MLA in Austin, Texas


By Lisa Rae Philpott
Music Library, The University of Western Ontario

Despite a dismal, blizzardy evening, and an excruciatingly early departure for the Detroit airport, I made all of my connections and arrived safely in Austin for the seventy-second Music Library Association annual conference. The Renaissance Austin Hotel proved to be an exceedingly pleasant venue, and the atrium courtyard floor-plan lent itself nicely to the evening's first delight: a brass choir performance by Front Fanfaronade in antiphonal "Gabrieli" style, from the various balconies surrounding the courtyard. The hotel permitted the performance with some misgivings, but the response (from non-MLA guests) was extremely positive. The opening reception was enjoyable as always, with opportunities to meet friends and peruse the offerings of the many vendors.

James Cassaro, MLA President, officially welcomed us and offered his own personal Texas history. He hastened to assure us that, contrary to popular belief, he did not spring "fully formed from the head of Lenore Coral," but spent a year cataloguing music at the University of North Texas. His first day, he catalogued an entire truck full of scores, only to be told that he had done a week's worth of work! And, in true Texan style, Cassaro became known by a variety of monikers including "Jimmy Phil" and "Jim Joe Billy Bob." He said it seemed fitting that his term as MLA President should end in Texas, where his music library career had begun.

Robert Freeman, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts (UTX-Austin), formerly of the Eastman School, offered his welcome, and spoke of being an "alien," having only spent three years in Austin. Things are done on a grand scale in Texas, with an $85 million museum to open in 2005; the Ransom Center will be reopening in the spring. The University of Texas has 53,000 students, and many opportunities for interdisciplinary study: "Everything is possible here!" Austin is the "Live Music Capital of the World" (Freeman figured he was "King of the 'dead' part!") with a Center for American Music. This might explain why the Times of London interviewed him to ask, if classical music is dying, why does the U.S. graduate 12,000 new classically-trained musicians every year? It's a question of narrowing the gap between composers and performers.

On a separate note, Laura Macy, editor of www.grovemusic.com, announced that Oxford University Press is the new owner of the Grove family. Given Oxford's longstanding commitment to music, this augurs well for the future of our reference publications.

Plenary Session I

"You Can't Hear American Music without Hearing Texas"  David Hunter, moderator

Music writer and analyst Casey Monahan
was approached in January 1990 to become Director of the newly-created Texas Music Office (http://www.governor.state.tx.us/music/). Monahan’s writings have appeared in the Austin Statesman, Rolling Stone, and the New York Times, to name a few. He also has experience working in libraries.

He stated the essential difference between Europe and North America, in terms of their view of the arts, is that Europe sees the arts as revenue-generating. We tend to have schools of the arts, and these institutions and the artists are patronized. “How many of your schools have a ‘music business’ course which is taught to music majors?” Fewer than twenty-five percent, judging by the show of hands. Students need to know the market, and learn how to deal with the business of music, rather than expecting to be honoured (or anointed) by the King! The Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association (MEIEA) exists to inform and prepare students for careers in the music and entertainment industries (http://musicbiz.loyno.edu/meiea/about_meiea.html).

The Texas Music Office assists with making connections to the music industry and finding jobs. Among its services, it sponsors interest groups, industry events, and lectures. In short, it helps students see themselves in the business of music.

In the 1970's, the Film Commission promoted and informed the public of the business of film. By the mid-1980's, the music industry in Texas was asking, “Why just film?” The industry lobbied the legislature, highlighting the educational impact of music with a list of music businesses, revising the film commission law to reflect “music” and enlisting the support of the Music Teachers Association. It soon became apparent that “Music Means Business!”

Monahan responded to questions, stating that he makes no aesthetic judgements about music programs, whether they be Willie Nelson or BBC Music documentaries. He has 14,000 clients a year, and does a great many business consultations. He is involved with the Handbook of Texas Music, and was responsible for the “Texas music license plate.” He never risks public money on an event, but helps everyone, from rappers to classical musicians.

David Neumeyer (Center for American Music, School of Music, UT-Austin, http://cam.music.utexas.edu/) spoke of the three agendas of the CAM: to support the teaching of Texas music, to the document the history of American music and to support research into all styles of American music. The UT-Austin’s Center for American History, a separate institution, also holds significant music materials. See: http://www.cah.utexas.edu/index.html.

Kevin Mooney’s (UT-Austin) dissertation topic was “Texas Centennial, 1936: Music and Identity.” His research into the Texas Centennial of 1936 taught him the value of telephone books. He had heard of an opera, The Lone Star, written for the centennial by Otto Wick, formerly of New York, who had moved to San Antonio. Although Wick had died in 1957, Mooney took a chance and tried the three Wicks in the San Antonio white pages. The third one was the son of Otto Wick, and was in possession of all of his father’s manuscripts (now kept at the Center for American History). Interestingly, there were a total of four operas written to
commemorate the 1936 Centennial, but none was performed.

According to Mooney, there is an important distinction between "Texas music" and "Texans in music." Texas was settled by invaders from the north and south, and they brought their own music. Both the Spanish conquest of 1521 and the subsequent Anglo invasion of 1821 prompted a cultural response of corrido, or border songs and narratives. The upwardly-mobile sector brought the influence of the string orchestra or wind band; in 1834, the Germans brought their singing societies and band music to Texas. In 1900, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra was founded, led by a Müller, who later anglicized his name to Miller. Scott Joplin embodied both "Texas music" and "Music in Texas" with his "Great Crush Collision March," written to commemorate the staged crash of two locomotives in 1896.

Someone asked why Austin is called "The Live Music Capital of the World." In response, David Hunter said he uncovered the fact that it is based on Texas census information, and Austin has the highest proportion of musicians and live-music venues in the U.S.

Attendees were treated to a performance by Paul Glasse, a mandolin player. His styles include pop, bluegrass, swing, jazz, etc., and like most Austin musicians, he is not originally from Texas. In the summer of 1977, he wanted to play electric mandolin in a swing band, and he couldn't find one in Poughkeepsie, New York! He is bemused by the fact he is continually asked if he plays the fiddle. At one gig alone, he was asked several times, "Are you sure you don't play the fiddle?" No, but he performed the fiddle-tune "Liberty" for us, as well as Duke Ellington's "Don't Get Around Much Anymore." The Austin scene is incredibly eclectic. One evening, as a student, he played in the UT-Austin Jazz Orchestra, and left that gig to play two-steps and circles at the Broken Spoke. Most musicians are drawn to the opportunity to perform multiple kinds of music. Glasse penned a tune which became entitled the "Paper Bag Rag" because the perfect percussion accompaniment ended up being brushes on a paper grocery sack. He told the assemblage, "'Y'all are the noisiest librarians I've ever met!"

Glasse was asked whether club owners in Texas were charging groups for the opportunity to play in their venues. No, not yet! (But in other cities several groups may be booked into a venue, with club-goers being polled at the door. If a group doesn't bring in fifty to seventy-five people, the group owes money to the club owner.) As a university town, Austin has a certain hipness. One can live cheaply and have a great lifestyle. The cost of living is rising in Austin, so surrounding towns like Barton Springs are becoming more attractive.

Bibliography Roundtable

Reconstructing the Ricardo Viñes Piano Collection at the University of Colorado at Boulder Laurie Sampsel (U Colorado, Boulder)

Upon finding a great deal of circulating piano music inscribed with a "Viñes" stamp in the library, Sampsel became intrigued and began to research this collection. Ricardo Viñes (1875-1943) was born in Spain, studied at the Paris Conservatoire, and made his debut at the Salle Pleyel in 1900, after which he toured Russia. He was a champion of contemporary piano music, and a friend of
Ravel, Debussy, Satie, Falla and Granados. The search became increasingly tantalizing: manuscript autographs bore dedications to Viñes, as did published scores. Many items were found in the M20's and were formerly part of the pianist's personal library. These were sent to Special Collections with full retrospective cataloguing. Eventually, two boxes, marked “Viñes Music Library” (and containing punch-cards!), were discovered in a storage area. While it will cost money to have the cards read, there is information such as author, title, imprint, and a number from which a preliminary bibliography was compiled over a two-month period. (Of course, the Viñes stamp was very helpful in definitively identifying these works.) This list contains some 800 works.

A Master's thesis from 1960 was helpful in establishing provenance. It seems that $200 was spent to purchase the collection in October 1954. Storm Bull (brother of Ole Bull, cousin of Grieg), who was then chair of the piano department, instigated the purchase of the scores, which played an important part in researching his Index to Biographies of Contemporary Composers. Sampsel interviewed the eighty-nine-year-old Bull, and learned the collection might have come from the dealer Pierre Berès. She has discovered additional Viñes holdings at the University of Delaware (35 manuscripts) and at the Hans Moldenhauer Archive (28 manuscripts).

Upon sending the scores for cataloguing, it became apparent that 200 required original cataloguing. Checking the UC-Boulder Viñes holdings against CatME, it seems that 100 titles are unique works and dozens of them are dedicated to Viñes. The 800 titles at UC-Boulder were published from 1880-1930. Presentation copies, with dedication, are often in mint condition as the premiere would have been performed from manuscript. Viñes's markings (fingerings, marginalia, rewritten difficult passages) are still readily identifiable in blue crayon, or in black or gray pencil. Some thirty-five scores are by Viñes’s teacher Charles de Beriot. Many works carry inscriptions by composers, those by South American composers carry dates and activities (concert details?). Musicologist Elaine Brodie was researching Viñes at the time of her death. Her widower has agreed to send Brodie's research notes and Viñes's diary to Boulder.

Sampsel hopes to write an article about Viñes. She still wonders what has become of Viñes's vocal music, accompanying scores, and other manuscripts.

Beethoven Treasure in America: a new inventory Patricia Stroh (Center for Beethoven Studies, San Jose State University)

Stroh is compiling a guide to unique Beethoven holdings that updates Sonneck (1927) and Albrecht (1978), to be made available as a Web site or online database. Stroh's scope will be much broader and will include cards, manuscripts, letters, household accounts, signed receipts, copyists' manuscripts with Beethoven's annotations, Beethoven's music manuscripts (his own works and those of other composers as copied by him), leaves of conversation books, contemporary letters to (or about) Beethoven, programs of concerts of Beethoven's music given during his lifetime, original portraits or portrait-engravings done during Beethoven's lifetime, strands of hair, etc.
The difficulty in compiling such an inventory is that private collectors will often purchase and sequester a work. Given that Beethoven music manuscripts auction at astronomical prices, one can understand the reluctance to have the ownership publicized. Beethoven letters are cheaper but still highly prized, with a signature and portrait commanding $45,000. The Beethoven Center recently purchased a letter written shortly after the suicide of Beethoven’s nephew at a cost of $20,000.

The Beethoven Centre provides illustrations for filmmakers and references to manuscripts held at other institutions. Occasionally, fragments can be matched to companion fragments via image links, such as those held at Stanford and the University of Chicago.

Stroh also mentioned the previously-unknown movement of a string quartet (1817) by Beethoven, which belonged to a family in the U.K. This has gone to the Martin Bodmer Foundation in Cologne, and has been published by Sauer (2001). The Beethoven Center holds a lock of Beethoven’s hair, which has undergone DNA analysis. She is aware that there are Beethoven bone fragments (his body was exhumed twice) located in America. Stroh would welcome further information on Beethoven material held in institutional collections or in private hands, and will be following up on a new lead regarding a miniature portrait owned by Peter Serkin.

Integrated Library Systems Roundtable and Technical Services Roundtable
Grace Fitzgerald and Rashidah Hakeem, moderators

Janet Bradford (Brigham Young University) discussed the SIRSI authority control package. BYU, an RLIN member, underwent a rapid migration to SIRSI in July 1998. SIRSI has a ‘validation wizard’ which looks for unauthorized links and permits browsing in the name authority file. But updates are messy and, because of “match points,” BYU found they had massive numbers of duplicates (60,000 of 90,000 authority records). These had to be fixed manually. The updates appear to occur immediately, but they are actually completed on an overnight run. She liked the fact that special indexes can have authorities, and pronounced the uniform titles and 700’s as “great.” One can search the authorized headings. There is no “100/240’s” searching, but those are to come in 2003. Ralph Papakhian mentioned that there was a difficulty between the 100/240 and the 700’s.

Mickey Koth (Yale) discussed Voyager’s authority control system. This exists in a separate table, and a “1xx” update does not update all associated records. The “global change file” must be updated manually by clicking. Yale gets authority records from MARS (OCLC) and belongs to RLIN (and is also a NACO library). They can import the records, but they will not overlay properly due to non-recognition of a single lower-case “c” that was present, as in “CcY.” The lower case “c” items all required manual fixes. Unfortunately, series will be validated as author-title entries. Cross-references display in the catalogue, and users can click on them to be redirected. The need to click constantly the update of items is painful. One can search uniform titles and find common errors. Global changes are entrusted only to the authorities’ librarian.

Paul Cauthen (U Cincinnati) spoke of changes with INNOVATIVE. One can make
changes within a bibliographic record and have an automatic update; global updates line up, and there is a preview pane which permits you to see whether the change did what you expected. His institution does not use automatic authority control since there is a glitch: there are flips of uniform titles. Near-matches generate a report, but simple, exact matches are automatically flipped, and an after-the-fact report is generated.

Sheet Music Roundtable

Open Archives Initiative (OAI) Sheet Music Project: A Gateway to Sheet Music Collections on the Web  Stephen Davison (UCLA)

Davison brought a demo of a cooperative cataloguing project using Dublin Core as the metadata standard. Sheet music collections have a broad audience: musicians, social and cultural historians (art, design, illustration) and the general public. The additional appeal of mounting sheet music collections on the Web is that the publications are of limited size, and such a project can serve as a substitute for full cataloguing, offering remote access and better discovery of materials via search engines.

OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) defines the format for metadata exchange with the ability to obtain metadata from servers worldwide, store data in a database, and respond to queries. And, like union catalogues, it can store holdings information and exist as a cooperative venture between institutions, but can also provide value-added service. Essentially there are two components to the OAI-PMH, and both must be OIA-compliant: data-providers/repositories and service-providers/harvesters. The data-exchange uses XGML, with date-stamping. Of course, the regular concerns are still valid: quality control, mapping guidelines for legacy data, etc.

At present, there are a pair of OAI projects: the University of Michigan’s OAIster (1.1 million records at 142 academic institutions  http://oaister.umdlib.umnich.edu/o/oaister/) and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign’s Cultural Heritage Repository representing 39 institutions including museums, libraries and cultural and historical societies (http://oai.grainger.uic.edu/oai/search).

The OAI Sheet Music Project discussions began in 2001 with UCLA (harvester), Johns Hopkins and Indiana University (data providers) committing their resources. Presently, the collections of these three institutions plus the Library of Congress are searchable via the project, and the collections of Duke and Brown Universities will be added in the future. You can search these resources at:  http://digital.library.ucla.edu/sheetmusic/ A usability study is being funded by the Mellon Foundation.

Davison’s Powerpoint presentation may be viewed on Internet Explorer at:  http://unitproj.library.ucla.edu/music/

Bibliographic Control Committee

Music Thesaurus Project  Jerry McBride (Middlebury College)

McBride provided an update: the form and genre terms were compiled over a two-year period with LCSH (1998) used as a source for terms, and expanded by the addition of ensemble and language terms. Subject
headings were deconstructed: “Songs (High voice) with piano” (songs equals genre; musical instruments or medium of performance). There is much duplication and few unique form/genre terms. Various MARC fields offered particular bits of information: 734, form/genre terms; 550, medium of performance terms; and 400, language terms. Orchestral music has provided thorny problems in making form/genre/medium decisions. Is “Jewish music” a form/genre? How does one treat ethnicity? Keith Jenkins of Simmons College was invited to participate due to his construction of an XML-coded thesaurus of musical instruments. One of the attendees inquired, “This thesaurus is to be used for what?” It proved to be the perfect segue to the next speaker.

The Indiana University Digital Music Library: Project and Metadata Mapping for Variations2. Harriet Hemmasi (Indiana University)

Hemmasi stated the thesaurus would offer end-user searching enhancement, and would not necessarily be required for indexing.

Indiana University’s Variations Project was begun in the early 1990’s and officially opened in 1996. It is reserves-driven in the Music Library, where scores and sound recordings continue to be digitized. Two years ago, Hemmasi moved to Indiana to help create metadata for Variations2. This phase will run from 2000-04, at a cost of $3 million (funding from NSF and NEH), and will integrate and synchronize multiple formats (print and sound; some day, video will also be included). There are twenty people engaged in this phase of the project. In addition, they are compiling a reference log (two years’ worth of reference questions) in order to ensure that they find and identify all possible versions/formats.

While MARC records can provide descriptive metadata from a complete bibliographic citation, the structural and relational connections are missing. Users also use “mood descriptors” to describe music, or want to know which movie titles are associated with a particular musical work. How do we capture the requests for “sounds like..., feels like..., makes me think of...?” So, where MARC can provide searchable tables of contents, duration, pagination, URL, Variations2 can offer access to movements, acts, scenes, sections, track timings and descriptions, and to individual pages and leaves.

Variations2 will start with the MARC record, and treat the work as found within a “container-centred” MARC record. (You can have two works in one container.) Using the IFLA model, an object can be a work, an instantiation (digitized) and a media object, with an attribute set for each entity: descriptive, structural, relational and administrative. (This document is published on the IFLA site: http://www.ifla.org/.) Vocabulary control is needed to denote the document type, the notation, contributors’ names, uniform title, subject headings, class numbers, dates, language, geography, etc. This will facilitate a search within the work itself, such as the exposition or coda. In IUCAT, searching for “Beethoven symphonies” with “all formats mixed” retrieves 394 items, the standard retrieval of all available incarnations of these works. One can search for Wagner’s Ring Cycle or for Das Rheingold because the parts are connected to the whole work. Music libraries must create their own metadata.
Women of Music Roundtable Alice Abraham (WGBH, Boston), moderator

The Real Songcatchers: American Women Pioneers of Ethnomusicology Carl Rahkonen (Indiana U of Pennsylvania)

The film Songcatcher inspired Rahkonen to search for the stories behind the real song catchers, those nineteenth- and twentieth-century women who pioneered the field of ethnomusicology. According to a presentation given at the Library of Congress, at least fifty percent of the ethnographic collections involved women as collectors, contributors or chief contact. Given the status of women in society at that time, it was remarkable that so many had "free licence" to live with and observe the aboriginal societies and therefore produce the immense body of work that they did. (Perhaps much of their success was due to the fact they were women, and were viewed as non-threatening?) At first, Rahkonen had only three names: Alice Cunningham Fletcher (Great Plains Indians), Frances Densmore (Sioux, near Red Wing, Minnesota, transcribed 2,500 songs) and Helen Roberts (transcribed 3,000 pieces); he then spent five years on a quest for Natalie Curtis (transcribed 200 songs, wrote seven monographs and sixty-nine articles), and is presently investigating the work of Laura Boulton (she amassed three huge collections of world music), Ruth Crawford and Sidney Robertson Cowell (Appalachia, Ozarks, Great Lakes and California folk music). These women's stories are fascinating: Fletcher was a Special Agent of the Office of Indian Affairs; and Curtis persuaded President Roosevelt not to suppress the language and music of the Indian people. You can read Rahkonen's paper at: http://www.people.iup.edu/rahkonen/WP/real_song_catchers.htm

Katherine Berg, Sixteenth-Century Music Publisher Susan Jackson (Visiting scholar, UT-Austin)

Jackson's dissertation was on the publishing firm of Berg and Neuber and its archive. She was interested in women printers, booksellers, type-cutters and scribes and thus was interested in the firm's history and the biographies of its owners. She researched directories from 1541-1645 and learned that five percent of those active in the book trades were women; however, they were sole proprietors, not partners, of a firm. So, the percentage of women working in the book trades would have been much higher, and, contrary to popular belief, they were not illiterate.

Several women had long careers in the trades, including Kunegunde Wachter (widow of Georg Wachter, she had previously been married to Hans Hergot), but, after her death in 1547, Georg Wachter married Kunegunde Hermann (so, there were two different women named Kunegunde Wachter); after his death, the second Kunegunde Wachter married Valentin Neuber.

Elisabeth Ott was married to Hans Ott; he died prior to the advertised publication of Heinrich Isaac's Choralis constantinus, so it seems likely that his widow Elisabeth was active in the business, even though Formschneider was known to have been the printer.

Catharina Gerlach (née Schmidt, widow of music printer Johann Berg, d. 1565) married Dietrich Gerlach, and became the primary music publisher in Nuremberg (and one of Lasso's principal publishers). Catharina married three times, and a daughter (also
Catharina) was also involved in music publishing (and was also married three times). Unravelling the biographical threads, Jackson discovered that Catharina herself purchased the properties that belonged to the firm (details of all sixteenth-century real estate transactions were recorded), which appeared also to have been her residence. A daughter, Veronika, was born in 1545, and upon the death of her first husband, Berg, Catharina senior began to use a new colophon. When she married Gerlach, she moved away from publishing anthologies of motets, and began publishing single-composer prints, as was commonly done in Germany. Following Gerlach’s death (1575), Catharina operated independently, running the business by herself for the fifteen years preceding her death in 1591. As fate would have it, Catharina’s will was contested in 1592 by her daughter Veronika, and the entire will was transcribed into the court register (a researcher’s dream!), right down to the disposition of the firm’s book stalls at the Frankfurt and Leipzig Book Fairs. Eventually the firm was taken over by Paul Kauffmann, a grandson from her first marriage, and daughter Catharina is listed in directories as a printer (d. 1605), with her husband listed as a bookseller.

In Her Own Words: Documenting the Musical Life of Mary Austin Holley
Kevin Mooney (UT-Austin)

Mary Austin Holley (1784-1846) was born in New Haven, a cousin to Stephen F. Austin (after whom Austin was named). She was “intelligent, charming and a published writer of unusual talents” (Letters of an Early American Traveller, 1833) and an inveterate letter writer. Her “Brazo boat song” and “Texan Song of Liberty” helped assure her place in Texas history. Prior to her marriage to Horace Holley, a Calvinist minister, she wrote him an exceptional and passionate 1,800-word letter on the power and value of music. Holley saved this letter, which he later had published in the Western Review (1821). Horace abandoned Calvinism for Unitarianism, and had to leave his college post. In 1827, while en route to New Orleans (where he planned to establish a school for boys), Horace perished of yellow fever and was buried at sea. Mary was left with their son and daughter, and took a position with the La Branche family of New Orleans. Mary had a piano imported from England, and taught lessons to her daughter and to the La Branche children. She was a strong-willed woman who often travelled solo:
the publication of her “Texan Song” credits her as “Mary Austin Holley,” without reference to her married status (rather unusual for the time).

Best of Chapters

New York State-Ontario Chapter

What is Hip and Other Inquiries in Jazz Slang Lexicography Rick McRae (SUNY Buffalo)

What is hip? Way hip? Way cool? McRae had the audience tap their feet...adagio, adagio, and snap their fingers on two and four, while he played his trombone (wearing dark glasses and a beret).

Jazz musicians’ communication is visceral; they accompany social dancers. A jam session is essentially another form of communication, using a common musical language with courtesy, decorum and mutual respect: one must be willing to listen. Jazz has underworld connections; use of slang rejects the mainstream and the speakers share an accepted vice. Slang is equated with immorality and cynicism. Jazz slang terms can be found in glossaries and slang dictionaries from 1934-70. But at least one writer (James Hart in an issue of American Speech, 1932), suggested that popular music deliberately chose vernacular phrases and words to appeal to a wider audience: “S’Wonderful” and “Wha’d Ja Do to Me.”

Gustav Klemm’s “Jargon of Jazz” (Etude, August 1934) was a diatribe, describing jazz as a passing craze, with numerous colourful references to his passionate dislikes (“sax slaptongue” equals burping of frogs; “flare” equals sudden ripping of a piece of metallic cloth; “trombone smear” equals easy for beginner; various barnyard noises) of aspects of the genre. One year later, Carl Cons penned his “Slangue of Jazz” (Down Beat, 1935) in which he described musicians as balloon lungs, staccato-spitter, and hot man (“swing”). Instruments were grunt-horns or squeak-boxes. Derogatory terms included longhair, salon man, paper man, schmaltz, lollypop, strictly union, and Joe below (as in below the pay scale). Vipers and muggles (shades of Harry Potter!) were weed-hounds. By contrast, Russell B. Nye’s “Musician’s Word List” (American Speech, 1937) was elegant.

Louis Armstrong’s autobiography Swing That Music had an appendix which listed thirty-one slang words or phrases. Like any other language, jazz slang evolves: a “clambake” originally denoted a jazz session, then evolved to mean musical cacophony, and from the 1950’s a “clam” was a mis-played note.

So, what is hip, anyway? Hep? Quoting the band, Tower of Power, “What is hip? Tell me tell me, if you think you know. ... Hipness is, what it is! Sometimes hipness is, what it ain’t.” (See McRae’s article in Notes 57:3 (March 2001): 574-584.)

Pacific Northwest Chapter


Multnomah County Library’s music collection numbers 43,000 scores (15,000 titles are piano music) and 4,300-4,500 scores
circulate each month. It’s an interesting collection, having been bolstered by gifts, with a wide range of older and newer music. Many scores are in the public domain. Patrons regularly complain about the discards, so weeding is extremely difficult!

Stafford enrolled in “School for Scanning” workshops and designed a project to link two previously unlinked libraries: the Multnomah County Library and the Oregon Historical Society Library. The goals were to be selective, to have a minimal cost in time off-the-desk (volunteers did much of the work), and to have score-images that print on 8.5 inch x 11 inch paper. The card catalogue of the Oregon Historical Society was searched for references to music and musicians, and photos were selected from the late nineteenth-century to the mid-1930’s. (Stafford hopes to include more photographs of school groups and home music-making.) Borrowers browsing the Multnomah County Library music collection may miss the fact that a particular work was by a local Portland composer. Given the age of some of the works, it made sense to highlight some of the music in a Web display. Some photos needed to be cropped, and look better on the Web site than they do in actual life. One particular image, 20 inches x 6 inches, of an outdoor youth concert, had to be scanned in twelve sections. Patrons take great pleasure in locating images of their relatives in the photos on the site. The cost of the site, not including staff time, was a mere $500 for photographs selected and reproduced from the Oregon Historical Society’s collections.

Plenary Session II

Revolution In The Recording Industry
Tom Moore (College of New Jersey)
Larry Kraman (Owner, Newport Classics)

Kraman is taking a hiatus from his Newport Classics business. His newest venture, Music Play-by-Play, is occupying more of his time; Kraman had a vendor’s booth at the exhibit area. In 1985, he began Newport Classics with an investment of $5,000. He basically said to his friend, Anthony Newman, “Play whatever you like, and I’ll record it.” When CDs first came on the market, anything and everything sold. Then, it cost $3.60 to replicate a CD; now it can be done on a PC in ten minutes for ten cents. Kraman used to press 2,000 copies; now you’re lucky if you sell 200. Part of the problem is there are far too many recording companies doing the same repertoire over and over again. Kraman also described modern music as unattractive (where’s the rhythm and melody?), and likened composers of electronic dance music to being “grandchildren of Varèse.”

Why not reissue some of the old vinyl records? Ninety percent of them lose money. RCA actually issued a CD entitled Making Out With Mozart with a parental advisory sticker on it! While an independent company could in theory reissue the content of old vinyl recordings on CD for a fee in the neighbourhood of $2,000, there’s no way the big companies holding the rights will acquiesce; their lawyers’ fees would be more than that. Independents also have difficulties with the large record chains. (Who can afford to wait 365 days to be paid by Tower Records?) Kraman sees the future of
recording companies in a subscription-based market, payable monthly like one’s cable bill. He encouraged attendees to check-out his forthcoming “Music Play-by-Play” which he promises will be revolutionary: “Car-talk meets Bartok!”

Brenda Nelson-Strauss (Indiana U)

Formerly of the Chicago Symphony Archives, Nelson-Strauss is a member of ARSC and is now based at Indiana University. She asked, “Where’s the revolution?” We have moved from 76.2-rpm (78-rpm is the average since discs play slower at the edge and faster towards the centre) to 33.3 rpm: a move to a new playback system which offered high fidelity. We’ve now had CDs for twenty years, with a move to high-resolution discs with some cross-compatibility. The nice thing about this new technology is that, unlike Betamax versus VHS, all formats are compatible. The high-resolution CDs do offer improved sound quality, but in order to produced enhanced CD-reissues (the original CDs would have been locked-in at 16 bits/44.1 KHz), one would need access to the original multi-track masters.

There has been an enormous proliferation of new formats: DVD-video, DVD-D (dolby), DTS (digital theatre system), DVD-A (audio). The latter, DVD-A, has been designed with six channels and flexibility (it can be Dolby or DTS), will work in DVD-D players and will have interactive links to an artist’s Web site. This format has just come onto the market and, at present, there are 200 titles available, twenty-five percent of which are Warner/BMG. DVD-A disc will hold seven hours of audio.

In 1999, the SA-CD (super audio CD) was released: a two-channel format, DSD (direct streamed digital), with 1,000 titles in print. 2.5 million SA-CD players have been sold.

While not all computers will be able to play both formats, there are also hybrid CDs, which contain two formats for the price of one. These discs have multiple layers: the “red book” layer is on the surface; the DVDA/SACD resides on a second, middle layer, which is semi-transparent. TELARC’s SACD discs are all hybrid; not all companies follow this same practise. But, with dual compatibility is built-in, this enables customers to delay their investment in new equipment.

What’s new? As of the first quarter of 2003, all major CDs are copy-protected with two tracks: one standard red-book track (playback) and one that keeps the material hidden from your PC. (No doubt, this will have implications for those who hope to download for online reserves!) Multi-session CDs use more disc space: this takes up eight minutes worth of potential content time.

Georgia Harper (Copyright Attorney, U Texas)

Harper offered her “crash course” on copyright, outlining the basic principles and how they their purpose. The Teach Act, was passed into law in November 2002, is representative of the struggle for balance between music and the entertainment industry. (This is listed at: http://www.copyright.gov/legislation/pl107-273.html#13301.)

The Constitution upholds the right for the improvement of society through the attainment of knowledge, as timely access will enrich the public domain. Copyright protects new ways of expressing ideas, once they’re presented in a tangible medium: your PowerPoint
presentation is copyrighted from the instant you hit the save button.

U S. copyright law changed twenty-eight years ago. It is now calculated as life of the author plus seventy years. Works "made for hire" have a copyright term of ninety-five years from publication or 120 years from creation, whichever is shorter; works created but not published have been give the same terms. Information sheets and FAQs are available at: http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ1.html#hlc

Large Resource Libraries Roundtable

Judy Marley (Southern Methodist U)

Marley described her experiences with a collection of 10,000 uncatalogued LPs: a project was devised whereby student assistants searched the catalogue: twenty percent were added to the collection and the remainder were either sold at a book sale or at "Half-price Books." The money was used to purchase historic CD reissues from the Metropolitan Opera (these discs must be used in-library, as the Met declined to permit their circulation). "Andante.com" is in negotiations with the Met, to broadcast some of these historic recordings via its Web site.

Regaining a Sense of Space Ned Quist (Brown U)

Quist described his paper as a think piece rather than a presentation.

There is a day when the road neither comes nor goes and the way is not a way but a place.
Wendell Berry

Libraries have surrendered their large work-tables: reserves now take up what was formerly staff-space. We now have an inferior product, a hectic info arcade. New buildings are elusive, and they always run out of space. We acquire more than we lose. We are in transition to a new world with digital information on remote servers. We need to look hard at what we're doing in terms of creating, editing and publishing. The library should be a place of quiet contemplation, a place of reflection. We need to reconfigure our space.

What is wrong with streaming the listening reserves and cutting down the crowds at the reserve desk? With so much material online, machines are becoming multi-purpose, and libraries have responded by becoming, to a large degree, the computer labs of the campus. We need to start deconstructing, and accommodate wireless laptops and personal digital assistants (PDAs), so we can regain some shelf space. We are experiencing a cash-shortage: digital resources do not come cheap; our endowment incomes are dropping. We are still acquiring more scores than available shelf space. Compact shelving gets full, too; offsite storage with robotic retrieval will help for the short term. Johns Hopkins University is offering desktop delivery of PDF documents. As for the publishing industry, there is no shortage of biographies and fan-ographies, but e-books seem a long way off.

The growth in e-journals? One day, J-STOR will get to music. We are already seeing the end of paper newsletters. And then there are scores. The “Thor Power Tool Ruling” meant the end of large print-runs: publishers pay tax on unsold inventory, hence they keep as little stock on hand as possible...so, we're seeing fewer and fewer new scores. Eventually, we will see an electronic music stand.
Commercial recordings are also in decline. Music is being streamed or downloaded piece by piece. The term “album,” which we know as an “LP,” once meant a set of 78s which were stored in a hardcover album with paper storage envelopes. We need to redirect our space: find more teaching space, “production space” (i.e., space for the creation of sound files for course reserves, etc.), and welcome those patrons who come to read, study and listen. Do we need to provide listening equipment (perhaps yes, for LPs)? Patrons can provide their own listening devices or we could sign out small, portable units. We need places where we and our users can enjoy “being,” so that they (and we) can read and reflect. A reading room should be a pleasant place for those involved in the thoughtful pursuit of scholarship.

Questions were entertained about needs assessment and space versus services. Old LPs are copyrighted. If you digitize the sound, you must also digitize the accompanying print material to have the tandem of sound and text.

Naxos’s offer of digitized music tracks raises questions about the budget over the long term? You no longer own the physical item. Archives will lose their physical assets. It was suggested that pricing at “Andante.com” is quite inexpensive, at $8.95/person/month.

What about backup systems? Well, when the service goes down, you have a slow day. What do you do now, when the power goes out? You still have print, but can you read it if it’s dark?

Controlled subscription rates can help with budgeting, but, honestly, if you are part of a consortium, you are a victim of the group. If there are subscriptions you cannot afford, you are out of luck.

My MLA conference was cut slightly short this year, as my convoluted travel plans dictated missing both the Annual Meeting and Banquet. The 2004 MLA Conference is to be held in Washington, DC. The 2005 Meeting is Vancouver, B.C. I understand that CAML will be meeting with MLA in 2005, and I encourage you to attend. Yes, compared to CAML conferences, MLA is overwhelming, but it’s also amazing.