
Building and Managing Your Music Collections - Part 2

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This is the balance of the paper given by Robyn Holmes at the 2002 ANZTLA Conference in Canberra.

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IV. Managing your collections: the Library perspective

Musical works are represented in many different manifestations and expressions, versions and editions. Musical editions range from the utilitarian – ephemeral in nature and designed for regular use – through to the exquisitely rendered work of art. This range makes for great variation in quality, quantity and functionality and demands special consideration about the physical conditions, space and access arrangements in your library.

Organisation

The physical properties of music – whether in print, audio or in manuscript formats – place special demands in terms of storage and management. Sizes of music editions range from 12cm to 50cm, from miniature study scores to oversized elephant manuscript, from two pages to hundreds of pages. A large orchestral or choral work may comprise multiple items across score and parts. Decisions need to be made about whether to store according to format and size or according to the musical content. Organising and arranging can be alphabetical, by a music classification system, chronology, genre, type, musical form, performance resources or groupings.

Storage

Scores often come in loose pages, either unbound or spiral bound, or in relatively fragile sheet music items, albums or anthologies. Musical works for ensembles will contain multiple related items which should not be separated. Some solutions to maintenance are to use archival boxes or customised folders that allow music to be stored flat. Items can be physically contained in plastic or mylar envelopes to stop separation of loose parts, and to assist in preservation. Flat deep wide shelving is best used for non-standard sizes, and shelving with supportive dividers used for non-hard copy albums and scores. CD storage, control and stack access similarly require special consideration:

specially sized shelving, CD drawers, and care in retrieval and matching of the actual recording to its physical container will assist. Should such items be on open stack access and made available to all for loan? Security and copyright are key issues both for scores and recorded sound.

Use versus preservation

If you collect or borrow music for use in performance or worship, then space requirements are a consideration especially if you are collecting or handling multiples sets of music. If the music is used for performing, then a system for recording, listing, monitoring and retrieving individual parts must be in place: a missing violoncello part can destroy an expensive set of music. The conflict between use and preservation becomes significant. When the choir conductor gives special performance instructions for particular phrasing, breathing, dynamics, or ornamentation, the chorister has to mark the score: annotations, scribbles, markings, torn pages abound in music that is well used. Which musical key, or which part, or in which version, whose edition, for instance, does the musician want? These can matter greatly to the performer and can alter the nature and quality of the music.

If you are not able to support performance materials in your own library, you need to be aware of the methodologies and processes for resource sharing and hiring and supply of such musical materials. Acquiring music in Australia is affected by the low level of music publishing in Australia, high costs of overseas materials, and the limited number of specialist importers and suppliers who tend to order on demand.

Copying music

Copying music for use in worship and associated activity has been greatly facilitated by church music licensing schemes.⁵ Copyright exists in both the manifestations of a musical work (mechanical rights)⁶ and in the rights to use the work (performing right).⁷ Instead of seeking permissions to

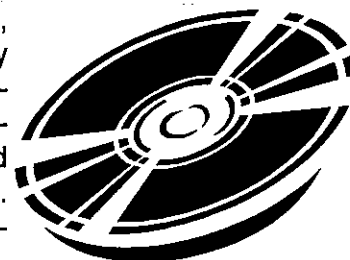
copyright for performances, churches can pay a general fee so that musical works performed under the authorization of churches are covered by licence. The copyright collecting agencies provide on-line information about religious music publishers and the various licensing organisations that represent them internationally, and publish specific guidelines on 'Music Copyright for Churches'.

Bibliographic control

Musical data and symbolic notation make special demands not only on the user but also on the cataloguer and reference librarian. Accurate locating, cataloguing and retrieval of specific music items becomes a specialist area. Cataloguing and bibliographical control and access is a major issue for most music collections and many musical items tend to remain uncatalogued, or described only at the collection level, perhaps with in-house finding aids. Music collections, both scores and recorded sound, have the lowest percentage of format coverage on Australia's National Bibliographic Database and small special collections frequently remain invisible. Nevertheless any system of description and location applied consistently will facilitate access. Use of standard AACR2 cataloguing rules, Library of Congress Music Subject Headings and use of music thesauri are some of the methods used in libraries.

Technologies

The multiple formats of music, not only scores but also recorded sound, video and emerging electronic resources in multimedia formats, require quality facilities for listening and recording and downloading. Sound, audio-visual and multimedia formats have faced abrupt technological changes and changing standards – the shift from 78 to LP to CD to DVD demands replacement strategies and



poses problems for preservation and ongoing access. Web delivery of music is opening up qualitative shifts in delivering musical data in integrated formats in real time. The digital revolution can support the conversion of music collections into digital media and provides new opportunities for digital preservation, publishing music on demand, centralised digital storage and management systems, storing and streaming digitally formatted sound to computer work stations or the controlled provision of music library materials legally for distance education, research and study. But the cost of supporting new technology is expensive for small libraries; specialist plug-ins and software is required as the standards and formats are not yet standardised; and access requires higher level computing facilities, server and broadband capacity plus headphones or listening posts! The popular commercial music market as yet dominates music on the web, although there are many sacred music sites emerging from the USA.

Resource sharing



How can you significantly add layers of support to your music resources and services, when you are a small specialist library?

- Ready access to information about music has massively improved with specialist on-line international music databases, indexing and lexicographic services and products.⁸ The National Library of Australia recently developed the Australian agency for International Standard Music Numbering (ISMN⁹), providing support for publishers and composers, plus access to Australian music publications and the International Directory of Music Publishers.¹⁰ The Australian Musical Association provides directories of music retailers, suppliers and

importers. As part of our work on national music infrastructure, the National Library of Australia has developed a register of international music web delivery and gateway projects.¹¹

- Cooperative agreements and reciprocal borrowing rights with specialist music libraries provide a ready-made solution to both collection building and access. Music libraries, like theological libraries, tend to be small and specialised in nature but benefit from close working relationships with their users, often the central hub of their organisations. The problem is that music libraries are mostly housed within music schools with their own priorities for music performance: in Australia today this does not generally mean sacred music. Therefore their commitment to support cooperative collection development and collection management might require an appropriate exchange of funds or services.
- In larger centres, maintaining relationships with churches, church schools and church archives often provides extended access to music collections for worship; these are not always able to be well managed, so pooling of library services and collections access might benefit all parties.
- Building relationships with other special interest organizations faced with similar issues – for example with the International Association of Music Libraries (IAML) – will provide some benefits. Like theological libraries, music libraries also have specialist needs, often stand outside mainstream library organisation, can be somewhat isolated, and are often poorly resourced.
- The National Library and IAML (Australia) have been working to improve the situation of music on the National Bibliographic Database, including easier batch loading of records that will recognise and maintain local in-house music data. A guide

for searching for music in the Kinetica service has been developed.¹²

National infrastructure

The National Library of Australia, together with ScreenSound Australia and other national music organisations, is currently developing national web infrastructure for music: *MusicAustralia*. The vision is to develop a web-based music service that will provide integrated, seamless access to Australian music resources and information. In the first instance, we have undertaken a pilot to develop, test and evaluate delivery mechanisms to make accessible digital music objects in score and sound. The first pilot service is now available on <http://www.musicaustralia.org>. This pilot has involved

- a) Digitising selected Australian sheet music and digitising selected sound recordings as mp3 files for web delivery;
- b) Building institutional digital storage, management and delivery systems to retrieve digitised and digitally generated scores and audio and to deliver and manipulate these musical objects on-line;
- c) Developing and testing the cooperative mechanisms for retrieving and simultaneously delivering score and sound from across different institutions, providing the user with an integrated experience of the music from a single search.

A future challenge for theological libraries will be how to network and deliver sacred music resources as part of this national endeavour!

Robyn Holmes

⁵ In Australia, through the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) Church licence and the Christian Copyright Licensing system. More information from the APRA web site: <http://www.apra.com.au/dist/disnbcst.htm> [Accessed 21 August 2002]

⁶ Covered by Australasian Mechanical Copy-

right Owners Society (AMCOS) <http://www.apra.com.au/About/AbIntro.htm> [Accessed 21 August 2002]

⁷ Covered by the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) <http://www.apra.com.au/index.htm> [Accessed 21 August 2002]

⁸ Most notably, RILM (Repertoire International de Litterature Musicale), RISM (Repertoire International des Sources Musicales), RIPM (Repertoire International de la Presse Musicale), RidIM (Repertoire International d'Iconographie Musicale) and *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians revised second edition* available on-line.

⁹ ISMN Agency home page <http://www.nla.gov.au/ismn/index.html> [Accessed 22 August 2002]

¹⁰ Australian Music Centre home page <http://www.amcoz.com.au/> [Accessed 22 August 2002]

¹¹ <http://www.musicaustralia.org/infor/internationalprojects.html>

¹² *Searching for Music in KineticaWeb* available on-line <http://www.nla.gov.au/kinetica/manuals/guide2.html> [Accessed 21 August 2002], in PDF and Word format.

[Apologies from the Editor for the error in formatting in the last issue (p.17) which left most of the endnotes missing. Here they are: ...]

¹ 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy', chapter VI Sacred Music, promulgated by Pope Paul VI, Dec.4, 1963. Published in *The Sixteen documents of Vatican II and the instruction on the Liturgy*. Vatican Council 2nd, 1962-65. St Paul Edition, Magister Books, Boston, 1967. P49. (Note that translations vary: 'oneness of spirit' = *unity of minds*; 'invests the rites with greater solemnity' = *confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites*).

² Score available from the National library Australia web site in digital form <http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-an6260761>

³ *Together in song: Australian Hymn Book II*, East Melbourne, HarperCollins Religious, 1999.

⁴ *ibid*, p.ix.