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After graduation from Harvard University (B.A. 1925), Mendel went to Paris, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger (1925-1927). He was music critic of The Nation (1930-1933), literary editor for G. Schirmer (1930-1938), editor of the American Musicological Society's journal (1940-1943), and editor for Associated Music Publishers (1941-1947). He was also an active translator. From 1936 to 1953 he conducted the Cantata Singers, one of the first groups in the USA to give authentic performances of Baroque music. He taught at the Dalcroze School of Music and the Diller - Quaile School in New York (1938-1950), serving as president of the former (1947-1950).

In the late 1940s Mendel gained recognition as a musicologist. He was appointed professor of music at Princeton University (1952), where he was departmental chairman (1952-1967), and held the Henry Putnam University Professorship from 1969 until his retirement in 1973. He was a member of the editorial boards of the Neue Bach - Ausgabe and the new Josquin edition. Mendel published studies on the history of musical pitch and the rhythmic structure of Renaissance and Baroque music. His editions and studies of Bach's life and works, most notably the documentary biography The Bach Reader (1945, with Hans T. David), and his practical and critical editions of the St. John Passion (1951, 1974), brought him recognition as the foremost American Bach scholar of his generation.

In his later years he investigated the music of Josquin and possible applications of computer technology to musicological problems. A Festschrift in his honor, Studies in Renaissance and Baroque Music, was published in 1974 (edited by Robert L. Marshall).

The collection consists of articles, correspondence, course notes, scrapbooks (1937-1952), memorabilia, and printed matter of Mendel, a professor of music at Princeton (1952-1973). The collection contains correspondence between Mendel, professional colleagues, and organizations such as the American Musicological Society, the Josquin Committee, and the International Josquin Festival Conference (June 1971) in New York, N.Y. There are also Mendel's records on the status of dissertations, course notes for a senior seminar in music history, material on pitches of various instruments and standard tuning frequencies, and scrapbooks containing letters, public relations announcements, and newspaper reviews of the Cantata Singers of All Souls Church in New York City, of which he was the conductor. In addition, there are liability insurance policies and cancelled personal checks of Mendel's wife, Elsa.

Additional material, also unprocessed was added to the collection in May 2007. This material includes sixteen binders and folders of Mendel while he was at Princeton University. The binders contain sheet music, original manuscript material, class curriculum and notes, and writings and criticism of Bach. Also included is correspondence; a binder labeled "Arthur's Honors"; photographs from an exhibition about Mendel; personal photographs; a photo album of his wife Elsa Wissell and her family, and documents about her death and her estate; photographs and letters about the "Cantata Singers"; printed material; and newspaper clippings.
This is an unprocessed collection and remains in its original arrangement.

Access and Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Use and Copyright Information

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. No further photoduplication of copies of material in the collection can be made when Princeton University Library does not own the original. Inquiries regarding publishing material from the collection should be directed to RBSC Public Services staff at rbsc@princeton.edu. The library has no information on the status of literary rights in the collection and researchers are responsible for determining any questions of copyright.

Acquisition and Appraisal

Provenance and Acquisition


Appraisal

No appraisal information is available.

Processing and Other Information

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Arthur Mendel Papers, Box and Folder Number; Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Encoding

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit 2012-08-06T12:54-0400

Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Subject Headings

· Josquin, Des Pres, 1440?-1521 -- Criticism and interpretation -- 20th century.
· All Soul's Church (New York, N.Y.)
• American Musicological Society.
• Cantata Singers.
• Princeton University. -- Dept. of Music -- 20th century.
• Music -- Instruction and study -- New Jersey -- Princeton -- 20th century.
• Musical pitch.
• Correspondence.
• Faculty papers.
• Scrapbooks.
• Conductors (Music) -- New York (State) -- New York.
• Princeton University -- Faculty.
• Music
• Princeton University
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Handel and Haydn, dates not examined
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Haydn Proceedings, dates not examined
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Correspondence: I - Neu, 1972-1973
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Int(l Congress: Bach Symposium, dates not examined
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KNUF, dates not examined
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NYPL, dates not examined
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Oxford, dates not examined
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Reese Memoir, dates not examined
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Josquin Committee, 1979
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Committee Business, dates not examined
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Individual Committee Members, dates not examined  Box: 8 Folder: 6
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Josquin Conference - T, dates not examined  
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Cantata Singers: Personal Checks - Cantata Singers, 1937 - 1945  
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Pitch Material, dates not examined

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- Brass, dates not examined  Box: 13 Folder: 2
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- Schlick, dates not examined  Box: 13 Folder: 11
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- Strings, dates not examined  Box: 14 Folder: 2
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- Thomas & Rhodes, dates not examined  Box: 14 Folder: 3
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- Vocal Compasses, dates not examined  Box: 14 Folder: 4
Woodwinds, dates not examined

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Pitch Material and Cantata Singers programs, etc., dates not examined

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Elsa Wissell's Family Photo Album, 1896-1984

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Scrapbook, 1928-1942

Acquisition and Appraisal: AM 2007-100
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Photographs, 1902-1975

Acquisition and Appraisal: AM 2007-100
Box: 18

Binder with "Arthur's Honors", Correspondence, Printed Material, 1938-1988

Acquisition and Appraisal: AM 2007-100
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Binder 1: Handel I; Binder 2: Monteverdi; Binder 3: Bach Performance Book;

Acquisition and Appraisal: AM 2007-100
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2 Binder Containing Bach's Cantatas BWV 225-846; 2 Binders Containing Opera
I & II, 1949-1979

Acquisition and Appraisal: AM 2007-100
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4 Binders Containing Bach Cantatas BWV 1-224, 1963-1966

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3 Binders with Material for Teaching Classes; 1 Binder Labeled "Handwriting
Studies", 1954-1971

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Matted Photographs, undated

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