

C Fantel, Hans (1922-2006), Papers, c. 1925-2006
4003 3.2 linear feet, 5 video cassettes, 1 DVD, 565 MB of digital files

RESTRICTED

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Fantel, a freelance writer, contain the articles he wrote for the *New York Times* and many other publications about high fidelity, home electronics, and music. Correspondence, photographs, and audio-visual materials make up the remainder of the collection.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Hans Fantel Papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Lois C. Zell on 16 January 2007 (Accession No. 6137).

RESTRICTION

Written permission required from donor to publish materials in folders 4-9 until 26 May 2021.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Hans Fantel was born in Vienna, Austria on 1 March 1922. When the Nazis took over the country in 1938, his father was arrested for having vocally opposed Germany's rearmament in the preceding years. Shortly thereafter, it was discovered that Hans' paternal grandmother was Jewish and he was expelled from school.

Fantel escaped to Czechoslovakia and served in the underground for a time before making his way to Tunisia and befriending the American consul, who helped secure him passage on a Red Cross ship to the United States in 1941.

He worked at a picture frame factory in New York while learning English and then received a scholarship to study biology at the University of Missouri. After his graduation in 1946, he worked as a technical translator for the U.S. Air Force in Ohio and enrolled in history and philosophy classes at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

He moved to New York in the 1950s and became a freelance writer covering high fidelity and home electronics for a variety of publications. In 1958, he helped found the magazine, *Hi-Fi/Stereo Review*, now known as *Stereo Review*. From 1977 to 1995, he had two syndicated columns in the *New York Times*, on both audio and video home electronics. A lifelong lover of classical music, he also wrote concert reviews and profiled musical conductors. He published nine books, most notably biographies of Johann Strauss and William Penn.

In 1998, the government of Austria and city of Salzburg awarded Fantel medals of appreciation for his efforts at building goodwill between Austria and the United States.

He met his wife Shirley "Shea" Smith, a senior copy editor for *Seventeen* magazine, in Greenwich Village in the early 1950s and they married a short time later.

Hans Fantel died on 21 May 2006 and Shea died on 22 June 2006.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers of Fantel, a freelance writer, contain the articles he wrote for the *New York Times* and many other publications about high fidelity and home electronics. Correspondence, photographs, and audio-visual materials are also included in the collection. The papers are divided into three series: **Personal**, **Writings**, and **Audio Visual**.

The **Personal** series contains correspondence, photographs, publicity clippings, and miscellaneous materials, and is arranged alphabetically by topic. The Fantels' kindness and hospitality to friends, neighbors, and family is reflected in their correspondence. They even hosted a friend's wedding at their home in 1969. The photographs mostly document their travels to Europe and their home life in Sheffield, Massachusetts. The photograph scrapbooks were disassembled for preservation purposes.

In the correspondence and photographs, users will find references to Bun and Schehi-type or S-type. These were the Fantels' pet names for each other (Bun was Hans and Schehi-type was Shea).

The **Writings** series is divided into two subseries: **Articles** and **Other Writings**. The **Articles** subseries consists of the articles Fantel wrote for various publications including the *New York Times*, *Opera News*, and *Hi-Fi Stereo Review*. He often recycled or revised articles for use in multiple publications. The bulk of the series is comprised of his columns for the *Times* which focused on home electronics. However, his Christmastime columns for the *Times* were often poignant pieces reminiscing about his childhood love of music and the rise of Nazism in Vienna. And a Fourth of July article in *Newsday* recounts his sailing into New York harbor in 1941 and seeing the Statue of Liberty for the first time.

In addition to home electronics, Fantel wrote several travel pieces and articles on concert hall acoustics. Notes and correspondence with editors is included in this subseries, which is arranged alphabetically by name of publication. Indexes exist for the *Times*, *Hi-Fi Stereo Review*, *Opera News*, and *Ovation* articles. Several unidentified articles and proposals are located at the end of the sub-series, as well as story leads and research on compact disc permanence.

The **Other Writings** subseries contains books, unpublished manuscripts, poems, and miscellaneous writings, and is arranged chronologically. Fantel collaborated on the book, *Feminine Forever*, with Dr. R.A. Wilson, but his contributions are unattributed in the bibliographic information.

The **Audio Visual** series consists of video cassettes, most of which document the Fantels' home life and their vacations to Japan and China in the 1980s. There is also an oral history interview done with Hans in 2000 in which he discusses his family history, his childhood and escape from Vienna, and his experiences in the Czech underground.

FOLDER LIST

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- f. 2 Berkshire Community College music class, 2005
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- f. 4-9 Conway Correspondence, 1968-1984
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 - f. 24 n.d.
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 - f. 31 1920s-1960s [**1 computer disc migrated to NAS, August 2018—see Born Digital Files**]
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- f. 71 *High Performance Review*, 1992-1996
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- f. 75 *Mainliner*, 1978
- f. 76 *Mechanix Illustrated*, 1963
- f. 77 *Modern Bride*, 1966/1967
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- f. 180-181 *William Penn: Apostle of Dissent*, 1974
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 v.c. 2 The Bun in Japan, 1981
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