

Register of the

Margarita Dietel Merriman

Collection

Collection 419

Center for Adventist Research
James White Library
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, Michigan
2026
Processed by Peter Ohura Korave

Margarita Dietel Merriman Collection (Collection 419)

Biography

Margarita Leonor Dietel Merriman (1927–) was a Seventh-day Adventist music educator, composer, and scholar. She was born on November 29, 1927, in Barcelona, Spain, to American parents and moved to the United States as an infant. She grew up in Washington, D.C., and later in Collegedale, Tennessee, where she received her elementary and secondary education in Seventh-day Adventist schools. Merriman attended Southern Missionary College before transferring to the University of Chattanooga, where she earned a Bachelor of Music degree in 1948. She later pursued graduate studies at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, earning a Master of Music in 1953 and later a PhD in composition.

Early in her career she taught at Shenandoah Valley Academy and Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University). In 1956 she married J. Houston Merriman, and the couple later moved to Rochester, New York, where she continued her doctoral studies.

Merriman spent most of her professional career at Atlantic Union College, beginning in 1959, where she taught music theory and composition, chaired the music department (1979–1985), and later served as coordinator of the Honors Core Program before retiring as professor emeritus.

Through her teaching, compositions, and church music leadership, she contributed significantly to Adventist music education and sacred musical culture. Her works include the oratorio *The Millennium*, two symphonies, and a piano concerto, and she authored the textbook *A New Look at 16th Century Counterpoint* (1982).

Scope

The Margarita Dietel Merriman's Collection comprises original musical compositions by Merriman, including chamber, choral, orchestral, organ, piano, and vocal works dating from the 1940s through the 2020s. The collection also contains documentation of musical performances held in various locations.

Arrangement and Provenance

The collection is organized into 13 boxes and arranged chronologically, spanning the years 1940s to 2006, in accordance with its original order. For further details regarding the structure and organization of the materials, see the Table of Contents and the Inventory below.

The collection was given to the Center by Merriman in fall 2025.

Extent

12 oversize boxes and 1 records carton; 17.04 linear feet

Provenance

Use

All users of this collection will complete the *Application to Use Unpublished Records*, and observe the regulation specified in the *Patron's Agreement* and *Researcher's Code of Conduct*. All records in this collection are open and available for research. Suggested citation for this collection:

Box _ Fld _ Margarita Dietel Merriman Collection (Collection 419), Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

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Margarita Dietel Merriman Collection (Collection 419)

INVENTORY

I. Musical Compositions

This collection contains original musical compositions by Margarita D. Merriman, dating from the late 1940s to the 2020s, including chamber, choral, orchestral, organ, piano, and vocal works. In some instances, texts or lyrics were written by other authors, with Merriman providing the musical settings for various instrumental and vocal parts. The materials include original manuscripts and duplicate copies and are arranged alphabetically.

Chamber Music

- Box 1 Fld 1 Chamber Piece for Winds and Trumpet, 1957
Instrumental piece without the lyrics
- Box 1 Fld 2 Dialogue for Cello and Percussion, 1976
For Mark Churchill and Leonard Cann
(3 copies)
- Box 1 Fld 3 Five Carols for Cello and Organ, 2020
First one commissioned by Wellesley Methodist Church in
Worcester, MA
- Box 1 Fld 4 Introduction and Rondo for Four Cellos, 1980
Thayer Conservatory Faculty Chamber Series
- Box 1 Fld 5 Lament for the Peace Keepers, 1984
Work for harp, violin, viola, and cello remembering
massacre at Beirut, 1983
Lament for the Peace Keepers by Leon Orr, 1984 (3 copies)
Include a music writing book with notes
- Box 1 Fld 6 Meditation for Violin, Cello & Piano, 1975
This work was composed for a multi-part instrumental
ensemble, including cello, piano, and violin.
- Box 1 Fld 7 Quinary, 1976?
Brass Quintet. Premiered during Fine Arts Week at AUC
(3 copies)

- Box 1 Fld 8 Sonata for Cello and Piano, 1973
Premiered by Mark Churchill and Margarita Merriman
- Box 1 Fld 9 Sonatine for Cello and Piano, 1976
In classical music, a sonatine written for a small number of instruments
- Box 1 Fld 10 String Quartet, 1957
This musical work is arranged for an instrumental ensemble that includes violin.
- Box 1 Fld 11 The Excluded, 1981
Fine Arts Week at AUC. For soprano, violin, cello, & piano
Copies include the original
- Box 2 Fld 1 Trio for Piano, Cello, Double Bass, 1984
Thayer Faculty Recital Series

Choral

- Box 2 Fld 2 Behold, the Tabernacle of God, 1967
Performed by the Aeolians at Atlantic Union College and at the 1970 General Conference session in Atlantic City
- Box 2 Fld 3 Benediction: Now unto him that is able, 2013
- Box 2 Fld 4 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, 1973
- Box 2 Fld 5 In Memoriam, 1988
Biennial Competition for the Moller-Ago Award in Choral Composition
- Box 3 Fld 1 Lord, thou Hast been our Dwelling Place, 1951
Written while teaching at Shenandoah Academy
- Box 3 Fld 2 O Solemn Thought, et al.
- Box 3 Fld 3 Praise to thee, O Lord, 1970, et al.
Letter from Margarita, 1984
- Box 3 Fld 4 Psalm 24: Male quartet with organ, 1964
Written for a student male quartet at Atlantic Union College

Orchestra

- Box 6 Fld 3 1776: Overture on Early American Tunes, 1975
Bicentennial piece combining three early American tunes
for the New England Sinfonia, directed by Jon Robertson
- Box 6 Fld 4 Concertato for Horn and Chamber Orchestra, 1976
Composed for Karen Steele, senior AUC music major
Also performed by Susan Salmineh, winner of the
University of New Hampshire concerto competition
Letter to Margarita included
- Box 7 Fld 1 Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, 1993
Performed by Kaestner Robertson under the baton of
Francis Wada
- Box 7 Fld 2 II. Lento, 1993
- Box 7 Fld 3 Pavane and Galliard, 1958
Student work at Eastman School of Music
(2 copies each)
- Box 7 Fld 4 Piece for Chamber Orchestra, 1957
Reading at ESM
- Box 7 Fld 5 Symphony No. 1, 1960
A complete orchestral score containing all
individual instrumental parts, including flutes,
oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets,
trombones, harp, piano, timpani, tuba, and strings
- Box 8 Fld 1 Symphony No. 1. Allegro
- Box 8 Fld 2 Symphony No. 1. Bassoon I; Cello; Clarinet
- Box 8 Fld 3 Symphony No. 1. Double Bass; Flute I
- Box 8 Fld 4 Symphony No. 1. Harp, Horns I-IV
- Box 8 Fld 5 Symphony No. 1. Oboe I-II, Piano, Piccolo
- Box 8 Fld 6 Symphony No. 1. Timpani, Trombone, Trumpet
- Box 8 Fld 7 Symphony No. 1. Viola

Box 11 Fld 7 Postlude on “O God, Our Help,” 1982
For personal use (original arrangement for organ).

Box 11 Fld 8 Service Suite on Lasst uns Erfreuen, 2006
Separate copies of Prelude, Offertory, and Postlude.
First performed at Christ Lutheran Church, West Boylston,
MA.

Box 11 Fld 9 Variations on Old Hundredth, 1963
Two Miniatures
Program booklet: Accents with Music, 1963

Box 11 Fld 10 Variations on Victory, 1996
First performed at Church of the Good Shepherd, Clinton,
MA. Copies include the original.

Piano

Box 11 Fld 11 Currents for Piano Solo, 1969
Four short pieces in different styles, first performed as
Saturday night entertainment by AUC faculty members.

Box 11 Fld 12 For Behold, I Create New Heavens (from The Millennium), 1973

Box 11 Fld 13 Piano Sonata, 1974
Premiered by Vivian Taylor; later performed by Kaestner
Robertson.

Box 11 Fld 14 Stylistic Variations on “Three Blind Mice,” 1950
Originally written for educational use at Shenandoah Valley
Academy, later popular as entertainment. Three copies,
including the original and a letter to Margarita.

Songs

Box 12 Fld 1 Ah! Seigneur, Qu’ai-je?, 1996
Lyrics by Paul Verlaine for Leslie Holmes

Box 12 Fld 2 A Complaint

Box 12 Fld 3 A Sabbath Prayer, 2003
Lyrics by Margarita Merriman. Included in Evelyn
Kopitzski’s compilation of works by SDA composers. Sung
at Houston Merriman’s funeral (2018)

- Box 12 Fld 4 A Voice, 1949
- Box 12 Fld 5 A Sunset, 1996
- Box 12 Fld 6 Dearest, it is Spring
Lyrics by Margarita Merriman for her wedding, 1956. Sung
by Dorothy Ackerman.
Includes letter to Margarita, 1956
- Box 12 Fld 7 Expectation, 1965
Lyrics by Margarita Merriman recalling a broken heart.
Premiered by Lourdes Morales and later recorded by Leslie
Holmes
- Box 12 Fld 8 Fading Glory, 1951
- Box 12 Fld 9 How Far from Home? (Re-arrangement)
Title refers to sacred song connected with early Adventist
hymn #665
- Box 12 Fld 10 I Asked for Bread, 1948
- Box 12 Fld 11 I Hoed and Trenched and Weeded, 1958
Lyrics by A. E. Housman
Includes letter to Margarita, 2003
- Box 12 Fld 12 Music I Heard with You, 1955
Lyrics by Conrad Aiken
- Box 12 Fld 13 The Night Is Freezing Fast, 1958
Lyrics by A. E. Housman
- Box 12 Fld 14 The Rivulet
Arranged for voice, cello, and piano; tempo marked Molto
Allegro (very quick and lively)
- Box 12 Fld 15 Soarings, 1990
Song cycle setting three poems by Mary Walker Norcliffe.
Premiered by Leslie Holmes during the American Women
Composers Fifth Annual Marathon
- Box 12 Fld 16 The Voiceless, 1948
- Box 12 Fld 17 The Voice of Weeping: from The Millennium, 1973

Box 12 Fld 18 Tunnels and Sidewalks, 1974 — 4 copies
Song cycle setting poems by R. Lynn Sauls. Premiered by
Betti McDonald, soprano

Box 12 Fld 19 Too Soon Comes Death, 1948

Box 12 Fld 20 To E.M.P. 1953
Handwritten sheet music; E.M.P. appears to be the initials
of the dedicatee

Box 13 Fld 1 What Are Years? 1988
Lyrics by Marianne Moore. Written for Leslie Holmes

Box 13 Fld 2 Who Would Think, 1948

Box 13 Fld 3 Why? 1950

II. Performance

This group contains documentation of musical performances from the late 1940s to the 2020s, including concert and recital programs, photographs, DVDs, press coverage, articles, and related materials, primarily associated with Atlantic Union College and Thayer Conservatory, and reflecting faculty, student, and community musical activities, including the work of Margarita D. Merriman. They are arranged chronologically.

Box 14 Fld 1 Photos of Performance (3)

Box 14 Fld 2 Performance- Concert Program Brochures
62nd Annual Commencement – University of Chattanooga,
1948
Cadek Conservatory – University of Chattanooga, 1948
D.C. Federation of Music Clubs, 1950
Music Faculty Recital – Atlantic Union College, 1960
Music Faculty Recital – Atlantic Union College, 1961
A Fantasy of Chromotones – Atlantic Union College, 1961
Sabbath Evening Vespers – Machlan Auditorium, 1961
Atlantic Union College String Quartet – Atlantic Union
College, 1962
Lilya Vinglas, Pianist, Senior Recital – Atlantic Union
College, 1962
Musicalairs (Music Week) – Atlantic Union College, 1962
Organ and Piano Meditations, 1962

Box 14 Fld 3 Sabbath evening vespers, 1961, 1967

- Box 14 Fld 4 Students of Margarita D Merriman: Atlantic Union College
 I. Lilya Vinglas, Senior Recital, 1962
 II. Rochelle Queen, Senior Recital, 1962
 III Don Thurber, Pianist, 1962
 IV. Sherryl L Roy, Pianist, 1964
 V. Eleanor P Lashley, 1968
- Box 14 Fld 5 Audio DVD
 AUC Faculty recital, 1963- DVD
 Millennium, 2000- DVD
- Box 14 Fld 6 Atlantic Union College
 Music Faculty, Atlantic Union College, 1963
 National Music Week, Atlantic Union College, 1964
 Music Faculty Recital, Atlantic Union College, 1964
 National Music Week, Atlantic Union College, 1965
 Vesper Meditation, Atlantic Union College, 1965
 Music Faculty Recital, Atlantic Union College, 1965
 Musical Meditations, Machlan Auditorium, 1967
 Music Faculty Recital, Machlan Auditorium, 1967
 National Music Week, Atlantic Union College, 1967
 Sabbath Vespers, Sacred Concert, Machlan Auditorium,
 1967
 Piano Meditations, Atlantic Union College, 1968
 Festival of Fine Arts, Atlantic Union College, 1968
 Aeolians, Atlantic Union College, 1969
 Festival of Fine Arts, Atlantic Union College, 1969
 Composers' Workshop, Atlantic Union College, 1975
 Concert in Honor of the Bicentennial, 1976
 Thayer Conservatory Recital, 1977
- Box 14 Fld 7 Thayer Conservatory Recital
 Performance at United Presbyterian Church, 1978
 Thayer Conservatory Recital, 1978
 Thayer Conservatory Recital, 1979
 Thayer Conservatory Recital, 1979
 Fine Arts Week, Atlantic Union College, 1979
 Performance at St Mark's Church, Massachusetts, 1980
 Thayer Faculty Recital, 1980
 Vesper Service, Granville, NY, 1980
 Thayer Faculty Recital, 1980-81
 Service of Dedication, Atlantic Union College, 1981
 Fine Arts Week, 1983
 Performance - Merriman, 1985

Performance – Recital of Compositions, 1985
Thayer Faculty Recital, 1986
Redlands Symphony (magazine), 1992–93
Founder’s Day Musicale, 1996

Box 14 Fld 8 Composers’ Symposium/Recital: 1971, 1974,1975,1976,1978.

Box 14 Fld 9 Composers’ Workshop: 1978, 1980

Box 14 Fld 10 Thayer Conservatory- Faculty recital, 1985-86, 1986, 2003

Box 14 Fld 11 Articles

Gleaner- The Atlantic Union
A New Slant on Christian Living, Linda Esposito, 1980
The Days of TCO, Margarita Merriman

Box 14 Fld 12 Performance: Newspaper press coverage, 1987
Singing their praises, Clara Silverstein
Leslie Holmes championing the music of five
Massachusetts women composers with series of composers.

Box 14 Fld 13 Composers of Massachusetts, 1990

Box 14 Fld 14 Celebration of Praise, 1988
A religious event associated with the National league of
American Pen Women (NLAPW), which is a nonprofit
organization that promotes and support creative work in the
fields of arts and music.

Box 14 Fld 15 Personal correspondence, 1991

Box 14 Fld 16 Thayer Conservatory Recital, 1990
Newspaper press featured Margarita Merriman as both
guest and performer, 1990

Box 14 Fld 17 Homecoming: Music and Memories of miller years, 1991

Box 14 Fld 18 Thayer Symphony Orchestra flyer

Box 14 Fld 19 Founders day Musical
Mary Holder Bietel, 1995
Jonathan Wohlers; J Bruce Ashton; Margarita Merriman;
Susan Mills, 1996
Included also a thank you letter from Southern College of

Adventist to Dr. Merriman.

Box 14 Fld 20 The Millennium-Concert Program, 2000
The concert features Margarita Merriman (Millennium),
and Jean Sibelius (Symphony No.2)

Box 14 Fld 21 Atlantic Union College Chamber Orchestra (Concert), 2002

Box 14 Fld 22 Memorial Service: Ethel Mabel Jensen, 2014

Box 14 Fld 23 Thanksgiving and praise service, 2006

Box 14 Fld 24 Musical brochure
William Ness, Organist, 2024
Centerville SDA Church
Church in Praise, 2024
College Church, 2011

Box 14 Fld 25 Musical booklet: Fine Arts Week, AUC, 1970 (3 copies)

III. Dissertation

In principle, the two dissertations are arranged in this order; however, in practice, they are physically housed in Box 12 alongside other materials.

Box 13 Fld 4 Analysis of the first Symphony
PhD Dissertation, University of Rochester, 1960

Box 13 Fld 5 Dissertation composition: First Symphony
This musical composition constitutes the creative component of the doctoral dissertation requirement and represents a significant work in Merriman's academic and professional career.

END