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
Room A1713, Charles E. Young Research Library
Box 951575
Los Angeles, CA, 90095-1575
(310) 825-4988
spec-coll@library.ucla.edu
Finding aid last updated 17 May 2016.
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.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction
Property rights to the physical object belong to the UCLA Library Special Collections. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish where The UC Regents do not hold the copyright.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Albert and Elaine Atwood Collection on Thilo Becker and Otie Chew (Collection PASC-M 60). UCLA Library Special Collections, Reference 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.

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.

  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.