

Guide to the Lorenzo Viola Papers

CMS.092

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

June 06, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Center for Migration Studies
October 1994

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Summary Information

Repository	Center for Migration Studies
Creator	Viola, Lorenzo, 1889-1976
Title	Lorenzo Viola Papers
Date [bulk]	Bulk, 1915-1940
Date [inclusive]	1894-1976
Extent	1.0 Linear feet in two document boxes.
Language	English

Language of Materials note This collection is in Italian and English.

Abstract The Lorenzo Viola Papers documents the career of Italian immigrant and Long Island music teacher Lorenzo ("Renzo") Viola, from his birth in Bagheria, Sicily, in 1889, to his death in 1976. It is especially strong on the period after the opening of his Renzo Viola Music Studio in Lindenhurst, New York, in 1947. The bulk of the materials concern his work as a composer and music teacher, including musical compositions, concert programs. The collection also contains vital information about Viola and his immediate family members.

Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Lorenzo Viola Papers (CMS 092); Box; Folder.

Biographical/Historical note

Lorenzo Viola was born in Bagheria, Sicily, in 1889, the son of a wealthy landowner. A precocious, talented child, he studied music in the finest European conservatories—Turin, Palermo, Paris, and Leipzig—under famous professors.

In 1915, he and his fiancé Isotta Bufaletti were traveling to the United States when a Germany submarine torpedoed their ship, the Ancona. Viola survived with an injury to his left hand; Bufaletti was presumed dead, as her body never surfaced.

Viola taught music in the United States. In 1947, he built the Renzo Viola Music Studio in Lindenhurst, Long Island, New York. Until the 1970s he taught and gave concerts with his students. A prolific composer, he published many works for orchestra, violin, and piano; most of these manuscripts are at the New York Public Library.

In 1920, Viola married Eloisa Cirrincione. The couple had one daughter, Violet Joy, and four grandchildren. Viola died in 1976, at the age of eighty-six.

Source: Richard Del Giudice, "Inventory: Lorenzo Viola Papers," Staten Island, Center for Migration Studies, 1994.

Scope and Contents note

CMS 092 documents the life of Lorenzo Viola, starting with his birth to a landowning family in Bagheria, Sicily, in 1889. It contains some material documenting his piano study at the Vincenzo Bellini Conservatory in Palermo, Sicily, but none from his other schools in Turin, Paris, and Leipzig.

Viola's first effort at immigration ended in disaster--he was sailing during World War I and the Germans torpedoed his ship, killing his fiancée and leaving him with a hand injury--and there is no direct documentation of that event, only family stories. The collection does contain the ticket from Viola's second, successful, effort at migration, aboard the Giuseppe Verdi in May 1916.

The record becomes fuller in the 1920s when Viola married Eloisa Cirrincione and had a daughter, Violet, the donor of these records. It becomes fuller still after 1947, when Viola erected his Renzo Viola Music Studio in Lindenhurst, Long Island, which gave him a place to store his records. He documented his teaching through photographs and concert programs, composed music and retained copies of his compositions, and indicated his political leanings through his musical compositions, as he dedicated music to Calvin Coolidge, Barry Goldwater, and Richard Nixon. The records dwindle in the early 1970s as Viola aged; he passed away in 1976.

Arrangement note

CMS 092 is arranged into four Series:

Series I: General Papers

Series II: Material on Musical Classes

Series III: Miscellaneous Items

Series IV: Musical Compositions

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies October 1994

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

Gift of Violet Viola Joy.

Processing Information note

Richard Del Giudice, then the Archivist of the Center for Migration Studies, processed the collection in October 1994. In May 2014 Mary Elizabeth brown entered the collection into Archivists' Toolkit in compliance with DACS; Nicole Greenhouse checked the work. Folder titles in the container list online may vary from the the physical folder titles.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Three linear feet of Lorenzo Viola's compositions are on deposit at the New York Public Library Performing Arts Research Collections--Music, under Call Number JBP 92-60.

Controlled Access Headings

Geographic Name(s)

- Lindenhurst (N.Y.)

Subject(s)

- Italian Americans |x Music
-

Other Finding Aids note

The original inventory is available in print upon request.

Series I: General Papers

Collection Inventory

Series I: General Papers 1894-1976

Scope and Contents note

This series contains biographical documents, clippings in Italian concerning the torpedoing of the ship "Ancona," that carried Viola and his fiancée to the United States in 1915, Viola's original ticket from Palermo to New York from 1916. Included are miscellaneous letters, recipes used by Viola's relatives to make liquors in their estate in Sicily, and Viola's handwritten narrative of his family's migration to the United States and the land they left in Sicily. Also included are several photographs of Viola and friends, clippings, photographs of his marriage. Finally, there are programs of concerts attended by Viola, obituaries, and a short biography of his daughter.

	Box	Folder
Birth certificate, military discharge, U.S. citizenship papers 1894, 1947	1	1
Transcript from Vincenzo Bellino Conservatory, Palermo, Sicily undated	1	2
Buffalette, Isotta 1915, 1922	1	3
Ticket for the ship "Giuseppe Verdi" May 17, 1916	1	4
Correspondence with family and friends 1916, 1923	1	5
Correspondence with Goldwater and Nixon 1964, 1970, 1972	1	6

Series II: Material on Musical Classes

Wine and liquor recipes undated	1	7
Memoir 1955	1	8
Photocopies of photographs of Viola and Federico Buffalette 1912, 1919	1	9
Marriage to Eloisa Cirrincione, photographs and papers 1920-1921	1	10
Lipari, Carmelo, photographs and correspondence undated	1	11
Turin, Italy, concert programs 1911-1930	1	12
Obituaries 1976	1	13
Biography by Violet V. Joy undated	1	14

Series II: Material on Musical Classes 1918-1962

Scope and Contents note

This series contains miscellaneous items, *Musical Couriers* of 1929-1931, advertising Viola's music studio, a prospectus of piano courses, programs of 18 concerts featuring his students from 1918-1962, clippings regarding these concerts, and photographs. Included is a patent and other items related to an invention by Viola called the Education Toy Piano.

	Box	Folder
Advertisement, Renzo Viola's Music Studio undated	1	15

Series III: Miscellaneous Items

Musical Courier advertisements 1929,1931	1	16
Viola's students' concert programs 1918-1962	1	17
Viola's students' concert news clippings 1919-1956	1	18
Photographs of Viola 1922-1953	1	19
Educational Toy Piano undated	1	20

Series III: Miscellaneous Items 1931-1940**Scope and Contents note**

This series contains a souvenir booklet of the Dinner Dance Testimonial on November 24, 1931 by the Italian Community of New York, in honor of Dino Grande, Italian Foreign Minister, rules governing the Long Island Harmony Band organized by Viola in 1940, and other items.

	Box	Folder
Dino Grandi dinner dance Nov 26, 1931	1	21
Long Island Harmony Band 1940	1	22
Viola, "Progress and the Economic Crisis--Enemies of Music" May 14, 1933	1	23
Viola, Robert: Doll Factory undated	1	24

Series IV: Musical Compositions**Series IV: Musical Compositions 1923, undated****Scope and Contents note**

Viola was a prolific composer who compositions included works for the orchestra, piano, and violin. Several compositions--among them Children's Sunday; Albums Pages: Six pieces for violin and orchestra--some are published and some handwritten.

	Box	Folder
Trifling Woman 1923	2	25
"The Jar" undated	2	26
Hail the Banner undated	2	27
Romance for Piano and Orchestra (Melodie du Coeur) undated	2	28
The Children's Sunday for Pianoforte	2	29
The Flag, words by Dr. D. Marino undated	2	30
Coolidge March, dedicated to the President of the United States undated	2	31
Piccina, Serenata Siciliana, Siren, Nettuno, The Aztec Drum, The Trasher, Suzy, Last Night, Rondo, Minuet undated	2	32
Albums Pages: Six Pieces for Violin and Piano, part 1 undated	2	34

Series IV: Musical Compositions

Albums Pages: Six Pieces for Violin and Piano, part 2 undated	2	35
Albums Pages: Six Pieces for Violin and Piano, part 3 undated	2	36
You and I, Arabesque, Tarantella, Libelia Dream, Marcia Libellule, Alice in Music Land undated	2	37
March of America, The Arabian Stroller, Impatience, The Cuckoo, My Love, Tulip, Tecla--Serenata Siciliana, The Piccoli, Dorabookka, Arab's Delight undated	2	38
The Goldwater March, Let's All Hail to Rotary, Lascia che Guardi, The Buzzing Bee, Hail the Banner, Three Kings, Kings on the Way (Corale), Pather Nostrum (Meditation), Prelude in A-Minor undated	2	39
Miscellaneous untitled compositions undated	2	40
La Gazza Ladra, by Rossini; Die Valkyrie, by R. Wagner; Melodies from La Boheme, by Puccini; Intermezzo, by Mascagni; Schlummerlied, by Schuman	2	41
American-Patrol, by Meachem; Beer Barrel Polka, by Brown; Silent Night, by Gruber; Nocturne, by John Slunicko; Under the Double Eagle, by J.F. Wagner undated	2	42
Viola, Lorenzo, 1889-1976 Osettar-Valzer Lento, by Salvatore Lo Monaco undated	2	43