

# Guide to the Paul Rosenfeld Papers

YCAL MSS 25



by Bruce P. Stark

November 1987

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	3
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
PAUL ROSENFELD (1890-1946) .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Collection Contents .....	6
Series I: Writings, 1926-46 .....	6
BOOKS .....	6
"A Concert in Rome" .....	6
"The Novel in the Journal's Form" .....	6
"The Pindaric Novel" .....	6
"Rites of Spring" .....	6
"The Spiritual Voyage .....	7
SHORTER WORKS .....	7
Series II: Correspondence, 1910-63 .....	9
Restricted Fragile Papers .....	10
Selected Search Terms .....	11

## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 25

**CREATOR:** Rosenfeld, Paul, 1890-1946

**TITLE:** Paul Rosenfeld papers

**DATES:** 1910-1963 (inclusive)

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3 linear feet (8 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers consist primarily of drafts of unpublished novels, works on literary criticism, and articles and essays, plus letters to Yale classmate Philip Skinner Platt.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.rosenfel>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.rosenfel>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Bryner-Schwab, 1948. The letters were given by Philip Skinner Platt in 1965.

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### Conditions Governing Access

Restricted Fragile Papers in Box 8 may only be consulted with permission of the appropriate curator. Preservation photocopies for reference use have been substituted in the main files.

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## Conditions Governing Use

The Paul Rosenfeld Papers are the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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## Preferred Citation

Paul Rosenfeld Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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## PAUL ROSENFELD (1890-1946)

Paul Leopold Rosenfeld was born in New York City on May 4, 1890, the only son of German-Jewish parents. He attended Riverview Military Academy in Poughkeepsie, New York, and graduated from Yale in 1912. He received a Litt. B. from the Columbia School of Journalism in 1913, worked as a reporter for six months, and traveled to Europe in the spring and summer of 1914. One of the foremost music, art, and literary critics of his day, he published his first essays in the *New Republic* and *Seven Arts*. He edited *Seven Arts* 1916-18, served as music critic for the *Dial* 1920-27, and was co-editor of *The American Caravan* 1927-36.

He wrote hundreds of articles for such journals as *Vanity Fair*, the *Nation*, and *Modern Music*. Among his seven published collections of essays were *Musical Portraits* (1920), *Port of New York* (1924), and *Discoveries of a Music Critic* (1936). He also wrote an autobiographical novel, *The Boy in the Sun* (1928).

Paul Rosenfeld never married and died of a heart attack in New York City on July 21, 1946.

For additional biographical information, see *Twentieth Century Authors* (1942), page 1201; *Dictionary of American Biography Supplement Four 1946-1950* (1974), pages 702-03; and Philip S. Skinner to Albert E. Godbut (Box 7, folder 122).

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## Scope and Contents

The Paul Rosenfeld Papers contain manuscripts of a variety of unpublished works and letters from Rosenfeld to Yale classmate Philip Skinner Platt spanning the dates 1910-63.

[Series I, Writings](#), (Boxes 1-6) is divided into two alphabetically arranged sections; *Books* and *Shorter Works*. The *Books* section contains three volumes of literary criticism, two autobiographical works, and one unpublished novel, while the *Shorter Works* holds twenty-eight articles, essays, and reviews.

The series begins with four typescript versions of the unpublished novel, "A Concert in Rome," originally titled "Temple of Venus and Rome." Set in fascist Italy, the novel is about the American Martin Newman and attempts to imitate early Joyce in its style. The series also includes multiple typescripts of three critical works, "The Novel in the Journal's Form," "The Pindaric Novel" and "The Spiritual Voyage." Each is devoted to a literary form and they were perhaps intended to be parts of a single work. Among the books discussed in "The Novel in the Journal's Form" are *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, while "The Pindaric Novel" concerns such works as Hermann Broch's *The Death of Virgil*; and "The Spiritual Voyage" analyses *The American Scene* by Henry James and *Etruscan Places* by D. H. Lawrence. "The Rites of Spring" is a semi-autobiographical novel set at Yale. Flavian King of Paris, the disguised son of a European ruling house, is the main character. The other autobiographical fragment concerns Rosenfeld's youth.

Paul Rosenfeld's wide ranging interest in art, literature, and music is reflected in the *Shorter Works* section. Seventeen of the apparently unpublished articles, essays, and reviews are devoted to literary criticism, seven to music, two to art, and two to photography. Each work normally consist of corrected typescripts, and several files include rejection letters. Some of the essays, for example, "The Inventions of Nodier" and "The Perfect Voyage" may be chapters of larger works. Rosenfeld's friendship with Alfred Stieglitz is

exemplified by two works, "Salutations on an Eightieth Birthday" and "Alfred Stieglitz," an appreciation of the photographer's life and work written shortly after his death in 1946.

[Series II, Correspondence](#), holds chronologically arranged letters from Paul Rosenfeld to Yale classmate Philip Skinner Platt, plus one photograph of Rosenfeld and a folder of Platt material. This last folder contains copies of a 1963 letter of Platt to Albert E. Godbut, which discusses Rosenfeld, and handwritten lists of the letters donated to Yale. The letters span the years 1910-15. The first two were written in the summer of 1910, when Rosenfeld was vacationing in Europe. The largest number cover the period between June 1912 and February 1914, when the young Yale graduate was attending Columbia and working in New York City. Another dozen describe Rosenfeld's 1914 trip to Europe, and a final group of 1915 letters report on a visit to a resort in Blue Hill, Maine.

The young writer frequently wrote about Yale friends like Louis Connick, William Griffin, Joseph Le Conte (Jake) Bell, William Herman, and Cyril Brown, all graduates of the class of 1912. A number of other Yale men were also mentioned, including William C. Bullitt, Eric Dawson, Waldo Frank, Cole Porter, and Arthur E. Baker. Rosenfeld never belonged to a secret society, a subject discussed in a May 22, 1913 letter, and he hinted at Yale's attitude towards Jews in an April 18, 1913 letter. "At times I feel sore as hell at Yale. I have several little cousins who ... are ordinary well-bred normal boys. They have had trouble getting rooms for their freshman year, because they go to small prep-schools, and it seems that all the rooms in Wright are given to the big prep-schools."

The bulk of the letters are concerned with Rosenfeld's ill-formed career plans and with discussions of friendship between two young men who formed a close bond at Yale. Rosenfeld frequently discussed his hopes for a writing career, his love of classical music, and the books he was reading. As early as June 29, 1912, he mentions doing a free-lance article for the *Times*, and over the course of the next two years he wrote two novels, "Coronation" and "The Emperor of Trebizond." On January 30, 1913, he reported attending a performance of "Louise" with Mary Garden, adding, "she can't sing." He praised Mahler's Fifth Symphony on December 5, 1913 and described a Cole Porter musical presented at the Yale Club of New York in a May 8, 1913 letter.

Rosenfeld travelled to Europe in the summer of 1914. In letters written from Munich on July 1 and Marienbad on July 27, he discussed the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Austrian expansionist policies, and Balkan politics, and praised Charles Seymour of Yale for his course on European politics. Upon returning to New York City, he shared an apartment for about two years with Platt, and the remaining letters describe life in Blue Hill, Maine in the summer of 1915.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Writings, 1926-46

2.25 linear feet (6 boxes)

Series I is divided into two sections, *Books* and *Shorter Works*. Each is alphabetically arranged by title and all manuscripts are placed in probable order of creation.

#### BOOKS

##### "A Concert in Rome"

b. 1, f. 1-3	Typescript (I), corrected, incomplete	n.d.
b. 1, f. 4-8	Typescript (II), corrected	n.d.
b. 1, f. 9-13	Typescript (III), corrected, incomplete	n.d.
b. 2, f. 14-18	Typescript (III), corrected, incomplete	n.d.
b. 2, f. 19-24	Typescript (IV)	n.d.

##### "The Novel in the Journal's Form"

b. 2, f. 25	Typescript, corrected (Part I)	n.d.
b. 2, f. 26	Typescript, corrected (Part I)	n.d.
b. 3, f. 27	Typescript (Part I)	n.d.
b. 3, f. 28	Carbon	n.d.
b. 3, f. 29	Typescript, carbon, corrected (Part I)	n.d.
b. 3, f. 30	Typescripts, incomplete (Part I)	n.d.
b. 3, f. 31	Cancelled pages	n.d.
b. 3, f. 32-33	Typescript, carbon (Part II)	n.d.
b. 3, f. 34	Typescript, corrected (Part III)	n.d.

##### "The Pindaric Novel"

b. 3, f. 35	Typescript, corrected	n.d.
b. 3, f. 36	Typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 37	Carbon	n.d.
b. 3, f. 38	Typescript, corrected	n.d.
b. 3, f. 39	Typescript	n.d.
b. 3, f. 40	Typescript, carbon, corrected	n.d.

##### "Rites of Spring"

b. 4, f. 41	Autograph MS, incomplete	1926-31
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## BOOKS &gt; "Rites of Spring" (continued)

b. 4, f. 42	Typescript, incomplete	n.d.
	"Autobiography"	
b. 4, f. 43	Typescript, carbon, corrected, incomplete	n.d.
b. 4, f. 44	Fragments, corrected	n.d.
	"The Spiritual Voyage	
b. 4, f. 45	Typescript, corrected	n.d.
b. 4, f. 46	Typescript, incomplete	n.d.
b. 4, f. 47	Carbon	n.d.
b. 4, f. 48	Typescript, corrected	n.d.
b. 4, f. 49	Typescript, corrected	n.d.
	SHORTER WORKS	
b. 4, f. 50	"Adalbert Stifter"	1945
b. 4, f. 51	"Against the Sibelius Cult"	n.d.
b. 4, f. 52	"Alfred Stieglitz"	1946
b. 4, f. 53-54	"All the World's Poughkeepsie"	n.d.
b. 4, f. 55	"Before the League"	n.d.
b. 4, f. 56	"Bernanos and the Catholic Novel"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 57-59	"The Conscious Faery-Tale"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 60-62	"The Dithyrambic Novel"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 63	"E. T. A. Hoffmann and Fantastic Fiction"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 64	"The Fantastic Kind"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 65	"Gertrude Stein's Achievement"	1946
b. 5, f. 66	"The Grandeur of Daumier"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 67	"The Henry James Revival"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 68	"The History of John Marin"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 69-70	"The Interior Voyage"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 71-73	"The Inventions of Nodier"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 74-76	"Music and Don Juan"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 77-78	"The Perfect Voyage"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 79	"The Pictures of Sappho"	[1945]

## SHORTER WORKS (continued)

b. 5, f. 80-88	"The Poem in Prose"	n.d.
b. 5, f. 89-90	"The Rimbaud Influences: Its History and Its Future"	n.d.
b. 6, f. 91	"Rimbaud and Musical Art"	
b. 6, f. 92	"Robert Schumann and Romantic Literature. I. Robert Schumann and Jean Paul"	n.d.
b. 6, f. 93	"Robert Schumann and Romantic Literature. II. Schumann and Eichendorff"	n.d.
b. 6, f. 94	"Robert Schumann's Musical Aphorisms: The Making of the Great Composer"	[1946]
b. 6, f. 95	"Salutations on an Eightieth Birthday"	1943
b. 6, f. 96-97	"Scorn Not the Prose Poem!"	n.d.
b. 6, f. 98-100	"Sherwood Anderson's Work"	n.d.



**Series II: Correspondence, 1910-63***0.5 linear feet (1 box)*

Series II consists of twenty folders of chronologically arranged correspondence and is followed by two folders of related papers.

b. 7, f. 101	Correspondence	1910
b. 7, f. 102-06	Correspondence	1912
b. 7, f. 107-13	Correspondence	1913
b. 7, f. 114-19	Correspondence	1914
b. 7, f. 120	Correspondence	1915
b. 7, f. 121	Photograph of Paul Rosenfeld	[1914]
b. 7, f. 122	Platt, Philip Skinner	1963

**Restricted Fragile Papers**

*0.25 linear feet (1 box)*

Box 8, *Restricted Fragile Papers*, houses fragile originals for which preservation photocopies have been made. The material is arranged in folder order and may only be seen with the permission of the appropriate curator.

Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

b. 8, f. 123      Box 2, folder 14

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b. 8, f. 124      Box 4, folder 43

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b. 8, f. 125      Box 4, folder 53

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b. 8, f. 126      Box 7, folder 113

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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Authors, American  
Critics -- United States  
Friendship  
Literature -- History and criticism  
Music -- History and criticism

### **Genres / Formats**

Autobiographies -- United States

### **Occupations**

Music critics -- United States

### **Names**

Platt, Philip Skinner, 1889-  
Rosenfeld, Paul, 1890-1946

### **Corporate Body**

Yale College (1887- ). Class of 1912