Message from the Chair

Here in Denver, spring is around the corner. I know this from the tulips sprouting in my front yard, from my itchy eyes and hoarse voice, and my cat’s sneezing fits. And this spring, while international events may leave us heartsick and demoralized, good news on the covid front seems, just possibly, not to be a mirage.

As of March 30, the seven-day average of new covid cases in the U.S. and Canada is down 86% from two months ago, and the seven-day average of covid deaths is down 72%. While the potential impact of the Omicron BA.2 subvariant is unpredictable, experts believe the level of immunity in the population from immunization and previous infection should prevent another surge like the one we saw at the beginning of this year.

As a result, we are beginning to see the buds returning to some long-barren branches of our musical life. The Denver Recorder Society and the Colorado Springs Guitar Society are both planning their first in-person meetings in two years for April. Hope these and other signs of returning vitality are but harbingers of much more to come.

If the pandemic is finally fading, it will have left wreckage in its wake with which we will grapple for some time to come. Prominent in this landscape is the incidence of stress, anxiety, and mental health issues we have all undoubtedly seen in students and staff (not to mention ourselves). Where we have worked assiduously to promote patron and staff safety in the darkest days of the pandemic, we must now begin to shift our focus to the more complex, subtle, and long-term work of prioritizing mental and spiritual wellness in our patron and staff programming. All the while vigilant for developments with the virus that pose new dangers and require agile pivots once more.

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Bearing current uncertainty in mind, MPMLA has decided to hold our Annual Meeting online for the third year. The meeting will take place on Thursday and Friday, May 19-20, and registration will once again be free of charge. The meeting website is live at https://bit.ly/mpmla-2022, and includes a registration form and the call for presentation proposals with a submission form. The program will be posted as soon as it is finalized. The deadline for proposals is April 17, so in the unlikely event you are reading this information for the first time, you will want move quickly to submit yours.

As this is our third online Annual Meeting, it is also the third meeting in a row that will not be held at University of Oklahoma in Norman. However, in our spring-like spirit of eternal optimism, the official theme for the 2022 Annual Meeting is “Next Year in Norman!”

Every two years, the Chapter elects officers, and this is one of those years. Accordingly, the meeting website has been furnished with a nomination form. The offices to be filled are Vice-Chair / Chair-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and Member-at Large. In order that the vote may take place 30 days before our Annual Meeting, the deadline for nominations is also April 17. Please consider nominating yourself or some worthy colleague for election to office in MPMLA, to ensure the Chapter’s sustainable future under capable leadership.

Speaking of annual meetings, I hope everyone was able to attend and enjoy the diverse and interesting program at the MLA Annual Meeting in early March. I want to offer a special shout-out to MPMLA members who contributed to such an excellent program, including Stephanie Bonjack, Janet Bradford, Lisa Chaufty, Carolyn Doi, Josh Henry, Amy Jackson, Myrna Layton, Nara Newcomer, Laurie Sampsel, and Matt Stock (sorry if I missed anyone – it was a big program).

In other news, I am excited to report that the MPMLA Membership committee, newly reconstituted at last year’s Annual Meeting, is up and running! It includes Thomas Bell (chair), myself, Laura Jacyna, and Maria Souliotis. We are working on contacting at least one person at every college or university music program in our chapter’s region. Many of these schools have small library staffs or faculties with no music specialist, and if we are successful, the MPMLA list may become more active with reference queries. We hope some people who become aware of the Chapter this way will want to become members. Our future plans include reaching out to public libraries with significant music collections, and contacting all the LIS programs in our region.

Finally, I acknowledge with great sadness the great tragedy we have all witnessed in recent weeks in Ukraine. It cannot help but bring feelings of frustration and helplessness. I note, however, the prominence of music in the many gestures of support we see for the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people against naked military aggression. How many of us have scrambled to respond to urgent requests for the Ukrainian national anthem or other important Ukrainian music. How many of us will never forget the performance of the Ukrainian Chorus Dumka of New York on Saturday Night Live? These things matter. Music matters. It is one of the things we live for. Our work as custodians of music honors beauty and makes the world a better place.
Janice Bunker – Brigham Young University

When thinking about life since January 1, the words to a song spring to mind, “I’m just a girl who can’t say no”. First person to give me title, show, composer and lyricist wins an ice cream cone in Norman!

At school, things are humming along at a pace that is a little too fast for me so I’m trying not to drown until after my senior recital on April 17 at 4 pm in Libby Gardner Concert Hall at the University of Utah. You are all invited to come, either in person or virtually by viewing the livestream on our YouTube channel LIVE@LIBBY. You could also attend my flute choir concert on April 23 at 4 pm, same venue. After this semester I have 6 classes left in my organ degree!

At work, I’m trying to finish a CD project before May 31 and I am serving on a task force to consider and outline the possibilities for starting a video game collection at our library. It has been very interesting work and I’ve registered to attend a couple of virtual conferences on video game music as a result. I also proposed a class number to LC for video game music, which was approved. You can look it up in ClassWeb now: M1527.3-.4! One funny thing that happened is the music area in our library got yarn-bombed:
At home, my husband decided not to retire for at least two more years, our youngest child passed the Language Arts part of the GED test and is working on the Math part, and our third child had major surgery and recuperated at our home for a month afterward. We have still not started our home remodeling project. And of course, I’m working on a new quilt (Zoom conferences in which I don’t have to participate verbally are great times to sew!):

Katy Levings – Oklahoma Panhandle State University

Our library auditorium renovation is mostly finished; all that is needed is a projector and sound system. The library has also acquired an Xbox S and Oculus for hosting video game nights and helping students de-stress during these trying times. We also have games, books, and puzzles for those less tech-inclined. Other than that, we are trying not to be blown away and hoping for rain.

Maria Souliotis – Northeastern State University (OK)

- In December 2021, I was elected as the Chapter Liaison for the Mountain-Plains chapter of Music Library Students and Emerging Professionals (MLStEP). I will be working with MLStEP leadership to facilitate networking, career, and social opportunities for MLStEP members.
- My library was recently awarded a grant from the American Library Association to sponsor a series of programs related to the Women's Suffrage movement. We are holding our first event on March 30 and will hold 5 additional programs through September.

NSU LIBRARIES RECEIVES GRANT FOR WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE DISCUSSION PROJECT

Let’s Talk About It: Women’s Suffrage programming will begin March 30

TAHLEQUAH — The NSU Libraries are one of 25 libraries nationwide selected to participate in Let’s Talk About It (LTAI): Women’s Suffrage, a grant designed to spark conversations about American history and culture through an examination of the women’s suffrage movement.

The competitive award comes with a $1,000 stipend to support programming costs and ten copies of five books covering the women’s suffrage theme. According to ALA, more than 100 libraries applied for the opportunity.

One of these things just doesn’t belong here...
To open the program, Dr. Cheryl Van Den Handel, Associate Professor of Political Science at Northeastern State University, will help bring *Women Making History: The 19th Amendment* to life with insight and discussion. For more information on programming, visit library.nsuok.edu

As part of the grant, the NSU Libraries will receive the following books:

- *The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* by Elaine Weiss
- *Women Making History: The 19th Amendment Book*, essays compiled by the National Park Service
- *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* by Martha S. Jones
- *Ida B. the Queen: The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Ida B. Wells* by Michelle Duster
- *The Once and Future Witches* by Alix E. Harrow

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2022, *Let’s Talk About It* is a reading and discussion program that involves groups of people reading a series of books selected by national project scholars and discussing them in the context of an overarching theme. The format for a *Let’s Talk About It* program involves a series of programs in which a discussion group meets with a local humanities scholar to discuss one of the five books in the theme.

*LTAI: Women’s Suffrage* is a humanities discussion project from the American Library Association (ALA) and is supported by the [National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)](https://www.neh.gov). To explore resources from past LTAI themes, visit the project website.

Anita Breckbill – University of Nebraska Lincoln

Yesterday our music library planning committee met for the first time with the official architects, BNIM, for our new music building, due to open in fall of 2025. The committee agrees on many things but are still discussing issues of compact shelving for books and locked cases for special collections. All opinions accepted from MPMLA members!

Meanwhile, I am working hard to reduce the reference collection and our luscious collection of M2s and M3s. Our library will have a much smaller footprint, and we don’t have check-out statistics to help make decisions on what to have on site and what to store in those collections. It’s all about faculty input and, um, professional librarian expertise.
Lucinda Johnston – University of Alberta

Not a lot to report from Edmonton, Alberta. Our campus was shut down over Christmas until the end of February due to the then-current wave, but is now essentially open, though many classes remained online for the remaining 5 weeks of classes. I suspect our fall term will find us with mostly in-person course offerings. One project that I’m excited to be working on is the cataloguing of various musical sources in our special collections library for RISM. The project has been on hold for most of the pandemic since the materials can only be worked with on-site, and access to the materials has been severely limited at best. It’s definitely a learning experience, and I’ll report more on it as I progress. Other than that, spring has arrived: more sunshine, more daylight hours, more birds singing in my backyard, and more mud and sand tracked into the house from the dog and everyone else. 😁

Janet Bradford – Brigham Young University

I’m retiring! After 36 ½ years it’s time to bid you all a fond farewell. Official date is August 1st so I’ve got a few months to finish up a ton of projects having served as an interim Associate University Librarian for the past 16 months I will now be able to focus on cataloging. I was so hoping to see many of you in SLC this past March... alas, COVID prevented in-person greetings but it was fun to see some of you thru virtual means. I’m very sorry to report that I am not going to be attending the MPMLA meeting in May due to graduations in our family happening at the same time. I do plan to stay active in our chapter (and look forward to traveling to and seeing you in future meetings).

From the very first, the MPMLA conference is my favorite.
I’ve seen lots of changes, sadly seeing some of our music librarian positions being repurposed or purged, watching many of you deal with unexpected health challenges, illnesses and deaths. On the other hand, I’ve watched many of you find life-long partners, excel at planning new building spaces and killing it at participation in both national and international conferences, as well as serving on committees and/or in leadership roles. Throughout it all I have seen, happily, long-lasting patterns of friendship and support. Thanks to all of you, from you oldie-goldies to you newest members with whom I’ve only had virtual contact, for being great examples of dedication and just good people!

Jeff Lyon – Brigham Young University
Recipient of the S. Lyman Tyler Award to honor service and excellence in one who maintains a high level of competence and knowledge combined with creativity & enthusiasm.

Joshua Henry – University of Oklahoma
Hey MPMLAers! After more than seven years of separation, I am excited to be back in this chapter. When I first joined MLA in 2013 or 2014 as a student at Oklahoma City University (OCU) under the guidance of the amazing Dr. Beth Fleming, my first conference was at the MPMLA chapter meeting in Norman, Oklahoma at the University of Oklahoma (OU). As I write
this (April 8, 2022) I have completed my first full week at my new job as the Description & Access Librarian at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. It is a nice full circle moment. I left MPMLA in the Fall of 2014 so that I could attend the Music Librarianship master's program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), which meant I was in the Midwest Chapter. After graduating from the program in 2017, I took a job at Westminster Choir College (WCC) in Princeton, NJ, which meant I could join either the Greater New York chapter or the Mid Atlantic chapter (my first conference up there was actually a joint meeting of those two chapters). My last day at WCC was March 25, 2022, and on March 29, 2022, I said goodbye to New Jersey and headed back to Oklahoma. Although I was sad to say goodbye, I am also looking forward to what is in store at my new job.

Over the course of two days, I drove a U-Haul from New Jersey to Oklahoma. Luckily, my sister flew up to New Jersey to help me with the move. I was also very grateful to my gracious friends and colleagues who gave me enough boxes to pack everything and snacks for the road trip. On March 28, 2022, when I was loading the U-Haul, New Jersey was actually experiencing snow squalls throughout the day, which I was not expecting for the day I had to load all of my belongings onto a U-Haul. However, the squalls never got that bad in my area, but it was weird to occasionally have snow flurries. After a quick check-out inspection at my apartment (in which I found out that I will thankfully be getting my entire security deposit!), my sister and I went to get gas (self-service is NOT allowed in New Jersey, which means you have to let someone else pump the gas for you) and then hit the road.

The first day was gorgeous as we drove through Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, and ending in Knoxville, Tennessee. The second day was more of an adventure. The west part of Tennessee was windy, but thankfully my sister drove most of that part. Then we hit the storms after passing through Memphis into Arkansas. For the next hour and twenty minutes, I had to drive through very heavy downpour. Luckily, the wind was not as strong, and I was able to follow behind a semi, who was able to act as a guide. Although it was a tense hour and twenty minutes, I think it could have been scarier, and we did not see any cows fly by in a tornado (hopefully some of you will get that movie reference). Around 11:30pm that night, we arrived in Edmond, Oklahoma to stay the night at my sister's house, and the next day I moved into my new apartment in Norman, Oklahoma. I am mostly unpacked, but my cheap bookcases...
did not survive the move (one broke while loading and the bottom half of the other was essentially broken while unloading). So although I still have a long list of things to do to feel fully settled, I can still say that I successfully moved and completed my first week at a new job.

As the Description & Access Librarian at OU, I am cataloging materials across all of the humanities with a focus on materials for the Fine Arts Library. So, although I am not solely cataloging music, I still get the chance to catalog quite a bit of music materials. This past week I was able to catalog scores, art books, and children's books, and I am looking forward to cataloging some sound recordings next week.

I hope to see all of you soon at either the chapter conference or the national conference in 2023, and fingers crossed it can be in person!

Thomas Bell – Kansas State University

Since May of 2018 our work lives at K-State Libraries has been defined by recovery from a fire in our main library, the Hale Library. From then until August of 2021 most Library faculty and staff were in offices around campus or working remotely, even more so since the pandemic lockdowns began in March of 2020. I remember that moment especially well because returning from MLA 2020 in Norfolk, VA I routed my trip through Newark to visit my wife for a few days that turned out to be a few months due to Covid-19-related shutdowns.

Little did I know at the time that my colleagues across campus would come to refer to me as “the last one of us to attend an in-person conference before Covid.”

About the fire. It started on the roof, not a flaming fire but smoldering in layers of the roofing materials of this 500,000 square foot building. No books, scores, or recordings burned. The problem was the toxic smoke (it goes everywhere, I mean everywhere).

The several hundred thousand gallons of water that went into the building to put out the fire were another problem along with the fact that it was over 100 degrees in the building (no electricity in these situations). Our disaster relief company worked day and night, battling toxins, mold, extremely high temperatures and more to remove some three million items. Our Dean said that she had arrived at the library with disaster workers on the lawn throwing up and exhausted. The people who rescued our collections wore head to toe protective gear in
a 100+ degree, wet, humid environment doing intensely physical work for 12-hour shifts. They brought very large generators connected to tubes that a person could stand up in going into the building. It looked like something from the X-Files.

Our materials went (in boxes in trucks) to “caves” in ours and other states to await treatment to remove toxins from the smoke. Items had to be placed in ozone chambers as part of the process. Anyone familiar with the rigors of “back end” interface issues can only begin to imagine the time-intensive nightmare situations this created for our Cataloging and Metadata people, especially Associate Professor Margaret Corby, Music Cataloging Librarian at Kansas State University.

I had the honor of serving on a task force charged with moving collections back into the library post-fire. Margaret was also on this taskforce, thank Heaven! I represented our Arts, Humanities, and Design Team on the taskforce. My most vital role ended up being to help my fellow subject Librarians to begin to grasp and value the enormous talent, energy, and hours that Cataloging and Metadata Librarians contribute to making our collections discoverable. I hope to share more soon about this experience and what we learned through the long journey but must wrap up this installment.

There is much more to unpack here especially the challenges of serving departments without physical collections for more than three years. Perhaps I’ll also share more details about the extent of the damage and devastation to illustrate what a daunting, remarkable process it has been. In the meantime, you can find more info here: https://blogs.k-state.edu/hale/2021/05/26/hale-library-a-new-chapter-begins-now/

Fast forward to now. The Hale Library at K-State is open. All five floors! The third floor features and showcases our Music and Art collections. This includes all circulating media, CD, LP, DVD, Blu-ray (and one wax cylinder I hid somewhere just to keep it interesting) along with books and scores, all in open stacks. I will leave you with some cool and refreshing news about collections. During the time of this unrest and tumult we have continued to acquire as many works as we can by women and Asian composers. Here are just a few of those composers: Karen Tanaka, Anna Clyne, Gwyneth Walker, HyeKyung Lee, Jean Ahn, Narong Prangcharoen, Julie Wolfe, Gabriela Lena Frank, Libby Larson, Florence Price, Bright Sheng, Jessie Montgomery, and Toshiko Akiyoshi. We are excited about the future here in a reimagined, refreshed space that is a joy to inhabit.
Lisa Chaufy – University of Utah

We celebrated J.S. Bach’s birthday (1 day late) on March 22 for the first time since the pandemic. Our 2022 birthday party experience was more low-key than previous parties, but it was still fun and well-tempered. The School of Music is blessed with over 8 historical keyboards, with 5 of them donated over the past five years. So, we have a library harpsichord, and the school clavichord (CPE’s favorite instrument) came to the library for a day. Students won a golden Bach (hurriedly painted by me the day before) for playing some Bach at one of the keyboards.

Photo 1: Amy Bach (yes, she’s a distant relation) at the clavichord.

Photo 2: Eight Golden Bachs

Photo 3: Wei-Chi Huang at the harpsichord

Photo 4: Some fruit and some sweets.

Photo 5: One of our graduated student employees, Darlene Castro, made a life-size Louis XIV for a Baroque Student Group concert. He remains in the library and we often put him to good use.
Sue Weiland – Ball State University
(retired and fondly remembers her time in MPMLA @Wichita State)

THE PIECE

A multi-year arc of sheer nuttiness

perpetrated by members of the
Mountain/Plains Chapter of the Music Library
Association

There was a time in the later 1980s and early 1990s when the Mountain/Plains Chapter of MLA was populated by totally normal people, competently doing their jobs at various university and a couple of public libraries. But when they got together, some chemistry happened, and they became one of the most consistently crazy bunch of people out there.

Perhaps this had always been true. The Chapter comprises 13 states (and one Canadian province) covering a large geographic area in a part of the country where institutions supporting music librarians are rather thin on the ground, so there is an instant camaraderie. A really large Chapter meeting might have all of 30 people; usually it was fewer. It was Myron Patterson of the University of Utah who, upon attending his first Chapter meeting back in the early 1980s, said, “This isn’t a conference, it’s a family reunion!” There’s also the occasional Chapter newsletter, which is titled Conventional Title. Besides not really being a title, it is an older name for what was the “uniform title” under the AACR2 cataloging code and became known somewhat inaccurately as the “preferred title” in RDA. Such constructed titles are necessary when cataloging music and are widely used. The newsletter also comes out not in volumes or issues, but in opus numbers.

It was probably at the Chapter dinner held during the 1987 national MLA conference held in Eugene, OR, that someone challenged the group to think of the longest English word that had only one vowel. No one could think of a very long one—it turned out to be “strength,” with 8 letters. This caused Annette Voth (Arizona State University, in Tempe) to come up with a Norwegian word (Annette must be of Norwegian ancestry) that had no fewer than 9 vowels; and suggested we make it the Chapter slogan. People liked that idea, but since only Annette could reliably spell and pronounce it correctly, the word was not officially adopted. As the evening wore on, Annette’s idea of a slogan morphed into the group wanting a Chapter theme song, a newly-composed piece that was specific to the Chapter. By acclamation, Karl Kroeger (University of Colorado, in Boulder), who did some composing, was chosen to write a piece for the Chapter.

Karl agreed to do so but demanded a commissioning fee. No problem, the Chapter could cover that. An unused cup was turned up and sent around the long table (probably 20 people) where the dinner was being held and people were on the last of the drinks. Everyone contributed to the cup, digging in pockets/purses—or negotiating with their neighbors—for pennies, nickels, and dimes. By the time it got all the way around the table and back to Karl, $.74 had been collected. This was formally presented to Karl, then quickly scraped away when someone pointed...
out that Karl could abscond to Mexico with the cash and we’d never see the piece. It was decided to keep the fee in escrow until the piece should appear. Jim Wright (University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque) offered to set up the escrow account-otherwise known as Jim’s sock drawer.

Two or three years later, Karl had completed the piece and brought a number of photocopies of his manuscript to hand out to attendees of the Chapter meeting. Entitled Prosit! for 8 Wine Glasses: Fantasy on a Theme of P.D.Q. Bach, it carried the notation “Commissioned by the Mountain-Plain[s] Chapter, Music Library Assn. Salsa, Grits, and Chowder Society” on the title page. Karl was given his commissioning fee. The piece was exactly 74 measures long: “a penny per measure,” Karl said. Though there were no actual bar lines, only tick marks to indicate seconds.

Though specified as being for 8 glasses, the performance notes on the last page indicate that a performer may play one glass, or a single performer may play the glasses in pairs. A minimum of 4 performers is therefore needed to cover all the so-called parts. (Close reading of the score indicates performing with only 4 people would require some acrobatics by the players in a couple of spots.) But the composer verbally allowed that any number above the minimum was also allowed, with some or all parts being doubled (or tripled, etc.) Each performer also had to have a teaspoon, and some kind of drinkable liquid held in the glass. The music was performed by dipping a finger in the liquid and then rubbing the moistened finger around the rim of the wineglass, to get the high ringing sound of musical glasses. At specific points, the performer strikes the glass with the teaspoon and lets it ring; other times does the same but stops the sound by placing a finger or hand on the glass. The amount of liquid to put in the glass was up to each performer. At the end, all performers raise the glasses, yell Prosi! or Skoal! or Cheers! or similar toasting words in any language; drink the rest of the contents of the glass (after having dipped their fingers in it multiple times, of course, to perform the piece); and throw the glasses over their shoulders into a fireplace (like what happens near the end of Mozart’s Don Giovanni.) The composer was adamant on this last point; omitting it would render the performance invalid.

A year or two after Karl distributed the piece, the upcoming Chapter meeting was planned to be held in Albuquerque, NM, with Jim Wright (University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque) in charge of the Local Arrangements Committee. He chose a historic hotel in Albuquerque with what was made to look like adobe on the ground floor, for accommodations and meeting rooms. THEN he discovered that in one section of the lobby area, the hotel had … a fireplace! Maybe Prosit! could be performed! Jim talked to the hotel manager and explained what we wanted to do with the fireplace come the next Chapter meeting. Somehow, he managed to get the hotel to agree to let us throw glasses in it. This seems incredible, but one can almost hear the manager’s thoughts: “A bunch of music librarians? — how much damage could they possibly do?”
With the approval of the hotel in hand, the word went out that the world premiere of *Prosit!* would take place at the Albuquerque meeting. Attendees were asked to please bring your copy of the piece if you had one—a few extra would be available for any new attendees who might think they were only going to a normal conference—and to BYO wineglass. (The latter was a bit of a problem for at least one attendee: Sue Weiland had a few cheap wineglasses she had bought while in college, but their rims were rather thick and did not play easily. She went to the JC Penney store in Wichita, KS to find a playable wineglass, managing to convince a clerk to allow her to take several different wineglasses into the restroom to find out which played well without having to purchase all those she tried. She found one that was very good and placated the clerk by buying four of them. She packed them all, as spares in case someone needed one or one broke in transit.)

The premiere was scheduled for the end of the Chapter conference, after the final dinner. It was late; people were tired; and as everyone went off to their rooms after dinner, it was clear that it would have been so easy to just fall into bed and sleep. But no one did. The descending elevators stopped at most floors, and more and more people got on, each clutching a copy of the music and carefully holding a partly-filled wineglass. Arriving in the lobby, everyone saw that the hotel had provided teaspoons and set up tables. The tables were in two sets, with an aisle in the middle aligned with the fireplace. People milled about for a bit, waiting for everyone to arrive, and staking out places on the tables with their wineglasses. Except for Jim Wright. He was found holding a mug of beer with a rim that was a good centimeter thick. Questioned as to how he expected to play that, Jim looked at his mug’s rim doubtfully, then brightened and replied, “I’m the drone!”

When everyone was there, the number of people per part was balanced so everyone could play and rehearsal commenced, with Karl in front calling out the seconds to keep the performers together, because the piece had neither time signature nor note values. The first attempt had several stops and cries of “Oh no, I forgot to do the teaspoon hit!” The second run-through was much smoother, and everyone decided the time had come for the performance. Karl continued as conductor, that is, calling out “measure” numbers.

People got ready, then looked over their shoulders to determine their specific angles to the fireplace. The premiere went very well, though punctuated by laughter; at the end people shouted several different toasts; and threw the emptied wineglasses over their shoulders without anyone getting beamed by a flying wineglass.
Now, there was (obviously) no way to practice throwing the wineglass; for a number of people, the amount of alcohol in their veins may have affected aim; and the fireplace was rather small. It was more decorative than functional and featured a long string of dried red chili peppers attached to either side of the fireplace. Some of the wineglasses did make it into the fireplace, but others smashed into the sides, each shattering a chili pepper or two, and with the force of the impacts grinding bits of red pepper into the wall behind.

The next morning, as everyone was straggling down to the lobby to check out and catch rides to the airport, the chili pepper strings were gone, the fireplace had been cleaned out, and there was already a two-man crew in place repainting the sides of the fireplace. The hotel staff was still courteous and Mtn./Plains didn’t get charged for damage, but Jim Wright thought it highly unlikely the Chapter would be welcomed back.

At the final dinner of the next Chapter meeting, in Tempe, it was discovered that due to the excitement of the premier, an important step in the life of *Prosit!* had been omitted. The score had to be cataloged! By acclamation, Sue Weiland (Wichita State University) was named Chapter Cataloger and Doctor of Catalogology, aka, the CC/DC. At this point Laurie Eagleson (University of Arizona, in Tucson) stood up and went into a passionate oration on the signal importance of this position; and that if anything were to happen to Sue—Laurie was interrupted at this point by many of the others, speculating on all the ways Sue might die—we must have a backup person. This position would be the Alternate Cataloger and Doctor of Catalogology, known as the … AC/DC. (You always have to watch out for the quiet ones!)

During the year, Sue did catalog the piece, creating a new record in OCLC’s WorldCat, and larding it up with a lot of unnecessary detail. A little later, Janet Bradford (Brigham Young University, in Provo) cataloged the piece in RLIN, a similar type of database used by the Research Libraries Group until 2006. Because the two databases were proprietary to OCLC and to RLG, neither could see the other’s work. When RLIN was merged into WorldCat in 2006, an algorithm decided which incoming RLIN records matched a record already in WorldCat and which did not. There were just enough differences between the two records that the algorithm decided they were different things, with the happy result (for the Chapter) that both records survive in perpetuity in WorldCat.

A copy of *Prosit!* exists in an opus of *Conventional Title*. [Opus 20 – April 1991] and herewith!

Editor’s note: CODA – our chapter did return to the same hotel, albeit accidentally—due to a name change. We found ourselves there again in 2011. And that visit brought its own drama. The MPMLA treasurer of the time reported: “The reservations people at the Hotel A--Z insisted that they be faxed an image of the credit card and wouldn’t guarantee the meeting over the phone. So to avoid having everything cancelled at the last minute, the fax was sent. Someone in their office got a hold of the chapter’s credit card information and made a bunch of purchases at Bed, Bath and Beyond and Target. The good people at Wells Fargo helped to resolve matters.”

And Fin!
...about composers and cookery?

I came across an NPR article from a dozen years ago about composer Gioachino Rossini and food, which included this delicious quote from that very well-fed maestro: “I know of no more admirable occupation than eating, that is really eating. Appetite is for the stomach what love is for the heart. The stomach is the conductor, who rules the grand orchestra of our passions, and rouses it to action. The bassoon or the piccolo, grumbling its discontent or shrilling its longing, personify the empty stomach for me. The stomach, replete, on the other hand, is the triangle of enjoyment or the kettledrum of joy. As for love, I regard her as the *prima donna par excellence*, the goddess who sings cavatinas to the brain, intoxicates the ear, and delights the heart. Eating, loving, singing and digesting are, in truth, the four acts of the comic opera known as life, and they pass like the bubbles of a bottle of champagne. Whoever lets them break without having enjoyed them is a complete fool.”

Somehow, non-foodie that I am, I had missed the memo about Rossini’s love of both cooking and eating! And yet “there are enough culinary references in his music alone to label the maestro a gourmand! His operas sing of hens and sturgeons, buns and cake, candied fruits and sweets, vanilla and coffee (Cinderella). His piano pieces celebrate radishes, gherkins, anchovies and butter, figs, raisins, almonds and hazelnuts (Peches de Vieillesse: Sins of Old Age) and even German cake. His characters hunger for food, dream of food, feast on food and are even ordered to consume food!”

Rossini was not the only composer from the western concert music tradition with an attachment to food. Enough of them were concerned about eating that Dr. Ira Braus, Associate Professor of Music History at the University of Hartford, wrote 190 pages on the topic. His book *Classical Cooks* was published by Xlibris in 2006. Despite its 4.5 star rating on Amazon, WorldCat shows that only 12 libraries bought the book, and none of the owning libraries are in the Mountain Plains Chapter, so I think we all missed knowing about what seems like a delightful book. Here is one quote from the author, to whet your appetite: “Puccini’s ‘fat,’ mellifluous as it is, may be compared to olive oil—clear, fruity, digestible, while Debussy’s is voluptuous, like butter—filmy, artery-clogging, and delectable.” After several chapters serving up main courses on composers living between 1350 and 2000 and their food, dessert is comprised of 24 recipes and menus “suitable for diverse musical occasions.”

Back in 1972, an article in *Music Journal* discussed the favorite foods of some of the same composers Braus discusses in his book. We learn here that Beethoven loved something he called “bread soup” which contained twelve eggs! Handel, apparently, liked to eat anything, and lots of it. Haydn enjoyed some good parmesan cheese with his macaroni and spaghetti. Rossini summed up the animosity he felt for Meyerbeer as “he detests macaroni, and I can’t stand
Sauerkraut.” Brahms, Chopin and Schumann enjoyed their coffee, while Liszt was a bacon and eggs man—and Toscanini liked egg drop soup. Mendelssohn did not eat meat, but he loved puddings, pies and cakes. Grieg enjoyed a certain kind of Norwegian cheese—it smelled very bad, and tasted very good. And Richard Strauss developed a taste for boiled Indian corn with cold veal. The author, Roma Freedman Sachs, ends with “Composers may try to live on music, but as it happens, find that the composition of dinner is the first art which makes all other arts possible.”

All of the composers mentioned thus far have been European. What about American composers? Is their gastronomy important to their composition? Carlos Salzedo, in 1925, wrote that composers who have “the inborn gift of orchestration” are often “masters as well of the real batterie de cuisine, the kitchen pots and pans.” He noted this association between masterful composition and masterful cookery in France, England, Germany, Italy and Russia; but in America, he felt that the composition of both music and food was about “quantity rather than quality,” and lacked the “sonorous seasoning” he praised in European music and food. Salzedo said, “Imagination, invention and logic—a sense of proportion, balance, dosage—are the three essentials in musical or culinary mixing.” Unfortunately, he did not find these in American music or cuisine except in the folk-born music of “spirituals, ragtime, jazz.” But these musical traditions were not then featured in the “tepid instruction of [American] music schools.” Salzedo also appreciated the food that was a part of the folk traditions of Black Americans—“corn pudding, shrimp okra, beaten biscuits” to name a few. However, to Salzedo’s taste, most American music composition and the “the flavorless food of [American] chain restaurants” were not that appetizing.

Well, times change—he was writing 100 years ago, after all—and tastes vary. So, while I find Salzedo’s assessment of American music and cuisine during his time interesting, I plan to read Ira Braus’ more current Classical Cooks. I am hoping that Braus will point to both European and American maestros who know their way around a kitchen! I do not know if any of them will turn out to be quite the gourmand that Rossini was, but I aim to find out!

—Myrna Layton

See p.20 for endnotes.
Even though MLA went fully online for 2022, it was a good opportunity to connect and learn. Our chapter met briefly on Thursday evening.

Here we share an MLA report written by Maria Souliotis, reprinted from MLA Newsletter:

To lecture or not to lecture? This is the question that I often find myself facing as I prepare lessons for library instruction. Kristina Shanton, Music Librarian at Ithaca College, addressed this question head-on with her Music Bibliography classes in an effort to increase student engagement while still covering essential course concepts. In her MLA conference session “Reimagining the Music Bibliography Class,” Shanton showed how she redesigned her pedagogical approaches, upgrading her course and lessons to best accommodate the learning styles of contemporary students. The results of this daring approach were remarkable.

Shanton overhauled her music bibliography courses by shifting from a lecture format to a group learning set-up. Students would use class time to meet in small groups (typically 4-5 per group) and work on course projects and presentations. The new arrangement emphasizes “learning by doing” and creative expression in both learning processes and finished products. The final course project, an annotated bibliography, was eliminated and replaced with a “research-based bibliographic project.” The format for the final project is open-ended; students can choose any form of multimedia for their culminating presentations.

In stark contrast to previous iterations of the course, Shanton all but eliminated teacher grading. Traditional grades were replaced with a system in which students graded their own work as well as that of their peers. Shanton assures her students that only she will see the grades and comments that students submit for each other, thereby encouraging thorough and honest feedback.

Shanton explained that the reimagined music bibliography class is governed by the principle of democratic pedagogy and the practice of “ungrading.” Democratic pedagogy is characterized by “learner-centered student agency” in that students are responsible for their own learning and seeking out opportunities to learn from others. The instructor’s role is to facilitate learning, acting as a guide or mentor instead of directing all classroom activities single-handedly. Students are responsible for generating feedback on their peers’ learning progress as well as assessing their own learning. By shifting some of the burden of assessment to the students, these processes enable “ungrading.” The emphasis on formative feedback lays the foundation for assessment as a conversation between the students and instructor. Democratic pedagogy also emphasizes metacognition and social justice.

In viewing the samples of student work from Shanton’s classes, I was impressed by the
variety of topics covered and the level of creativity the students displayed in expressing key concepts and ideas. Final projects manifested themselves in the form of thematic catalogs of underrepresented composers and musics, mock Wikipedia pages about notable figures in musicology, and new entries for Slonimsky’s *Lexicon of Musical Invective*. Multimedia included podcasts, in which students interviewed real practitioners in the field of music education and technology, and a YouTube video of a skit where students “time-traveled” through different eras of music criticism. The plethora of project formats, attention to detail, and high-quality end products shows that the students were truly engaged in their own learning and took pride in presenting their best work.

The strategies conveyed in “Reimagining the Music Bibliography Class” have inspired me to reflect on my current pedagogical practices so that I can implement new approaches to teaching and learning in future instructional sessions. Looking ahead, I know I will encounter students who are already accustomed to learning in a post-COVID19 world (i.e., virtually). My teaching must accommodate that reality through the use of multimedia and the flipped classroom. As my university is also in the early stages of assessing the delivery of its online and hybrid courses, with the likely end goal of standardizing the format and layout for each course, anything I source from Shanton’s methods must be adapted to my university’s standards. The session did not address how to reconfigure “one-shot” instruction sessions or strategies for fostering engagement with non-music majors in Music Appreciation classes, for whom music is a foreign language. However, these activities constitute the bulk of my formal teaching and outreach for my university’s Music Department, and I suspect this may also be the case for others. It would be beneficial to revisit and address these topics in a future session.


The annual meeting will be May 19-20 (Thursday and Friday) and will take place online. The theme of this year’s meeting is “Next Year in Norman.” The website includes a link to register for the meeting, a page with the call for proposals and a link to a submission form, and a page listing the officers we will elect this year with a link to a form to submit nominations.

Please note that meeting proposals should be submitted by April 17, which is also the deadline for officer nominations. We will need to elect a Vice-Chair / Chair-Elect, a Secretary-Treasurer, and a Member-at-Large. Please consider nominating yourself for an office if you would like to become more involved in MPMLA.

We welcome program submissions on musicology, librarianship, or pretty much anything touching on either. Presenters are not required to be MPMLA members, although they must be members to be considered for the
"Best of Chapters" nomination. Quality proposals from students are encouraged, as always. The Program Committee will judiciously weigh and consider proposals and announce a program by May 2, which will then be added to the website.

Please excuse me in advance for the reminders I will send between now and April 17; I want to be sure to keep this information and the website link in front of everyone. Let's see those proposals and nomination pour in!

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

End notes for Composers & Cookery continued from p.17


Commissioned by the Mountain-Plain Chapter, Music Library Assn.
Salsa, Grits, & Chowder Society

Prosit!
for 8 Wine Glasses

Fantasy on a Theme of P.D.Q.
Bach

Karl Kroeger
Ending

Shout "Prosit, Skol,"

"Salute," or other appropriate
epithet & toss glasses in fireplace!
PERFORMANCE NOTES

1. The tick-marks at the top of each system represent seconds of time.

2. The straight black horizontal lines represent sustained tones produced by rubbing a moistened finger around the rim of the glass.

3. Glasses may be "tuned" to any pitch the player desires, except that two tones of the same pitch should be avoided.

4. Glasses may be played in pairs by a single performer, or a single performer may play a single glass.

5. Notes with an x-shaped note head are to be struck with a teaspoon near the rim and at the same time stopped from ringing by placing a finger on the glass to dampen the sound.

6. Notes with an oval-shaped note head are to be struck with a teaspoon near the rim and allowed to ring freely.

7. Dynamics are entirely at the discretion of the performer.

8. It is essential that this piece be performed in a room with a fireplace, without which the effect of the ending will be lost and the intention of the composer frustrated.