
**Albert and Elaine Atwood collection on Thilo Becker and Otie Chew, 1888-ca.
1984**

Finding aid prepared by Doug Johnson, 2015; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

UCLA Library Special Collections

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Title: Albert and Elaine Atwood collection on Thilo Becker and Otie Chew

Collection number: PASC-M 60

Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections

Language of Material: English

Physical Description: 2.0 linear feet(4 flat boxes, 1 document box)

Date: 1888-circa 1984

Abstract: The collection consists of material relating to the careers of Thilo Becker and Otie Chew, prominent Los Angeles musicians and music teachers. There are clippings and programs relating to their performance and teaching careers, and to the performance careers of several of their students. There are also scrapbooks documenting piano concerts given in Los Angeles from 1915-1956.

Physical Location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Albert and Elaine Atwood Collection on Thilo Becker and Otie Chew (Collection PASC-M 60). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Biography/History

Thilo Becker and Otie Chew were a married couple who were prominent musicians and music teachers in Los Angeles throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Becker, a pianist, was born in Australia in 1868, and spent several years studying in Leipzig, Germany before emigrating to Los Angeles in 1894. He gave a few recitals, but quickly gained more prominence as a teacher than as a performer. Chew, a violinist, was born in London in 1880 and was recognized as a child prodigy, earning a scholarship to the Royal College of Music at the age of 11. In 1907 she moved to Los Angeles and met Becker, and the two soon married. They enjoyed a prominent place in Los Angeles musical society, teaching scores of students and hosting guests at their home studio on Alvarado Street. In the 1930s they revived their performing careers for some time, giving a number of dual recitals in the city. Thilo Becker died on December 16, 1944 and Otie Chew Becker died on January 22, 1953.

Albert and Elaine Atwood were friends of Otie Chew. Elaine was Chew's youngest pupil, but they did not have a social relationship until Becker's death in 1944. As a widow, Chew became a close friend to both the Atwoods, traveling with them on many occasions and entrusting them with portions of her estate.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of material relating to the careers of Thilo Becker and Otie Chew, and to the careers of their students. There are clippings and programs, mostly contained in scrapbooks. There is an unpublished book manuscript by Becker and a small amount of music composed by him. There is a small amount of material regarding Richard Wagner, including cards depicting scenes from his operas. Also of interest are scrapbooks compiled by Marjorie Barker, a student of Becker's, that document a large number of piano concerts given in Los Angeles over the course of decades.

Organization and Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:

Series 1. Personal papers

Series 2. Scrapbooks

Series 3. Music manuscripts

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: [462260](#)

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Becker, Thilo

Chew, Otie

Series 1. Personal papers.

Scope and Content

This series consists primarily of material relating to the careers of pianist Thilo Becker and his wife, violinist Otie Chew.

Box 5, Folder 1

Biographical information for Thilo Becker and Otie Chew. 1895-ca. 1984.

Scope and Content Note

Includes photocopies of Chew's certificate of admission to Windsor Castle; typed anecdotes related by Albert Atwood.

Box 5, Folder 2

Book manuscript. 1932.

Scope and Content Note

"Thoughts Relating Principally to Music" by Thilo Becker [includes copy of telegram from Ignace Paderewski].

Box 5, Folder 3

Cards - Richard Wagner. undated.

Scope and Content Note

Twelve cards depicting scenes from Wagner operas; post card for Parsifal.

Box 5, Folder 4

Correspondence. 1891-1944.

Scope and Content Note

Includes letters from Otie Chew to her parents; copy of a cable from Ignace Paderewski to Thilo Becker.

Box 5, Folder 5

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. 1967.

Scope and Content

Contains program for world tour by Shibley Boyes [two copies, one inscribed by Boyes].

Box 5, Folder 6

Photographs.

Scope and Content

Includes portrait of Richard Wagner; photos of Paloma Schramm and Shibley Boyes.

Box 5, Folder 7

Photographs - Otie Chew. 1895 and undated.

Box 5, Folder 8

Photographs - Thilo Becker. undated.

Box 5, Folder 9

Photographs - Thilo Becker and Otie Chew. undated.

Box 5, Folder 10

Programs. 1890-1951.

Scope and Content

Contains programs for performances by Otie Chew, Thilo Becker, Paloma Schramm, and Olga Steeb; program for memorial service of Los Angeles Times music critic Isabel Morse Jones.

Box 5, Folder 11

Clippings. 1888-1953.

Box 5, Folder 12

Journals of C.F.W. Schramm. 1897-1899.

Series 2. Scrapbooks. 1915-1956.

Box 1

Scrapbook. 1915-1951.

Scope and Content Note

Contains clippings and programs regarding piano concerts in the Los Angeles area, compiled by Marjorie Barker. [unbound]

Box 2 **Scrapbook. 1923-1956.**
 Scope and Content
 Contains clippings and programs regarding piano concerts in the Los Angeles area, compiled by Marjorie Baker. [unbound]

Box 3 **Scrapbook. 1933-1937.**
 Scope and Content
 Contains clippings and programs regarding Thilo Becker and Otie Chew.

Box 4 **Scrapbook. 1922-1955.**
 Scope and Content Note
 Contains clippings and programs regarding the students of Thilo Becker [unbound]

Box 4 **Photocopies. 1915-1949.**
 Scope and Content
 Contains photocopies of various pages from the scrapbooks in the collection.

Series 3. Music manuscripts.

Scope and Content
 Contains handwritten music manuscripts.

Box 3 **Caruthers Conway compositions. 1944-1945.**

Box 3 **Im Walde et. al. [Friedrich von Bodenstedt and others]. 1903.**

Box 3 **Paloma Schramm compositions. 1904.**

Box 3 **Thilo Becker compositions [some cowritten with Paloma Schramm-Baruch]. undated.**