Message from the Chair

Ellwood Colahan – University of Denver

Greetings MPMLA members! Thank you for your support in electing me chair of the Chapter, and I undertake to fulfill your confident expectations to the best of my poor abilities. Thanks to Myrna Layton for her work as Chair over the last two years, and Janice Bunker for her work as Secretary-Treasurer over the last six years and counting. Amy Hunsaker having accepted a position at UVA, there is no Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect to recognize at present, but I do thank Member-at-Large Avery Boddie for agreeing to fulfill the duties of this position in the absence of the elected officer, as specified in our bylaws. Actually, Avery had no choice; this greatness has been unavoidably thrust upon him. However since these duties consist only of making the reservation for the MLA Chapter dinner, he didn’t mind too much. Next May we will hold a special election to replace Amy as Vice-Chair/Chair Elect.

This year has been a year like no other. The April newsletter detailed some of the drastic changes our institutions and our music libraries went through in response to the dramatic onset of the COVID pandemic. This once-a-century catastrophe has yet to subside. The summer brought another historic advent: a painful yet long-overdue national reckoning over race and injustice, whose ramifications and consequences are as yet unfolding in a historically polarized political climate. This “second pandemic” is not unrelated to the first, as prominent voices in our land attempted to scapegoat some communities with responsibility for the virus itself, resulting in a dramatic rise in hate speech and even violence against Asian-Americans. The summer also brought an environmental reckoning, as global warming fueled already the second most-active hurricane season in history (not over yet) and a devastating wildfire season – most prominently on the west coast, but affecting the Rocky Mountain region as well. Here in Denver, the smell of smoke on the air has become another unwelcome part of the new normal.

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MPMLA was forced by the COVID crisis to transition to an online annual meeting in May. My deepest thanks to Stephanie Bonjack for pushing us early to think about this. The timing of our meeting was such that many of us were not completely adjusted to the new reality, and Stephanie’s forward thinking helped us change plans in time for a successful pivot. Once the decision was made to move the meeting fully online, we realized that we didn’t need Thursday for a travel day, and could hold the meeting Thursday and Friday instead of Friday and Saturday, which freed up a full weekend for conference attendees, a welcome benefit of the forced change.

Matt Stock, Erica Argyropoulos, and Christine Edwards, the original host and the Program Committee, swiftly and smoothly planned the online meeting. University of Denver’s Zoom account was enlisted for the platform. A practice session was held the Tuesday of the week of the meeting, with Janice and Myrna’s participation since they would be conducting the Business Meeting. This was a useful opportunity to get familiar with the Zoom meeting controls, discuss how to handle voting, and test the sometimes-spotty ability to send documents through Zoom chat. Afterwards we all felt a little more confident that we knew what we were doing.

The meeting went off without a hitch. The online format meant that it was easier than usual for people to attend, and we had 96 people register for our meeting – surely a record. Not all 96 were present in every session, but we regularly had 30 or more present at once, a number MPMLA has not seen for some time. In addition, we found that presenting online minimized the usual technical hiccups with issues like sound, lighting, and projection; and the videorecordings of presentations were much higher quality than we usually manage.

The breakout room feature of Zoom facilitated the focus group sessions with our MLA visitors Holling Smith-Borne and Matthew Vest. For part of the second day we were concerned that a major thunderstorm system moving through central Oklahoma might knock out a few people’s internet connections, but in the end that did not happen. The meeting was a success, and we unexpectedly found ourselves on the cutting edge of MLA chapter remote conferencing. We were contacted by the editors of CAML review about our experience, and Christine and I wrote up a short account for their 2020 issue (forthcoming). When SEMLA was planning their own chapter meeting later in the summer, they reached out to MPMLA for advice. The success of this meeting inspired many of those involved to envision a future in which MPMLA will always include this element in our annual meetings.
That was then. This is now. As the fall terms grind on, our students, our staffs, and our institutions are facing new and unprecedented challenges. Few libraries have the collection budget available this year they might have expected this time last year. Some institutions have suffered severe enrollment reductions and loss of income from student housing and athletics programs, affecting everything from staffing to program sustainability. Some of us are working to support faculty who find themselves challenged to teach under circumstances they never imagined, and some of us are worried about staff members who may be ill or at high risk, or who may have suffered their own tragic losses in the course of the pandemic.

Most of all, we are supporting a population of students under greater stress than ever before. A CDC study in August reported that adults this year are experiencing two to four times the normal prevalence of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, compared to last year. One in ten reported starting or increasing substance use because of COVID-19. These effects are especially pronounced among younger adults [http://bit.ly/MMWR-200814].

What can we do about this? Music librarians won’t discover a vaccine, or eliminate racism, or reverse global warming. But there are important things we can do. We can help our students feel supported, by doing our utmost to deliver materials they need for their study. We can exercise flexibility and forbearance to account for the difficulties they are working under. We can offer them programming centered on student and musician wellness. Laura Jacyna and Marsha Harris spoke of their work in this area at our most recent annual meeting. We can diversify our collections to include under-represented voices and critically consider the way we describe these voices in our catalogs. University of Denver is trying to do the former by collecting music of Native Americans, in recognition of our founder’s role in past oppression. Clara Burns reported on her work in the latter area at last year’s annual meeting.

More than this, though, our ongoing, quiet work as stewards of the human record is a necessary part of inspiring all people to focus on the possibility of creation over the threat of destruction. Music may not save the world, but it is – as much as anything – the reason the world deserves to be saved. If we can only keep that understanding alive, we will have done much.
Ann Myers – University of Northern Colorado

Ann Myers is the Music Librarian at the University of Northern Colorado and holds degrees in both historical musicology and library and information studies.

Originally from Iowa, she has worked all over the country in all kinds of different libraries, including sheet music archives at the University of North Carolina, parochial school libraries for children from preschool through middle school, and public libraries in Miami. She is interested in a wide variety of research fields, including early music, American country music history, Celtic folk genres, and the intersections of music and literature.

The Skinner Music Library is open to students, faculty, and the public, but is taking serious precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. All staff and patrons must wear masks at all times while in the building, and the maximum room capacity for all meeting rooms and study alcoves has been reduced to allow for only as many people as can safely social distance within. Our staff sanitizes the service desks, study tables, computers and equipment, and copiers every day before opening as well as having a deep clean by janitorial staff on the weekend, and patrons are encouraged to sanitize computers and tables after use with provided sprays and wipes. All returned materials are quarantined for four days before being put back into circulation, and staff have relocated to various other rooms in the building to make sure no one has to work in close proximity to anyone else. Any staff or student workers with symptoms immediately isolate and return to work only after a negative COVID-19 test or a suitable quarantine period (assisted by our Student Health Center, which administers tests as needed).

It’s challenging, but the students have been very polite and helpful in following the rules and wiping things down after themselves, and we’ve so far been able to keep serving patrons!

1. Why is a piano so hard to open? (Because the keys are on the inside)

2. What type of music are balloons afraid of? (Pop music)

3. How do you make a bandstand? (Take away their chairs)
Myrna Layton – Brigham Young University

Remember this picture from April 2020?

Now that space looks like this:

I would call that an improvement. I am not sure if it is astronomically better than it was before the remodel, but it definitely is an improvement over the plastic hanging from the ceiling!

In other news, I achieved Continuing Faculty Status (= tenure) at BYU, as well as attaining the rank of Senior Librarian, and became the department chair of the Humanities section of the library. I am so thankful to those in this chapter who wrote letters of support for my candidacy—I could not be the librarian I am without the support and friendship of my colleagues, both at BYU and within MPMLA.

Janice Bunker – Brigham Young University

Hello, friends!

Things are a combination of same-old and totally-awesome. I work mostly from home, with forays into the library to return finished items. Our library created a wonderful procedure to allow catalogers to take some uncatalogued items home to work on, which I return to a specific location so they can be routed to the labeling unit. I am taking organ lessons, music history, form & analysis and organ literature at the University of Utah, as an Alexander Schreiner Organ Scholarship student, and I am having tons of fun! I only travel to Salt Lake once a week for school. I am playing tenor recorder and Baroque flute (using two different types of masks) in an early music ensemble conducted by our own Lisa Chaufty. My junior recital will be live-streamed November 8 at 4 p.m. from https://music.utah.edu/libby-live/index.php. You are all invited! I owe the library at Denver U kudos for letting me inter-library loan one of the scores I needed. Thanks! I went on two quilting trips this summer. Here’s the current quilt-in-progress, which is mounted on my cool design wall in my “new” sewing room (courtesy of child #4 moving out).
Hello from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta. The pandemic caused the U of A to close its doors in mid-March, and we’re still working mostly remotely, with only a few classes being held in-person, on campus. All of our library locations have been closed since March as well, with the exception of one library where students can book times to come in and use public computers on the main floor and in the basement. There is no physical access to the stacks, but we are offering curbside pick up (as of sometime in June I think) and distance services as well (i.e. mailing physical materials to U of A students not currently residing in Edmonton). And of course, all bibliographic instruction is on-line now. We’ve heard rumours that there may be more on-campus activity come the new year, but for the time being, this will be the status quo...

I think I mentioned in the last Conventional Title update that the Government of Alberta had drastically slashed funding to higher education in the province back in February.

This, combined with the pandemic, has resulted in the permanent closure of two of our library locations on campus, which in turn has resulted in many of our materials being shifted and/or relocated to our off-site storage facility. The music collection was affected by these changes, and so when we are able to come back to campus, students will discover a much leaner selection of music materials on site. Fortunately, our materials are still available, but unfortunately not as browse-able as they used to be. One must move with the times, I suppose...(!)

Here are a couple of pics of me...

and my supervisor (Negrita) hard at work in our basement office...

(I have never in my life taken a selfie before... anything for you guys!) Stay safe and healthy everyone!!
Bob Diaz – University of Arizona

Editor’s note: Bob is the Special Collections Librarian/Archivist and curator for the Performing Arts and Architecture at the University of Arizona Libraries and previously spent 12 years as the Music, Dance and Theatre Arts Librarian in the Fine Arts Library

The University of Arizona (UA) Fine Arts Library is one of three branch libraries that are part of the University of Arizona Libraries system. It is located a little over half a mile away from the UA Main Library on the northwest corner of campus in the School of Music building, and it primarily serves the information needs of the faculty and students of the School of Music. The School has a strong performance-focused curriculum, but it also offers advanced degrees in musicology, ethnomusicology and composition, among other areas. Musicology faculty and their graduate students have long been accustomed to using the Library on an almost daily basis, as it is conveniently located just down the hall from their offices. The Library is also used by students and faculty in the School of Theatre Arts, Television and Film, the School of Art and the College of Architecture, all of which comprise what is known as the University’s Fine Arts complex. The Center for Creative Photography and the UA Art Museum are also in the vicinity.

The Fine Arts library started out as the University of Arizona School of Music Library well over fifty years ago, and was initially managed by staff of the School of Music. It primarily housed a highly prized collection of scores and recordings that distinguished faculty such as Dr. James Anthony had carefully built over several decades. In the early 1990’s, management of the library was handed over to the University Library, and the collection was expanded to include books, journals, audio-visual and other materials that had formerly been housed at the Main Library. Consolidation of collections and a change in management of the Library were seen as positive moves, particularly given that the University Library’s budget was much healthier than that of the School of Music’s. Over the years, the University Library has poured thousands of dollars into building the Fine Arts Library’s collections, and to providing access to online resources such as journals and databases. It has also invested large amounts of funds for renovation of the space, increasing it in size and providing more room for library materials, student study rooms and computer terminals.

Unfortunately, over the past 20 odd years, other branch libraries in the vicinity, such as those of the School of Architecture and the Center for Creative Photography, have been forced to close due to heavy budget cuts. At one point the University library administration also wanted to close the Fine Arts Library, but the faculty and friends of the School of Music fought hard to keep it open, and they succeeded. The passage of new student fees dedicated to library services in recent years has helped keep services going. However, with continued budget cuts in recent years, the Library’s hours have been severely reduced, and keeping faculty and students “happy” has been a difficult, if not impossible goal to reach.

When Covid-19 hit in March, the entire campus of the University of Arizona was forced to shut down, and all courses were moved to an online environment. All of the Libraries were closed, and staff were asked to work from home. Patrons were told to hold on to their books, the collections were inaccessible, and ILL services came to a grinding halt. Nevertheless, the staff did its best to continue to provide services virtually. Still, many patrons expressed frustration, particularly graduate students and faculty whose research was thwarted because they couldn’t get access to the Library’s collections.
In early August, the Library moved to providing additional limited services. Patrons could finally return their materials and request books and computer equipment. However, it wasn't until later in the month, when school started, that the Library opened some of its space to the campus. The Albert Weaver Science Library and the Health Sciences Library are now open during the week, but seating has been reduced and there are stringent rules in place that require the wearing of masks and social distancing. The Main library lobby is open for picking up books and interlibrary loan materials as well as loaner laptops and other equipment, but the rest of the facility is closed.

The Fine Arts Library is also closed until the end of the year, but patrons can request materials online, and pick them up within a day or two at the Main Library. Reference and instruction continue to be provided virtually. Librarian Rachel Castro has been the liaison to the School of Music since 2015. She had this to say about the current situation.

“When the Fine Arts Library closed, the biggest concern was access to print resources, particularly scores and reference materials. Since the library has resumed limited services, needs have shifted toward access to technology and building an understanding of evolving library policy. For example, there have been requests for access to laptops, cameras, and micro-film printers. There have also been questions about returning items, dealing with delays in transiting library materials and interlibrary loans, and changes to our late return policies/fees”.

At present, librarians and archivists continue to partner with faculty to provide online instruction, and reference service is provided virtually to the campus community and beyond.

Patrons can also request digital copies of materials housed in Special Collections. While nobody knows when campus life will get back to normal, the University of Arizona Library staff remain committed to providing access to print and online materials as well as other resources. We all look forward to the day when our libraries are once again filled with students and other visitors busily engaged in learning and study.

Katy Levings – Oklahoma Panhandle State University

Not much going on here. Our roof is being fixed (fingers crossed); it’s been leaking since the 80’s, and we had to close our big meeting room a few years ago due to increasing damage from leaks. Hopefully, after the roof is fixed we’ll be able to reconstruct our youth room. It was dismantled to make way for a grand foyer for another department. The library is in a sparsely populated area, so COVID cases are rare. It makes it difficult to get people to wear masks inside the library; they don’t seem to believe it’s real, and they think they are invincible. We don’t have much space to quarantine materials; half the library building was given to athletics and another department two years ago, including library offices and workrooms. We’re doing our best to stay safe and keep our patrons safe. On the plus side, the weather hasn’t been bad and Wonder Woman 1984 is coming out in December 😊

New Order’s 1983 Blue Monday featured in Wonder Woman 1984
Avery Boddie – University of Nevada Las Vegas

At UNLV Music Library, we just finished phase one of a renovation where we replaced our old study carrels...

These tables have greatly improved the overall appearance of the library...

as well as providing users with the ability to reconfigure the tables to allow for more collaborative research and study.

The next phase of our renovation consists of using 100k to replace carpeting, redesign our service desk, replace existing chairs, and purchase a monitor to display news and announcements from the library, as well as the purchase of a display/exhibition case.

Anita Breckbill – University of Nebraska Lincoln

The "new (ab)normal" with COVID gives us stacks closed with crime-scene tape, HathiTrust emergency access, patrons masking in the library, patrons Zooming their classes in the library, and many faculty and staff working from home.

At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, we are undergoing enormous budget cuts spread out over the next three years, and our Dance Department is currently on the chopping block. The Libraries will see a large cut--mostly from collections. In spite of the collections cut, we are looking at subscribing to a digital scores library, and we are currently having consecutive trials of nkoda and Classical Scores Library, that will take us to before Thanksgiving, which is the end of the semester. I spent my summer cataloging a named donation of a jazz CD collection, and the CDs are piled in our back room, awaiting marking.
My pandemic hobby has been to bicycle the neighborhoods of Lincoln—ride to a neighborhood and bike north/south/east/west on all the streets—evaluating the houses and landscaping as I go. Returning home, I highlight my Lincoln map to show my progress. Here’s my map (picture). My legs are toned, and my heart rate is low, thanks to COVID-19.

Jenny Thompson – University of Denver

Our Best of Chapters winner at MPMLA 2020 was Jenny Thompson, for her paper titled “Bais in the Canon: An Exploration into Whitewashing in America’s Classical Music and its Forgotten African-American Past.” She followed up that win by earning the top spot in the MLA Best of Chapters competition. More about that on page 15-16. To get to know Jenny better:

Jenny Thompson, 23, is a second-year Masters student at the University of Denver’s Lamont School of Music, where she pursues an MM in Classical Vocal Performance and studies opera as a lyric coloratura soprano. She enjoys academic writing and research, and has written on musical topics such as the Baroque castrati, Surrealism in Modern Opera, African-American composers, and vocal pedagogy for transgender singers. She is a faithful Los Angeles native who has since moved to other sunny places like Miami and Colorado, and loves to spend lots of time in nature.

Jenny is greatly passionate about the survival and well-being of the arts, especially opera, and believes that this can best be achieved through education and awareness. Her personal beliefs surrounding equal access to the arts and representation in music fuel her life’s mission to seek justice within the musical arts and the world at large—where we can envision a creative, harmonious space for all.

- “Why is American Classical Music so White?”
- How seldom do we hear this question asked?
- A buried history of America’s first Classical music exists among African-American composers like Florence Price & William Levi Dawson from early 20th century
- almost erased due to systemic racism
- These composers & their works deserve the praise and support of modern musicians & scholars for the future of American Classical Music
- Examination of Price’s Symphony in E minor and Dawson’s Negro Folk Symphony
Rayla Tokarz – University of Nevada Reno

Hi, everyone! My name is Rayla Tokarz and I am taking over for Amy Hunsaker at UNR.

I have some big shoes to fill during the interim as the music librarian, but I hope to keep things together for the next Fine & Performing Arts Librarian. Although, this “short-term” stint will at least be through this school year and perhaps a bit more since we are currently on a hiring freeze.

I’m a bassoonist with a BA in music, so it has been fun getting to know the music department! I will do my best to keep you updated with what is happening at UNR. For starters, Amy H. worked with our music department and our copyright liaison librarian to move the Public Domain Concert online because of Covid-19. Check it out! [https://library.unr.edu/public-domain](https://library.unr.edu/public-domain)

Editor’s note: Rayla was an intern for the Music and Dance Library at BYU during the summer of 2009!! Her official title at UNR is Information Literacy Librarian. Since their university also lost their business & economics librarian, Rayla was asked to cover duties for business as well as music on top of her regular assignment. She is one busy librarian!

Carolyn Dow – retired [Polley Music Library, Lincoln, NB]

Not much happening in the life of this retiree. My ensembles performances are cancelled through the end of 2020, with spring uncertain. I am writing one set of program notes for November for an orchestra that is working this fall as socially distanced chamber strings, well masked, of course.

Personally, after a dogless summer, a new Westie, just 8 weeks old, joined me the end of September. Name of Robbie (after Robert Burns, the Scottish poet). And in early November, another pup, a Scottie, named Mairi (after the queen of Scots) will join us, also at 8 weeks old. It will be an active winter.
Mark Black – Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

Editor’s note: I reached out to Mark for this issue of Conventional Title, but only received this note by return e-mail, which I thought was, in itself, of interesting historical consequence:

Thank you for contacting the Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at Banff Centre. We are currently closed and do not have a set date to reopen at this time. With the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we are all in uncharted territory. Since opening in 1933, Banff Centre has rarely cancelled programs and public events on our campus. It is a decision compelled by the Province of Alberta mandating us to restrict public gatherings and cancel in-person classes at post-secondary institutions (https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16997.aspx#restrict). We believe that it is also in the best interest of the health of our staff, participants, faculty and guests. Please visit the main Banff Centre website (https://www.banffcentre.ca/) for status updates.

Stephanie Bonjack – University of Colorado Boulder

So much has happened this year, it’s hard to distill everything into an “update.” It feels more like dispatches from the field. The University of Colorado Boulder went fully remote in March following the state’s stay at home orders. However, the university administration made it clear in the spring that they planned for a hybrid 20/21 school year. The summer was spent mapping out classrooms, testing HVAC systems, and installing MERV filters. Each department on campus had to plan for half of their courses to be in person. We have just come out of a two week remote-only period, in response to rising infection rates on campus and in the community. I presume we will have more of these throughout the rest of the school year.

Meanwhile, the CU Libraries underwent a complete reorganization. The new structure organizes by chapter, team, and section, with pods and guilds replacing task forces and working groups. The Music Library employees used to be in the Arts and Humanities department, as one of multiple subject departments. We are now in multiple reporting lines. I continue to be the Head of the Howard B. Waltz Music Library, but am also the Section Lead for the Collections, Materials Management & Cataloging section. This includes our two music catalogers as well as collections personnel from other libraries. Our branch
manager is in a Services section. You may remember that I was leading a search for a new Music Outreach Specialist in the spring. That position was moved to the Communications Team, but was ultimately not funded by campus.

The Music Library continues to be closed and all collections in the Libraries are closed to browsing. The Libraries implemented contactless pickup during the summer, so items can be paged from any location and picked up outside the main library.

This is working well. We also have two branch libraries – Business and Engineering – that have been re-configured for reserved study seating. Multiple members of the Music Library staff participate in the cohorts that staff these locations.

I continue to work from home while also managing my son’s schooling. He’s in first grade. If I haven’t returned your message, that’s why! I’ll get back to you as soon as I can.

Kathy Essmiller – Oklahoma State University

One of the goals in the OKState Greenwood School of Music (GSM) during this period was to continue to provide meaningful opportunities for our students and fulfill our responsibilities as a service unit to the university and community. The GSM has been live-streaming nearly all of its events on OState TV, which was an important step forward. Many of the students and community supporters engage with our program exclusively through the live-streamed concerts, which illustrates the importance of the live-stream.

Some of the other avenues to connect with the community include the trailer concert series (branded as Pokes’ Pop Up Performance Series), outdoor concerts at the Student Union Amphitheatre and the McKnight Center Plaza, virtual jazz concerts where the parts recorded individually and synced together digitally, and a very large number of GSM-sponsored virtual lectures/masterclasses on general music topics, career development, supporting DEI in music, and mental health initiatives, among others.

OSU has blanket license agreements with BMI, SESAC, and ASCAP. For music requiring a grand license or for a performance that is not covered by a blanket license, we work with the copyright holder to purchase the license as necessary.
At Brandon University, the Music Library functions and operates under the Main Library umbrella. The Music Library is currently closed, with pick up appointments for music students and faculty to retrieve requested items. Reference services are delivered virtually, and there is increased reliance on electronic resources. The Main Library has been adapted to offer students socially distanced study spaces, as well as computer access through their computer lab. Students must make an appointment to access the library, and can book study space, computer time, printer access, etc. As many of our students are in rural communities without reliable Internet access, and others are located in Brandon but lack effective study spaces at home, it became an essential need for the library to provide computer/Internet access and study spaces.

The School of Music has decided to offer a hybrid of in-person and online instruction. Many safety considerations and accommodations have been implemented, such as: providing students with microphones for online lessons, plastic dividers in instructor offices, assigning students to specific practice rooms and access at set times, and scheduling time in between room uses to allow the air to be filtered and ventilated.

I know there are substantial cleaning procedures for Brandon University campus buildings, but I am not well informed about what these procedures entail.

**Did You Know?**

**Did you know about Qwest TV?**

Qwest TV is “The world’s first subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) service dedicated to jazz and beyond. Concerts, documentaries, archives, interviews.” Qwest TV includes jazz, soul, funk and world music.

“I believe that a hundred years from now, when people look back at the 20th century, they will view Bird, Miles and Dizzy, as our Mozart, Bach, Chopin and Tchaikovsky, and it is my hope that Qwest TV will serve to carry forth and build on the great legacy that is jazz for many generations to come.”

*Quincy Jones, Qwest TV co-founder*

This service is being offered with a free trial lasting until September 2021. Unlimited access to 1000+ programs. See: [https://qwest.tv/edu/](https://qwest.tv/edu/) or read more about Qwest TV in a 2017 review written by our very own Christine Edwards of the University of Central Oklahoma: [http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/g1sr-sm28](http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/g1sr-sm28)
**Did you know about Halloween Radio?**

For you Halloween lovers out there, *Halloween Radio* lets you choose from "five haunted Halloween music channels: Main, Oldies, Atmosphere, Movies & Soundtracks or Kids" so you can stream all the Halloween-flavoured music you would like. They also offer Halloween e-cards that you can send to your friends. [https://www.halloweenradio.net/](https://www.halloweenradio.net/)

**Did you know about arts funding in the UK?**

On Monday October 12, grants were awarded to many UK arts venues that have been struggling because of the COVID-19 shutdown. From ballroom dancing clubs to the Manchester Jazz festival to at least four orchestras, the grants will allow them to stay afloat for a while longer.

Welcoming the announcement, UK Music CEO [Jamie Njoku-Goodwin](#) said:

“This funding is fantastic news and will be a lifeline for so many music venues that have been struggling to survive since they first felt the impact of Covid-19 in March.

“It is a huge vote of confidence in the £5.2 billion UK music industry, and recognises that our industry will be a key part of the post-pandemic recovery.

“The music industry has worked hard to help itself and all those who depend on it to make a living, and shown incredible ingenuity in its fight to get back on its feet.”

MLA 2021

On 29 September 2020, MLA President Susannah Cleveland sent an announcement to the MLA listserv stating that MLA 2021 will be a fully virtual conference. She said, in part, “I am very excited about the prospects of a virtual conference, and I hope you will be, too. It gives us many ways to connect with one another and to encourage greater participation from people who have not been able to attend in-person conferences in the past. Our virtual chapter meetings have seen robust attendance and participation, and we expect a similar effect with this national joint meeting between MLA and TLA.” The meeting dates remain unchanged, March 3-7.

Something to look forward to at MLA 2021: The Best of Chapters winners from the 2020 competition will present their winning papers at this meeting.

Those of you who are on the MLA listserv may have noticed that our chapter’s own Jenny Thompson of the University of Denver was a winner!! She will present her paper titled “Bais in the Canon: An Exploration into Whitewashing..."

Congratulations to Jenny, on this well-deserved recognition! Looking forward to hearing you again at MLA 2021!

**MPMLA 2020 in review**

The Mountain Plains met on May 14-15 in a virtual meeting via Zoom. Two of our members, Christine Edwards and Ellwood Colahan, wrote a brief article of their experience in facilitating this conference for a forthcoming issue of the *CAML Review*. Here are some excerpts from that article:

Christine Edwards: “As COVID-19 swept into North America, it became increasingly obvious that an in-person gathering was not going to be possible for May 2020. Travel was being restricted, funds were being withdrawn from departments, and anxieties rose. No one wanted to fully cancel, but no one was sure how to go fully online either. There was no great example to follow and Zoombombers were making headlines. Despite the growing pile of ‘what ifs,’ we chose as a committee, and with the approval of the board, to move forward in pursuing a completely virtual MPMLA meeting.

Here are some of the lessons we learned along the way:

- Choose the platform that the majority of your planners are familiar with, as they will become default tech help
- Change of platform does not necessarily equal change of program
- Recognize that there is more that you cannot control, than can
- Virtual attendance is something we should be regularly offering

In the end, it was an extremely successful program. Communication was key, as in most situations, to ensuring that success.”

Woody Colahan: “MPMLA 2020 was successful beyond our expectations. We definitely did miss our traditional pre-conference dinner and all the other usual opportunities to socialize together. But, in compensation for the lack of in-person contact, we had greater participation than we may ever have had in one of our annual meetings.

As Zoom host, I was concerned something might go wrong at the last minute, but the two-day meeting went off without a hitch. All the sessions for which presenters gave permission are linked from our meeting website: [https://sites.google.com/view/mpmla2020/program](https://sites.google.com/view/mpmla2020/program).

This meeting introduced us to a way of meeting as a chapter that we will continue to take advantage of, even when our post-COVID world finally arrives.”

Look for the entire article in a forthcoming issue of *CAML Review*!

**Newsletter Editor and Listserv Note:**
Myrna Layton is the newsletter editor and manager of the MPMLA listserv. Contact her at [myrna_layton@byu.edu](mailto:myrna_layton@byu.edu).