

Giovanni Battista Fontana Musical Papers

CMS.040

Finding aid prepared by Richard Del Giudice

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Center for Migration Studies
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Summary Information

Repository	Center for Migration Studies
Creator	Fontana, Giovanni Battista
Title	Giovanni Battista Fontana Musical Papers
Date [inclusive]	1908-1945
Extent	1.0 Linear feet in two boxes.
Language	English

Language of Materials note In Italian, English, and Latin.

Abstract Giovanni Battista Fontana was the first organist and choirmaster of the Church of Our Lady of Pompei, New York City. He remained with the parish from 1908 until 1945 when he died at the age of 72. The collection contains musical compositions, the opera "Sayda," in three acts, the incomplete score of "Il Cieco di Guerra," tragic opera in two acts, church music, organ music, and chamber music. Also included are newspaper clippings announcing the death of Fontana, and six agreements between Fontana and G. Ricordi (a musical publishing house).

Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Giovanni Battista Fontana Musical Papers (CMS 040); Box; Folder.

Biographical/Historical note

Giovanni Battista Fontana was the first organist and choirmaster of the Church of Our Lady of Pompei, New York City. He was born in Cremona, Italy and before a coming to America, had been director of the Ponchielli Institute of Music in Cremona.

Fontana emigrated to New York in 1908 after receiving an offer to be organist and choirmaster of Our Lady of Pompei. He remained with the parish from 1908 until 1945 when he died at the age of 72.

Fontana's primary responsibility was to play the organ at all religious functions, including weekday masses and funerals. He also directed the adult and children's choirs as well as musical programs which were then very popular in the church hall. Apart from his work at Our Lady of Pompei, Fontana gave piano lessons to the local children in their homes. In addition to all these activities, the maestro found time to compose a variety of musical scores, including a mass, an entire opera entitled "Sayda" (from a libretto by Friar Silipigni), and music for organ, chamber music, and church music.

Scope and Contents note

The musical compositions of Fontana were composed during the time he was organist at Our Lady of Pompei. Several of the scores were published, while others were not. There are approximately 39 musical compositions, and several of the scores have the musical notation in Fontana's hand. Included with the works is the opera "Sayda," in three acts, the incomplete score of "Il Cieco di Guerra," tragic opera in two acts, church music, organ music, and chamber music. Also included are newspaper clippings announcing the death of Fontana, and six agreements between Fontana and G. Ricordi (a musical publishing house).

Arrangement note

The collection was arranged into four groups: opera, church music, for organ, and for piano.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies December 1986

Revision Description

Edited for DACS compliance and inputted into Archivists Toolkit by Nicole Greenhouse and Mary Brown November 2013

Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers by appointment.

Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright is owned by the Center for Migration Studies. Permission to publish materials must be requested before use.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

This collection was likely donated by Our Lady of Pompei Church.

Processing Information note

In 2013, this collection was entered into the Archivists' Toolkit in compliance with DACS and folder descriptions were simplified from the original print finding aid. (The original finding aid is available in print upon request). Folder titles in the container list online may vary from the the physical folder titles.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Our Lady of Pompei (Parish : New York, N.Y.).

Subject(s)

- Church music |x Catholic Church |y 20th century.
- Italian Americans |x Music

Other Finding Aids note

The original inventory is available in print upon request.

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Sayda, Part One	1	1
Sayda, Part Two	1	2
Sayda, Part Three	1	2
Sayda, Part Four	1	4
Il Cieco di Guerra	1	5
Working Score	1	6
Missa Our Lady of Pompei	2	7
Cor Jesu Mass	2	8
Tus Scendi dalle Stelle--Pastorale	2	9
Il Cantico del Sole (6 accompanist and 10 vocal scores)	2	10
Agnus Dei (2 copies)	2	11
Pater Noster (1 copy and 10 scores for orchestral soloists)	2	12

Panis Angelicus	2	13
Salve Regina (1 copy and 4 copies for vocal soloists)	2	14
Ave Maria, in honor of the marriage of Ann Carbone (4 copies and 20 copies for vocal soloists)	2	15
L'Italia a Tripoli, piccola fantasia descrittiva per pianoforte	2	16
Il Pator Vagante (2 copies)	2	17
Humoristic	2	18
capriccio per organo	2	19
Practical pieces for organ	2	20
Canzone Rustica	2	21
Toccata	2	22
Nettie--Valse	2	23
Fugue in F minor	2	24
Quintet Gioventu' Allegra (1 copy and 4 soloist scores)	2	

Quarter Humouresque for flue, oboe, clarinet and bassoon (1 score for each instrument)	2	26
Trio Religioso	2	27
String Quartet in D major	2	28
Concerto for organ and piano	2	30
Nocturno for violin	2	31
Largo for piano and violin	2	31
Trio Religioso for violin and viola	2	33
Vivacita'--scherzo	2	34
Lento espressivo: melodia in D minor for violoncello and organ	2	35
Mozart--violin, viola and organ	36	36
Melodia in D minor	2	37
Nocturno	2	38
Brillo' Sulla Mia Cuna--nell'opera "Sayda"	2	39

Raggio Sulla Mia Cuna--nell'opera "Sayda"	2	40
Bagattella	2	41
Ero bella quando ero bambina	2	42
Personal files--biographical	2	43
Personal files--contracts	2	44