ Monteux @ Civic Auditorium &</i> <i>audience (9"x20") (b&w)</i> (Moulin Studio),	n.d.
5	7	Photo, <i>Philharmonic Society of San Mateo</i> @ <i>Woodland Theater in Hillsborough,</i>	1928
5	8	Photo, <i>SFSO w/ Jorda (formal portrait) on</i> <i>stage WMOH (16"x20") (color),</i> c. 1954 Photo, <i>SFSO w/ Monteux @ WMOH & audience</i> <i>(16"x20") (b&w)</i> (Morton Photo), c. 1940	

SERIES VII. Photos -- Miscellaneous

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
3	3	Photo, <i>Woodland Theater, Hillsborough, CA</i> <i>(8"x10") (8),</i>	c. 1930
3	4	Photo, <i>Christmas Pageant (8"x10") (5),</i>	n.d.
3	5	Photo, <i>unidentified (5),</i>	n.d.

SERIES VIII. Artwork

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
4	3	Prints, <i>"Romeo & Juliet" (Monteux & LWA)</i> <i>signed by artist (8"x13")</i> (Antonio Sotomayor),	1943
		Prints, <i>10"x12" embroidery, based on drawing</i> <i>by Antonio Sotomayor "Monteux Honors</i> <i>Sibelius" (Mrs. Clifford Jones),</i>	1942
		Prints, <i>Lincoln Statue (10"x13")</i> (Antonio Sotomayor),	n.d.

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4	4	Prints, <i>Watercolor of Barbizan in 1880</i> (8"x10") (Unknown),	n.d.
		Prints, <i>Watercolor of Notre Dame , Paris</i> (8"x10") (Unknown),	n.d.
5	1	Prints, <i>Man (pen & ink drawing -- 10"x14")</i> (unknown),	n.d.
5	5	Prints, <i>SFSO members w/ Monteux, inscribed to LWA by Monteux (10"x14")</i> (Antonio Sotomayor),	n.d.

SERIES IX. Miscellaneous

<u>Container</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>	<u>Dates</u>
3	6	Papers, " <i>3 and Pierre Monteux</i> " -- <i>Spr.</i> <i>46, Win-Spr. '52, Fall-Win'53</i> , as above	
3	7	Program, " <i>Guest Book</i> " and reel to reel tape of <i>half the concert</i> (Burlingame Public Library Concerts honoring LWA),	June 14, 1959