

Finding Aid to the Edwin Fissinger Papers

Fissinger, Edwin, 1920-1990

Edwin Fissinger papers, 1948-1990

2.75 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 226

[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

OVERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY

Edwin R. Fissinger was born June 15, 1920 and attended school at Rockford, Illinois. He earned an undergraduate degree at Marquette University, Milwaukee. He served during World War II in the U.S. Air Force. He received both his bachelor's and master's degrees from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. While there he specialized in composition and studied under Leo Sowerby. He earned his doctorate from the University of Illinois in 1965, where, in addition to studies in music literature and conducting, he studied musicology with Dragon Plamenac.

Dr. Fissinger's musical career began at the American Conservatory of Music where he was director of the choir and instructor from 1947 to 1954. He then was a graduate assistant in music theory at the University

of Illinois from 1954 to 1957. From 1957 until coming to North Dakota State University in 1967 he was chairman of the music department and director of the choir and madrigal singers at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.

At North Dakota State University Dr. Fissinger was chairman of the music department and served as the director of the choir. He was instrumental in 1970 in having the music department earn accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Music. He was also instrumental in the construction of the \$6 million Music Education Center, dedicated in 1982.

Fissinger was nationally recognized as a composer and editor of choral music, with numerous works published. He was editor for a number of years, beginning in 1967, of the Parkway Choral Series of contemporary choral music for World Library Publications. A number of his choral works have been published by this company. From 1958 to 1962 he was consulting editor for Summry-Birchard Publishing Co. In 1973, 1977 and 1983 the NDSU Concert Choir, under his direction, was selected to perform at the opening session of the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. In 1977 Dr. Fissinger received the NDSU Blue Key Doctor of Service award. He retired in 1985 and continued composing until his death in Fargo on October 16, 1990.

Fissinger and Cecile Patricia Monette were married Feb. 27, 1943 in Fresno, California. Cecile was born in Lowell, Massachusetts on July 26, 1917. They raised a son and daughter, Edwin and Laura. Cecile died in 1998. They are buried at Riverside Cemetery, Fargo.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Edwin Fissinger Papers** document his prolific career as a composer primarily through an extensive collection of his original arrangements. The papers have been organized into three series: Fissinger's dissertation on Antonio Caldara, Publications, and Compositions.

The correspondence folder contains only several letters (1963-1966) from World Library of Sacred Music related to the publishing of his music. The award nomination contains the formal nomination made by Sandra K. Stanley for a NDSU award.

Dr. Fissinger completed his Ph.D. dissertation in 1965 at the University of Illinois, titled [*Selected Sacred Works of Antonio Caldara*](#). This series contains his research notes and copies of Caldara's music. The collection does not include a copy of the completed dissertation.

The [**Publications Series**](#) includes several books that include compositions by Fissinger or items he edited. *Christ is Risen* includes his "Alleluia! The Strife is O'er." This work is composed of nine organ pieces based on Easter hymn tunes and published in 1965. *One Faith in Song* includes both the two and three equal voices books. Fissinger's contributions include, *All Hail, Adored Trinity; Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty; Lord, Who at Thy first Eucharist Didst Pray; Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow, Sing of Mary; Sunday Hymn; Faith of our Fathers;* and *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*. The book *Parish Liturgy*, a book of Mass ordinaries and hymns for Mass and the sacraments, includes a number of

compositions by Fissinger for the Mass. *Six Soft Pieces* includes Fissinger's "To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King." There is also a copy of his *Workbook of Music Fundamentals*, published in 1959.

The [Compositions Series](#) constitutes the great majority of the collection and has been organized alphabetically by title. With the preponderance of music titles, italics have not been used. If provided, dates and other information are given with the entry on the finding aid. The first two folders contain music manuscripts by Dr. Fissinger for music to be used in Catholic church services, including the Alleluia, Gloria, Gradual, Introit, Propers, etc. For all other compositions the research should consult the box/folder listing for specific titles. Almost all are the handwritten work of Dr. Fissinger, with only an occasional draft or final printed version.

A later donation (2010) includes three of Fissinger's original works. They are *Eight Songs for Mezzo Soprano* and *Four Songs for Soprano* which are similar to those in the original collection, with slight differences. For *Sing Noel* there is a copy of the 1957 published version by World Library Publications and a mimeographed mss version with a personal inscription by Fissinger to the recipient Frances Mandell. *Sing Noel* was given to Mrs. Mandell by Fissinger. The others were given by Fissinger to Ms. Maxine Mandell, Mrs. Mandell's daughter.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

| Box/Folder | Contents |
|------------|---|
| 1/1 | Finding aid, and Biographical material |
| 1/2 | Correspondence |
| 1/3 | Award nomination for NDSU Mary McCannel Gunkelman Recognition Award, by Sandra K. Stanley, 1989 |

Selected Sacred Works of Antonio Caldara Series

| | |
|------|--|
| 1/4 | Writings |
| 1/5 | Respice in Me Domine |
| 1/6 | Ad Dominum Cum Tribularer |
| 1/7 | Jubilate Deo |
| 1/8 | Expectaus Exspectavi Dominum |
| 1/9 | O Sacrum Convirvum |
| 1/10 | Laboravi |
| 1/11 | Ego Sum Panis Vivus |
| 1/12 | My Soul Will Magnify the Lord (Magnificat) |
| 1/13 | Lauda Jerusalem |
| 1/14 | Stabat Mater |
| 1/15 | Caldara music onion skins |
| 1/16 | Caldara music onion skins |

1/17 Caldara music onion skins

Publications Series

1/18 Christ is Risen, 1965
 1/19 One Faith in Song (Two volumes: 2 equal voices and 3 equal voices), n.d.
 2/1 Parish Liturgy, 1967
 2/2 Six Soft Pieces, by six American composers, n.d.
 2/3 Workbook of Music Fundamentals, by Edwin Fissinger, 1959

Compositions Series

2/4 Religious compositions, rough drafts, A-F
 2/5 Religious compositions, rough drafts, G-S
 2/6 Ach Weh Des Leiden, by Hans Leo Hassler
 2/7 Ack, Värmeland du Sköva
 2/8 Adam Lay yBoulder, 15th century
 2/9 All That's Past, 1971
 2/10 Alleluia, 9th Sunday after Pentecost, by Fissinger, 1967
 2/11 America the Beautiful, arr. By Fissinger
 2/12 Amor (Lamento della Ninfa, by Claudio Monteverdi
 2/13 Arise, Shine, for Thy Light is Come, by Fissinger, 1980
 2/14 At the Cry of the First Bird, by Fissinger, 1989 ("For Dr. JoAnn Brorson to mark her appointment as director of the Concert Choir at North Dakota State University")
 2/15 Ave Maria, arr. by Fissinger, 1951?
 2/16 Away in the Manger, arr. Edwin Fissinger
 2/17 Battle Hymn of the Republic, arr. Edwin Fissinger
 2/18 Black is the Color, July 1984
 2/19 Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, by Edwin Fissinger
 3/1 Big City Medley
 3/2 By the Waters of Babylon, by Fissinger, 1976
 3/3 Children on a Hill, by Fissinger, 1949
 3/4 Christmas Songs (Deck the Halls, Away in a Manager, etc.)
 3/5 Clap Your Hands, by Fissinger
 3/6 Come to the Stable, arr. Fissinger
 3/7 Consecrate the Place and Day, by Fissinger ("Written for the dedication of the Music Education Center, at North Dakota State University")
 3/8 Credo
 3/9 Diamond Head, by Fissinger, 1949 ("For my sister Ella")
 3/10 Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel, arr. by Fissinger
 3/11 Dover Beach, by Fissinger, 1990
 3/12 Easter Sunday Gradual, Alleluia, and Sequence, by Fissinger, 1966
 3/13 Ecce Sacerdos, by Fissinger, 1967
 3/14 Eight Songs for Mezzo Soprano, by Fissinger, 1951 ("Poems by Adelaide Crappsy")

- 11/21 Eight Songs for Mezzo Soprano (similar to above, copy in binder)
- 3/15 The Everlasting Voices, by Fissinger, 1978 ("Mixed voices, a cappella")
- 3/16 Fanfares
- 3/17 Fanfares for Madrigal Dinner
- 3/18 Fools Rush In
- 3/19 For Now is the Time of Christmas, by Fissinger, 1978
- 4/1 Four Christmas Vignettes, by Fissinger
- 4/2 Four Songs for Soprano, by Fissinger
- 11/22 Four Songs for Soprano (similar to above, but copy version in binder)
- 4/3 Gentle Annie, arr. Fissinger
- 4/4 Gershwin Medley, Dec. 1973
- 4/5 The Gifts, arr. by Fissinger ("Catalonian Carol")
- 4/6 The Gifts, arr. by Fissinger (printed version)
- 4/7 Give Your Hearts, by Fissinger, 1965 ("For Hedda and Denny")
- 4/8 Go' Way From My Window, 1984
- 4/9 God Bless America, arr. Fissinger, 1979
- 4/10 God Rest You Merry Gentlemen, arr. Fissinger
- 4/11 Gradual & Alleluia, 3rd Sunday after Pentecost, by Fissinger, 1967
- 4/12 Gradual for Easter, by Fissinger
- 4/13 Gradual, Trinity Sunday, by Fissinger, 1966 ("Commissioned by the Church Music Association of America for the Fifth International Church Music Congress")
- 4/14 He Is Born on This Holy Night, arr. by Fissinger
- 4/15 The Holly and the Ivy, arr. Fissinger
- 4/16 Holly Carol, arr. by Fissinger, 1975
- 4/17 The Hour Glass, arr. by Fissinger ("Four Pieces for Male Chorus")
- 4/18 How Beautiful Upon the Mountains, by Fissinger, 1985 ("In memory of Tie")
- 4/19 How Far is it to Bethlehem, arr. Fissinger
- 4/20 I Saw Three Ships, 1973
- 4/21 Incline Your Ear and Come Unto Me, Fissinger, 1986
- 4/22 In Paradisum, by Fissinger, 1988 ("For Dr. Ed Thompson and the University of Utah Concert Choir")
- 4/23 In Te Speravi Domine, by Fissinger, 1953 ("For Bernadette and Alfred")
- 4/24 In the Bleak Mid-Winter (choir and oboe), arr. by Fissinger, 1989 ("For Dr. Brad Logan")
- 4/25 Introit, Christmas
- 4/26 Jenny Kiss'd Me, arr. Fissinger, 1987 ("Four Pieces for Male Chorus")
- 5/1 Josphua Fit the Battle of Jericho, arr. Fissinger, 1979
- 5/2 Joyfully Let Praises Ring (Processional), by Fissinger, 1982
- 5/3 Just One of Those Things
- 5/4 Laetatus Sum, by Scarlotti, arr. by Fissinger
- 5/5 The Lamb, by William Blake, arr. by Fissinger
- 10/9 The Lamb, arr. Fissinger ("Three Pieces for Treble Choir")
- 5/6 Last Supper, by Amer Westendorf, arr. by Fissinger
- 5/7 Laura Lee, 1976
- 5/8 Let it be Forgotten, by Fissinger, 1992

- 5/9 The Linnet, by Fissinger, 1971
- 5/10 Lines for Late Autumn
- 9/15 Liturgical music, by Fissinger, 1950-1953
- 5/11 Long, Long Ago, by Fissinger, 1952
- 5/12 Love Came Down at Christmas, by Rossetti, arr. by Fissinger ("For my wife")
- 5/13 Love is a Sickness, 1986
- 5/14 Loveliest of Trees, by A.E. Houseman, arr. by Fissinger, revised 1989
- 5/15 Lux Aeterna, by Fissinger, 1982 ("To the memory of Phil and Dodie Mark")
- 5/16 Lux Aeterna, by Fissinger, 1983 (Print proofs)
- 5/17 Madonna and Child, Christmas Greeting, Christmas Festival (1981), Recipe (Four Christmas vignettes, 1981)
- 5/18 Madrigal, by William Shakespeare, arr. by Fissinger ("Four Pieces for Male Chorus")
- 5/19 Make Haste, O God, by Fissinger,
- 5/20 Make We Joy (Processional), 1975
- 5/21 Make We Joy Now in this Feast (Processional), by Fissinger
- 6/1 May the Good Lord bless and Keep You, Meredith Wilson, arr. by Fissinger, 1980
- 6/2 Meditation Song (Second Sunday after Easter), by Fissinger, 1967
- 6/3 Memorial Sketches (Orchestral Suite), by Fissinger, ca. 1950 ("...four pieces, each piece depicting in tonal portraits the personality of a close friend killed in World War II.")
- 6/4 Memorial Sketches (orchestra parts)
- 6/5 Memorial Sketches (orchestra parts, onion skins)
- 6/6 Missa Dolorosa, by Antonio Cladara (string parts)
- 6/7 Missa Dolorosa, by Antonio Caldara (onion skins)
- 6/8 Moon Magic, 1966
- 6/9 The Morning Trumpet, by John Leland, arr. by Fissinger, 1982
- 6/10 Music, When Soft Voices die, Percy Shelley, arr. by Fissinger
- 6/11 My Dancing Day
- 7/1 My Heart is Steadfast O God, by Fissinger, 1949
- 7/2 My Jesus Hath a Garden, by Fissinger, 1978
- 7/3 Nigh, by Fissinger, 1952
- 7/4 No Man is an Island, John Donne, arr. Fissinger, 1989 ("To the memory of our dear friend, Norman Luboff")
- 7/5 Noel Sing We Both All and Some (Processional), by Fissinger, 1981
- 7/6 O Beata Et Gloriosa Trinitas, Palestrina, ed. Fissinger
- 7/7 O Shepherds, Go Quickly, arr. Fissinger, 1974
- 7/8 O Shepherds, Go Quickly, arr. Fissinger, 1979 (print proofs)
- 7/9 O Shepherds Leave Your Flocks, arr. Fissinger
- 7/10 O Shepherds Leave Your Flocks, arr. Fissinger (print proofs)
- 7/11 An Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, John Oldham, arr. Fissinger
- 7/12 Ode to Saint Cecilia, Fissinger, 1987
- 7/13 Oh! Susanna, Stephen Foster, arr. Fissinger, 1975
- 7/14 On a Morning of Mist, L. Hanes, arr. Fissinger, 1970
- 7/15 On Christmas Night, arr. Fissinger
- 7/16 Our Savior Hath a Garden, arr. Fissinger (17th Century Dutch carol)

- 7/17 Past Three a clock, arr. Fissinger, 1979-1980
- 7/18 Patapan, arr. Fissinger, 1979
- 7/19 Pater Noster (sketches), Fissinger, 1985
- Prairie Scenes: A Choral Cycle, by Fissinger (I-VIII) (“Commissioned by and dedicated to the Bismarck-Mandan Civic Chorus and their director, William Franke”)
- 7/20 The Prairies, I, words by Anne Murray Movius
- 8/1 Passing of Winter, II, words by Cecile Bonham
- 8/2 The Call of Spring, III, words by Robert J. Richardson
- 8/3 Dakota Dawn, IV, words by Mildred Montgomery
- 8/4 The Wind in the Wheat, V, words by Jessamine Slaughter Burgum
- 8/5 The Wild Prairie Rose, VI, words by Alice Sinclair Page
- 8/6 A Winter Night, VII, words by Jessamine Slaughter Burgum
- 8/7 Prairie Winds, VIII, words by Jessamine Slaughter Burgum
- 8/8 Prelude for the Piano, by Fissinger, 1946
- 8/9 Psalm 71, 1960
- 8/10 Psalm 100, by Fissinger, 1985
- 8/11 Psalm 113, by Fissinger, 1985 (“Commissioned by the 1986 Arkansas All-State High School Choir, Randy Erwin, chairman”)
- 8/12 Psalm 117 and Psalm 134 (“Two Psalms for a cappella choir”), by Fissinger, 1950
- 8/13 Psalm 134, by Fissinger (photocopy of printed version, “For My Friend and Teacher Leo Sowerby”)
- 8/14 The Rarest Gift (Noel Nouvelet), arr. Fissinger, 1977
- 8/15 Recorder Trio
- 8/16 Reeds of Innocence, and The Lamb, William Blake, arr. Fissinger (“Three Pieces for Treble Choir”)
- 8/17 Reeds of Innocence, William Blake, arr. Fissinger
- 8/18 Regina coeli Jubila, arr. Fissinger (“16th cent. Melody”)
- 8/19 Retrospect (Bass baritone, string quartet and piano)
- 8/20 Response, by Fissinger, 1951
- 8/21 The Rosebud, William Broome, arr. Fissinger, 1986
- 8/22 Sans Day Carol (Holly Carol), 1975
- 8/23 Say to Them, 1986
- 8/24 Say to Them That are of a Fearful Heart, by Fissinger
- 9/1 Send in the Clowns, 1978
- 9/2 September Song
- 9/3 Set Me As a Seal, Song of Solomon, arr. Fissinger
- 9/4 Sequence
- 9/5 Sequence (print draft)
- 9/6 Seven Fold Amen, by Fissinger, 1951
- 9/7 Silent Night, arr. Fissinger
- 9/8 Sing Noel
- 11/23 Sing Noel (published edition, and mimeographed manuscript with inscription)
- 9/9 Sing, O Ye Heavens, Isaiah 44:23, arr. Fissinger, 1986
- 9/10 Ship to My Son, arr. Fissinger, 1984

- 9/11 Sigh No More, Ladies, William Shakespeare, arr. Fissinger, 1987 ("Four Pieces for Male Chorus)
- 9/12 Sir Christmas, Anon., arr. Fissinger
- 9/13 Sketches for Processional, 1980
- 9/14 The Sleep of the Child Jesus, arr. Fissinger, 1989-1990 (includes printed version)
- 9/16 Some Folks, Stephen Foster, arr. Fissinger, 1975
- 9/17 Something Has Spoken to Me in the Night, Thomas Wolfe, arr. Fissinger, 1978
- 9/18 Son of Mary Carol, 1982
- 9/19 Sonata for Viola & Piano, by Fissinger
- 9/20 Sonatina for Alto Sax and Piano
- 9/21 The Splendor Fall on Castle Walls, Tennyson, arr. Fissinger, 1990
- 10/1 Spring, Thomas Naske, arr. Fissinger
- 10/2 Spring, arr. Fissinger ("Three Pieces for Treble Choir")
- 10/2 Spring Grass, Carl Sandberg, arr. by Robert Krentz ("Dedicated to the Concert Choir of North Dakota State University and the director, Edwin Fissinger")
- 10/3 The Star That I See, L. Hanes, arr. Fissinger, 1966
- 10/4 Sweet and Twenty, Shakespeare, arr. Fissinger, 1986
- 10/5 Symphony in One Movement, by Fissinger, 1949
- 10/6 The Tabernacle of God is With Men, by Fissinger ("For David Austin")
- 10/7 Tell me Where is Fancy Bred?, Shakespeare, arr. by Fissinger
- 10/8 The Lamb, William Blake, arr. Fissinger ("Three Pieces for Treble Choir")
- 10/9 Three Thoughts on Nature: All That's Past, The Linnet, Loveliest of Trees, for mixed choir and flute, arr. by Fissinger
- 10/10 There is Sweet Music Here, arr. Fissinger, 1987
- 10/11 This Endris Night, 15th century, arr. Fissinger
- 10/12 This is the Day Which the Lord Hath Made, by Fissinger, 1951
- 10/14 To Daffodils, Robert Herrick, arr. Fissinger, 1986
- 10/15 To Everything There is a Season, Ecclesiastes III, arr. Fissinger, 1976 ("Commissioned by the Voices of Mel Olson, Omaha, Nebraska")
- 11/1 To Everything There is a Season (Print draft)
- 11/2 Tomorrow
- 11/3 Tomorrow Shall be My Dancing Day, by Fissinger ("For Kenneth Sherwood and the Red River H.S. Choir") (mimeograph copy)
- 11/4 To Music, mixed voices and cello, Robert Herrick, arr. Fissinger, 1987
- 11/5 Unser Keiner Lebet ihm Selber, Heinrich Schütz, arr. Fissinger
- 11/6 Wade in the Water, 1984
- 11/7 Wassail Song, Fissinger, 1972 and 1976
- 11/8 Welcome Yule, 15th Century, arr. Fissinger
- 11/9 We Wish You a Merry Christmas, arr. Fissinger, 1981
- 11/10 Wexford Carol, arr. Fissinger, 1975
- 11/11 What Cheer?, arr. Fissinger
- 11/12 What is this Fragrance?, arr. Fissinger
- 11/13 What Wondrous Love, arr. Fissinger, 1980
- 11/14 Where Are You Fair Maids, Ravenscroft, Fissinger, editor

11/15 When Christ Was Born of Mary Free, Fissinger
11/16 Wind Through the Olive Trees (Long, Long Ago), Fissinger, 1953 (printed version)
11/17 Winter Sunset for Chorus and Piano, Fissinger
11/18 Wisdom, by Fissinger, 1952
11/19 Witness, arr. Fissinger, 1970
11/20 Yule Log Carol, W.C. Dix, arr. Fissinger, 1988