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## **The Shambrey Chorale Collection SPC.2010.002**

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California State University Dominguez Hills, Gerth Archives and Special Collections

2010, revised 2019

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**Language of Material:** English

**Contributing Institution:** California State University Dominguez Hills, Gerth Archives and Special Collections

**Title:** Shambrey Chorale Collection

**creator:** Shambrey, Celestine, 1911-2001

**Identifier/Call Number:** SPC.2010.002

**Physical Description:** 6 boxes

**Date (inclusive):** 1890-2005

**Abstract:** This collection includes sheet music, performance notes, performance programs, chorale rosters, photos, a book, journal articles, correspondence documents, and multimedia related to the Shambrey Chorale. Choral works include early traditional sacred church music and hymns from 16th century styles to contemporary styles, compositions from canonical European composers, traditional negro spirituals, gospel, jazz, musical theater, U.S Patriotic, American Folk Songs, Christmas themes, and Ethnomusicological styles.

#### **Scope and Contents**

The Shambrey Chorale Collection includes sheet music, performance notes, performance programs, chorale rosters, photos, a book, journal articles, correspondence documents, and multimedia related to the Shambrey Chorale. Choral works include early traditional sacred church music and hymns from 16th century styles to contemporary styles, compositions from canonical European composers, traditional negro spirituals, gospel, jazz, musical theater, U.S Patriotic, American Folk Songs, Christmas themes, and Ethnomusicological styles with print dates ca.1890-1995. Some sheet music also include the conductor's handwritten markups in regards to performance cues. Some sheet music include non-choral works. The performance programs include performances by the Shambrey Chorale and concerts by other choirs. The photos are one-of-a kind, two of which photograph a performance poster of the Shambrey Chorale and their March 23, 1975 performance. The single book in this collection is a poetry book by Langston Hughes. The journal articles are multiple copies of a single article describing the lack of black Americans and involvement in philharmonic or symphony orchestras. The correspondence documents are from John Mayes, Jr., Shambrey Chorale president during 1991. Other documents pertain to Thelma Hicks, active chorale member; Dr. Jester Hairston, composer of many choral works in their collection; and papers about vocal exercises, orchestra seating, jazz mentorship programs, chorale rosters, and chorale history. Multimedia consists of an audiocassette tape and 2 DVDs.

#### **Historical Note**

The Shambrey Chorale was conceived and implemented in Summer of 1972 with their first formal rehearsal in October 1972. Their first public performance was February 25, 1973 at the Temple Israel of Hollywood, California. After rave responses to their debut performance at Temple Israel, choral group members met on March 17th to formally organize. The Chorale was named after its Founder-Director, Celestine (Celeste) Shambrey. Vennie F. Johnson accepted her nominated role as the chorale's organ accompanist. Basso-baritone soloist, Rudy Williams, was selected as first president. Their regular rehearsal base was Plymouth Congregational Church (on 6th Avenue and West 54th Street), with major credits to Vennie F. Johnson, a member of Plymouth Church, for officiating the process.

As a non-profit organization, chorale members and leaders were non-paid, voluntary positions. Chorale funding came from chorale participant regular contributions. Through time, special contributions in the form of finances or advising came from major sponsors such as Milton F. Williams, Dr. Milton H. Davis, and C. Dave Hardgrave. First president, Rudy Williams, provided awards and citations to chorale participants who demonstrated exceptional service or sacrifice for the fulfillment of the chorale's goals and purposes.

The first officers were Rudy Williams, President; Barbara Moore, Vice President; Peggy Speese, Corresponding Secretary; Zulah Lee, Treasurer; Earldon Scales, Assistant Treasurer; Vennie Johnson, Librarian; Verlena Davenport, Assistant Librarian; Vermya Phillips, Chaplain; Don Villarel, Publicity; Viola Avery, Social Chairman; and Carrier Speed, Assistant Social Chairman.

Their major purposes are: 1) to provide varied styles of well prepared music for area audiences -- and especially for those who might not otherwise enjoy such privileges, 2) to demonstrate the possibilities and creative advantages of intergroup sharings, regardless of religious, educational, social or ethnic backgrounds, 3) to present constant challenges to participants (leadership included) for persistent application and improvement of their natural talents, and 4) to offer rescue for emergencies confronted by serious, gifted but disadvantaged students. As part of fulfilling their major purpose, c. 1973-1974, ten students in a variety of fields such as medicine, music, and police and social service have been given financial provisions for registration, books, graduation fees, and more.

Their early performance history: 1) Handel's oratorio, JUDAS MACCABAEUS, on February 25, 1973 at Temple Israel of Hollywood, Calif.; 2) Hall Johnson music on May 20, 1973 at Oneonta Congregational Church, South Pasadena, Calif.; 3) R.

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Nathaniel Dett's oratorio, THE ORDERING OF MOSES on November 4, 1973 at Zion Hill Baptist Church, 78th and 10th Avenue, near Inglewood, Calif.; 4) Traditional and Contemporary music on February 24, 1974 at Church of Chimes (Congregational) United Church of Christ, Van Nuys, Calif.; 5) Beethoven's oratorio, MOUNT OF OLIVES, on April 7, 1974 (Palm Sunday) at First United Methodist Church, Inglewood, Calif.; and 6) Traditional and Contemporary music on May 26, 1974 at Faith Presbyterian Church, Century Boulevard near Western (Calif.).

**Arrangement**

Arranged in 2 series: Series I. Papers, photos, and multimedia (1972-2005) Series II. Sheet music (1890-1995)

**Conditions Governing Access**

There are no access restrictions on this collection.

**Conditions Governing Use**

All requests for permission to publish or quote from the collection must be submitted in writing to the Director of Archives and Special Collections. Permission for publication is given on behalf of Special Collections as the owner of the physical materials and not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

**Citation**

[Title of item], SHAMBREY CHORALE, Courtesy of the Department of Archives and Special Collections. University Library. California State University, Dominguez Hills

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

African Americans--Music.

African Americans--California--Los Angeles.

Gospel Music

Church music

Chorales

Shambrey Chorale

Hairston, Jester, 1901-2000

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**Series 1: Organizational Papers 1972-2005**

**Scope and Contents**

Papers, photos, and multimedia pertaining to the Shambrey Chorale and Celestine Shambrey.

box 1, folder 1	<b>Rosters, Descriptions, and Notebook 1976-2005</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 2	<b>John Mayes 1989-2000</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 3	<b>Performance Programs 1976-1996</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 4	<b>Anniversary Programs and photographs 1975-1997</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 5	<b>Other concert programs 1983-2008</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 6	<b>Organizational and Biographical Information 1997</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 7	<b>Thelma Hicks, Jester Hairston 1972-1987</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder

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box 1, folder 8	<b>Scholarship Certificate - Celestine Shambrey 1926</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 9	<b>Shambrey Chorale Roundtable 2005</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 1, folder 10	<b>African Diaspora Sacred Music Living Legends Festival undated</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 2, folder 1	<b>I Can Tell the World 2005</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 2, folder 2-3	<b>Handel's Judas Maccabeus - program notes, conductor's notes, sheet music undated</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folder
box 2, folder 4	<b>Beethoven's Mount of Olives - Program notes, conductor's notes, sheet music undated</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 2, folder 5	<b>Dett's The Ordering of Moses 1965</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder

**Series 2: Music 1890-1995****Scope and Contents**

A reflection of Shambrey's music library, includes choral and non-choral works of European and European-style sacred church music and hymns from 16th through 20th centuries; traditional negro spirituals; gospel; jazz; musical theater; U.S Patriotic; American Folk Songs; Christmas; and Ethnomusicological styles. Also includes Shambrey Chorale conductor's handwritten performance cue markups and incomplete sheet music. Inclusive dates reflect printing dates as opposed to original composition dates.

box 2, folder 6	<b>Bach Choral Books 1899-1958</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 2, folder 7	<b>Bach Choral Sheet Music 1921-1953</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 3, folder 1	<b>Beethoven Sheet Music 1929-1938</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 3, folder 2	<b>Handel's Messiah 1940-1968</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 3, folder 3	<b>Sacred Music: 16th-17th century 1921-1962</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 3, folder 4	<b>Sacred Music: 18th Century 1926-1981</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder
box 3, folder 5-6	<b>Sacred Music: 19th century 1882-1962</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folder
box 3, folder 7	<b>Sacred Music: Sheet music 1900-1939</b> <b>Physical Description:</b> 1 folder

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box 3, folder 8	<b>Sacred Music: Sheet music 1940-1949</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 4, folder 1	<b>Sacred Music: Sheet music 1950-1989</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 4, folder 2	<b>Sacred Music: Sheet music undated</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 4, folder 3	<b>Sacred Music: Songbooks 1910-1981</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 4, folder 4	<b>Spirituals 1917-1995</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 4, folder 5	<b>Gospel sheet music 1934-1986</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 1	<b>Traditional Choral Music 1898-1971</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 2	<b>Country Music 1959</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 3	<b>U. S. Patriotic Music 1940-1951</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 4	<b>Opera Music 1895</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 5-6	<b>Musical Theatre Music 1927-1971</b> Physical Description: 2 folder
box 5, folder 7	<b>Film Music 1951-1977</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 8	<b>Jazz Music 1931-1970</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 9	<b>American Folk Songs 1939-1966</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 10	<b>World Music 1959-1994</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 5, folder 11	<b>French Compositions undated</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 6, folder 1	<b>Christmas Music 1907-1981</b> Physical Description: 1 folder
box 6, folder 2	<b>Multigenre Songbook undated</b> Physical Description: 1 folder

box 6, folder 3

**Incomplete Sheet Music - Sacred and Secular undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder

box 6, folder 4

**"Celeste's Gospel Melody" by Celestine Shambrey undated**

**Physical Description:** 1 folder