

Music and Performing Arts Library

Annual Report

July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020

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I. Unit Narrative

1. Major Activities and Accomplishments

MPAL serves one large school (Music) and two smaller departments (Dance and Theatre), all three of which are actively engaged in scholarship, creation, and performance. We serve an estimated 1,000 students and 150 faculty as our core constituents, in addition to the numerous individuals on and off campus who regularly use our collections and services for scholarship and enjoyment.

Like all others on campus, due to the coronavirus pandemic MPAL was affected by the shift to online instruction and working from home in mid-March of 2020 when the Library closed to the public. This, of course, affected our gate count, circulation, and other statistics, but allowed us to focus on other projects that could easily be accomplished from home, such as digital project preparation. However, despite our truncated “in-person” year, we were again one of the busiest locations among all libraries based on collection usage (ranking 6th after Main, UGL, Oak Street, Grainger, and SSHEL, respectively), and based on reference and gate count activity.

We had some staffing changes this year—the head of the unit was on sabbatical from February 16, 2020 through August 15, 2020, and Marek Sroka ably served as acting head. Kate Lambaria took on the bulk of the subject specialist duties in the Head’s absence, and even despite the increased workload met collecting and other deadlines and provided a high level of service to patrons. MPAL also lost a staff member this year, as one full-time staff member retired at the end of May 2020. In an example of the excellent training and experience our graduate assistants receive through working with us, our departing Graduate Assistant Thom Jencks secured a position as Performing Arts Librarian for Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Specific activities are described thematically below, and additional ongoing initiatives are listed in the section regarding progress towards FY20 goals.

Collection Management and Assessment

In fall 2019 we expanded our **loanable tech pool** to include more adapters and chargers, as well as microphones and a foot pedal. These immediately proved to be popular with patrons as are the portable CD/DVD drives and iPads that we offer. We will continue to assess their use and the needs of our patrons.

In continued efforts to make our print collection as relevant and useful as possible, we completed an **assessment** of a specific section of our collection (the MTs—primarily music pedagogy), which will result in some materials being deduplicated and some materials being sent to OSLF. We also completed a collection assessment of materials regarding composers and playwrights of color. Both of these efforts will result in new materials being ordered for the collection. In addition, we worked with CMS to contribute serial volumes to the next phase of

the **BTAA SPR**.

The transfer almost **42,000 unprocessed gift recordings** (primarily 78s and LPs) from the Press Building basement storage area to the Internet Archive for digitization was completed in August 2019. IA has begun to digitize these materials and more information as well as the content can be found here for the 78s:

https://archive.org/details/78rpm_universityofillinoisaudioarchive?tab=about and here for the LPs and 45s (there is no content in this section yet):

https://archive.org/details/vinyl_universityofillinoisaudioarchive?tab=about. This is a significant addition to the preservation of sound recordings, a time-sensitive effort given the fragile nature of many sound carrier formats. Few institutions are able to address this on a large scale on an individual basis and the Internet Archive allows content to be captured and shared widely. We are working with the Library's Director of Communications to publicize this online collection once more materials are available.

Cataloging of the 800+ title Hymn Tune Index microfilm corpus was completed in November of 2019 by ACS staff and the titles were added to MPAL's Special Collections. This work was done as an outcome of working with ACS to define and prioritize MPAL's various cataloging projects. The ACS and MPAL unit heads were successful in winning a University Library **Merrick fund grant to carry out the project**. In addition, the Head of MPAL had for the last few years been working with Nicholas Temperley, the emeritus faculty member who created the Hymn Tune Index and donated the microfilms to the Library, to create a succession plan for the project. Sadly, Temperley passed away in April 2020. He left a sizeable sum to the Library to aid in the continuation of the online Hymn Tune Index tool and continue processing of additional microfilms and documents.

In late summer 2019, we completed the effort to **inventory and analyze the 900+ RISM holdings** (manuscript and early printed editions of music) housed in MPAL's Special Collections and RBML. We have outlined needed cataloging efforts on these materials and have begun the next phase of identifying additional UIUC holdings to report to RISM, an international index of importance to music scholars around the world. Related to this, we have begun discussions with RBML to transfer some of the oldest/rarest items to them for better physical stewardship and cataloging. This year saw the beginning of a project to **digitize** a six-volume set of broadsides (song sheets) from our **Special Collections** for inclusion in the Internet Archive and metadata capture is complete. We will be working to identify additional materials from our RISM holdings and other Special Collections for digitization.

We worked closely with **UGL** to **transfer** appropriate print and media items to our collections; related to this, we also had discussions regarding the selection of theatre media materials with the English and Drama Librarian. Collaboration with the English and Drama Librarian on developing MPAL's theatre collections is ongoing.

As with all other libraries on campus, we engaged in extensive work to clean up catalog records in preparation for the **Alma** launch, working with Michael Norman, ACS, and CMS to identify and fix problems. This work is ongoing. We also worked with Janelle Sander to review existing location and circulation policy information and determine how these would translate into Alma/Primo.

Outreach and Engagement

Our major outreach initiative this year was hosting an open house to celebrate our 75th anniversary on September 6th. Approximately 70 people joined us at the event. We had several activities and giveaways of branded materials purchased through a **Library Marketing Grant**, plus a display of items in our collection, an exhibit covering the history of MPAL, and demonstrations of the player piano. There was also a trivia contest and one lucky winner took home a copy of *The Beatles Anthology*. We hope to turn the history exhibit into a virtual one and have plans to work with Don Krummel, Professor Emeritus in the iSchool, to capture his **oral history of the Music and Performing Arts Library**.

Our renovated **player piano** continues to draw attention and this year we held **monthly public demonstrations** as well as some by appointment for members of the campus and surrounding communities. We even created an online event calendar to help publicize these and other MPAL events: <https://calendars.illinois.edu/list/6591>. We plan to do one or more virtual piano demonstrations this coming year. More information about the piano and our roll collection can be found here:

<https://www.library.illinois.edu/mpal/about/collections/specialcollections/steinway-duo-art-player-piano/>.

We continued our successful outreach and engagement relationship with the **Krannert Center for the Performing Arts**. In addition to the popular **monthly guides** that we produce to highlight our collections related to their performances, we also continued our **pop-up library events** at KCPA. Six of these were held during select performances and were staffed by graduate and student assistants. We developed an **assessment tool** to track items that were displayed and that circulated from the event, as well as to measure patron interactions (both reference and general interest queries); unfortunately, the pandemic led to the cancellation of KCPA events and our pop-up libraries before this could be implemented. As in the previous year, these events proved to be successful for increasing the visibility of MPAL and its collections and services and strengthening our relationship with KCPA.

Other ways we increased accessibility and visibility of our collections included expanding our **new materials display** initiative to include media items, as it has been very popular with patrons. We continue to mount **monthly exhibits in the Library** and create LibGuides and bibliography handouts for each and shifted those to online-only exhibits in the spring. In fall of 2019 we launched the outcomes from two unit-awarded University Library Marketing Grants: **signage and bookmarks** (fall 2017 award, with design work completed in 2018) and open house giveaways in the form of **branded pencils and earbuds** (spring 2019 award). The bookmarks were especially well-received by faculty and students and we will need to get more printed once we are back to in-person service again.

This year we continued to get input from and share information with the School of Music Library Committee (chaired by the MPAL head). We also made effective use of our **Twitter** feed (which now has 1,000 followers) and our three-year-old biannual **newsletter** (<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/101886>) to share information with patrons and others. The Head of MPAL also participated in the 2019 **Library Friends Event**, bringing

materials to display and conversing with several donors.

In October of 2019, the MPAL librarians served as local arrangement co-chairs of the **annual meeting of the Midwest chapter of the Music Library Association (MWMLA)**. In this role we hosted two days of meetings in Champaign-Urbana for 70 music librarian attendees from universities and colleges across the Midwest. This included tours of MPAL, where items from our Special Collections were on display, as well as demonstrations of the player piano. In addition, we invited Scott Schwartz from the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music and Gabriel Solis from the School of Music and current Head of the Department of Theatre to be guest speakers.

Last but not least, MPAL granted a request from the **Illinois State Museum** for the loan of an item from our Historic US Sheet Music collection <https://www.library.illinois.edu/mpal/about/collections/specialcollections/uiucsheetmusic/> (Washing Day by William Hawkes Smith, an early example of music lithography) for their exhibit “Fashioning Illinois: 1820-1900”.

Reference and Instructional Services

MPAL again had a strong year for reference and instruction services. We continued to offer expanded reference service hours by having graduate assistants staff two nights and one weekend afternoon a week in addition to our Monday-Friday 9am-5pm staffed hours. These additional hours support periods when trained reference staff were previously unavailable.

- We had approximately 3,000 directional and reference transactions across our two staffed desks (three seats), librarian offices, and off campus. During sweeps week, we were recorded as having the third most transactions of any location (behind RIS and Grainger).
- Instruction sessions (including online), player piano demonstrations, and tours numbered 30 this year, reaching approximately 605 people.
- We created and/or maintained over 60 course and topical LibGuides, which received almost 30,000 views this year—up over 30% from last year, with increases throughout the year, not just during the pandemic.
- We built upon existing one-off workshops created at MPAL over the last several years to develop a sustainable workshop series of on citing and using sources specifically for performing artists.

MPAL also launched our **newly re-designed website** this year, which makes it easier for patrons to find our research resources and other information. This was the product of Kate Lambaria’s ongoing work with the Library User Experience Coordinator and the web team.

2. Progress toward FY20 goals

NB: only ongoing or incomplete work is listed here. Completed goals are highlighted above. Many of the in-progress or not-started progress remained in these states this year due to the unit head’s sabbatical and/or the pandemic as much of the work requires being on-site with materials.

- Work with ACS (and RBML) to identify resources to address needed improvements to existing catalog records for items in our *RISM* holdings, in the Renaissance Music Archive, MO items in our Special Collections, as well as for Marcettes and MARS mismatches throughout our collection—*Ongoing*
- Shelf-listing and inventory project in scores collection—*Ongoing*
- Create inventory of the holdings in our almost 300 volume Binders Collection of historic sheet music—*In progress—roughly half-way complete*
- Continue score use analysis project to improve our collecting practices—*In progress; some changes implemented*
- Conduct an MPAL Special Collections assessment to identify unique items and research need for digitization (basis for this project was begun by a practicum student in Spring 2018)—*Not started*
- Conduct a collection development project to identify and increase score and recording holdings by University of Illinois composers and performers—*Not started*
- Explore possibilities for grants to formally catalog and digitize piano roll collection—*Not started*
- MPAL Reference and MPAL Stacks deduplication project: in an effort to optimize use of our print reference collection, we will undertake a collection assessment project to evaluate holdings duplicated in our reference and stacks collections and shift/weed materials appropriately—*Not started*
- iPads replacement exploration: we will be examining options for replacing our aging and popular loanable iPads, which we've been offering since 2013 as the result of winning a University Library Innovation Grant—*In progress*

3. FY21 Goals

In FY21 we will continue ongoing work and start projects not yet begun from the list above. In addition, MPAL has several new projects and initiatives in mind for the coming years, some of which may need to be postponed until the Library reopens. As in past years, many of these cross over more than one Strategic Direction category, so the lists below could be reorganized in various ways.

SD1. Pro-active and trusted partners in scholarship, discovery, and innovation

- Continue efforts to identify rare and significant items from MPAL's Special Collections to digitize—this will be a multi-year endeavor.
- Continue targeted work on collection assessment and deduping and transferring, etc.
- Evaluate additional online content platforms for addition to our collection offerings.
- Work with Library IT to help transition the online Hymn Tune Index database to a new platform and with the new keeper of the project to identify additional films and documents to accession into MPAL's Special Collections.

SD2. Transformative learning experiences and SD3. Societal and global impact

- Offer virtual reference services (chat and online meetings) to MPAL patrons on a regular

schedule.

- MPAL history digital exhibit: use research completed for MPAL's 75th Anniversary exhibit to create a digital exhibit. Conduct an oral history with Don Krummel, Professor Emeritus in the iSchool, to capture the history of the Music and Performing Arts Library for inclusion in the exhibit.
- Create a collection of online learning objects that encourage user participation and engagement and that can be deployed in multiple courses.
- Develop a “performing special collections” event series that encourages dance, music, and theatre students as well as community members to engage with and learn from the unique materials in our Special Collections.
- Produce one or more virtual player piano demonstrations and lectures.

SD4. Strategic investments for a sustainable library environment

- Collaborate with BTAA Music Librarians group to investigate potential subscription savings on online music platforms such as nkoda.

4. Challenges

Our primary challenges remain much the same as in recent years: our dated (and in some cases damaged) physical environment, the large number of under-cataloged materials in our collections (especially Special Collections), and lack of capacity to engage deeply with ongoing special projects due to limited staffing. These issues impact patrons and staff alike. While we have tried to make good use of our existing gift and endowment funds for project help and furniture, such funds have diminished and are not easily or quickly replaced. In addition, we need additional specialized cataloging staff who can handle rare music materials.

5. Unit Needs

MPAL continues to work with Facilities, ACS and CMS to address our greatest needs, and work is under discussion and/or underway in most areas:

- Facilities improvements (notably a new ceiling, new furniture, new flooring and paint, etc.);
- Cataloging or catalog enhancements for under-processed collections, unprocessed gifts, and miscataloged items;
- Deduplication of holdings and/or transfer of materials to OSLF;
- Reclassification of DDC materials into LCC.

6. Contributions of Graduate Assistants, Hourlies, and Practicum students

- Two state-funded .25 FTE GAs
- One endowment funded .25 FTE grad hourly
- One extra help hourly (limited term appointment in Summer 2019)

Each regular GA and grad hourly student spent 6 hours a week at the service desk performing reference and circulation duties; during spring 2020, each worked an additional 2 hours at the service

desk to provide extra coverage while the Head was on sabbatical. In addition, each student had special projects that they worked on during their other 4 hours per week, with major examples listed below. This list also includes the projects conducted by the temporary grad (who did not participate in reference duties).

<u>Major Responsibilities</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<i>Outreach and Engagement</i>	Special events and marketing (<i>75th Anniversary Open House</i>); Krannert Center LibGuides creation and pop-up libraries; Social media account management; Exhibit creation
<i>Collection Management and Assessment</i>	Collection assessment and related ordering (<i>KCPA events, composers of color, musical works with tape/electronics, M3 inventory</i>); RISM item inventory; Shelf mapping and capacity review; Review of major French monograph series; Clean up of catalog records that were OCLC duplicates (coordinated with Head of ACS)
<i>Instruction and Other Public Services</i>	Course integrated instruction sessions; Workshops on special topics (<i>citing music and performing arts sources</i>); LibGuides maintenance and creation (<i>keyboard resources, strings resources, dance research, electronic music, citing sources, KCPA events</i>); LibGuides inventory for Alma/Primo transition; Loanable iPads management; De-stressor events.
<i>Digital Projects</i>	Metadata creation for broadsides digitization; Research for broadsides digital exhibit.

II. Statistical Profile

1. Facilities

- User seating counts
 - at tables--98 total (86 on first floor; 12 on 2nd floor)
 - at carrels--48 total (8 on first floor; 40 on second floor--incl. 8 listening carrels)
 - at public workstations--18
 - in group study rooms--24
 - informal/other--17
- Number of hours open to the public per week
 - Summer II 2018--48 hours per week
 - Fall 2018--75.5 hours per week
 - Spring 2019--75.5 hours per week
 - Summer I 2019--40 hours per week

2. Personnel

Faculty

Kirstin Dougan Johnson (1.0 FTE) (on sabbatical 2/26/2020 until 8/15/2020)

Marek Sroka (acting unit head during Johnson sabbatical)

Kate Lambaria (1.0 FTE)

Staff

William Buss (1.0 FTE)

David Butler (1.0 FTE)

Josh Hankemeier (1.0 FTE)

Diane Pye (1.0 FTE) through May 2020

Nancy Taylor (1.0 FTE)

Graduate Assistants/Hourlies/Practicum students

David Floyd (0.25 FTE GA, state funded)

Thom Jencks (0.25 FTE GA, state funded)

Gabrielle LaBare (.25 FTE, King endowment funded)

Thornton Miller (Limited term graduate hourly, endowment funded, May-August 2019)

Student Assistants

MPAL's FY18 student assistant wage budget was \$22,010. We employed 7 student workers this year.

3. User Services

- Sweeps week gate count: 1,925-Fall; 1,924-Spring
- Circulation (from Voyager circulation reports)
 - Initial and renewal: 28,584
 - Discharge: 13,251
 - Call slips: 2,324
- Reference interactions (from DeskTracker)
 - 3,023 (all MPAL locations, all types)
- Presentations (from the Instructional Statistics database)
 - Number of presentations to groups: 30
 - Number of participants in group presentations: 605