

University of Toronto Music Library



Greta Kraus fonds

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Greta Kraus
1907-1998

Greta Kraus was a harpsichordist, pianist accompanist, and teacher. Born in Vienna on August 3, 1907, she studied at the Vienna Academy of Music, from where she received her Music Teacher's Diploma (1930). After graduation, her teachers included Hans Weisse (1924-1931) and Heinrich Schenker (1931-1934).

In 1938, Kraus immigrated to Hawkesbury, Ontario, before moving to Toronto in 1939 to teach at Havergal College. From 1943 to 1969, she taught at the Royal College of Music in Toronto, and then at the University of Toronto (1963-1976, part time after 1976). She coached lieder and taught harpsichord, accompanying, and Baroque performance practice. She was also the director of Collegium Musicum (Toronto).

Kraus was a prominent harpsichord player, known for her performances of Bach and twentieth-century composers. She performed as a soloist and in collaboration with many musicians, including Arnold Walter, Robert Aitken (in the Aitken Kraus Duo, 1965-1986), Lois Marshall, and Sir Ernest MacMillan (in performances of the *Messiah*, *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, and *Mass in B Minor*, 1942-1956). In 1958, she founded the Toronto Baroque Ensemble (1958-1963) with Elizabeth Benson Guy, soprano; Nicholas Fiore, flute; Donald Whitton, cello; and Corol McCartney, violin.

Kraus received many awards for her contributions to music performance and education, including a citation from the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (1973); Outstanding Woman of the Province of Ontario (1975); Toronto Arts Award (1990); the Order of Ontario (1991); and, the Order of Canada (1992).

She was married to chemist Erwin Dentay.

Sources:

Schabas, William and Betty Nygaard King. "Kraus, Greta." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Last edited December 13, 2013.

Greta Kraus fonds

Date range: 1898-2006, predominant 1938-1997

Extent: 37.5 cm of textual records and other materials (3 boxes)

Fonds consists of the personal and professional papers of Greta Kraus, including correspondence, photographs, programs, and some materials relating to the Kraus family.

Source: Donated from the Estate of Greta Kraus Dentay (A2020-09).

Series A : Awards and honours

Date range: 1990-1993

Extent: 2.5 cm of textual records + 9 photographs + 2 videocassettes

Series consists of materials relating to awards and honours received by Greta Kraus, including the Toronto Arts Award (1990), the Order of Ontario (1991), and the Order of Canada (1993). Materials include correspondence, programs, newspaper clippings and other press releases, and photographs. The series also includes two VHS tapes with recordings of the Order of Ontario ceremony (May 8, 1991) and the Toronto Arts Awards (August 15, 1990).

Series B : Correspondence

Date range: 1938-1997

Extent: 18 cm of textual records

Series consists of personal and professional letters, postcards, and greeting cards sent to Greta Kraus. Series includes correspondence from Carl Bamberg, Emmy Heim, Jules Heim, Margarethe Kraus (mother), Sigrid Kraus, Dr. Walther Kraus (brother), Dr. Wilhelm Kraus (father), F. Langen, Lotte Leonard, Lois Marshall, Denise Restout, William Schabas, Irene Serkin, Rudolf Serkin, Teresa Stratas, Fritz Waldstein, Hans Weiss, Manfred Willfort, and Victor Zuckerkandl.

Arrangement: Correspondence is arranged in ascending chronological order, by year. The series includes some correspondence that is not dated at the end of the series.

Series C : Family and personal papers

Date range: 1898-1997

Extent: 4 cm of textual records

Series consists of materials pertaining the Greta Kraus' family and her personal life. Items include the Meldungsbuch for Margarethe Müller (Greta's mother) from the University of Vienna (1898-1902); a Fink family tree and family history, compiled (in German) by Dr. Hermann Mark, 1996 (Greta Kraus' maternal grandmother was Amalie Fink); the order of service for Erwin G. Dentay's funeral (husband, d. September 29, 1973); draft articles by her brother Dr. Walther Kraus (in German); the funeral notice for Dr. Walther Kraus; Greta Kraus' travel diary (1941, 1945); and her passports. Series also includes handwritten testimonials (Zeugnis) of Miss. Anderson (1912, 1914), a student of Mrs. Mackenzie-Wood, from Dr. [Jean] Paul Ertel, music critic for the Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger.

Series D : Performance records

Date range: 1931-2006

Extent: 3.5 cm of textual records + 6 audio cassettes

Series contains a programs from concerts that Greta Kraus performed in or attended, lecture notes on the topic of "the art of singing", newspaper clippings relating to Kraus or her family, and audio recordings of three concerts. The programs include the memorial tribute to Greta Kraus in Walter Hall (May 8, 1998) and "The Greta Kraus Schubertiad" produced by the Aldeburgh Connection (May 9, 2006 at the Glenn Gould Studio). Recordings include the memorial tribute; a concert produced by the Aldeburgh Connection ("Greta's Choice, January 16, 1994); and, "Celebrating Greta Kraus" (September 23, 1993). The series also contains a summary of her principal career dates, and two articles written by Thomas Hathaway: "Greta Kraus: 'A Crazy Career - Upside Down from A to Z'" and "What is a Song, How do You Sing it and What is Tradition all About?: Lois Marshall and Greta Kraus on Music-Making."

Series E : Photographs

Date range: [ca. 1907-1997]

Extent: 58 photographs

Series contains photographs of Greta Kraus (professional and candid), Elizabeth Benson Guy, Beulah Bondi, Jon and Hatti Vickers, Lois Marshall, and various other friends, musicians, and family members.