Message from the Chair

Greetings, esteemed colleagues across the mountain-plains region!

This year Norman! During the past three years we ended our virtual meetings with the phrase, “Next year Norman!” That made it extra special to experience our 2023 Chapter Meeting in person (and virtual/hybrid) live in Norman on the campus of the University of Oklahoma! It felt new to us, like we were learning how to do this in person again. Special thanks to Matt Stock for organizing and hosting such a fun, well organized, meeting. We enjoyed lavish treats during our breaks and very good dining in this lively college town.

Congratulations to our Best of Chapter winners, Margaret Corby, and Janice Bunker! Margaret’s presentation, Cleaning House the Hard Way, shares the dramatic story of the technical and adaptive challenges faced after a fire in the Hale Library in 2018. The recovery project took more than four years, and the space looks much different now. Janice’s paper, Maceo, Liza, and Sweet Georgia Brown, recounts the career of underappreciated composer, Maceo Pinkard, and the remarkable journey of his song, Sweet Georgia Brown through multiple musical styles to ubiquity in the cultural landscape.

Other presentations included Explorations in Musicology: MapleStory (Korean MMORPG) and its music by Myrna Layton, Kundiman as a Politically Contested Artistic Space in the Marcos Era by Jane Wee, and Copland and

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We met in the Bizzell Memorial Library and found it to be a richly stimulating environment, especially due to their art collections featured throughout the five-floor space.

I took a number of pictures of the art but wish I had taken more. The walls and spaces of intuitively installed works reflect a significant amount of time, knowledge, and care invested.

In my past work liaising to our college of Architecture, Planning, and Design and with The Mariana Kistler Beach Museum of Art, both at K-State, I began to appreciate the immense thought, work, and research invested in creating atmospheric spaces. Our time in the Bizzell Library brought this to mind. It is a great example of the expansive possibilities of placemaking, the idea of designing spaces for the purpose of fostering bonds between people and a place. Placemaking focuses on people and their needs, aspirations, for belonging and community. That sounds like an amazing learning environment. It sounds a lot like an ideal library.

I have been in a few hospitals during dark and painful times and experienced them as both patient and visitor. One was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, another the University of Kansas Hospital in Kansas City, KS. Both places have phenomenal art collections and in both I experienced things dearer than words. In another hospital in another place, I remember being very close to losing a relative and in grief wandering down a hallway and finding myself under a skylight, standing in a shaft of sunlight. That light made a world of difference. Placemaking.

As our cities, towns, communities, and families continue recovering from the pandemic and its multifaceted effects, our libraries have such potential as places of belonging, community, learning, so many good things made more vital in this cultural moment.
It is an honor to be your colleague in our profession that strives to create an environment where all learners are welcome. One other major factor of placemaking at our meeting in Norman I didn’t mention is you. Your kindness and respect towards each other and me were so uplifting to see and experience. Thank you.

On the horizon: Where will we meet for MPMLA 2024? Possible sites include locations in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Utah (BYU). Also in the works, we have unused funds from our MLA Chapter Grant. The board are working towards using those funds for scholarships to encourage music librarianship students to participate in our 2024 meeting.

Lisa Chaufty – University of Utah

Hello from McKay Library at the University of Utah! As always, the weeks of this fall semester are moving on apace and the weather is turning: we are stocking the hot chocolate at our library hot drinks station again.

October is getting busy for us with our usual events and some new ones. I’ve highlighted a few, below:

Our fall composer birthday bash for 2023 celebrated four composers that may be new to you. We were excited to shine a spotlight on Ramiro Cortés (a Utah composer) as well as Kaija Saariaho (who passed just last June, sadly). In addition to the playlist—a great opportunity for discovery—we sweetened the day with cupcakes. (This is the one time of year that I get to bring out my four-tier cupcake stand!)

I have been wanting to get a monthly craft hour going. So, I’m trying it out. We’ll see how it goes this month. Perhaps the

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colder weather will usher in the “doing things with yarn” season.

And, finally, the School of Music EDI committee (IDEALS=Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, Library, Student Success) includes the library in most of its work. We are beginning a new initiative to create a community for international students. Members of the IDEALS committee will host one-hour conversation sessions with any students who come to participate. We have our first two scheduled in October.

Laurie Sampsel – University of Colorado Boulder

Laurie Sampsel has been continuing her research and writing on Denver musician Estelle Philleo. Her article with Don Puscher, “Teaching her Way through the American West: Estelle Philleo’s Journey as a Piano Teacher,” was just published in the Journal of Historical Research in Music Education. See https://doi.org/10.1177/15366006221144057.

Laurie is currently on sabbatical prepping for her next big project, the 4th edition of Music Research: A Handbook. She will moderate a panel discussion on silent film music at the Society for American Music conference in March. In the meantime, she’s looking forward to holiday performances on flute, piccolo, and recorders.

Anita Breckbill – University of Nebraska-Lincoln

The Libraries navigated a successful temporary move of the collections of the Music Library to enable work on the new Music Building to continue. The Music Library is now a closed collection, available only through paging. It is housed in the basement of an empty building on campus—the former home of the Student Health Center. The collection is thus spread through multiple rooms, which are the size of physical examination rooms. Our Head of Collections Management did the careful jigsaw puzzle work of fitting the collections into the spaces available.

Work is ongoing in preparing the Music Library’s special collections for ingestion into the Libraries’ Special Collections/Archives. Reboxing, relabeling, and creation of finding aids to their specifications is making me feel like I have done justice to the collections we have as I mourn their departure.
My office, for the year, is in our main library, which enables me to be closer to my librarian colleagues, though further from the music faculty and students. I get more reference questions via email than I have at any previous time.

A webcam shows progress on the new building: https://arts.unl.edu/gksom-construction-live-feed

Maria Souliotis – Northeastern State University (OK)

As the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect of our Chapter, I want to say that I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and interacting with those of you who attended our annual meeting in Norman, Oklahoma this past May. It was my first in-person MPMLA Annual Meeting and I had a great time socializing with and learning from each of you. I look forward to our next Annual Meeting, wherever it may be!

During the conference, the attendee group took an excursion to the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art at the University of Oklahoma campus, where we were immersed in an interactive art exhibit entitled Synesthesia, created by the local art collective Factory Obscura.

While I didn’t experience the title sensation while viewing the exhibit, per se, I did marvel at the original creations of the artists. Their choices of physical materials and found objects gave me a new perspective on the possibilities of contemporary three-dimensional art and I delighted in finding little cartoonish visual surprises sprinkled throughout the different works.

Samuel Bradshaw – Mobile QA Engineer at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints

Hi! I joined this mailing list a few months ago. I love seeing the community in this group, and thought it would be a good time to introduce myself.

I grew up in Washington and Florida, and now live in Utah. I’m not a professional librarian, but I enjoy organizing and cataloging information and making it available for anyone to use.
During my spare time, I research hymnals and songbooks relating to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as related denominations such as the Community of Christ. My research can be found at https://singpraises.net/. So far, 104,391 songs are indexed and cross-referenced in 141 languages. Myrna and a few others at BYU have helped me with my research.

At the beginning of this year I launched another website, Archive Viewer (https://archiveviewer.org/), which aggregates scanned books and periodicals related to my research, and provides a book viewer that can be embedded on other websites. Both websites are free resources, and I hope they will be useful to anyone whose research overlaps mine!

Janice Bunker – Brigham Young University

Happy October!!

I have sort of moved to a new castle along with my new role as Cataloging Queen of Circulating Music.

This means the essential things are in my new castle but in the course of my day I generally find myself fetching something from my old castle. The old castle is slated for someone else who hasn’t been crowned yet, so I have some time.

But I should just set aside a day and do it. My new castle has more windows (two of which are mostly covered by the lockers in the hallway outside my suite) but happily has just as many shelves and book carts full of things to do!
Also, I inherited several backlogs, a new shelf of new stuff, and a couple of Cubbies of Doom.

I also inherited a full-time staff employee! I feel so wealthy with so many cool parts to my new queendom!

--Janice Bunker, Library Cataloging Queen

**Lucinda Johnston – University of Alberta**

I didn't get a chance to submit anything to the last Conventional Title issue, so a brief update. In May I attended the CAML (Canadian Association of Music Libraries) conference in Quebec City, and finished my trip with a short visit in Winnipeg (where my family lives) and on both legs of the journey my luggage went missing!! While at the conference, I presented on a newly digitized collection of the magazine *Penguin Eggs*, part of the University of Alberta Library's Edmonton Independent News & Media collection on the Internet Archive. I was also elected President of CAML at our Annual General Meeting, and am now even busier than ever! Luckily, I have our mascot Helmut the Camel helping out with communiqués... (Named for Helmut Kallmann, Canadian music librarian and historian, and co-founder of the original Canadian Music Library Association.)

Then, in August I went to IAML and got covid (!!!), so completely missed the conference and the presentation I was supposed to be a part of (about developing a process for conducting commercial availability checks for a sheet music collection, as part of a larger digitization project...) but fortunately my colleagues managed without me. And, the post-conference portion that I was planning to spend in Wales had to be cancelled as the friend I was planning to visit has a compromised immune system... So, I spent a few days by the sea, recuperating, then flew home.

One highlight of my summer was seeing Fred Penner in concert (Canadian children’s entertainer icon... you probably know the song *The Cat Came Back*...) in an outdoor concert in a tiny little southern Alberta town called Pincher Creek. One of the best concerts I’ve been to in a while!! I should note that Fred Penner was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters at the U of A this past June, and I was fortunate to be part of his “welcome reception” party. One of my favourite songs from his most recent CD is *Celebrate*. He shared that this was the only album (of 13) on which all four of his
children sang with him. In this video, the background singers are his daughters... I'm guessing the baby is his grandchild!

In other news, this is my last issue as editor of Conventional Title! After initially being terrified and feeling wholly inadequate, I came to really enjoy this assignment, and am sad to let it go...but very happy to turn over the reins to the person...

...who wants to be the next editor of Conventional Title!!

And we have a new editor!!

Sadie Webster – Brigham Young University

Hello Members of MPMLA!

I’m delighted to join you as a fellow music and library enthusiast. My name is Sadie Webster and I graduated in August of 2023 with my MLS from Emporia State University. Prior to that, I graduated from BYU with a Bachelor of Music in Saxophone Performance. I currently work at the BYU Library as an Electronic Resource Specialist and am an active performer in my community. Some of my favorite pieces are Shostakovich Jazz Suite No. 1, Stravinsky’s A Soldier’s Tale, Barnes Symphony No. 3, and of course, Rhapsody in Blue (how could I not love this piece as a saxophone player?). I have a penchant for film music and musicals, and am excited to join you as both a new member and as editor of the Mountain Plains Chapter newsletter, Conventional Title.

Myrna Layton – Brigham Young University

There is nothing new here in the library—we continue to deal with constant change and continual construction, which is old news for us! The roof, the restrooms, the elevators, in addition to the remodeling that has been going on for several years already. We had a couple of days this summer when the decibel level from jack-hammering in the restrooms was so high that we had to close the desk to protect the hearing of our student workers.

(Editor’s note: FRED PENNER. I am totally fangirling here!! Canadian that I am!)
Did you know... (by Myrna Layton)

...about Hensel Songs Online?
https://henselsongsonline.org/

This is a database of lieder (voice and piano) composed by Felix Mendelssohn’s older sister, Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847). Of the 239 songs included in the database, about 100 of them have never been published before. The database was created by Tim Parker-Langston, who is a student at Goldsmiths, University of London. He undertook the study of Hensel’s Lieder as his research PhD project. Tim is a tenor, and sings at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Tim and five others (of which two are singers and three are pianists) traveled to Leipzig this January of 2023 to record Hensel songs.

From this website, you can purchase physical copies of the three volumes of compiled Hensel scores and the recording Tim and friends made (currently quite nicely discounted)—or you can choose to access the scores of each song for free online, and link to your Spotify account to listen to the songs these musicians recorded. Or you can do all of these things—purchase hard copies while also using the online merchandise as needed!!

There is also a crowd-sourcing opportunity for singers to choose a Hensel song to make their own video recording of, and add it to those already available at the #HENSEL link on the website.

There are literally scores of Hensel song scores to download or print—(and you can choose your key of preference in many cases!), recordings to listen to, videos to watch, with links to texts, translations, and autograph sources. It is an amazing collection, really, that your library patrons will enjoy having access to, if they know about it! Spread the word!

There’s something happening here, for what it’s worth.
Did you know? (part 2)

Did you know...(by Myrna Layton)

... about https://austriamanus.org/ Medieval Music Manuscripts from Austrian Monasteries?

A poster session held today (October 20, 2023) at Klosterneuberg, in Vienna, explains about it:

This project is associated with the global cantus index network (https://cantusindex.org) and is intended to allow “free and universal access to complete and fragmentary manuscripts with musical notation written before c. 1600, kept at monastic libraries in Austria.” (Photo by Patrick Layton, a PhD student working on the project. And son of our editor.) Check out both the websites! Pretty cool!

Answers to Band Names on page 3:
Counting Crows, Rolling Stones, Grateful Dead, Def Leppard, Led Zeppelin, The Doors.

MPMLA 2023

The annual meeting of the Mountain Plains Chapter of the Music Library Association finally made it to Norman, Oklahoma!! Thanks to Matt Stock, Joshua Henry, and all of the local Oklahoma people who hosted and helped and welcomed. Thanks also, for the decision to make it a hybrid conference, so that some of us could attend and present and participate remotely. Where will MPMLA 2024 be? Let’s get that figured out soon, so we can make plans!

MLA 2024

The 93rd Annual Meeting of the Music Library Association will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, February 28-March 2, 2024, as a hybrid event.

Conference registration will open in mid-November. Hope that many of us can attend!

For news about MLA 2024 visit the website: https://conferences.wp.musiclibraryassoc.org/

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