

# THELMA MATESKY MOORE MUSIC COLLECTION

## OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Repository:** Crandall Public Library.  
Center for Folklife, History, and Cultural Programs,  
Glens Falls, NY.
- Creator:** Arlene Stock, collector
- Title:** Thelma Matesky Moore Music Collection
- Dates:** c. 1951 - 1968
- Abstract:** This collection contains the papers of Mrs. Thelma Matesky Moore, who lived in Albany, NY and New York City. She was a musician and composer, who took part in the revival of the “American art song”. She performed in many concert halls, including New York City’s Carnegie Hall. Her composition for *The Ballad of the Harp Weaver* was recorded by Johnny Cash in 1963. She co-wrote the musical, *Brownstone* and she composed music for Browning’s *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. Included in the collection are hand-written scores, correspondence, and several programs for the musician’s concerts.
- Quantity:** 1 box
- Identification Number:** Archives & Manuscripts: Personal and Family Collections

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Thelma Matesky Moore lived in Manhattan, NY for most of her life, but she made a second home in Albany, NY. She was a musical composer and soprano singer. She wrote French, German, and English songs. Her English musical compositions were a revival of the “American art song”. Her family was also musical; her father taught violin in California and her brother, Ralph Matesky, was also a composer, music professor, and violinist. Both of her sisters, although never professionals, sang and played piano as well. Moore played and taught piano in New York City for a number of years. She began singing professionally after attending a concert by Lotte Lehmann, whose brother, Fritz Lehmann, then became her voice coach. She performed at New York City’s Times Hall and Carnegie Hall. She often performed in Albany, NY. Her first performance in Albany was a concert at the Albany Institute of History and Art. She married Dr. Eldridge M Moore, former President of the Queensbury Board of Education.

One of her compositions, *The Ballad of the Harp Weaver*, was recorded by Johnny Cash in 1963. This song was actually a Pulitzer prize-winning poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay, which Matesky set to music. She also composed music for Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. Other than poetry, Moore composed various sacred works, including psalms and church anthems. She also co-wrote a musical called *Brownstone*, with Dan Harvey. Several of her compositions were included in a source book for English teachers which was issued by the NYS Dept. of Education. She also wrote jingles for TV commercials and put newspaper clippings to music in her "Clippings from the New York Times". She was director of the board of trustees for the Foundation for the American Art Song. She served as a vocal director for Albany Shaker High School in 1963.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE RECORDS

This collection consists of various materials, relating to the musician and composer Thelma Matesky Moore. The dates of the collection run from 1951 – 1968. These papers are arranged according to genre (correspondence, writings, misc. papers, musical scores, and printed music).

- Folder one contains six letters, mostly regarding the publication of Moore's story, *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug*.
- Folder two contains *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug*, in three parts, and a eulogy written for Moore's friend, Anita de Mars.
- Folder 3 contains miscellaneous pamphlets and clippings, as well as a photo of Mrs. Moore and concert programs.
- In folder 4 are thirteen music scores, which were composed by Moore—these are handwritten and include notes about where the songs were written and whom they were written for.
- Folder 5 contains three printed musical scores, which were printed by various printers in New York.

## INDEX TERMS

<b>Topics:</b>	American Art Song Foundation for the American Art Song Sonnets from the Portuguese The Ballad of the Harp Weaver
<b>Places:</b>	Albany, NY—Albany Institute of History and Art New York, NY—Carnegie Hall New York, NY—Times Hall
<b>Important People:</b>	Harvey, Dan Lehmann, Fritz Lehmann, Lotte Matesky, Ralph

Millay, Edna St. Vincent  
Moore, Eldridge M., PhD  
Moore, Thelma (Matesky)

**Form/Genre:** Musical score / letter / program / newspaper clipping

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Preferred Citation:** Thelma Matesky Moore Music Collection  
Center for Folklife, History, and Cultural Programs,  
Crandall Public Library, Glens Falls, NY.

**Accession Information:** Accession number:

**Processing Information:** Arranged and described by Caitlin Johnson, February 2009.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

Series 1

Box 1

Folder 1 (Correspondence):

- Letter from Anita de Mars, to Mrs. Stewart Minte, regarding Thelma Matesky, 2pg.
- Letter from Samuel S. Walker, Jr. to Thelma Matesky (60 Swan St, Albany 10, NY), regarding publication of *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug* story, Oct 26, 1961.
- Letter from Peter Meyer to Thelma Matesky, regarding publication of *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug* story, Dec 5, 1962.
- Letter from Peter Meyer to Thelma Matesky, regarding publication of *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug* story, Nov 19, 1962.
- Letter from Arthur Shimkin to Thelma Matesky, regarding publication of *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug* story, Oct 12, 1961.
- Letter from Thelma Matesky to Arthur Shimkin, regarding publication of *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug* story, Oct 13, 1961.

Folder 2 (Writings):

- Eulogy of Anita de Mars, written by Thelma Matesky, May 4, 1963, 2pg.
- *My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug*, by Thelma Matesky, August 20, 1961, 2pg.
- *Sequel to My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug*, by Thelma Matesky, Sept 10, 1961, 3pg.
- *The Passing of My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug*, by Thelma Matesky, Sept 25, 1961, 3pg.

Folder 3 (Misc.): Brochures / Pamphlets / Programs / Clippings / Photo:

- [2] [brochure] Keep America Beautiful, Inc., 1963

- [pamphlet] *Some Beetles of New York*, by John A. Wilcox, NYS Museum, Feb/Mar 1960, 4pg.
- [pamphlet] *New Species of Galerucinae and Alticinae with Notes on Other Species*, by John A. Wilcox, NYS Museum, Jan 1953, 8pg.
- [2] [pamphlet] Four American Songs music book advertisement
- [clipping] Times Union, Albanian Puts Poems to Music, by Ellen Scott, Feb 25, 1962.
- [clipping] Times Union, Foundation for American Art Song Chartered, by Ellen Scott, July 7, 1968.
- [clipping] And the Band Played On, by Edwin Holden, July 18, 1962.
- [program] Albany Institute of History and Art, March 30 show
- [program] Carnegie Recital Hall, October 25 show
- [program] The Institute of the Opera, Drama and Theatrical Arts concert, Chancellors Hall, Albany, NY, November 20, 1964.
- [program] Calamity Jane, The Tribune Musical Co. at Albany Shaker High School, March 1963.
- [church program] People's Christian Chapel, Schenectady, NY, Dec 19, 1964
- [photo] Thelma Matesky

#### Folder 4 (Musical Scores):

- Richard Nixon for President, 1960
- Youth and Love
- Sonnet IV: Thou Hast Thy Calling to Some Palace-Floor
- My Darling Mr. Gold-Bug, Oct 3, 1961
- My Country, April 23, 1962
- Mother, Nov 13, 1962
- Was Hab' Ich Gesagt, 1951
- A Voice, Aug 27, 1951
- Psalm 138: I Will Praise Thee With My Whole Heart, Aug 23, 1954
- Psalm 133: Behold, How Good and How Pleasant It Is
- Holy, Holy, Holy, Dec 11, 1959
- Nocturne For a Long Day, Dec 11, 1959
- A Simple Morning Prayer, Oct 10, 1968

#### Folder 5 (Printed Music):

- Four American Songs, 1962
- Psalm 138: I Will Praise Thee With My Whole Heart, 1964
- Holy, Holy, Holy: A Christmas Carol, 1962