

John Davison papers, 1938-1999
HC.Coll.839
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Finding aid prepared by Finding aid prepared by Leslie O'Neill and Forrest Wright

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections
2009.11.12
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Summary Information

Repository	Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections
Creator	Davison, John (John H.)
Title	John Davison papers
Date [inclusive]	1938-1999
Extent	93.0 Linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>John Davison was a prolific composer who taught music at Haverford College from 1959 until his death in 1999. Several of his compositions were performed and recorded by orchestras throughout the United States. Within this collection are drafts of almost all his 144 scores, as well as audio recordings of a couple dozen of his pieces. Thus any researcher interested in his work should start here. Also of note to alumni are the scores Davison saved from his students.</p>

Preferred Citation note

Haverford College Library, Haverford, PA, Special Collections, Special Manuscript Collections, John Davison Papers, Coll. No. 839.

Biographical/Historical note

Born May 31, 1930 in Istanbul, Turkey, to American parents, John Davison moved to the United States soon after his birth. He was raised in Auburn, NY and New York City and “showed an early interest in music, studying piano and theory,” (Catherine Mardiello, Pianist). He was educated at Juilliard School’s lower school; Haverford College, graduating in 1951; Harvard University, earning his master’s degree; and the Eastman School of Music, earning his doctorate in creative composition. Among his teachers were Alfred Swan, Randall Thompson, Walter Piston, Bernard Rogers, Howard Hanson, Alan Hovhaness, and Robert Palmer (Haverford website).

In 1959, after obtaining his doctorate, Davison began teaching at Haverford College as the Ruth Marshall Magill Professor of Music. He continued to teach at Haverford until his death in 1999, and saved his students’ compositions throughout this period.

A prolific composer, “Davison's idiom is rooted in the great Western classic-romantic tradition with Baroque, Renaissance, jazz, modernist, and folk elements mixing in at times,” (Dram). He wrote for trumpet, trombone, piano, horn, and violin, in addition to less traditional instruments such as koto, cimbalom and bagpipe. His “compositions are published and recorded [and] have won awards and received numerous performances,” (Catherine Mardiello, Pianist). Among orchestras playing his compositions have been the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, the Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia, the Susquehanna Symphony, and the Minnesota Orchestra. The Chestnut Brass Company recorded his Brass Quintet on their CD "Pastime with Good Company," and Albany Records issued an all-Davison CD (Haverford website).

In addition to his composing and teaching, Davison also co-authored a book about the songs of Robert Burns with John Ashmead. Davison also kept a sketchbook, where he drew figures occasionally used for concert programs and posters.

Bibliography:

Catherine Mardiello, Pianist. Record (Box 120).

DRAM. “Music of John Davison.” <http://www.dramonline.org/albums/music-of-john-davison/notes> (accessed October 1, 2009).

Haverford College Music Faculty Website, “In Memoriam” <http://www.haverford.edu/musc/faculty/davison.html> (accessed December 9th, 2009).

Scope and Contents note

The John Davison collection, 1943 to 1999, documents his work as a composer and as a Professor of Music at Haverford College. The collection includes written scores and recordings. It also includes correspondence and personal materials collected by Davison throughout his life. Other materials found in the collection are clippings, concert posters and programs, framed certificates and photographs, as well as audio and video such as cassette tapes, reel-to-reel, long playing records, and VHS tapes. The collection is divided into two series: "John Davison Materials" and "Materials by Others."

The first series, "John Davison Materials," is divided into five sub-series: "Scores;" "Personal Material;" "Recordings;" "Music Programs;" and "Correspondence." Within "Scores," are Davison's opuses composed between 1948 and 1998. Score titles in this series include "Jonas' Song and Dance" (Opus #130), Symphonies 1 through 6 (some of which are oversized), psalms and hymns, and "Arthur's Return for Bagpipes and String Orchestra" (Opus #82). Researchers interested in John Davison's scores would benefit from examining his "Catalog of Works," available from Haverford College Special Collections.

The "Personal Materials" subseries is comprised of items collected by Davison, and include the following subseries: "Clippings;" "Diplomas and Certificates;" "Education;" "Maps;" "Miscellaneous;" "Notes;" "Planners;" "Photographs and other graphics;" "Quotes;" "Reviews;" and "Sketchbook." His collected "Clippings," largely pertain to Davison. His "Diplomas and Certificates," include diplomas from Deerfield Academy and his 1951 Haverford College diploma. "Education" includes items such as his Statement of Intentions for his senior year at Haverford College and an invoice for a semester of college. Within the subseries "Photographs" is a framed black and white photograph of John Davison, Aaron Copland, and Sylvia Glickman taken at Haverford College (undated). Throughout Davison's life, he sketched the world around him and these sketches, found in the "Sketchbook" subseries were occasionally used for concert programs and posters.

The subseries "Recordings," is composed of Davison's performances and studio pieces from the early 1960s through the 1990s, arranged numerically. Also found are interviews with Davison on programs such as National Public Radio (NPR). These recordings are found in following formats: cassette tapes, reel-to-reels, long playing records (LPs), and VHS tapes.

"Music Programs and Posters" consists of concert programs and posters for Davison's performances from 1955 through 1999. Also included are programs Davison collected from concerts attended.

"Correspondence" is divided into letters to Davison (ordered chronologically, 1943 to 1999), letters from Davison, and an exchange between Davison and his former music teacher Ronald Thompson. Also included are holiday cards sent to Davison and a computer disk of his saved letters.

The second series, "Materials By Others" are items collected by Davison throughout his professional life. Within the subseries are scores by Steven Gerber and musical works by Wilson Townsend, consisting of masses, prayers, canticles, and other fragments. Davison also collected many of his students' musical works, which are represented in the subseries "Student Compositions," from 1962 to 1999. Researchers can request a complete list of Davison's students to review alongside this series. In the subseries "Musical Works by Others" are works by Sydney Carter, David Hatt, and the 1934 publication *Songs of Haverford*.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections 2009.11.12

Conditions Governing Access note

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Archives with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

Processing Information note

The processing of this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources' "Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives" Project.

This collection was *minimally processed* in 2009-2011, as part of an experimental project conducted under the auspices of the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries to help eliminate processing backlog in Philadelphia repositories. A minimally processed collection is one processed at a less intensive rate than traditionally thought necessary to make a collection ready for use by researchers. When citing sources from this collection, researchers are advised to defer to folder titles provided in the finding aid rather than those provided on the physical folder.

Employing processing strategies outlined in Mark Greene's and Dennis Meissner's 2005 article, *More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Processing Approaches to Deal With Late 20th-Century Collections*, the project team tested the limits of minimal processing on collections of all types and ages, in 23 Philadelphia area repositories. A primary goal of the project, the team processed at an average rate of 2-3 hours per linear foot of records, a fraction of the time ordinarily reserved for the arrangement and description of collections. Among other time saving strategies, the project team did not extensively review the content of the collections, replace acidic folders or complete any preservation work.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Eastman School of Music.
- Harvard University.
- Haverford College.
- Juilliard School of Music.

Genre(s)

- Correspondence.
- Scores
- Sketches
- Sound recordings
- Video recordings

Geographic Name(s)

- Haverford (Pa.)

Personal Name(s)

- Davison, John (John H.)
- Gerber, Steven R.
- Townsend, Wilson

Subject(s)

- Composers
- Education.
- Music--Instruction and study
- Opera
- Orchestra
- Piano

Series I. John Davison Materials

Collection Inventory

Series I. John Davison Materials 1938-1998	
Subseries a. Scores 1948-1998	
Arrangement	
Davison's scores were all marked with a pre-existing opus number. The scores listed by title at the end of the series, were not marked with a number.	
	Box
Opus 1: Nocturne & Scherzo (Piano Sonata, No. 1); Sonatina No. 1 1948-1952	1
Opus 2: Sonatina for Violin and Piano 1950 1952-1956	1
Opus 3: Suite for Cello and Piano; Suite for Viola; Suite for Flute and Piano; Suite for Clarinet and Piano 1952-1956	1
Opus 4: Suite for String Trio; Suite for Clarinet, Tuba, and Piano; Suite for Flute, Violin and Piano; Suite for Recorder Trio 1949-1959	1
Opus 5: 3 Fantasies for String Quartet; 3 Fantasies for Oboe, 2 Violins, and Cello; Fantasia and Pastorale for Clarinet, Violin, and Cello; Fantasia for Viola and Piano; Twelfth Night for Recorder Quartet 1947-1962	1

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 6: Suite for Piano Duet 1954	2
Opus 7: Suite for Horn and Piano 1954	2
Opus 8: Communion Service No. 1 1956	2
Opus 9: Sonata for Trombone and Piano 1957	2
Opus 10: Four Songs to Sacred Texts: Lauds and Blessing 1958	2
Opus 11: Angel Songs and the Star 1958	2
Opus 12: Concertino for 12 Instruments 1954-1958	2
Opus 13: Symphony No. 1 for Chamber Orchestra 1958	3-4
Opus 16: Woodwind Quintet 1960	5
Opus 17: Triptych 1960	5
Opus 19: Psalm 130 1961	5
Opus 20: Blessed Be the God 1962	5

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 21: Trio-Fantasia 1962 5

Opus 22: Concerto for Harpsichord and String 1963 6

Opus 23: Suite for 8 Brass Instruments 1963 6

Opus 24: Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano 1964 6

Opus 25: Symphony No. 3 for Winds and Percussion 1964 7

Oversized box

Larger scores housed in oversized box.

Opus 26: Four Teaching Pieces; Canzona and Chorale; Pastorale for 2 Trumpets and 3 Violins; Suite for 7 Classroom Instruments; 3 Children's Songs 1965 6

Opus 27: Lo, This Land 1965 8

Opus 28: Psalm 23 1965 8

Opus 29: As the Hart 1965 8

Opus 30: Hodie Christus natus est 1965 8

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 31: Now Thank We All Our God 1966 8

Opus 32: Sonata for Clarinet and Piano 1966 9

Opus 33: Hymns of Paradox 1966 9

Opus 34: Let This Mind Be In You 1966 9

Opus 36: Concertino for Oboe and Chamber Orchestra 1967 9

Opus 37: Sextet for English Horn, Strings, and Piano 1968 9

Opus 38: Symphony No. 4, for Strings (oversized) 1969 41

Oversized Box

Larger scores housed in oversized box.

Opus 39: Sonata for Cello and Piano 1969-1982 10

Opus 40: Bless the Lord 1949-1969 10

Opus 41: Communion Service No. 2 1970 10

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 42: Quintet for Trombone and String Quartet 1970	10
Opus 43: Prelude, Introduction, and Rhapsody for Euphonium and Piano 1971	11
Opus 44: Piano Music I: Introduction and Dance; 2 Preludes and Fugue; 3 Sonatinas; Suite; Sonata No. 2 1955-1971	11
Opus 45: Great Service: Communion Service No. 3 1972	11
Opus 46: Morning Canticles; Venite; Te Deum; Benedictus es; Magnificat and Nuac dimittis 1972-1976	11-12
Opus 47: 3 Short Anthems: Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord; This is the Day the Lord Hath Made; The Spirit of the Lord 1973	13-15
Opus 48: 3 Psalms 1953-1973	15
Opus 49: 4 Geneva Psalms 1952-1973	16
Opus 51: Magnificat Plasetarum 1974	16
Opus 52: Liturgy for Orchestra 1974	16
Opus 53: Quintet for Brasses 1974	17

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 54: Celebration 1975	17
Opus 55: The American Prophet 1975	18
Opus 56: 3 Pieces for Recorder Quartet 1976	18
Opus 57: Communion Service No. 4 1976	18
Opus 58: Suite for Saxophone and Piano 1967-1977	18
Opus 59: Sonata for Flute and Guitar 1977	18
Opus 60: Mass 1977	19
Opus 61: Hypercube 1977	19
Opus 62: String Quartet 1977	20
Opus 63: Passacaglia for Organ undated	20
Opus 64: Magnificat and Nunc dimittis 1978	7
Oversized Box	

Subseries a. Scores

Larger scores housed in oversized box.

21

Opus 65: 2 Hymns; Civitas Dei; Herbert 1977-1979

21

Opus 66: There Were Shepherds Abiding in the Field 1953-1988

21

Opus 67: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano 1975

23

Opus 68: March-Chorale with Variations 1966-1979

Oversized Box

Larger scores housed in oversized box.

21

Opus 69: Year's Praise 1979

21

Opus 70: 4 Suites for 4 Flutes; 3 Ceremonies; The Realms of Katoban; Dances;
Modal Circus 1975-1989

22

Opus 71: Piano Music II 1977

23

Opus 72: Symphony No. 5 1979

Oversized Box

Larger scores housed in oversized box.

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 73: Sonata for Euphonium, Tuba, and Piano 1980	22
Opus 74: Introduction, Psalm Tune and Allegro 1981	22
Opus 75: Japanese Folk-Song Suite 1981	22
Opus 76: The American Psalmist 1981	24
Opus 77: Kokiriko Variations 1982	24
Opus 78a: I Love My Jesus Quite Alone 1981	24
Opus 78b: A Quaker Cantata 1982	24
Opus 79: Introduction and Allegro 1982	25
Opus 80: Windows and Murals 1982	26-27
Opus 81: Communion Service No. 5 1983	25
Opus 82: Arthur's Return for Bagpipes and String Orchestra 1983	25
Opus 83: Fantasia-Pastorale for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano 1983	25

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 84: Suite for Trombone Choir 1984-1987	28
Opus 85: Piano Music III 1984	28
Opus 86: Suite for 2 Violins 1984-1987	28
Opus 87: Laetum Mysterium; for Trombone, Choir, and Organ 1985-1987	28
Opus 88: O Emmanuel 1985	28
Opus 89: Variations on an Ancient Tune 1985	29
Opus 91: Sonata for Horn and Piano 1986	29
Opus 92: Sanctus for Chorus and Piano 1986	29
Opus 93: Sonata Pastorale for Flute, Cello, and Piano 1986	30
Opus 94: Trio Sonata for Trumpet, Trombone, and Piano 1987	30
Opus 95: Concertino Lirico for Flute and Orchestra 1987	31
Opus 96: Fantasia on Victimae Paschali Laudis 1987	31

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 97: Sextet for Woodwind Quintet and Piano 1988	32
Opus 98: The Heavens Declare the Glory of God 1988	33
Opus 98a: [Arrangement of Haydn Trio for Woodwind Quintet] 1988	33
Opus 98b: [Finishing of Unfinished Mozart rondo] 1988	33
Opus 99: For All Who See God 1989	34
Opus 100: Tonus Peregrinus for Baritone, Flute, and String Orchestra 1989	34
Opus 101: Sonata a Quattro for 4 Trombones 1990	34
Opus 102: Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano 1990	34
Opus 103: Divertimento for Flute, Horn, and Piano 1990	34
Opus 104: Franklin Variations for Flute, Cello, and Piano 1990	34
Opus 105: Sonata Brave for Flute/Alto flute, English Horn, and Piano 1990	35
Opus 106: Sonata for Trumpet and Piano 1990	35

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 108: 3 Tenebrae Responsories 1990	35
Opus 109: Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano 1991	35
Opus 110: Sonata for Tuba and Piano 1991	35
Opus 111: Suite for 4 Recorders and Viola da Gamba 1991	35
Opus 112: Sonata for 3 Trombones and Piano 1991	35
Opus 113: Piano Sonata No. 3 1991	35
Opus 114: Florilegium for 3 Flutes 1992	36
Opus 115: Over the Mountain 1992	36
Opus 116a: Burns Love Songs 1992	37
Opus 117: Sonatina for Oboe and Piano 1992	38
Opus 118: Will God Indeed Dwell on Earth 1993	38
Opus 119: Three Goodbyes 1993-1994	38

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 120: Symphony No. 6 1993	38
Opus 121: Cello Concerto 1993	39
Oversized Box	
Larger scores housed in oversized box.	
Opus 122: Sonata for Bassoon and Piano 1993	38
Opus 123: Fanfare for a New Center 1993	38
Opus 124: Hail Gladdening Light 1993	38
Opus 125: Saxophone Quartet 1994	38
Opus 126: 4 Pieces for Bass, Trombone, Piano 1994	40
Opus 127: Variations on "Nearer, My God, To Thee" 1994	40
Opus 129: A Walsingham Ave 1994	40
Opus 130: Jonas' Song and Dance 1994	41-43

Subseries a. Scores

Opus 131: 2 Easy Pieces for Piano Duet 1995	44
Opus 132: Bagatelle for Oboe and Piano 1995	44
Opus 133: Fantasy For Horn, Euphonium, and Piano 1995	44
Opus 138: Lullaby and Allegro, Chamber and Reel 1996	44
Opus 141: Kaleidoskopikon 1997	44
Opus 143: 3 Maine Folk-Songs for 2 Horns 1998	44
Symphony for Band undated	45
Fantasia for Viola and Piano undated	45
Celebration for String Quartet and Piano undated	45
Deleroye Pavan (by Orlando Gibbons, missing parts supplied by John Davison) undated	45
Fantasia by Orlando Gibbons, Arranged for Brass by John Davison undated	45

Subseries b. Personal Material

Fleisher Memorial of Free Library of Philadelphia, list of scores borrowed from Davison collection at Haverford 2002	45
Subseries b. Personal Material 1938-1999	
Scope and Contents note	
This series contains materials all relating to John Davison, either produced or collected by him.	
	Box
Clippings 1960s-1990s	46
Diplomas and certificates 1947-1951 Deerfield Academy: Deerfield Chapter Cum Laude Society Certificate, February 17th, 1947 (framed); Deerfield Academy Course Certification, June 4th, 1947 (roll); Haverford College B.A. Diploma, 1951 (roll)	46
	Item
Diplomas and certificates 1947-1951	(loose on shelf)
	Box
Education 1948-1951	46
Maps undated	46
Miscellaneous (broken metronome cover, LP cover) undated	46

Subseries c. Recordings

Notes (includes computer disk of Davison's work) undated	46
Planners 1949, 1950, 1951	46
Drawing of Davison 1951 A framed photograph of John Davison, Aaron Copeland, and Sylvia Glickman at Haverford, undated. This framed photograph is not in box 47, but on shelf with collection.	47
	Item
Photograph of John Davison, Aaron Coplan and Sylvia Glickman at Haverford College undated	(loose on shelf)
	Box
Quotes undated	47
Reviews (3 folders) 1950s-1990s	47
Sketchbook (drawings by Davison) undated	47
Subseries c. Recordings undated	
	Box
Cassette Tapes	48-52
Tapes	

Subseries d. Music Programs and Posters

Davison marked each recording with a roman numeral from I to V, followed by title, and this order was used to arrange the material.

CDs

Arrangement note

As of 2010, there is only one CD and it is physically located next to VHSs.

Box

53-116

Reel-to-reel

Reel

Davison marked each recording with a roman numeral from I to V, followed by title, and this order was used to arrange the material.

117

Long Playing Records

118

VHS

Subseries d. Music Programs and Posters

Box

119

Programs at Haverford 1948-1951

120

Concert programs 1949-1953

Subseries e. Correspondence

Concert programs 1955-1982

120

Pennsylvania Ballet Company schedule 1970

120

Concert posters 1955-1999

120

Subseries e. Correspondence

To Davison 1943-1999

Box

1943

121

1944

121

1945

121

1946

121

1947

121

1948

121

Subseries e. Correspondence

1949	121
1950	122
1951	123
1952	123
1953	124
1954 (2 folders)	124-125
1955 (2 folders)	125
1956	126
1957	126
1958 (2 folders)	126
1959 (3 folders)	127-128
circa 1950s (3 folders)	128-129

Subseries e. Correspondence

1960 (4 folders)	130-131
1961 (3 folders)	132
1962	133
1963	133
1964 (2 folders)	134
1965 (10 folders)	134-137
1966 (5 folders)	138-139
1967 (5 folders)	140-141
1968 (6 folders)	141-143
1969 (3 folders)	143-144
circa 1960s	144
1970 (2 folders)	145

Subseries e. Correspondence

1971	146
1972	146
1973	147
1974	147
1975 (2 folders)	148
1976 (2 folders)	148-149
1977 (2 folders)	149
1978	150
1978-1979	150
1979 (2 folders)	150-151
circa 1970s (9 folders)	151-154
1980	154

Subseries e. Correspondence

1981	154
1982	154
1983	154
1985	154
1989	155
circa 1980s (13 folders)	155-159
1990 (3 folders)	160
1991 (2 folders)	161
1992 (2 folders)	161
1993	162
1994 (3 folders)	162-163
1995 (3 folders)	163-164

Subseries e. Correspondence

1996 (2 folders)	164
1997 (3 folders)	165
1998 (2 folders)	165-166
circa 1990s	166
Holiday cards undated	166
undated	166
From Davison	
	Box
Letters to Ted Kopf 1950-1955	166
Computer disk of correspondence undated	166
Unidentified undated	166
	Box
Ronald Thompson Letters 1950s-1960s	166

Series II. Materials By Others

Series II. Materials By Others 1938-1998	
Subseries a. Scores by Steven Gerber undated	Box 167
Subseries b. Music by Wilson Townsend	
	Box
Fragments and Sketches undated	167
Keyboard Pieces undated	167
Masses undated	167
Notebooks undated	167
Prayers, Hymns, Canticles undated	167
Subseries c. Student Compositions 1962-1999	
	Box
Aitken - Akins undated	168
Allen - Bhattacharya undated	169

Subseries c. Student Compositions

Bien - Burnett undated 170

Callahan - Diamond undated 171

Dimock - Griffeath undated 172

Grochocinski - Husemoller undated 173

Ives - Larson undated 174

Lazaroff - Livingston undated 175

Long - Meier undated 176

Melson - Peterson undated 177

Petraske - Scully undated 178

Seager - Ure undated 179

Vaccaro - Zucer undated 180

Oversize undated 181

Subseries d. Musical Works by Others

Subseries d. Musical Works by Others

Box

182

Christmas Songs and the Star (words by Eloise H. Davison and music by John Davison) undated

182

Music Educators National Conference: Works for Orchestra and String Instruments (multiple composers) 1968

182

George Fox (words and music by Sydney Carter) undated

182

Organ Book No. 3 (by David Hatt) undated

182

Songs of Haverford (multiple composers) 1934