

Kurt Schindler's Project: Culture Heritage and Technologies: reconstructing an epistolary as a main source for researching in Musicology



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**1st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
„MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN CULTURAL
HERITAGE“, SOFIA 25-27 SEPTEMBER 2013**

[Research Project I+D+I HAR2010-15165]

Sources on Kurt Schindler's musical works and life

Extra-musical Sources

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graph TD; A[Extra-musical Sources] --- B[Letters (Family Friends, Musicians...)]; A --- C[Photos (personal, fieldworking)]; A --- D[Notes (drafts for Fieldworking, Conferences Poems...)]
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Letters (Family Friends, Musicians...)

Photos (personal, fieldworking)

Notes (drafts for Fieldworking, Conferences Poems...)

The importance of digital catalogues for researching on Kurt Schindler

National Libraries:

- ❑ Biblioteca Nacional de España
- ❑ Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
- ❑ Library of Congress
- ❑ The New York Public Library
- ❑ Bibliothèque nationale de France

Colective catalogs

Catàleg Col·lectiu de les Universitats de Catalunya

Catálogo Bibliografico del CSIC

Catálogo Colectivo de la Red de Bibliotecas
Universitarias (REBIUN)

Columbia University Libraries (CLIO)

Biblioteca del Orfeón Catalán

The importance of digital catalogues for researching on Schindler (cont)

Archives and Institutions without an internet
catalogue on Schindler's materials:

USA:

- The Hispanic Institute at Columbia University
- The Hispanic Society of America

Spain:

- Fundación Juan March of Madrid
- Archivo Manuel de Falla in Granada
- Orfeó Catalá Archive
- Biblioteca Valenciana

The importance of this composer

- Kurt Schindler (Berlin 1882-New York 1935),
— musician, director of the Schola Cantorum NY,
the first researcher on Spanish folk music



Kurt Schindler (the 1st on the left) in Soria (Spain) in the 30s during one of his fieldworkings recollecting Spanish Folksongs

Main spots of his life:

- 1899-1901 he studied in Berlin and Munich universities
- 1902-04: conductor of the Stuttgart and Würzburg Opera; assisted Mottl and Zumpe at Munich, and Strauss at Berlin
- 1905-08: assistant at the Metropolitan Opera (New York)
- 1909-26: founder and conductor of the Mac Dowell Chorus (3 years later Schola Cantorum) of New York
- 1912-25: organist-musical director at Temple Emanuel NY
- 1926-27: conductor of the Roxy Theatre and private classes for coached singers (NY)
- 1927-28: *The Forum* concerts at the Guild Theatre (NY)
- 1932-33: chairman of music, Bennington College (Vermont)

BENNINGTON NAMES ARTISTS TO FACULTY

New College Selects Teachers
to Direct Novel Curriculum
for Women Students.

SCHINDLER IS MUSIC HEAD

Dorothy Canfield Fisher to Give Aid
in Creative Writing—Special
Help Planned for Gifted.

Dr. Robert D. Leigh, president of Bennington College, Bennington, Vt., which will open in September with eighty young women students, announced yesterday at a luncheon at the Cosmopolitan Club, 133 East Fortieth Street, the names of the men and women who have been appointed to the faculty of the new institution.

The Bennington project was broached eight years ago with a view to the establishment of a progressive college in which the curriculum would be particularly adapted to the needs of women in the contemporary world. An announcement from the office of the college at 109 East Seventy-third Street said the members of the faculty already were "rapidly making definite plans for the curriculum, which is going to be flexible enough to suit the interests and needs of the individual student, with the fine arts as one of its major branches."

The appointments follow:

KURT SCHINDLER, founder and formerly director of the Schola Cantorum, to be director of music.

TO TEACH AT BENNINGTON.



Elgin Studio.

Kurt Schindler.

Bennington 1932

activities of the tutor concerned."

Mr. Schindler, who is to take over the music department, is in Spain studying unwritten folk songs of the Iberian Peninsula under the auspices of Columbia University. He was born in Berlin and studied there and in Munich and Vienna, and was assistant conductor under Richard Strauss in the Berlin Royal Opera as a young man. He has acted as coach and drill master for the Metropolitan Opera Company here and has trained many noted singers.

"The work in music at Bennington under Mr. Schindler," Dr. Leigh said, "will combine student participation in the creation of music as well as its understanding. Music is considered a subject equal in importance to any other subject in our curriculum. As one indication of this, the college is offering instruction in this field without extra fees and with the same requirements for admission to a particular type of music instruction as prevail in other curriculum work."

From 1911-35 he recollected and analysed folk-songs in Russia, Spain, Hungary and Portugal

- He recollected songs in Russia from 1911 to 1916
- Following his epistolary, he went to Spain to recollect folk-songs during the periods:
 - *autumn 1919, summer 1920-1922-1925
 - *from autumn 1928 to spring 1931 (travelling in between on summer 29 to Morocco and France)
 - *from July to December 1932 (October in Portugal)
- He recollected songs in Hungary in 1933
- He recollected songs in Portugal on spring 1935
- He participated with folk studies in musicological conferences in several cities of USA, Egypt, Palestine, Barcelona or Rome

important institution in the South, has decided to remain in New York. Mr. Becker's large number of pupils and friends will be glad to know of this decision.

Mrs. Adolph Carlson, a soprano soloist and a pupil of Townsend H. Fellows, of Carnegie Hall, has been appointed solo soprano at the First Reformed Church at Hackensack, N. J.

RESEARCHES OF SCHINDLER.

Kurt Schindler, the musical director of the Schola Cantorum, of New York, returned a few days ago from a six weeks trip to Europe. When Mr. Schindler said he was "glad to be back" no one doubted him, for the accomplished musician looked truly content. While abroad Mr. Schindler visited Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, Amsterdam and London.

"Since I settled in America, eight years ago," said Mr. Schindler, "I have made five trips across the Atlantic, and this time, as on other visits, I was eager to hear the novelties. The latest opera by

French tenor. Very likely my American publisher, Mr. Schirmer, or myself may yet receive a request to permit the use of this song in the performances of the D'Annunzio play.

"Another experience in Paris which I shall not soon forget was the public performance of works by Arnold Schoenberg. With characteristic politeness the pianist who played the compositions begged the audience to be lenient in passing judgment, because the pieces 'were so ugly.'

"I had luncheon with Emma Eames and her husband, Emilio de Gogorza, at their apartment in Paris, and found the American prima donna handsomer than ever and much more slender. In London I visited Oscar Sage in his studio, and attended Maggie Teyte's song recital devoted to compositions by American composers.

"Conditions have changed since I left Germany, eight years ago. Richard Strauss is still the master mind in that country, but in other lands there are younger men who have forced the nations to sit up and take notice. This is true of France, Spain, Russia, Poland and last, but not least, Vienna, which is turning out fine young talents.

"Among the new compositions which I brought back with me are scores by Igor Strawinsky, which in difficulty, especially rhythm, surpass anything that I know."

FUTURE OF AMERICAN SONG.

European trips, Summer 1917

Richard Strauss, 'Ariadne,' I heard twice, once in Germany and one in England. In it I found much to admire, though not in every respect enjoyable.

"While in Paris I attended the general rehearsal of Charpentier's 'Julian,' this being less of a novelty to me, as I had studied the score; and I also attended performances of the Russian operas and ballets. Here I had a most amazing experience upon entering the theatre for the general rehearsal of D'Annunzio's new drama, 'Pisanella.' The first strains of the incidental music were so familiar that I forgot I was in Paris, and I suddenly realized that, without so much as the change of a single note, the music credited to an Italian composer was nothing more nor less than my 'Chante de Trouvere,' a melody based on an old air of the twelfth century. This song is dedicated to my friend Edmond Clement, and has often been sung by the distinguished

Russian trips (1914)

"I happened to arrive in Berlin the day before war was declared," said Mr. Schindler. "I had spent all of July in London, but previous to that, I had spent May and June traveling about in Russia, and all my luggage was pasted up with the labels of hotels in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Warsaw and other Russian cities. After reaching Berlin, I could not get a letter away for eleven weeks, and I ought to have been back here to take up my work fully two months ago.

"You see, while I have taken out my first papers for American citizenship, I have not been living over here the ten years necessary to become immune from serving in the Landsturm, in Germany, and as I was in Germany, I could be called upon for service.

"In Germany, while the whole country has been, and is united on the justice of Germany's cause, everybody thought our only opponents would be France and Russia, and that the war would not last long. It was my duty to remain in Berlin, but nobody anticipated that the Landsturm, would be called out. It did not seem possible that England would get into the conflict, and I was prepared to remain and await the call which it seemed certain would not come. Then, when England joined the war, I stayed on, still awaiting the call.

"Finally, with not being able to hear from home, and the uncertainty of how long I might have to stay, wore on my health. When it seemed that I might have to wait indefinitely, I was able to show that my professional arrangement over here had been knocked out and that I could not get any money, I got a special permit entitling me to proceed to the United States.

"I can assure you that I never was so happy to get back to New York. You don't know what a land of peace looks like unless you have been where there is war. But people who have known my devotion to French and Russian music may wonder if it will continue, now that Germany is at war with France and Russia. So far as the war is concerned, it will make no difference with my music."

Summer 1919 in Spain

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He vingut a l'Orfeó Català pensant escoltar el millor chor del món, y encara he trobat més que això, he trobat el centre d'un idealisme gran y sant que amb el seu foc dona resplendor a aquesta ciutat y aquest país destinats a tan gloriosa creixença.

L'Orfeó Català sota la direcció segura y inspirada del seu Mestre En Lluís Millet ha guardat y mantingut aquí l'ànima i l'idealisme durant tot el desenrotllament meravillos del comerç barceloní, y jo crec que en això reposa son mèrit més gran, un mèrit incalculable per l'avenir d'aquesta hermosa terra!

Barcelona, y Agost de 1919

Kurt Schindler.

What else can be found about him?

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- ❑ From 1907-35 he was reader and critic for G. Schirmer, Inc. Publications
 - ❑ He met his wife, a Russian actress, during his folk-song fieldworking in Odessa, getting married on November 1916; she died two years later
 - ❑ In 1922 he was the President of the Biennial Musical Festival of Catalonia (Spain)
 - ❑ He used to travel to Spain sponsored by the Hispanic Society of America and Casa de las Españas (Columbia University), and the Spanish Centro de Estudios Históricos

Marriage

(15/11/1916-
19/01/1919)

None except the closest friends of Mr. Schindler knew of his approaching marriage, although the engagement had existed for some time. The bride is a Russian and was formerly on the stage. She arrived last week on the Kristianiafjord from Bergen after a ten days' trip through Russia, traveling in all several thousand miles. Mr. Schindler has been the director of the Schola Cantorum for several seasons, and is also associated with the Schirmer Music Publishing Company.

He was abroad when the war began and several times was reported to have been shot while fighting for the Fatherland. He spent the early Summer of 1914 traveling in Russia. In Berlin, following the declaration of war, he was mistaken for a Russian spy because of the Russian labels pasted on his luggage.

The bride's father for many years has been administrator of the Municipal Opera House of Odessa. Mr. Schindler first met his bride when he was visiting Russia, collecting material for publication of Russian folk songs, some of which were heard last season.

Mrs. Kurt Schindler.

Mrs. Kurt Schindler, formerly a Russian Imperial actress, died yesterday of influenza at her home, 121 East Fifty-second Street. She was 28 years old and before her marriage in 1916 was Miss Vera Androuchevitch of Russia. She gave up the stage upon her marriage. Mr. Schindler is a composer and conductor of the Schola Cantorum.

“*The
Hymn of
Free Russia*”

Will be published
on June 17th

—IN—

The Sunday World

It is the hymn of the
new Russian Republic.

The poem is written by
Konstantin Balmont,
English version by Kurt
and Vera Schindler.

The music is by Alex-
andre Gretchaninoff,
arranged and edited by
Kurt Schindler.

Words and Music

:: :: COMPLETE :: ::

He published, with his wife, several scores, during 1917 and 1918 on Russian music.

There are in several libraries all over the world

Kurt Schindler

who will conduct the Chorus of the Schola Cantorum in a
Russian Folk Song Concert at Carnegie Hall, Wednesday
Evening, March 28th, writes of the

AMPICO
Reproducing Piano

"The Ampico reproduces faithfully the individual
style of the virtuosi in all its minutest detail.

"What a pity such an invention did not exist in the
time of the great classical composers to hand down
to posterity their own lofty message."

KURT SCHINDLER.

Knabe Warerooms:
5th Ave. at 39th St.

Since 1917, he is
popular and he
earns money
with publicity

Display Ad 84 -- No Title

New York Times (1857-1922); Dec 20, 1922; ProQuest

pg. 11

KURT SCHINDLER

Director of the Schola Cantorum

Appearing at

Carnegie Hall This Evening

Writes of the

AMPICO

"What a loss that the Ampico did not exist in the days of such giants as Liszt, Rubinstein and Chopin—and what an immeasurable joy to this, and future generations its existence will be."

KURT SCHINDLER

BUY AN AMPICO FOR CHRISTMAS

Knabe Warerooms
Fifth Avenue at Thirty-ninth St.

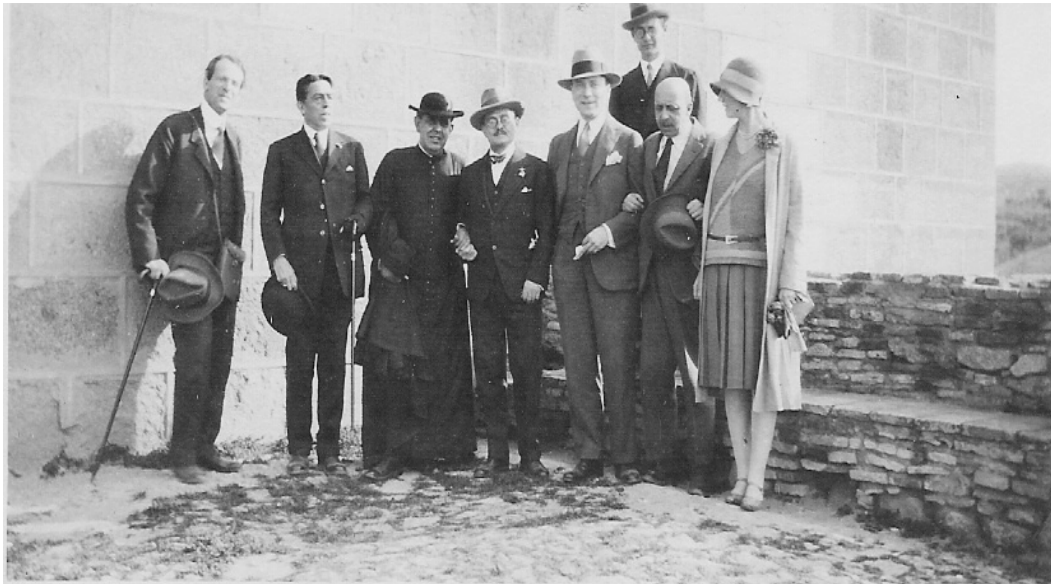
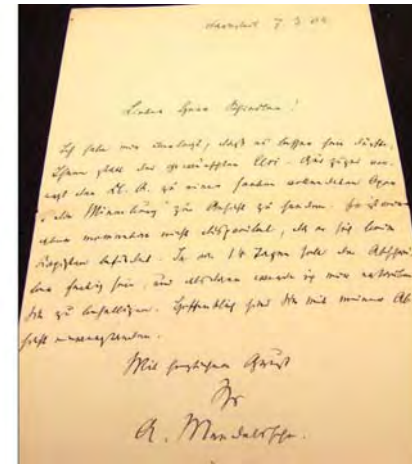
Advertisement

1922



Kurt Schindler, Conductor of the Schola Cantorum.

Importance of letters, photos and notes as a main source for researching



Songs from Andalucía and Murcia

1. "Mira-la bien!" collected and harmonized by Felipe Pedre
Canción callejera de ciego postulante (Street Song of a blind Begg)

Original Text (Castilian):

Mira-la bien! mira-la bien!
ve hasta bonitos tiene los pies!...
le compañera cuando va andando,
erlas y flores va derramando,
tiene los ojos, que las pestañas
Le hacen manijas!...
tiene los dientes como granitos
De azoç con leche;
es más hermosa que los rosales
Llenos de rosas.
Mira-la bien! Mira-la bien!

English version:

Look at her well! Look at her well
Look at her feet so dainty and fine
When thro' the street my maiden is sta
Flowers and pearls she's everywhere
Her burning glance, as Lo Liba dance
Everyone entrances! -
And when she smiles, her teeth like
Like the grains of sweet rice
And when she blushes, her cheeks was
Bowers of red roses!
Look at her well! Look at her

Kurt Schindler

from the 6 "Canciones Arabescas", an early work of the dean
of Spanish music; he was among the first who tried to
transcribe the Andalusian melodies, as they are really sung,
and not as pedants wanted to stereotype them

An epistolary: from an extra-musical source to a main source

- Letters from Kurt Schindler and for him, from contemporary musicians, opera singers, friends, family and so on
- Where are they? In several archives on USA, Spain and somewhere else
- Mostly they are personal letters, and explain personal changes on musical taste, determined friendship or original research

To whom did Schindler write and who answer him?

- **Mainly his family: parents, brother, wife and mother and sister-in-law**
- **German, Italian, Spanish, British, French, Hungarian, Polish and North-American composers, conductors, music teachers, pianists, singers, music publishers, critics, music librarians and musicologists**
- **Friends, some related to music too or another ones from his European journeys**

Family:

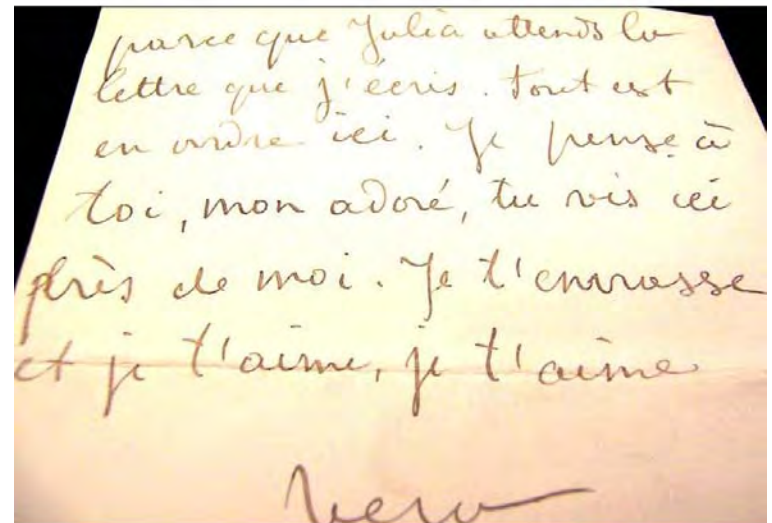
From his parents:

His mother-in law...



From Gebr Schindler Bank Geschäft:

From Vera Androuchevitch:



European Composers

Oskar Fried (Berlin 1871-Moscow 1941)
Composer and conductor, introducing Works of Mahler, Busoni, Delius, Szymanowski, Schoenberg, Strauss



Friedrich Gernsheim
(Worms 1839-Berlin 1916)
Composer, conductor and Pianist. Studied in Paris, taught at Stern Conservatory. Favoured works of Brahms, Bruch, Humperdinck (his disciple in Köln), Verdi



Rudolph Ganz (Zürich 1877-Chicago 1972), composer, conductor and pianist
Studied with Busoni in Berlin, taught at Chicago Musical College 1901-58, becoming President. Introduced in USA works of Debussy, Ravel, Boulez, Honneger, Cage



Ildebrando Pizzetti (Parma 1880-Rome 1968), composer, conductor and critic.
Taught at Florence Conservatory 1908-24 Milan and Rome Accad. Sta Cecilia 1936-58. Joined with Respighi and Zandoni a manifesto to musical tradition. Critic for the *La rassegna musicale*, *Corriere della sera*

American artists

John Alden Carpenter (Illinois 1876-Chicago 1951). Composer. Studied with J.K.Paine at Harvard, with Elgar at Rome, with Ziehn at Chicago. Popularity for his songs, stage music



Walter Pach (New York 1883-1958). Lecturer, critic, painter. Taught at University of California at Berkley



Percy Grainger (Victoria [Australia] 1882-New York 1961). Composer, pianist and folk songs collector. Studied at Frankfurt Berlin (with Bussoni). Taught at NY Univ



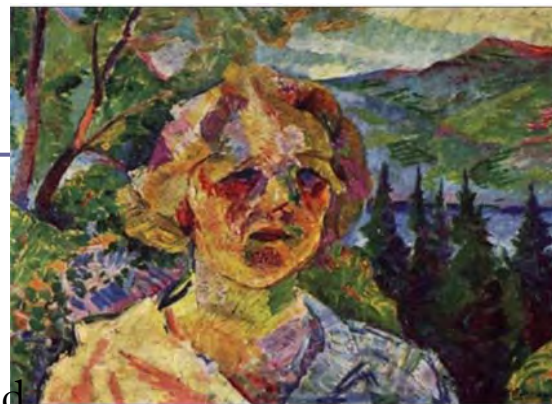
Deems Taylor (New York 1885-1966). Composer and critic for several periodicals. Studied at NY University. Famous his radio talks and opera commentator at NBC

Famous artists and friends

Marguerite D'Alvarez
[Alvarez de Rocafuerte, Italian origin] (Liverpool 1886-1953) Contralto. Started performing operas in London at Covent Garden. Famous recordings as *Sanson and Dalila*



Gerda Busoni
Wife of Ferruccio Busoni (Empoli 1866-Berlin 1924), composer, pianist and man of letters. Teacher of Weill and Vogel



William Barclay Squire
(London 1855-1927) Musicologist, critic, librarian at British Museum. Grove's Dictionary (1ed) contributor



Alexander Borowsky
(1889-1968) Russian pianist. Studied at St Petersburg Conserv. Taught piano at Boston



Jose A. Weissberger [Pepe], Schindler's closest friend. Austrian businessman, Art collector. Helped him during his fieldworking in Spain and Portugal in the 20s-30s

Letters give information:

Postcards from Sylt by his parents, summer 1902

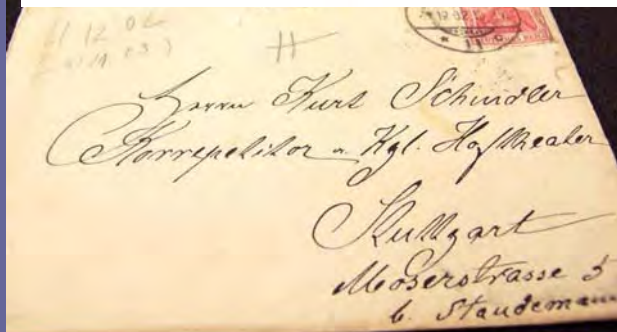


He received daily post from home; when his parents comited suicide, he gave up

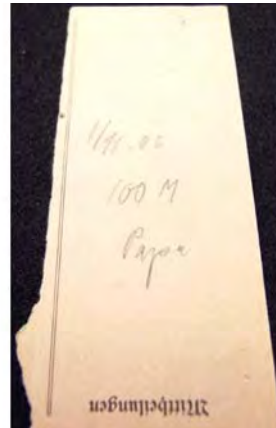
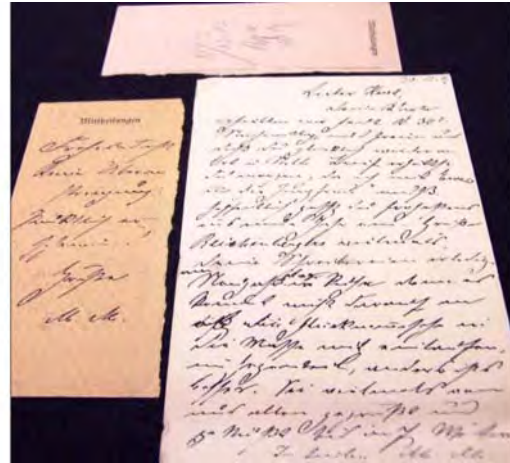


Germany and go to USA starting a new life; he never had a permanent home again

The letters tell us his musical positions:



And his father's money sending



Sometimes he received monthly 50 DM (1901, 1902), where and how is he spending so much money?

Money, a big need, for assistant his brother Ewald, and his family-in-law

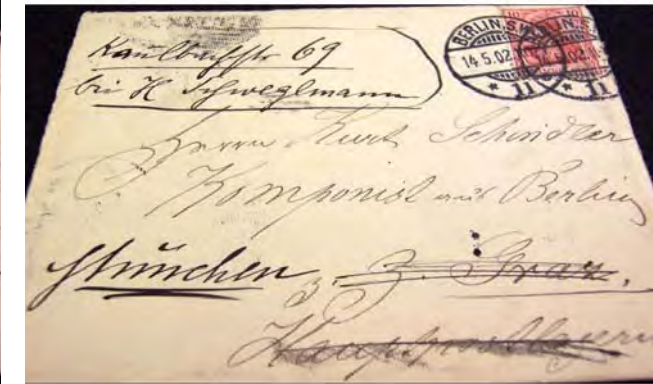


Until his death, he will help his wife's family to move from Russia to France, and his brother from Chekoslovaquia to USA



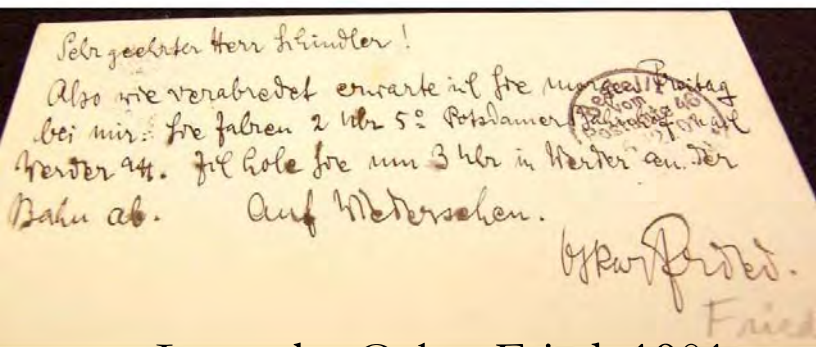
It was impossible to compose again concerts and classical songs looking for money and giving so many private lessons to young singers

He used to be missed in Europe for months, only the letters found him



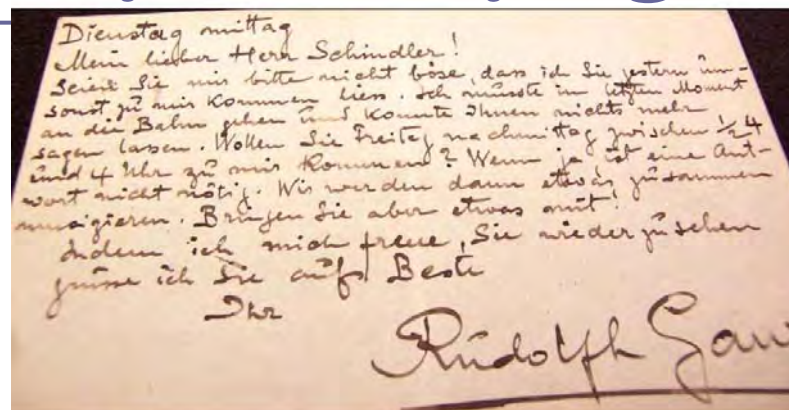
From 1926, after leaving The Schola Cantorum, Schindler travelled to Europe giving no information of where he is. Most of the letters said the difficulty of contacting him. Why is he behaving in that way? His friends asked him why is he is so hard for establishing a relationship

He was appreciated by famous contemporary artist, why he was forgotten so quickly after dying?



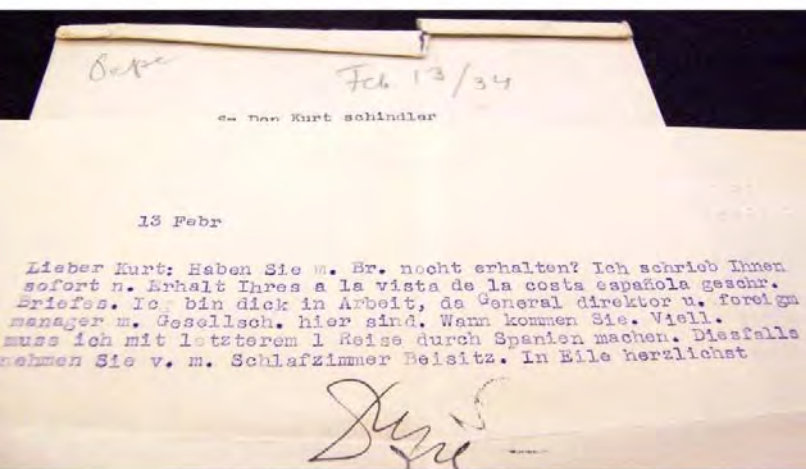
Sehr geehrter Herr Schindler!
Also wie verabredet erwarte ich Sie am Freitag
bei mir: Sie fahren 2 Uhr 50 Potsdamer
Bahnhof. Ich hole Sie um 3 Uhr in Herder an der
Bahn ab. Auf Wiedersehen.
Oskar Fried.

Letter by Oskar Fried. 1901



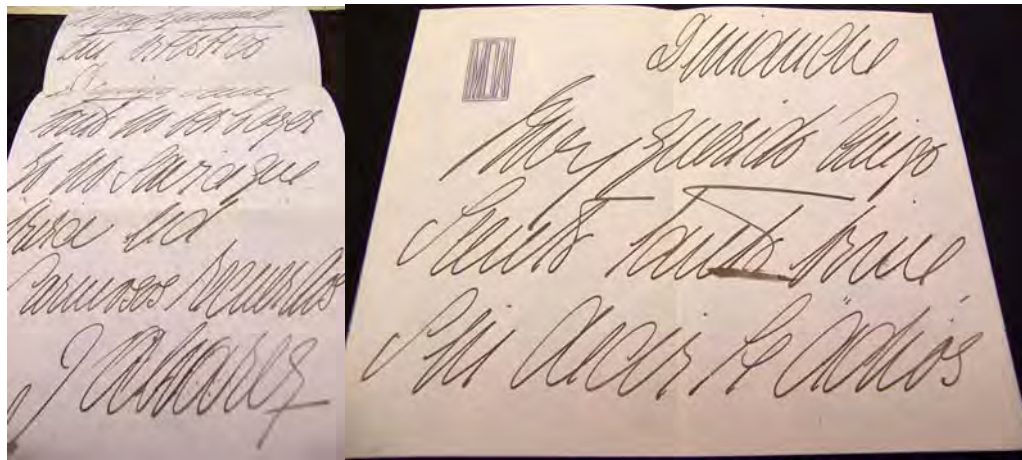
Dienstag mittag
Mein lieber Herr Schindler!
Seien Sie mir bitte nicht böse, dass ich Sie gestern um-
sonst zu mir kommen liess. Ich müsste im letzten Moment
an die Bahn gehen und konnte Ihnen nichts mehr
sagen lassen. Wollen Sie Freitag nachmittag zwischen 1/2
und 4 Uhr zu mir kommen? Wenn ja, ist eine Ant-
wort nicht nötig. Wir werden dann etwas zu sammen
ausigieren. Bringen Sie aber etwas mit!
Indem ich mich freue, Sie wieder zu sehen
grüsse ich Sie auf's Beste
Ihr
Rudolph Ganz

Letter by the Swiss pianist Rudolf Ganz
(1877-1972), 1900



Feb 13/34
an den Kurt Schindler
13 Febr
Lieber Kurt: Haben Sie v. Br. noch erhalten? Ich schrieb Ihnen
sofort n. Erhalt Ihres a la vista de la costa española geschr.
Briefes. Ich bin dick in Arbeit, da General direktor u. foreiga
manager v. Gesellsch. hier sind. Wann kommen Sie. Viell.
muss ich mit letzterem 1 Reise durch Spanien machen. Diesfalls
nehmen Sie v. m. Schlafzimmer Beisitz. In Eile herzlichst
Dzi

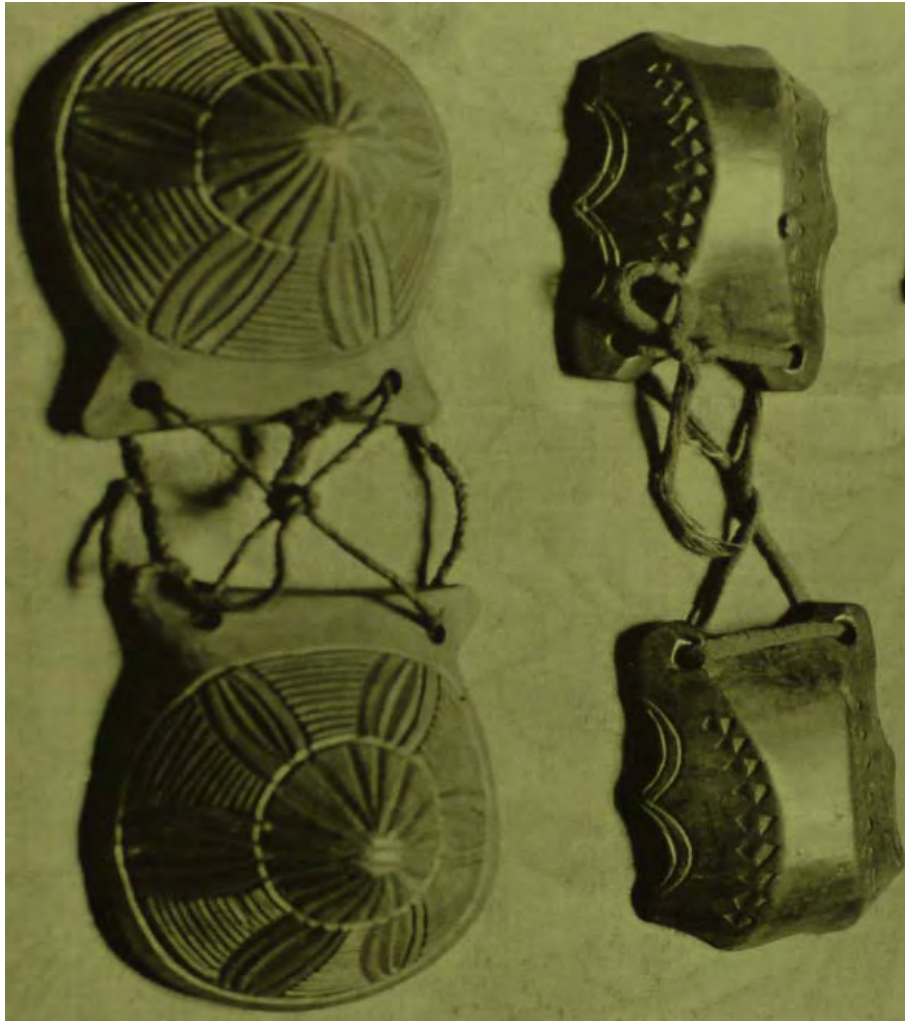
Letter by Pepe Weissberger,
13rd-February 1934, with Schindler's
hand-writing on the envelop



Handwritten letter with a stamp and cursive text.

Letter by the British contralto
Madame D'Alvarez, nd

CONCLUSION



Kurt Schindler's project will provide a basis for studying of the reception and internationalism of the musical taste of the first 3 decades of the 20th Century

THANK



YOU