

Cellists' Corner

Brief Career Details of Important Cellists

prepared by David Johnstone from public information

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SPECIAL FEATURE on JULIEN PAUL BLITZ

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Blitz was born in Ghent, Belgium, the son of violinist Edouard E. Blitz (1860–1915) and pianist Mattie Louise Miller (1865–1904). He moved to the United States with his family at the age of two. He began violin studies with his father, who had been appointed the first music director of the Kansas City Philharmonic. He returned to Belgium when he commenced cello musical studies in 1901 at the Ghent Conservatory, where he studied with Paul-Henri-Joseph Lebrun, Joseph Lampens, Joseph Jacobs, Leon Rinskoph, and Edouard Jacobs. Blitz made his debut in 1904 and graduated cum laude from the conservatory in 1905.

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Blitz was engaged as a cellist in the Kursaal Orchestra in Ostend, Belgium, then returned to the United States. He lived in New York City briefly, then accepted a position at Baylor College in Belton, Texas.

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In 1913, Blitz founded and became the first music director of the Houston Symphony; he also directed activities of the Houston Treble Clef Club. Blitz's tenure in Houston lasted from the inaugural concert in 1913 until 1916. From 1917 to 1922, he conducted the San Antonio Symphony. In San Antonio Blitz was also the director of the Chaminade Choral Society of the Tuesday Musical Club. Subsequent positions held by Blitz include faculty positions at the San Antonio College of Music; Austin College and Kidd-Key College (where he was head of the string department), both in Sherman, Texas; the Fort Worth Conservatory, and, from 1934 until 1950, head of the music department at Texas Technological College (later Texas Tech University) in Lubbock.

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Blitz moved to Dallas in 1950, where he taught and coached music in the public schools and performed as a guest cellist with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

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Blitz was married to pianist Flora Briggs on January 24th, 1921, and died in Dallas on July 17th, 1951. The Blitzes had one child, Edouard Marquis Blitz, also an important cellist, who became the assistant principal cellist of the Dallas Symphony.

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A mention of the cellist here:

<https://houston.culturemap.com/news/arts/02-06-13-houston-symphony-reveals-its-star-packed-100th-anniversary-season-lineup-the-big-names-are/#slide=0>

He would probably have been the conductor on the attached photo, but the image totally lacks definition! Anyway better something than nothing!



Go to the Symphony Concert!

YOU can do something "For the good of Houston" by attending the initial concert of the Houston Symphony Orchestra tomorrow afternoon.

Houston SHOULD have a permanent symphony orchestra! Houston CAN have such an organization. Whether she WILL or not, however, depends upon public appreciation.

The first concert tomorrow will be your first opportunity of expressing your wish for this new acquisition to Houston's greatness. Express yourself by your presence.

Let us all go to that concert and so pack the Majestic Theatre that there can be no doubt in the promoters' minds that Houston wants such an orchestra. Let us do that much for "musical Houston." Let us encourage the proposition all we can. The interest shown in this first concert will govern largely the activity of the organization's promoters in the future. Concert is at 5 p.m. Saturday afternoon. Tickets on sale at Dinscher's Jewelry Store, Goggan's, Oliver's and Carter's Music Houses. Seats 25 cents to \$1.00.

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