

**S0483 New Music Circle
Records (1959-1981)
79 Folders**

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at sbsresearch@umsystem.edu.

On April 17, 1959, the Junior Division of the St. Louis Symphony Society presented a benefit concert at the American Theater entitled "Music in Our Time." The purpose of this concert, which featured St. Louis composers and performers, was to raise money for a commissioned symphony to honor the orchestra's 80th Anniversary Season in 1959-60. The sold-out house of about 1400 persons produced a net sum of \$7,500. This amount represented an international record for a contemporary concert.

Elizabeth Gentry Sayad (then Elizabeth Gentry Coleman), the chairman of "Music in Our Time" and three of the composers who were represented on the program---Manus Sasonkin, music reviewer on the Post-Dispatch and graduate consultant at the St. Louis Institute of Music; Robert Wykes and Harold Blumenfeld, composers-in-residence at Washington University---felt that it had been proven that there was an audience, as well as a need, for a forum of new musical works in St. Louis. In early May of 1959 these composers and Mrs. Sayad met with a group of young people from the community who were devoted to the cause of supporting contemporary music. At this time the New Music Circle was born.

Elizabeth Sayad was one of the major driving forces behind the group. Several illustrious and talented St. Louisans joined her in her efforts. The Founding board members were: Elizabeth Gentry Coleman (now Sayad) (Chairman); John T. Rogers (Treasurer); Edward Corn (Publicity Chairman); Eloise Polk; Louise Conant; Mrs. Charles Baumgarten; Martin Schweig, Jr.; Patricia Krebs; Linda Robertson; Leslie Laskey; Barbara Blake; Nancy Turner; and Rudolph Kremer.

The primary purpose of the NMC is to present contemporary music in the City of St. Louis. The contemporary visual arts have developed a large audience in St. Louis and local artists have been much stimulated by their reception. NMC hoped to establish and focus regional attention on St. Louis as a midwestern center for the performance of modern music. The NMC attempted to present new works that represent the best creative efforts of local, national, and foreign composers, as well as twentieth century classics by the musical pioneers of our time and the experimental works of the avant-garde. The organization also tried to serve the existing audience and to help enlarge it by providing an educational forum through the medium of discussion with the composers at the conclusion of each concert. In addition, the NMC provides a permanent record of the best of each season through commercial recordings.

The NMC has been active in the St. Louis community for 30 years. Elizabeth Gentry Sayad retired as chairman after 7 years of service, but she still supports the group with her multiple talents. Each year the NMC sponsors three concerts and in some seasons the group sponsors special events. These special events are usually held on the group's anniversaries, such as the Catalytic Celebration which was held to commemorate the NMC's 10th Anniversary.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The New Music Circle Records document the activities of this organization from 1959 through 1981. The bulk of the material is correspondence. The correspondence, however, is wide ranging and covers a variety of topics. Each stage of planning is well documented-- contracts, grants, proposal, etcetera can be found in this collection. Most of the information contained here is for the years 1967 through 1978. Prior to 1967 and after 1978 the information is very sketchy.

In addition to correspondence, this collection also contains information concerning the planning of the events of each season. This information only concerns the 1971 season to the 1980 season. Documents pertaining to other years are not contained in these records. The concert information, used in conjunction with the correspondence, provides a fairly complete record of the NMC's activities.

Meeting minutes and membership lists help the researcher by giving information on outstanding members such as Elizabeth Gentry Sayad. Meeting minutes are available for the following years: 1961-1979. Unfortunately, there are gaps; not all of the meeting minutes are included. The collection also contains newspaper articles and programs for NMC events.

In addition to miscellaneous news articles, a scrapbook for 1961 to 1966 is also included in this collection. This scrapbook documents the NMC's early activities very thoroughly.

Recordings and photographs complete this collection although this information is incomplete and sketchy. Copies of the two phonographs are on cassettes for the researcher's benefit. Also included is a reel-to-reel recording of the Goell-Sayad piano duo.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Concerts/Projects: This series includes papers and planning material pertaining to specific projects or concerts the NMC sponsored. These documents are divided into seasons for the years 1971 through 1980. The Sensorium project, the Catalytic Celebration, and the participation of the St. Louis Women's Club are filed separately within this series.
2. Correspondence: This series consists of general and miscellaneous correspondence covering any number of topics. The files are arranged chronologically from 1959 to 1981. Also included is correspondence with Eleanor Newman, the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, and the Missouri Council On the Arts.
3. Daily Affairs: The bulk of this series consists of meeting minutes (1961-1979) and programs. Also included are By-Laws, grants, contracts, financial records, KFUE information, membership lists, newspaper articles, and flyers.
4. Scrapbook: This series consists of one scrapbook which contains information for the years 1961 through 1966.
5. Recordings: This series consists of musical recordings: a 45 rpm single of "St. Louis is My Home Town;" cassette and long-playing album entitled New Music Circles; cassette of The Prince and the Pauper; and one reel-to-reel recording of the Sayad-Goell piano duo.

6. Photographs: This series includes photographs of receptions and NMC projects and concerts.

FOLDER LIST

BOX 1

Series 1: Concerts and Projects

1. NMC Catalytic Celebration, 1969
2. Sensorium, 1969-1970
3. NMC Season, 1971-1972
4. NMC Season, 1972-1973
5. NMC Season, 1973-1974
6. NMC Season, 1974-1975
7. NMC Season, 1975-1976
8. NMC Season, 1976-1977
9. NMC Season, 1977-1978
10. NMC Season, 1978-1979
11. NMC Season, 1979-1980
12. St. Louis Women's Club Participation, 1970-1976

BOX 2

Series 2: Correspondence

13. Correspondence, 1959
14. Correspondence, 1960
15. Correspondence, 1961
16. Correspondence, 1962
17. Correspondence, 1963
18. Correspondence, 1964
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28. Correspondence, 1974
29. Correspondence, 1976
30. Correspondence, 1977
31. Correspondence, 1978
32. Correspondence, 1979
33. Correspondence, 1980
34. Correspondence, 1981

35. Correspondence, no date
36. Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, 1963-1967
37. Missouri State Council on the Arts, 1974-1975
38. Eleanor Newman, 1969-1971

Series 3: Daily Affairs

39. By-Laws, 1964
40. Contracts, 1973-1980
41. Grants, 1967-1979
42. Financial Records, 1961-1979
43. KFUE
44. Meeting Minutes, 1961
45. Meeting Minutes, 1962-1963

BOX 3

46. Meeting Minutes, 1964
47. Meeting Minutes, 1965-1966
48. Meeting Minutes, 1967
49. Meeting Minutes, 1968
50. Meeting Minutes, 1969
51. Meeting Minutes, 1970
52. Meeting Minutes, 1971
53. Meeting Minutes, 1972
54. Meeting Minutes, 1973
55. Meeting Minutes, 1976
56. Meeting Minutes, 1978
57. Meeting Minutes, 1979
58. Membership Lists, 1965-1979
59. Non-NMC Programs, 1951, 1960-1970
60. Program Preparation, 1964-1972

Series 4: Public Relations

61. Newspaper Articles, 1959-1981
62. Newspaper Articles, no date
63. News Releases, 1961-1962, 1976, no date
64. Posters and Flyers
65. Programs, 1960-1973
66. Program Announcements, 1959-1981

BOX 4

Series 5: Scrapbooks

67. 1961-1966

Series 6: Recordings

68. 45 rpm single: "St. Louis is My Home Town" (Located in Oversize Box)

- 69. Cassette and Long Playing album: New Music Circles
- 70. Cassette: The Prince and the Pauper
- 71. Reel-to-reel: Goell-Sayad Duo(Located in Oversize Box)

Series 7:Photographs

- 72. #14310-14311
- 73. #14312
- 74. #14313
- 75. #14314-14315
- 76. #14316
- 77. #14317
- 78. #14318
- 79. Slides, #11742-11746

OVERSIZE BOX: Posters and sound recordings

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