

BIOGRAPHY

Charles Schiff was born in New York City in November 1926. After graduating from the High School of Music and Art, he won scholarships in both clarinet and orchestral conducting to the Juilliard School of Music, where he was later awarded his Bachelor's and Master's degrees and a graduate fellowship as assistant conductor of the Juilliard Opera Theater. While at Juilliard, he studied conducting with Jean Morel of the Metropolitan Opera.

Mr. Schiff also studied for five summers at the Berkshire Music Center (Tanglewood) where he was a private scholarship pupil of Dr. Serge Koussevitzky. During succeeding summers he studied with Pierre Monteux in Hancock, Maine, and with Franco Ferrara at the International Conductors' Course in Hilversum, Holland. He also studied composition privately with Vittorio Giannini, and has a number of original works, performances and awards to his credit.

In New York, Mr. Schiff founded the Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, which he directed for five years. In subsequent years, he was the music director of the Berkshire Chamber Orchestra in Massachusetts, the Hollywood Little Symphony in California, the Jamaica Symphony Orchestra on Long Island, N. Y., the Sussex Symphony Orchestra in New Jersey and the City Symphony Orchestra of New York. During the summers of 1965 and 1966, Mr. Schiff was the music director of the New Hampshire Music Festival.

In the fall of 1965, Mr. Schiff assumed the directorship of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in West Virginia. This year (1971-72) marks his seventh season with the orchestra, which has just concluded a tour of the state, funded by a special grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mr. Schiff is also the artistic director and conductor of the West Virginia Opera Theater, which he founded shortly after coming to Charleston. The Opera Theater has been the recipient of three major grants from the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council, which have assisted it in making annual tours of the tri-state region, using Charleston Symphony personnel for its orchestra, and appearing on the regular concert series of the Charleston Symphony.

In addition to his permanent positions, Mr. Schiff has appeared as guest conductor with a number of orchestras in the United States and abroad, including several concerts with the New York Philharmonic at the Lewisohn Stadium, the Israel Radio Orchestra in Jerusalem, and the Broadcasting Orchestra (Omroep Orkest) in Holland.

Mr. Schiff is married to the Israeli concert pianist, Edith Karney. They have two daughters, Talia (age 12) who studies the cello, and Leora (age 10) who studies the violin.