

Guide to the Louise Talma Papers

YCAL MSS 811



by Karen Spicher

2007-05-16

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 811

CREATOR: Talma, Louise, 1906-1996

TITLE: Louise Talma papers

DATES: 1942-1985

BULK DATES: 1952-1963

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 11.31 linear feet (37 boxes)

LANGUAGE: Chiefly in English; some materials in German.

SUMMARY: The Louise Talma Papers contain materials relating to composition and performance of Talma's opera *The Alcestiad*, and to Thornton Wilder, his friendship with Talma, and his collaboration with her as librettist for *The Alcestiad*. Contents relating to *The Alcestiad*, 1950s-1970s, include autograph letters, signed, to Talma from Thornton Wilder, 1952-1975 and undated, and from his sister Isabel Wilder, 1954-1972, with some letters annotated by Talma; autograph manuscript music drafts; diazo reproductions of autograph manuscript full scores and vocal scores, including a German translation by Herberth E. Herlitschka; microfilms of scores; autograph manuscript drafts by Wilder of the libretto, and typescript mimeograph copies of the libretto; audiocassettes and reel-to-reel audiotapes of performances, 1960-1962 and undated; photographs of performances; and clippings of reviews. Other papers, 1940s-1980s, include scores and parts for other vocal, orchestral, and chamber works by Talma, most diazo reproductions of autograph manuscript scores, 1947-1980 and undated; other writings by Wilder, most typescript, 1953-1973 and undated; clippings relating to Wilder; concert programs and other printed material, most concerning performances of Talma's music; and photographs, most of Talma with Wilder or with musicians, 1956-1962.


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

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.talma>.

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.

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

b. box
f. folder
 item barcode

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Bequest of Louise Talma, 1997.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Box 23 (audiocassettes) and boxes 24-27 (reel-to-reel audiotapes): Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Conditions Governing Use

The Louise Talma Papers is 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.

Preferred Citation

Louise Talma Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Former call number: Uncat ZA MS 525. In 2014, the collection received a baseline level of processing, including partial rehousing and minimal organization. The collection was reclassified under a new call number, and containers were renumbered. Most folder titles were based on information provided by the creator, while some were assigned by Library staff. Folder titles were not verified against contents.

Louise Talma (1906-1996)

Louise Talma (1906-1996), American composer. Talma composed *The Alcestiad*, an opera in three acts, with libretto by Thornton Wilder, in 1955-1958. The opera premiered in German translation in Frankfurt, Germany, on 1962 March 1.

Scope and Contents

The Louise Talma Papers contain materials relating to composition and performance of Talma's opera *The Alcestiad*, and to Thornton Wilder, his friendship with Talma, and his collaboration with her as librettist for *The Alcestiad*. Contents relating to *The Alcestiad*, 1950s-1970s, include autograph letters, signed, to Talma from Thornton Wilder, 1952-1975 and undated, and from his sister Isabel Wilder, 1954-1972, with some letters annotated by Talma; autograph manuscript music drafts; diazo reproductions of autograph manuscript full scores and vocal scores, including a German translation by Herberth E. Herlitschka; microfilms of scores; autograph manuscript drafts by Wilder of the libretto, and typescript mimeograph copies of the libretto; audiocassettes and reel-to-reel audiotapes of performances, 1960-1962 and undated; photographs of performances; and clippings of reviews. Other papers, 1940s-1980s, include scores and

parts for other vocal, orchestral, and chamber works by Talma, most diazo reproductions of autograph manuscript scores, 1947-1980 and undated; other writings by Wilder, most typescript, 1953-1973 and undated; clippings relating to Wilder; concert programs and other printed material, most concerning performances of Talma's music; and photographs, most of Talma with Wilder or with musicians, 1956-1962.

Arrangement

Organized into three series: I. Correspondence, 1942-1975. II. *The Alcestiad*, 1952-1976. III. Other Papers, 1947-1985.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1942-1975, undated

3.13 linear feet (8 boxes)

b. 1, f. 1-7	Wilder, Isabel	1954-1972
b. 1, f. 8-14	Wilder, Thornton	1952-1956 April
b. 2, f. 15-26	Wilder, Thornton	1956 May-1957 May
b. 3, f. 27-38	Wilder, Thornton	1957 June-1958 May
b. 4, f. 39-49	Wilder, Thornton	1958 June-1959 December
b. 5, f. 50-61	Wilder, Thornton	1960 January-1961 April
b. 6, f. 62-72	Wilder, Thornton	1961 April-1963 December
b. 7, f. 73-83	Wilder, Thornton	1964 January-1975 December
b. 8, f. 84	Wilder, Thornton	undated
b. 8, f. 85	Wilder, Thornton (excerpts). Photocopies	undated
b. 8, f. 86-87	Wilder, Thornton (excerpts). Transcriptions, typescript mimeograph	undated
b. 8, f. 88-89	Unidentified	1942-1964, undated

Series II: *The Alcestiad* , 1952-1976, undated

6.09 linear feet (20 boxes)

Organized into five subseries: Libretto, Music, German Translation, Sound Recordings, and Other Papers

Libretto		
Autograph manuscript by Thornton Wilder, unless otherwise noted		
b. 9, f. 90	Act I. Draft	1955-1959, undated
b. 9, f. 91	Acts I-II. Draft	undated
b. 9, f. 92	Act II. Draft	undated
b. 9, f. 93	Act II. Draft, "final version"	1957
b. 9, f. 94	Act III. Draft	1958
b. 9, f. 95	Acts I-III. Typescript carbon	1959
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 96	Act I. Typescript mimeograph stencils	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 97	Act II. Typescript mimeograph stencils	undated
b. 10 (Oversize), f. 98-99	Act III. Typescript mimeograph stencils	undated
b. 11, f. 100-101	Acts I-III. Typescript mimeograph (4 copies)	1962
b. 12, f. 102-109	Acts I-III. Typescript mimeograph (16 copies)	1962
b. 13, f. 110-116	Acts I-III. Typescript mimeograph (14 copies)	1962
b. 14, f. 117-123	Acts I-III. Typescript mimeograph (14 copies)	1962
b. 15, f. 124-129	Acts I-III. Typescript mimeograph (11 copies)	1962
b. 15, f. 130-131	Act I, excerpts. Typescript mimeograph (13 copies)	1963
Music		
Autograph manuscript by Louise Talma, unless otherwise noted		
b. 16 (Oversize), f. 132-133	Notes and sketches	1952-1960, undated
b. 16 (Oversize), f. 134	Act I. Drafts	1956 January-1957 January










Music (continued)

b. 16 (Oversize), f. 135	Act II. Drafts	1957 February- December
b. 16 (Oversize), f. 136	Act III. Drafts	1958 February- October
b. 16 (Oversize), f. 137	Act I. Full score, excerpts (diaz reproduction)	undated
b. 17 (Oversize), f. 138-139	Act I. Full score (diaz reproduction, with annotations) In 2 volumes	1959 August 19
b. 18 (Oversize), f. 140	Act II. Full score (diaz reproduction, with annotations)	1960 November 3
b. 18 (Oversize), f. 141	Act III. Full score (diaz reproduction, with annotations)	1960 December 24
b. 19, f. 142	Act I. Full score, "corrected" (microfilm) (1 reel) "Hunter College copy" "For making the transparencies for Carl Fisher, Inc."	1975-1976
b. 19, f. 143	Acts II-III. Full score, "corrected" (microfilm) (1 reel) "Hunter College copy" "For making the transparencies for Carl Fisher, Inc."	1975-1976
b. 20 (Oversize), f. 144	Act I. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, "uncorrected," with annotations)	1957 February 23
b. 20 (Oversize), f. 145	Act II. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, "uncorrected," with annotations)	undated
b. 20 (Oversize), f. 146	Act III. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, "uncorrected," with annotations)	1958 October 30
b. 20 (Oversize), f. 147	Acts I-III. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, "corrected through page 102," with annotations)	1958 October 30
b. 20 (Oversize), f. 148	Acts I-III. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, "corrected," with annotations)	1958 October 30
German translation Autograph manuscript by Louise Talma, unless otherwise noted		
b. 21 (Oversize), f. 149	Libretto. Notes and score (diaz reproduction), with translation	undated
b. 21 (Oversize), f. 150	Libretto. "Text Korrigenda"	
b. 21 (Oversize), f. 151	Libretto, German translation. Typescript mimeograph	1957 July 23





German translation (continued)

b. 22 (Oversize), f. 152	Act I. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, with annotations) <i>4 Folders</i>	1957 February 23
b. 22 (Oversize), f. 153	Acts I-III. Vocal score (diaz reproduction, with annotations)	1958 October 30
b. 22 (Oversize), f. 154-156	Acts I-III. Vocal scores (diaz reproduction, "errata not corrected," with annotations) (3 copies)	1958 October 30
<p>Sound recordings</p> <p>Restricted fragile material. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>		
b. 23, f. 157,  39002091243494	<p>First performance (1 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 01:31:03 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>The program is distorted at times.</p> <p>[Aviary] ycal_mss_0811_39002091243494 [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243494aump3</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	1962 March 1
b. 23, f. 158,  39002091243502	<p>First performance (2 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 00:53:16 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>The program is distorted at times.</p> <p>[Aviary] ycal_mss_0811_39002091243502 [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243502aump3</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	1962 March 1
b. 23, f. 159,  39002091243510	<p>Second performance (1 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 01:31:30 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>Static can be heard on the tape.</p> <p>[Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243510aump3</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	1962 March 3
b. 23, f. 160,  39002091243528	<p>Second performance (2 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 00:54:09 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>The program is distorted at times.</p> <p>[Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243528aump3</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	1962 March 3
b. 23, f. 161,  39002091243536	<p>Act I / Act II (1 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 01:58:50 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>The program is distorted at times.</p> <p>[Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243536aump3</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	undated
b. 23, f. 162,  39002091243544	<p>Act III (2 of 2)</p> <p><i>1 Audiocassette 00:27:15 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i></p> <p>[Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243544aump3</p>	undated

Sound recordings (continued)

b. 23, f. 163,  39002091243551	Act I / Act II (1 of 2) <i>1 Audiocassette 01:56:49 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static can be heard on the tape. The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243551ump3	undated
b. 23, f. 164,  39002091243569	Act III <i>1 Audiocassette 00:26:42 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243569ump3	undated
b. 24, f. 165,  39002091243387	Act I. Master tape, English and German <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:59:47 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243387ump3	1961 November - December
b. 24, f. 166,  39002091243395	Act II. Master copy <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:52:53 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> Static and pops in the audio can be heard. The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243395ump3	undated
b. 24, f. 167,  39002091243403	Act III <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 7 inches 00:30:57 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243403ump3	1960 May 16
b. 25, f. 168,  39002091243411	Act I. German text continued <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 7 inches 00:11:58 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> A high amount of hiss can be heard on the tape. The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243411ump3	undated
b. 25, f. 169,  39002091243429	Act I. German text, copy <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 7 inches 00:49:31 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> A high amount of hiss can be heard on the tape. The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243429ump3	undated
b. 25, f. 170,  39002091243437	Act I. Second performance <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:59:25 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243437ump3 Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 26, f. 171,  39002091243445	Act II. Premiere <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:50:04 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> High frequency background noise can be heard on the tape. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243445ump3	undated

Sound recordings (continued)

b. 26, f. 172,  39002091243452	Act III. Premiere <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:32:54 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243452ump3 7.5 ips, full track	undated
b. 26, f. 173,  39002091243460	Act I. Copy <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 01:00:02 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> A high amount of hiss can be heard on the tape. The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243460ump3	undated
b. 27, f. 174,  39002091243478	Act II. Copy <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:52:54 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> A high amount of hiss can be heard on the tape. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243478ump3	undated
b. 27, f. 175,  39002091243486	Act III. Copy <i>1 Audiotape Reel; 1/4 inch; diameter 10 inches 00:31:02 Duration (HH:MM:SS.mmm)</i> The program is distorted at times. [Aviary] ycalmss081139002091243486ump3	undated
Other Papers		
b. 28, f. 176-177	Photographs	1956-1962, undated
b. 28, f. 178-179	Programs	1955-1963
b. 28, f. 180-181	Clippings	circa 1957-circa 1962

Series III: Other Papers, 1947-1985, undated*2.09 linear feet (9 boxes)*

Organized into five subseries: Music by Louise Talma, Music by Other Composers, Writings by Thornton Wilder, Clippings, and Unsorted Materials.

Music by Louise Talma Autograph manuscript by Louise Talma (diaz reproduction), unless otherwise noted		1947-1980, undated
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 182-183	<i>All the Days of My Life</i> (cantata). Score, with manuscript annotations (2 copies)	1963 June 5
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 184	<i>All the Days of My Life</i> (cantata). Parts (clarinet, cello, percussion), copyist's manuscript, diazo reproduction, with manuscript annotations	undated
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 185	<i>Celebration</i> (chorus, SSAA, and orchestra). Score	1977 July 16- August 4
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 186-187	<i>Diadem</i> (tenor, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano). Score (2 copies)	1980 June 21
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 188-189	<i>String Quartet</i> . Score, with manuscript annotations (2 copies)	1954 Jan-Aug
b. 29 (Oversize), f. 190-191	<i>String Quartet</i> . Parts, with manuscript annotations (2 copies)	1954 Jan-Aug
b. 30 (Oversize), f. 192-195	<i>Summer Sounds</i> (clarinet quintet). Score, with manuscript annotations (8 copies)	1969 July-1973 February
b. 30 (Oversize), f. 196	<i>Summer Sounds</i> (clarinet quintet). Parts (fragments from score)	1969 July-1973 February
b. 30 (Oversize), f. 197	<i>Summer Sounds</i> (clarinet quintet). Parts, with manuscript annotations	1969 July-1973 February
b. 30 (Oversize), f. 198	<i>A Time to Remember</i> (chorus and orchestra). Parts (violin I, violin II, viola, percussion), copyist's manuscript, diazo reproduction (transparencies)	1967-1968
b. 30 (Oversize), f. 199-200	<i>A Time to Remember</i> . Chorus and orchestra. Parts (orchestra), copyist's manuscript, diazo reproduction, with manuscript annotations	undated
b. 31 (Oversize), f. 201-202	<i>Toccata</i> (orchestra). Score, printed (American Music Center) (6 copies)	c1947
b. 32 (Oversize), f. 203	<i>Voices of Peace</i> (chorus and string orchestra). Parts, transparencies	1973
b. 32 (Oversize), f. 204	<i>Voices of Peace</i> (chorus and string orchestra). Parts (fragments from score)	1973
b. 32 (Oversize), f. 205	Unidentified. Fragment, autograph manuscript	undated
b. 32 (Oversize), f. 206	Music notebook (blank)	undated
Music by Other Composers		1970, undated

Music by Other Composers (continued)

b. 33 (Oversize), f. 207	Boulanger, Nadia. <i>Faust et Hélène</i> (cantata). Printed (Paris: Editions Durand); inscribed by unidentified	copyright 1970
b. 33 (Oversize), f. 208	Levin, Robert D., and Martin, Louis. <i>Keyboard Harmony: a Progressive Method in the Harmonization of Figured Basses and Melodies</i> . Manuscript, diazo reproduction; inscribed by Levin	copyright 1970
b. 33 (Oversize), f. 209	Martin, Louis. <i>An Anthology of Music for Sight-Singing</i> . Manuscript, diazo reproduction; inscribed by Martin	copyright 1970
b. 33 (Oversize), f. 210	Vidal, Paul. <i>Keyboard Harmony: 178 Figured Bases</i> . Manuscript, diazo reproduction	undated
Writings by Thornton Wilder		1953-1973 and undated
b. 34, f. 211	"Childhood: A Play" (printed)	1960 November
b. 34, f. 212	"Giordano Bruno's Last Meal in Finnegans Wake" (typescript, with manuscript annotations)	undated
b. 34, f. 213	"Joyce and the Modern Novel" (printed clipping)	undated
b. 34, f. 214	<i>Seven One Act Plays for Four Actors. Bernice</i> (typescript carbons, inscribed) (2 copies)	1957 July 22
b. 34, f. 215	Speech on accepting the Peace Prize from the Association of German Publishers and Booksellers (typescript carbon)	1957 October 6
b. 34, f. 216	<i>Theophilus North</i> . "Deer Park" (typescript photocopy, revised, with inscription)	1973 March 6
b. 34, f. 217	Unsorted articles (printed clippings)	undated
Clippings		
b. 35, f. 218	Talma, Louise	circa 1955-circa 1976
b. 35, f. 219	Talma, Louise, and Thornton Wilder	1976
b. 35, f. 220-226	Wilder, Thornton	circa 1952-circa 1978, undated
b. 35, f. 227-228	Unsorted clippings	circa 1957-1973, undated
Unsorted Materials		
b. 36, f. 229	Photographs of Louise Talma, Thornton Wilder, and others	1956-1962
b. 36, f. 230-231	Pressed leaves and tree bark	undated
b. 36, f. 232	Printed material about Louise Talma	1963-1985
b. 36, f. 233	Printed Material about Thornton Wilder	1955-1976, undated
b. 36, f. 234	Other Printed Material	1955-1969

Unsorted Materials (continued)

b. 37 (Oversize), f. 235	Oversize printed material about Louise Talma	undated
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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

Chamber music -- Scores
Composers -- United States -- Archives
Operas -- Librettos
Operas -- Scores
Orchestral music -- Scores
Vocal music -- Scores

Genres / Formats

Audiocassettes -- United States -- 20th Century
Audiovisual materials -- United States -- 20th Century
Photographs -- United States -- 20th Century
Sound recordings -- United States -- 20th Century
Tape reels -- United States -- 20th Century

Occupations

Composers -- United States -- 20th Century

Names

Herlitschka, Herberth E., 1893-1970
Talma, Louise, 1906-1996
Talma, Louise, 1906-1996 (Alcesteiad)
Wilder, Isabel, 1900-1995
Wilder, Thornton, 1897-1975
Wilder, Thornton, 1897-1975 -- Musical settings

Contributors

Talma, Louise, 1906-1996
Wilder, Thornton, 1897-1975