

McLean County Museum of History

Awadagin Pratt Collection

Processed by
Judy Brown
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1992 - 2012
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also Photos: People Collection and Posters

Brief History

Awadagin Pratt was born in Pittsburgh in 1966. He began studying piano at the age of six. When he was nine, his family moved to Normal where both his parents, Theodore and Mildred Pratt, became professors at Illinois State University. In addition to piano, the young Pratt took lessons in violin and tennis, excelling in all three. At the age of 16, he entered the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on a violin scholarship but studied the piano as well. Deciding to transfer to a music conservatory, he was accepted as both a piano and violin student at the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Subsequently, he became the first student in the school's history to receive diplomas in three performance areas—piano, violin, and conducting. When he was a 26 year old pianist in 1992, he won the prestigious Naumberg Competition in New York. This award brought him financial security and wide recognition and acclaim. Pratt has performed at Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, the Dorothy Chandler Center in Los Angeles and Chicago's Orchestra Hall to name but a few of his venues. Also, he has played in Europe, Japan and South Africa. His debut CD, "A Long Way from Normal" issued in 1994, was but the first in an extensive discography.

In 2004 Pratt accepted a position as a Professor of Piano and Artist in Residence at the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music; he continues to perform and tour. As of 2016, Pratt was married to Jill Meyer, a Cincinnati lawyer and businesswoman. The couple have a son Ayrton.

Scope

The collection includes newspaper articles, magazine articles, publicity releases, concert advertisements, concert programs, a biography, and miscellaneous items.

Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Awadagin Pratt Biography

- 1.1 Biography (from www.awadagin.com)

Folder 2: Newspaper Articles

- 2.1 "Music career crescendoing," *Pantagraph*, May 17, 1992, p. A3.
- 2.2 "Pittsburgh Pianist Wins Naumberg Prize," *New York Times*, "Living Arts" section, May 14, 1992.
- 2.3 "Triple threat," *Chicago Tribune*, July 5, 1992, p. 20-21, section 13.
- 2.4 "Young Pianist serves notice in local debut," *Chicago Tribune*, July 12, 1992.
- 2.5 "Young Pianist Surprises with Musical Insight," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 13, 1992.
- 2.6 "Living Up To Stellar Expectations," *Chicago Tribune*, "Tempo" section, January 31, 1993.

- 2.7 "Who are our heroes?," *Chicago Tribune*, "Parade" section, August 6, 1995, p. 5.
- 2.8 "The new face of classical music," *State Journal Register*, "A&E" section, September 16, 1999.
- 2.9 "In pursuit of passion," *Pantagraph*, April 30, 2012
- 2.10 "A virtuoso on and off the stage," *Albuquerque Journal*, undated

Folder 3: Magazine Articles

- 3.1 "Awadagin Pratt 1st Black To Win Naumburg Contest," June 1, 1992, *JET*, p. 22.
- 3.2 "Now He's a Player," August 17, 1992, *People*, p. 71.
- 3.3 "The Sports & Wellness Interview: Awadagin Pratt," *New Mexico Sports & Wellness Club News*, February/March 1997, p. 8
- 3.4 "An American original," *Piano & Keyboard*, May/June 1999, p. 25
- 3.5 "Key Player," *Illinois Alumni*, January/February 2003, p. 37.

Folder 4: Concert Advertisements

- 4.1 "Awadagin Pratt, Piano, Carnegie Hall debut," Carnegie Hall, November 5, 1997.
- 4.2 "Who is Awadagin Pratt?," *Washington Performing Arts Society*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 1998.
- 4.3 "Awadagin Pratt, Piano," Master Works, Illinois Symphony Orchestra, 1999/2000.
- 4.4 "The Cypress Quartet w/pianist Awadagin Pratt, April 26, 2000, Indiana Historical Society.
- 4.5 "Awadagin Pratt in private recital," Pratt Music Foundation.
- 4.6 "Awadagin Pratt and Zuill Bailey in Concert, Saturday, August 19, 2006.
- 4.7 "Up close and musical," Illinois Wesleyan University, September 22, 2012.
- 4.8 "Awadagin Pratt, Piano," Illinois Symphony Orchestra

Folder 5: Concert Programs

- 5.1 Hopkins Symphony Orchestra 1991-1992 Concert Season, Saturday, October 26, 1991, Johns Hopkins University
- 5.2 Grant Park Music Festival, Chicago, July 9, 1992.
- 5.3 Wesleyan Civic Orchestra featuring Awadagin Pratt, Friday, Illinois Wesleyan University, May 7, 1993.
- 5.4 Back to Normal, Awadagin Pratt In Concert, Illinois State University, Sunday, September 18, 1994.
- 5.5 The Kennedy Center, WPAS presents Awadagin Pratt, Piano, Saturday, April 1, 2000.
- 5.6 Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Masterworks Concert, Awadagin Pratt, Piano, January 2001.
- 5.7 Up Close and Personal, Awadagin Pratt, Illinois Wesleyan University, Saturday, September 22, 2012.

Folder 6: General Publicity

- 6.1 Awadagin Pratt, EMI Classics, photographer: Lie-Shin
- 6.2 IMG Artists presents Awadagin Pratt
- 6.3 "Pratt: A Piano Powerhouse," *Washington Post*, May 15, 1993.
- 6.4 "Pratt's performance as striking as his image," concert review, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, May 2, 1994.

- 6.5 “Pianists displays mastery of Beethoven,” *The Orlando Sentinel*, March 28, 1995.
- 6.6 “Pianist Pratt Displays Brilliant Technique,” *St. Louis/Post Dispatch*, 12/2/95.

Folder 7: Pratt Music Foundation

- 7.1 “Pratt Music Foundation Scholars for 2013-14.

Folder 8: Miscellany

- 8.1 Performance dates 1992-93
- 8.2 Performance dates 1993-94
- 8.3 “The President and Mrs. Clinton honor His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, and Mrs. Mbeki at White House State Dinner,” Monday, May 22, 2000.
- 8.4 Awadagin Pratt, Speaker, Illinois Wesleyan University Commencement, April 29, 2012