

# **University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections**

## **Finding Aid - Mme. Pauline Donalda Collection (RBSC- ARC-1728)**

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University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

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<http://rbscarchives.library.ubc.ca/index.php/mme-pauline-donalda-collection>

# Mme. Pauline Donalda Collection

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## Summary information

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**Repository:** University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

**Title:** Mme. Pauline Donalda Collection

**ID:** RBSC-ARC-1728

**Date:** c. 1890-1961; predominantly 1902-1945 (date of creation)

**Physical description:** 10cm of graphic materials and one textual record.

**Language:** English

**Language:** French

**Language:** Italian

**Dates of creation,  
revision and deletion:**

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Pauline Donalda, an operatic soprano, teacher and administrator, was born Pauline Lightstone in Montreal on March 5, 1882. Her parents, Jews from Russia and Poland, changed their name from Lichtenstein to Lightstone upon their arrival in Canada.

As a child Pauline studied singing on scholarship with Clara Lichtenstein (no relation) at the Royal Victoria College, McGill University. In 1902, after being encouraged by the French tenor Thomas Salignac, Pauline moved to Paris on a grant from Donald A. Smith, Lord Strathcona, where she studied voice with Edmond Duvernoy, stage techniques with Paul Lhérie, speech with Pierre Berton, and Italian with Babette Rosen. In honour of her benefactor, Donald A. Smith, Pauline adopted the stage name Donalda.

On December 30, 1904, Donalda made her debut on stage in Nice, France, singing the role of the title character in Massenet's *Manon*. Donalda performed several roles while in Nice, including Jenny (in *Chatterton*) and Nedda (in *I Pagliacci*). In 1905 Donalda made her London debut on May 24 at Convent Garden, singing Micaëla in *Carmen* with Emmy Destinn and Charles Dalmorès, under the direction of André Messager. On June 28, 1905 she sang the part of Ah-Joe in the premiere of Franco Leoni's *L'Oracolo*. In the 1905 production of *Faust* at Convent Garden Donalda sang the role of Marguerite, with her future husband, whom she would marry the next year, the French baritone Paul Seveilhac. While in London, she also performed the roles of Juliette, Mimi and Zerlina. In the autumn of 1905 she sang Marguerite and Mimi at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, after which, on medical advice, she spent six months resting in the south of France. She returned to Brussels in the spring of 1906 and sang the roles of Manon, Elsa (*Lohengrin*) and Eva (*Die Meistersinger*).

After performing in the 1906 season in London, she sang again in Brussels but broke her contract in order to accept an offer from Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera Company. Before going to New York she made her professional debut in Canada on November 16, 1906, singing with her husband at a recital in the Montreal Arena. She made her New York debut on December 7, 1906 in Faust. That season she sang in numerous shows, including Carmen, Don Giovanni, La Traviata, Lohengrin, and I Pagliacci, along with some of the most prominent singers of the time, such as Nellie Melba, Emma Calvé, Alessandro Bonci, Mario Ancona, Mario Sammarco, and Charles Gilbert. Donalda left Hammerstein after the season, and sang at Convent Garden in the summer of 1907. She made her debut at the Opéra-Comique in Paris on October 19, 1907 singing in Manon with Salignac, Jean Périer, and Lucien Fugère. She then divided her time between London and Paris, making concert tours throughout Central Europe, and to Russia in 1910. During this time Donalda became a renowned performer of oratorio and gave concerts with some of the great performers of the day, including Mischa Elman, I.J. Paderewski, Efrem Zimbalist, Jan Kubelík, and Pablo Casals, and with many distinguished conductors, including Hans Richter and Sir Landon Ronald. In 1910 she opened the Convent Garden season, replacing Luisa Tetrazzini on short notice in La Traviata with John McCormack and Sammarco. She returned for the 1912 season, singing the Page in Les Huguenots and Nedda in I Pagliacci, with her husband (now a tenor) playing Canio. After being coached by Marie Roze, the famous "Carmen," Donalda recreated the role in an English version in November 1913. The show was a huge success, and Donalda sang it in French in Nice in February 1914, where she also performed in La Bohème.

When World War I broke out Donalda was in Canada prior to an intended departure for a concert tour of Australia. The tour subsequently cancelled, Donalda decided to stay in Canada, pursuing a career in concerts and the music-hall, and giving benefit appearances for charity and the war effort. In 1915 she created and organized the "Donalda Sunday Afternoon Concerts" in Montreal. That year she also sang in New York and Boston. In 1916 Donalda sang the role of Nedda in I Pagliacci at the Princess Theatre in Montreal. She returned to Paris in 1917. In June 1918 she married the Danish tenor Mischa Léon (born Haurowitz) in Paris, her first marriage having ended in divorce. That year she sang with Léon in Balfe's Le Talisman in Nice. She sang in her final season at the Convent Garden when it reopened in 1919. On July 24, 1919 she sang Concepción in the English premiere of Ravel's L'Heure espagnole, a performance with seventeen curtain calls.

In 1922 Donalda opened a studio in Paris and began to devote herself to teaching. A member of the L'Union Professionnelle des Maîtres du Chant Français, she taught hundreds of pupils before returning to Montreal in 1937, where she opened a studio and continued to teach. A number of Donalda's pupils would go on to have international careers, notably Clarice Carson, Fernande Chiochio, Mary Henderson, Eileen Law, Germain Lefebvre and Robert Savoie. She founded the Opera Guild of Montreal in 1941, serving as president and artistic director until 1969, presenting 29 operas over the course of 28 seasons. In 1954 she was granted an honorary Doctorate of Music from McGill University, and in 1967 she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Pauline Donalda died on October 22, 1970.

### **Custodial history**

Pauline Donalda gave the collection to Irving Guttman, a renowned Canadian opera director. The collection remained in the custody of Guttman and his partner Robert Dales until they donated the records to Rare Books and Special Collections.

## Scope and content

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The collection consists of 53 photographs of well-known 20th century opera singers, composers, musicians, and directors, as well as a performance program and a print of a portrait painting, given to and collected by Pauline Donalda as mementos of her career. The majority of the photographs are signed and dedicated to Pauline Donalda by their subjects, often with personal comments.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title is based on the creator of the collection.

### Immediate source of acquisition

The records were donated to Rare Books and Special Collections by Irving Guttman and Robert Dales in August 2014.

### Arrangement

Prior to their donation the photographs were framed and displayed on a wall in the donors' home. The photographs were removed from their frames for the purposes of the donation, although the majority of the photographs remain on their backings.

### Finding aids

Detailed finding aid available; item level control.

### Related material

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) hold some of Pauline Donalda's personal papers. The Marvin Duchow Music Library, Schulich School of Music at McGill University holds Donalda's music library and some of her personal correspondence.

### Accruals

Further accruals are not expected.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** published

## Access points

- Irving Guttman
- Donalda, Pauline (subject)
- Graphic material (documentary form)
- Textual record (documentary form)

## Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-01	Item - Photograph of Hans Richter (János Richter)	1909		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-02	Item - Photograph of Pietro Antonio Stefano Mascagni	[1933]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-03	Item - Photograph of Sir Paolo Tosti	[1907?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-04	Item - Print of Pablo Casals	1913		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-05	Item - Program for "Don Giovanni"	1905		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-06	Item - Photograph of Marcel Journet	1918		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-07	Item - Photograph of Edmund Burke	1932		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-08	Item - Photograph of Paul Dukas	[c. 1905-1920?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-09	Item - Photograph of Pauline Donalda (in costume)	1905		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-10	Item - Photograph of Eustase Thomas (de Salignac or Thomas-Salignac)	1902		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-11	Item - Photograph of Paul Lhérie (Lévy)	[1890?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-12	Item - Photograph of Emmy Destinn	1906		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-13	Item - Photograph of Dame Emma Albani	[1911]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-14	Item - Photograph of Mario Sammarco	1912		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-15	Item - Photograph of Johanna Gadski (in costume)	[c. 1903?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-16	Item - Photograph of Dame Nellie Melba	1907		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-17	Item - Photograph of Eustase Thomas (de Salignac or Thomas-Salignac) (in costume)	1903		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-18	Item - Photograph of Eustase Thomas (de Salignac or Thomas-Salignac) (in costume)	[c. 1903?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-19	Item - Photograph of Eustase Thomas (de Salignac or Thomas-Salignac) (in costume)	[c. 1903?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-20	Item - Photograph of Pauline Donalda (in costume)	[1904]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-21	Item - Photograph of Emmy Destinn (in costume)	[c. 1908?]		
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-22	Item - Photograph of Pauline Donalda (in costume)	[c. 1905?]		

RBSC-ARC-1728-1-23	Item - Photograph of Jules Émile Frédéric Massenet	[c. 1900-1910?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-24	Item - Photograph of Giacomo Puccini	1906
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-25	Item - Photograph of Mattia Battistini	1918
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-26	Item - Photograph of Lillian Nordica	[c. 1906-1912]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-27	Item - Photograph of Pablo Casals	1950
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-28	Item - Photograph of M. Backhaus	1913
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-29	Item - Photograph of Fritz Kreisler	1913
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-30	Item - Photograph of Mischa Elman	1910
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-31	Item - Photograph of Gabriel Fauré	[c. 1905-1910?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-32	Item - Photograph of André Messager	1927
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-33	Item - Photograph of Adelina Patti	1918
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-34	Item - Photograph of Claude Got (in costume)	1934
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-35	Item - Photograph of Louise Homer (in costume)	1907
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-36	Item - Photograph of Arthur Nikisch	1912
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-37	Item - Photograph of Geraldine Farrar (in costume)	1909
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-38	Item - Photograph of Pauline Donalda (in costume)	[1905]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-39	Item - Photograph of Leonard Bernstein	1944
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-40	Item - Photograph of Francis Poulenc	1938
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-41	Item - Photograph of Gerald Moore	[c. 1950-1960?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-42	Item - Photograph of Pierre Faubert	1930
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-43	Item - Photograph of Oscar Strans	1944
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-44	Item - Photograph of Lotte Lehmann	1957
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-45	Item - Photograph of Carol Brice	[c. 1949?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-46	Item - Photograph of Carlton Gould (in costume)	1944
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-47	Item - Photograph of Gregor Piatigorsky	1946
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-48	Item - Photograph of Marcel Grandjany	1945
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-49	Item - Photograph of Unknown [Travelly?]	?
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-50	Item - Photograph of Hugh Thompson	[c. 1943-1960?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-51	Item - Photograph of Unknown [Anelyia Kuyak?]	?
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-52	Item - Photograph of Lothar (Val) Wallerstein	1945
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-53	Item - Photograph of Marthe Létourneau	[c. 1940-1944?]
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-54	Item - Photograph of Mack Harrell	1943
RBSC-ARC-1728-1-55	Item - Photograph of Val (Vladimir) Rosing	1961