

Sylvia Rabinof Collection

Finding Aid prepared by Xiaolong Gao & Haimin Park (2001)

Revised by Maxwell Brown (2013)

Sylvia Rabinof was born Sylvia Smith in New York on October 10, 1913. She died in Florida on January 20, 2001. Along with her husband, violinist Benno Rabinof, Sylvia Rabinof formed one of the more popular duos of her era. They extensively toured the U.S., Europe, Asia and Africa throughout their career together. The duo performed a mix of classical and contemporary pieces. Sylvia Rabinof was also an author ("Musicianship Through Improvisation" and "The Improviser"), composer and teacher. She was a member of the faculties at SUNY Fredonia and Brevard Music Center.

The Sylvia Rabinof Collection contains concert programs, reviews and scrapbooks documenting Sylvia Rabinof's concert career as a piano soloist along with her extensive concert activities with her husband, Benno Rabinof. Also contained are manuscripts, proofs and published scores of Sylvia Rabinof's numerous arrangements and original compositions, along with various drafts and notebooks for her workshops on Musicianship Through Improvisation. The Sylvia Rabinof Collection also contains recordings of many live performances by the Rabinofs.

SERIES I: Performance Files

This series comprises programs, reviews, publicity materials and articles. The materials are organized chronologically by performance date:

Box 1

Subseries 1: Scrapbooks (1913-1977)

- 1) Benno Rabinof (1913-43)
- 2) Sylvia Rabinof (1935-62 / 1970-77)
- 3) Benno and Sylvia Rabinof (1956-59)
- 4) Benno and Sylvia Rabinof (1960-62)

See also Series VI/4

Box 2

Subseries 2: Sylvia Rabinof

Here are found concert programs, reviews and promotional materials documenting the concert activities of Sylvia Rabinof as soloist, recitalist, collaborative pianist, composer, conductor and music director. Materials are arranged chronologically and span between 1935 and 1997:

1935	1
1936	2
1937	5
1938	6
1939	4
1940	3
1941	1
1942	1
1949	1
1954	1
1960	1
1961	1
1962	2
1970	1
1977	2
1979	1
1981	1
1993	3
1994	2
1997	3
1998	1

Publicity materials
 Works by Sylvia Rabinof
 Workshops / Seminars / Masterclasses
 Itineraries / correspondence
 Articles: miscellaneous, undated

Subseries 3: Benno Rabinof

Here are found concert programs, reviews, and publicity materials documenting the concert activities of Benno Rabinof as soloist and recitalist. Materials are arranged chronologically and span between 1927 and 1960:

1927	1
1931	1
1938	2
1941	2
1942	3
1944	2
1945	1
1946	1
1947	1
1951	1
1955	1

1960 2

Publicity flyers

Articles

Subseries 4: Benno and Sylvia Rabinof

Here are found concert programs documenting the performance activities of Benno and Sylvia Rabinof as a violin and piano duo. Materials are arranged chronologically and span from approximately 1938 to 1971:

1938 (?)	1
1943	16
1944	56
1945	39
1946	13
1947	3
1948	7
1949	2
1950	6
1951	3
1952	5
1953	2
1954	1
1955	5
1956	3
1957	3
1958	3
1959	4
1960	6
1961	5
1962	2
1963	2
1964	3
1965	2
1966	3
1967	1
1968	3
1969	6
1970	1
1971	1
1972	2

Miscellaneous flyers and correspondence

Subseries 5: Music Festivals

1979 June 27 – August 12 Brevard Music Center (Brevard, NC)

SERIES III: Subject Files

Box 3

Subseries 1: Musicians Club of New York (MCNY)

Sylvia Rabinof served as president of MCNY starting in 1976. Correspondence and other files related to Young Artists in Performances and other series, fund raising, minutes, etc.

- Awards / Announcements (1961-63)
- Correspondence (1958-69, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1974-75, 1976, 1977, 1978)
- Olga Koussevitzky Dinner Concert (1978)
- Concerning various members
- Minutes
- Meet the Composer series
- Taxes / financial
- Cadenza (newsletter)
- Miscellaneous: benefits, competitions, etc.

Subseries 2: National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC)

- Junior Festival bulletins (1970-72, 1977-78, 1983-86, 1987-94)
- NFMC Fall Sessions (1981-85)
- Florida Federation of Music Clubs fall sessions (1989) / Convention (1990)
- NFMC Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (1959)
- Membership applications
- Junior Composers Contest (1974)
- Certificates (1987)
- Correspondence (1964-70, miscellaneous)
- 1991 Festival: Improvisation

Box 4

- Improvisation: miscellaneous files
- Publisher correspondence

Subseries 3: Periodicals

Music Club magazine (1971, 1973, 1975, 1985-89, 1992-93)
Florida Music Director: 1988 (Aug, Sep, Dec), 1989 (Apr)
American Music Teacher: 1988 (Feb/Mar), 1989 (Jun/Jul), 1994 (Oct/Nov)
Music & Artists (1969-1972 (7 issues)
The Dial: WNET/Thirteen: 1981-82 (9 issues)
New York Times magazine (Dec 25, 1983)

Subseries 4: Biographical Files and Professional Papers

Sylvia Rabinof
Biographical sketches
Awards:
 ASCAP membership (1961)
 Lincoln Memorial University (Doctor of Music)
Entry for *Who's Who in American Women*
Obituary / memorial service / tribute by Richard Glazier
A Tribute to Sylvia (Junior Keynotes article – 2001)

Benno Rabinof
Columbia Artists Management poster

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof
Correspondence (concert management)
ANTA tour of Greece, Yugoslavia and Spain (scrapbook)
Vivaldi Concertos (Paganiniana Records): publicity flyers
Contracts and other financial files
Miscellaneous notes, anecdotes, memories

SERIES IV: Correspondence

Selected correspondence:
 Jascha Heifetz (letter, 1957 / album leaf: 3 lines of music, inscribed)
 Marcus J. Smith: author of a book on Dachau (photocopy)
 Jacques Thibaud and unidentified (ALS)
 Bruce Wilson: donation of Rabinof Collection to IPAM (2001)

Publishers of Sylvia Rabinof scores: Belwin, Warner Brothers
Sylvia Rabinof: general correspondence (primarily personal letters and notes)
Gift of Benno Rabinof collection to the University of Toronto (1976-1989)
Addresses: large bound book containing contact information

SERIES V: Audio Visual

Subseries 1: Unpublished acetate and transcription discs

Box 5

Sylvia Rabinof album set

The Deluge (cantata by Sylvia Rabinof)

Recital (WNYC: August 1, 1943):

Bach: Partita in C minor

Bach-Liszt: Fantasy & Fugue in E minor

Hamlet the Flea (work by Sylvia Smith): excerpts

Benno Rabinof album

Vivaldi Concerto (with A. Wallenstein / March 7, 1939)

Otello-Ernst (WOR)

Concerto-Kreisler

Mendelssohn (Heifetz?)

Ysaye: Sonata No. 4 (Kreisler?)

Havanaise – Ravel

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof album

Virgil Thomson: Sonata No. 1

Schumann (?)

Debussy: Sonata

unidentified disc

Benno Rabinof at 12 years old:

Porpora: Minuet

Schubert: Ave Maria

Brahms: Violin Concerto

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof: Spanish and Gypsy Music

Ravel: Tzigane

Albeniz: Tango

Dvorak: Slavonic Dance No. 1

Sarasate: Gypsy Air

Brahms: Hungarian Dance No. 20

Kreisler: Gypsy Caprice

Falla: Jota

Kreisler: La Gitana

Granados: Spanish Dance

Sarasate: Introduction & Tarantelle

Bruch: Violin Concerto

Franck: Sonata

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof: Beethoven Sonata Cycle
Town Hall (1948: Oct 23, Nov 13, Dec 4): 3 albums
Town Hall (November 22, 1953)

Miscellaneous

David the King – Author Meets Critic
What are Stars
3 unidentified discs

Subseries 2: Commercially Issued LPs

Box 6

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof
Vivaldi: Concertos for two violins (with Elmar Oliviera): 3 album sets
Gypsy Violin Classics (Decca DL 10101)

Sylvia Rabinof
Sibelius: Complete works for violin and piano (with Ruggiero Ricci)

Miscellaneous

Bengt Hallberg
Bach: Violin Concertos (Bronne/Oliviera)

Subseries 3: Cassette Tapes

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof
Schubert: Fantasy Op. 159

Sylvia Rabinof
14 cassette tapes of recital, Concerto and chamber performances (1974-1995)
Juilliard classes: 4 tapes
Interviews: 2 tapes
Musicianship through improvisation: 6 tapes

Students

Erica Broadnax, Justine Chen, Keri Knecht, Dora Rosenbaum, Sofia Rosoff,
Beth Sussman, Diane & Daniel Tramontozz, Sam Welsh

Miscellaneous pianists

Richard Alston, Claudio Arrau, Natalya Antonova, Wilhelm Backhaus,
Daniel Barenboim, Jorge Bolet, John Browning, Van Cliburn,
Mortin Estrin, Walter Gieseking, Richard Glazer, Gold & Fizdale, Gary Graffman,
Vladimir Horowitz, Wilhelm Kempf, Lily Kraus, Anton Kuerti, Raymond
Lewenthal, Leonard Pennario, Murray Perahia, Vlado Perlemuter, Sergei
Rachmaninoff, José Ramos-Santana, Sviatoslav Richter, Artur Rubinstein,

Gyorgy Sandor, Artur Schnabel, Rudolf Serkin, ? Stuber, Rosalyn Tureck, Ralph Votapek

Other artists

Jussi Bjoerling, Georges Enesco, Yo-Yo Ma, Mischa Weisbrod

Miscellaneous

Arensky

Chopin Etude in F minor

Rare piano compositions by Polish composers

Rimsky-Korsakov Concerto

Blank (unidentified) tapes (2)

Subseries 4: Reel to Reel Tapes

Box 7

37 tapes containing performances by Benno and Sylvia Rabinof from 1957-1968, including live performances of violin and piano duos, commercially issued recordings, Concertos, piano solo performances and performances of compositions by Sylvia Rabinof.

Box 8

16 tapes containing performances by Benno and Sylvia Rabinof from 1969-1975, including live performances of violin and piano duos, Concertos, rehearsals, interviews, and compositions by Sylvia Rabinof.

19 tapes containing miscellaneous commercially issued recordings by other performers (Arrau, Corigliano, Enesco, Grumiaux, Kreisler, Rabin, Rubinstein, Spalding, Szigeti, Thibaud, Vecsey, Vladigerov, Votapek, Alan Weiss), Russian and Yiddish folk songs, and unidentified reels

Subseries 5: VHS tapes

Sylvia Rabinof in Sante Fe at the home of Carol K. Smith, June 30 and July 1, 1992 (Part I):

Sylvia improvises, classical pieces, conversation-reminiscences

Sylvia Rabinof in Sante Fe at the home of Carol K. Smith, July 1, 1992 (Part II): classical pieces, oral history

Sylvia Rabinof in Delray Beach, FL, April 1993: Sylvia practices before a small group of friends prior to an upcoming performance, Sylvia talks about and demonstrates methods of improvisation

SERIES VI: Scores

Subseries 1: Manuscripts and Proofs of Piano Works by Sylvia Rabinof

Box 9

Original Compositions

A Mazurka for Doris
A Soufflé on the Letters EGG (piano solo)
Elegy (piano solo)
Gastronomic Suite (piano solo)
Longing (piano solo)
Rika: A Profile (piano solo)
Six Little Pieces for Piano
Suite from “Noah’s Ark”: Part II (piano solo)
Three Tuneful Tidbits
Miscellaneous easy (pedagogical) piano pieces

Arrangements and Improvisations on various works

C.P.E. Bach: Solfeggietto (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: Air for G-String (piano solo arrangement)
J.S. Bach: Invention No. 8 (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: Invention No. 13 (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: Little Prelude in C minor (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: March in D (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: Minuet in G minor (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
J.S. Bach: Musette (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Beethoven: Ländler in D (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Chopin: Prelude in G Major (improvisation for a 2nd piano – incomplete sketch)
Debussy: Clair de Lune (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Gershwin: Melody No. 40 (piano solo transcription)
Mozart: Alla Turca (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Mozart: Allegro from Sonata K. 545 (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Purcell: Chaconne on Air “Dido’s Lament” (arrangement for 2 pianos, 4 hands)
Purcell: “When I am Laid in Earth” (arrangement for 2 pianos, 8 hands)
Schubert: Ländler, Op. 33, No. 10 in A minor (improvisation for a 2nd piano)
Schumann: The Happy Farmer and His Family (variations for 2 pianos, 8 hands)

Christmas Music: arrangements and improvisations

Greensleeves/What Child is This? (piano solo arrangement)
Rudolph Goes Baroque (piano solo arrangement)
Rudolph Goes Romantic (piano solo arrangement)
The Legend of the Little Drummer Boy (piano solo arrangement)
The Xmas Carol Tree: A Baroque Dance Christmas (piano solo arrangement)

Miscellaneous manuscripts

Counterpoints (2nd piano improvisation sketches)
Sounds and Rhythm (unidentified)
Various complete and incomplete manuscript sketches

Proofs for 2nd piano improvisations published by Belwin Mills

C.P.E. Bach: Solfeggietto
J.S. Bach: Invention No. 8
J.S. Bach: Invention No. 13
J.S. Bach: Minuet in G Major
J.S. Bach: Minuet in G minor
J.S. Bach: Musette
Beethoven: Ländler in D
Mozart: Alla Turca from Sonata K. 331
Schubert: Ländler , Op. 33, No. 10
Schumann: The Happy Farmer and His Family

Subseries 2: Published Piano Works by Sylvia Rabinof

Piano solo arrangements of Christmas music

A Baroque Dance Christmas
Greensleeves (What Child is This?)
Rudolph Goes Baroque
Rudolph Goes Romantic
The Little Drummer Boy

Piano solo transcription

Gershwin: Melody No. 40

Improvisations for a 2nd piano

C.P.E. Bach: Solfeggietto
J.S. Bach: Invention No. 8
J.S. Bach: Two Minuets (G major / G minor)
J.S. Bach: Musette
J.S. Bach: Pour le Lute (Little Prelude No. 3 in C minor)
Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 545 (first movement)

Improvisations for 2 pianos, 4 hands

Beethoven: Ländler in D
Purcell: Chaconne on Air "Dido's Lament"
Schubert: Ländler, Op. 33, No. 10

Improvisations for 2 pianos, 8 hands

Purcell: "When I am Laid in Earth" (Dido's Lament)
Schumann: The Happy Farmer and His Family

Subseries 3: Manuscripts of Vocal and Orchestral Works by Sylvia Rabinof

Box 10

Vocal and Choral Works

Various songs:

- A Girlie Made a Monkey Out of Me
- I'll See You
- Lead On, America
- Longing
- My Johnny
- Three Songs (Wings, There's a Lassie Somewhere, Only a Jester Am I)
- When Will It Be (Beethoven: Op. 130)

Carnival: chorus and orchestra

The Carol Book: Christmas Carols for mixed voices

Dem Milner's Trehren (Warshawski) for chorus

Green Grow'th the Holly (Shakespeare): madrigal

Noah's Ark: various sketches and pieces from the cantata

Salut au Monde: cantata

Sigh No More, Ladies: madrigal

The Deluge: cantata

Stage Works

Cadenza on Life of Paganini: unidentified

Hamlet the Flea: operetta

Chamber and Orchestral Works

Leaves of Sadness / Leaves of Joy: string orchestra

Salut au Monde: Suite for Strings

Suite for Chamber Orchestra

Subseries 4: Violin and Piano Arrangements by Sylvia Rabinof

Paganini: Violin Concerto No. 6 in E minor (published)

Vivaldi: Concerto No. 1 in D minor for two violins (proof)

Vivaldi: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major for two violins (proof)

Vivaldi: Concerto No. 3 in D Major for two violins (proof)

Vivaldi: Concerto No. 4 in C Major for two violins (proof)

Vivaldi: Concerto in A minor for two violins (proof)

Vivaldi: Concerto in D Major (handwritten copy of the orchestral score)

Vivaldi: Sonata/Suite in A Major for violin and piano (proof)

Box 11

Subseries 5: Works by Other Composers

Bach: Chorale Preludes (selected) for organ (Marks Music)
Bach: Clavierübung III for organ (Carl Fischer)
Chopin: Fantasy on Polish Airs – score and parts (Breitkopf)
Debussy: Sonata for Violin and Piano (Durand)
Martinu: Concerto for violin, piano and orchestra (orchestra parts)
Mozart: Melody Dicer – compose your own music (Carousel Publishing Corp.)
Noda, Ken: unpublished compositions
 Sonatina in 3 Movements
 A Kennel of Doggy Canons
 The Zoo Suite
 Halloween Night
 Suite for Piano
 Prelude and Canon for Two Pianos
 Variations on a Japanese Theme
 Tale of the Horse
Various: Chorale Preludes by Masters of the 18th & 19th Centuries for organ (Concordia)

SERIES VII: Writings and Pedagogical Materials

This series contains notebooks used by Benno and Sylvia Rabinof during their student years. Also included are extensive files containing materials used by Sylvia Rabinof in organizing and presenting courses and workshops on improvisation.

Box 12

Subseries 1: Musicianship Through Improvisation (workbooks, drafts and files)

Musicianship Through Improvisation
 Original book
 Unidentified early notebooks

Musicianship Through Improvisation (A Classical Improvisation Workshop for Teachers)
 Outline I (1987)
 Outline I: Beginning and Early Harmonic Forms (1990)
 Floppy disc: 1999 version of Musicianship Through Classical Improvisation
 Publicity flyers

Musicianship Through Classical Improvisation
 Outline II: Baroque and Romantic Forms (1995?)
 Outline II (1999)

Musicianship Through Improvisation: student enrollment notebook listing attendance, receipts, etc. (1965-1988)

Subseries 2: Research Materials

Topical files

- Altered Chords (Aug 6ths, 7ths, 9ths, etc.)
- Binary / Ternary
- Cadenzas
- Chaconne
- Chorale
- Contemporary (styles and techniques)
- Contrapuntal Forms
- Free, Fancy and On Your Own (free forms)
- Fugue
- Harmonic Progressions / Cadences
- Invention
- Jazz
- Modes
- Modulation
- Names (musical alphabet)
- Prelude
- Rhythm
- Rondo / Sonata
- Secondary Triads
- Sequences
- Sonatina Form
- Ternary Mazurka
- Theme and Variations
- Theory (miscellaneous)
- Miscellaneous

Subseries 3: Articles

Junior Keynotes: publication of the National Federation of Music Clubs
Newsletters (1968-2000) containing articles by Sylvia Rabinof

Box 13

Composer biographies (articles)
Schubert
Wagner

Subseries 4: Unpublished books by Sylvia Rabinof:

Paradox: The men and women, little known or unknown, behind some of the best known of the world's popular music (by Charles Rothenberg and Sylvia Rabinof)

Creative Counterpoint

Subseries 5: Materials from Benno and Sylvia Rabinof's Student Years

Sylvia Smith (Rabinof): harmony exercise books (4)
Sylvia Smith: theory book for course taught by James Bleecker
Sylvia Smith notebook:
 Teaching of Music
 Spoken English
 Teaching of Instrumental Music
 Orchestration
 Violin Class (1st year)
Unidentified student notebooks
New York University: student book (1931-32)
Benno Rabinof: student harmony books (4)

Subseries 6: Diaries and datebooks

Sylvia Rabinof: diary (1933)
Sylvia Rabinof: appointment book / diary (1937)
Sylvia Rabinof (?): appointment book (1956) / notes on Spanish lessons
Sylvia Rabinof: appointment book (1991)
Sylvia Rabinof: list of proposed concert programs, practice log
unidentified: lists composers and works
unidentified: list of contemporary performing musicians
Sylvia Rabinof: scrapbook (including concert programs 1925-1938)

SERIES VIII: Photographs

Box 14

Subseries 1: Sylvia Rabinof

Portraits and snapshots
Fall River, MA, 1935 (album)
Basel, 1937 (album)
Snapshots, 1976
Spring, 1977: unveiling (BR tombstone)/Brevard/Round Top
Album, 1978
In rehearsal and performance (unidentified date, ca. 1975)
Sylvia Rabinof with Smith family (early 1950s)

With others (miscellaneous)

Subseries 2: Benno Rabinof

Unidentified album: Benno Rabinof and family?
Publicity photos
Portraits and snapshots

Subseries 3: Sylvia and Benno Rabinof

Benno and Sylvia Rabinof wedding photos
Rehearsals, performances, receptions, etc.
Israel

Snapshots at various locations:

Atlantic City
Cape Cod
Corpus Christi, TX (1955)
El Paso, TX (1949)
Galveston, TX
Italy
New Orleans
Niagara Falls / Grand Canyon
Phoenix, AZ (1947)
St. Louis Zoo

On various boats

Snapshots: unidentified dates, locations

Snapshots: miscellaneous dates (1953, 1957, 1965, 1970, 1971-73)

Subseries 4: various other people and places

Sylvia and/or Benno Rabinof with other musicians, including:

Leopold Auer
Paul Creston
Mischa Elman
Jascha Heifetz
Ignaz Paderewski
Dmitri Shostakovich

Other musicians: autographed portraits

James Bleecker
S'Amico Pasquale Crescenti
? Economides
Georges Enescu
Jascha Heifetz
Olga Koussevitzky

Eugene Ormandy
C. Michael Paul
Lev Strokoff (?)
Jacques Thibaud
Theodore Vavayiannis
Eugene Ysaye
Unidentified (7)

Other musicians: not autographed

Howard James Barnum
Johannes Brahms
Albert Einstein
Jascha Heifetz
Fritz Kreisler / Thomas Beechem
David Oistrakh
Paderewski/Schelling/Kreisler/unidentified
Sergei Rachmaninoff
Unidentified (6)

Miscellaneous

Smith family
Others (unidentified)
Various unidentified locations
negatives

SERIES IX: Miscellaneous

Box 11

Books

Keyboard Harmony, Books I & II (Modena Scovill)
Rhythmic Training (Robert Starer)
The Harrowing Hell of Dachau (Marcus J. Smith)

Scrapbooks

Jascha Heifetz: various articles and photographs (2 bound volumes)

Miscellaneous

Paganiniana: publicity flyers for recordings (not involving the Rabinofs)
Concert programs: concerts and theater productions (not the Rabinofs)

