

American music in the collection of Belgian violinist Laurent Halleux (1897-1964), at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels

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Laurent Halleux (1897-1964) is a Belgian violinist who began his career as Second violin of the Pro Arte Quartet from 1911 to 1943.

The Pro Arte Quartet was founded in 1911-1912 by four Belgian musicians graduated from the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. The Pro Arte Quartet rapidly became one of the most successful formations of its time specialized in the contemporary repertoire. It played notably several world premieres in Belgium. During the Second World War, the Quartet emigrated to the United States and became the *Pro Arte Quartet* of Madison, which celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2011-2012.

Laurent Halleux thus moved to the United States and continued to play with the Pro Arte Quartet until 1943. Afterwards, he taught at the Mills College of Oakland, gave private lessons and also worked for cinema studios in Los Angeles, while continuing to tour with various quartets. He returned to Belgium in 1961 and died three years later.

The Royal Conservatory of Brussels preserves a set of scores that belonged to him. The Collection includes approximately 200 scores including those of the repertoire of the Pro Arte Quartet as well as some personal scores. In some cases, only the Second violin part is preserved.

This collection preserves editions, including editions of autograph manuscripts, as well as manuscripts containing autographs of various composers. The collection gathers several scores of American composers which testify of the link between the Belgian violinist and American music. Thus, we can notably find editions of original manuscripts of G.M. Chadwick, H. Cowell, W. Josten, H. Morris and C. S. Skilton, as well as some manuscripts, often autographs, of N. Berezowsky, A. Copland, Ch. Cushing, J. Fitelberg, R. Harris, W. Piston, V. Rieti and D. S. Smith.

The most exceptional autograph manuscript preserved in the Collection Halleux is undoubtedly the second violin part of Stravinsky's *Concertino for string quartet* (1920), performed by the Pro Arte Quartet on many occasions.