

MUSIC LIBRARIANSHIP IN AMERICA

-Peter Higham, Mount Allison University

The Symposium "Music Librarianship in America" was held at Harvard University, October 5-7, 1989. The Symposium was organized by the Harvard College Library and the Harvard University Department of Music, in recognition of the establishment there of the Richard F. French Librarianship, the first Music Librarian chair in the United States. Much of the credit for endowing the chair goes to Richard French: he is the director of doctoral studies in music at Juilliard, and professor emeritus of the School of Music and the Institute of Sacred Music, Yale University. The host of the Symposium was Michael, head of the Edna Kuhn Loeb Music Library and current holder of the Chair.

Representatives from the fields of musicology, ethnomusicology, history, publishing, arts administration, performance, composition, criticism, librarianship, and library education explored and reflected upon "the roles and functions of music librarians and their contributions to musical life". There were 244 registrants from thirty different states, but a very small Canadian presence: no speakers and only six registrants.

Tours of the Music Library, a concert and reception took place on the opening day while the Symposium proper took up the remaining two days. Harold Samuel of Yale University presented the keynote address, "Why Music Librarians?" If he didn't exactly answer the posed question he did touch on the bringing together of musicologists (the users) and librarians (the providers) for the Symposium; this kind of joint endeavour is a familiar motif in the history of the Music Library Association. He argued that distinct purposes and goals of college libraries and major research libraries should be maintained; a focus on collecting by libraries of regional resource materials would enhance de-

velopment of American music.

Thereafter, four half-day sessions each centred on a pertinent topic. Session I was concerned with "Music Librarians as custodians of cultural history", with discussion about the changes in, and the complexity of the work, and the "collaborative interdependence" required for preservation of valued materials. Charles Hamm brought home our adjusted viewpoints of music history by recalling John Cage's remark that only the present is fixed while the past is ever changing.

Session II addressed the connection between "Music Librarians and music scholarship". Among the speakers, Bruno Nettl commented that music librarians are in a position to act as mediators between the different "music communities", and James Pruett of the Library of Congress affirmed that the technical specialist must not replace the scholarly librarian.

Session III dealt with "Music Librarians and American music". The first of four excellent presentations was D.W. Krummel's historical perspective. Richard Crawford examined the changing viewpoints over the years as reflected in writings about American music. While in some quarters there had been a reluctant recognition of the worth and importance of American music (as compared with the European tradition), it was only more recently that much of it was receiving its deserved emphasis in American music libraries. It is interesting to note that there were doubts among Americans concerning their music, perhaps parallel to Canadian musicologists' and librarians' concern for a distinctive Canadian music.

Session IV, "Music Librarians and performance", chaired by Gunther Schuller, gave the Symposium a performer's view, a

critic's view, and Milton Babbitt's composer's view presented in a perpetuum mobile of perceptions and anecdotes. The Symposium Coda included a summing up by Susan Sommer, articulations of valuable questions (not necessarily with answers) to take away from the Symposium, by Richard French, and a final salute by Michael Ochs. Overall, the sessions were a descriptive summary of what has happened in music libraries in the United States, with few resolutions or directions indicated for the future. There followed a reception in the Music Library, where an exhibit of musical treasures from the Isham Memorial Library was on display. There were two other library exhibitions during the Symposium: "First impressions: printing in Cambridge 1639-1989", and "Music manuscripts from the Houghton Library". There was an opportunity to view the latter during a reception held in the rotunda of the imposing Widener Library.

The program was to include a "festival of sacred music": three concerts were presented in conjunction with the Symposium, two of which had a tenuous

"sacred music" content. The first was a presentation of black gospel music with the Reverence Gospel Ensemble. I heard both reverent and irreverent comments about this concert; I had opted to attend another in Boston. The next evening, the Boston Camerata, assisted by the Boston Shawm and Sackbut Ensemble and the Schola Cantorum, presented "Musique de joye: a renaissance celebration of musical instruments". On Sunday evening there was a recital of baroque music, half of it by Bach, by Dutch organist Ewald Kooiman. Of course, there were plenty of other fall season events to attend in the Boston area -- for instance, around the dates of the Symposium there were performances by the Boston Symphony Orchestra of Mahler's Ninth Symphony (recorded live for a series to be issued on CD), and of **The Creation**, performed by the Handel and Haydn Society in its 175 anniversary year.

The Harvard Square area, always interesting and enjoyable, was especially enlivened by the frenetic activity of college students in early fall.

IAML 1989: OXFORD

-Alison Hall, Carleton University

Oxford is a wonderful place to be at any time, and if England is having its best summer since 1976, and IAML happens to be meeting there, well, so much the better. Sitting indoors was not easy, but some of us managed it, and here is a report of selected proceedings.

IAML Council

The progress of the various ISBDs was reported from the IFLA meeting in Paris.

ISBD PM is approved for publication in the spring of 1990.

ISBD NBM was published in 1987.

ISBD A is in review.

ISBD G is being revised for harmonization.

A proposal from LC for a simplified ISBD is being investigated. ISO has taken up the IAML UK proposal for an ISMN, and Anders Lönn was named as the IAML representative on a small working group.

The series **Documenta musicologica**, published by Bärenreiter, of which IAML is one of the sponsors, was discussed, the issue being whether IAML wished to continue its association, as we have no input in the content.

Branches

The French branch, currently very active, is now producing a bulletin. The president of the small but active Czech branch has written several articles