The SAA Performing Arts Roundtable encourages the exchange of information on historical and contemporary documentation of music, dance, theater, motion pictures, and other performance media.

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Roundtable Leadership, 2010-2011

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Page 3: Child actress Mary Jane Irving with Bessie Barriscale and Ben Alexander in the 1918 silent film Heart of Rachel. Mary Jane Irving Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

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Message From the Co-Chair by Claudia Thompson

This issue of Performance! features music and music collecting. Issues like this remind us of how wide our apparently focused collections are. Even in the area of classical music there is tremendous variety, from the chorales of Handel to the ragas of Ali Akbar Khan. Popular music offers yet another great range. The study of music and of the music preferred and performed in a culture can provide remarkable insight into how people think. So whether your own favorite instrument is the piano or the broom-banjo, you should find something of interest in this issue.

Summers seem to get shorter and shorter! Just a few days ago there was plenty of time to plan for SAA in Chicago. Now the meeting is practically here. As a reminder, the meeting of the Performing Arts Roundtable will occur on Wednesday, August 24, from 3:15-5:15 PM. Anastasia Karel will talk about developments at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum’s Library and Archives. I plan to discuss copyright issues, especially as they relate to sound recordings. (Although I am not a lawyer and won’t give legal advice!) After that we will break into discussion groups, then reconvene to give each group a chance to present their ideas to everyone. This was a format that I saw used at the SAA conference in Washington, D.C. It generated some interesting results and I think it is especially appropriate for a roundtable. PAR is meant to be a venue for the exchange of ideas. All of us can learn from the practices of others. Sometimes small institutions, or those with small collections of performing arts materials, need the expertise of larger institutions that can afford to hire specialists. On the other hand, non-specialists (I like to think) bring to the table a necessary corrective against excessive detail and impenetrable technical language. Please come to the meeting and don’t be afraid to speak up. Everyone has a different perspective.

Roundtable elections were held online for the first time. This year Cynthia Tobar’s term on the Steering Committee was due to end, but, thankfully, she agreed to run again. Cynthia is an Assistant Professor/Metadata Librarian at the Mina Rees Library at the CUNY Graduate Center. Leilani Dawson is completing her term as Co-chair, and I want to personally thank her for her work in helping me transition into the position. Sylvia Kollar agreed to run for Co-chair for the coming term. As an archivist with Winthrop, Sylvia has organized and managed the archives of the Paul Taylor Dance Company, among other collections. I am very grateful to both. Roundtable leadership is done on a purely volunteer basis. The roundtable could not function without people willing to give their time and energy to it.

If you can’t make it to Chicago (and I know we’re all on tight budgets these days), please make your voice heard on the SAA Performing Arts Roundtable Discussion List. Jeni and Helice are always looking for content for the newsletter, too. Share your great photos and newsworthy events before another summer escapes.
As a young boy and recent immigrant to the United States, Hugo Keesing was an avid collector of baseball and bubble gum cards. By the mid-1950s, he moved on to popular music, and in the 1970s, he began collecting to support the curriculum of the course he taught at the University of Maryland, “Popular Music in American Society.”

Today, Dr. Keesing has amassed what is arguably the most comprehensive collection of popular music related to the Vietnam War, and has significant holdings related to World War II and the Korean War. In the 1990s, after retiring from his teaching career, Dr. Keesing began a relationship with the University of Maryland's Special Collections in Performing Arts, donating over 250 linear feet of materials relating to popular music, including books, magazines, sheet music, realia, ephemera, teaching materials, and, of course, records.

Last year saw the release of Next Stop Is Vietnam: The War on Record, 1961-2008, a 13-CD boxed set and accompanying 304-page book. The materials were both curated and written by Dr. Keesing; the book also features an introduction by musician Country Joe McDonald and a history of the Vietnam War by historian Lois T. Vietri.

In March 2011, Cassandra Berman visited Dr. Keesing in his home to discuss popular music, the educational value of primary sources, his relationship with archives and libraries, and the creation of his boxed set.

How did you begin collecting popular music? When did you begin collecting the music that comprises Next Stop Is Vietnam?

I began collecting records in about 1955 to 1956. I was in junior high school, and baseball cards, which had been my interest beforehand, were still fine, but baseball cards didn’t interest girls. Knowing something about the current music — whether it was Pat Boone, Elvis Presley, the Everly Brothers, or whoever — was a much better way to, it was more useful for dating and going to parties. The music collection began in the mid-1950s. I collected a couple of records which would later become part of the Vietnam collection simply because they were popular at the time.

But it was really mid-1970s — so, 20 years later — when I began teaching a course at the University [of Maryland] called “Popular Music in American Society,” that I decided that topical material was a great way to interest students in contemporary history. What that did was give me an opportunity to go out and look for topical records, and it wasn’t just Vietnam. I also looked for records, for example, on politicians. Records about Nixon and Watergate, John Kennedy, and songs like “The Ballad of Harry Truman.” He [Harry Truman] was the guy who died when Mount St. Helens erupted. Or songs about the Exxon Valdez [oil spill]; topical songs, which generally have a very short lifetime. So, if you find them, buy them quickly, because you never see them again otherwise.

The course encouraged me to buy books, reference books. And from the early 1970s until the collection went to the University of Maryland in the mid-1990s, I think, I had accumulated somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 books on pop music, on rock and roll music. A lot of it was like the music, I guess. When a group called the Bay City Rollers came out, there were four or five paperbacks, and that was the last people heard of the Bay City Rollers. But New Kids on the Block were simply another incarnation. All of the teen pulp paperbacks, I’d buy them either new or they’d show up at Goodwill for ten cents or something like that. So I simply bought all of those things, and built up a very, very sizable collection.

It sounds like you never had any trouble introducing music as a primary source to students.

No. I had more trouble initially convincing
faculty. I always said, "Look (if it was a department chair or anyone else), come into my class." I invited anybody to come in and listen; I invited students to bring in their parents, so that they didn't think that this was a "gut course," as we used to call them, where nothing happens. No, students are expected to listen, to learn.

And I used other primary source materials in addition to music. In one of the early iterations, after doing some World War II materials, a student who certainly appeared bright said, "Who is this Churchill you were talking about all night?" It struck me that I was presuming a good deal more knowledge, especially historical knowledge that students didn't have. So at that point I went in to my collection. I began taking 35mm slides; I had boxes full of newspapers, magazines. I would bring those to class, so that in addition to hearing music as a primary source, they had the chance to read newspaper headlines, to see sheet music, so that there were tangibles there as well.

Archivists and librarians have so many primary sources accessible to them. What sort of role do you see them playing in an educational setting?

Music can be the entry. If you can capture people's interest — whether it is in a class or whatever — with some songs, and then say, "If you'd like to learn more about women in the military, or nurses, or victims of Agent Orange or napalm, for example, here are some Web sites… but I also would encourage you to try to find some of these books." But I think you can start people with music. One of the things that librarians can do is encourage students to follow the trail: "Music's got you started, now here are some URLs for you." I tried to put those into the boxed set wherever possible. And I'm hoping that through discovery learning the Web site will get them interested in a book, which will get them interested in doing more research. So that it's the way in. Music doesn't have the answers, but it can create an interest where otherwise there was none.

What have been some of your most exciting archival or primary source discoveries while working on Next Stop Is Vietnam?

I found a record called "Danny Fernandez," and I didn't have it my collection. It talked about a young man who died in Vietnam, and I was curious as to whether this was a real soldier, if this was simply another unknown hero. And so because they said he died, I went to the K.I.A. [Killed in Action] listing, the official listing you can find online, of all soldiers killed in Vietnam. And I found a Danny Fernandez. And what I learned was that he wasn't just a small town soldier, but that six months after the record was released, that he was the second soldier during the Vietnam War to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.

As I began writing the bios [for the accompanying book], I tried looking for the artists. And Eddie Harrison [songwriter of "Danny Fernandez"], I located him through the Internet, called him up, and said, "Mr. Harrison, here's who I am and I'd love to learn more about how you happened to write this song." And he gave me a story. But he was so struck by the fact that 35 years later somebody would call him out of the blue. He said, "Nobody's talked to me about this record after since about two months after it was released." He also said that I want to send you some things. For example, this is a letter — he scanned it for me — that he received from the mother of this young soldier, thanking him for writing [the song]. And here is a copy of the original sheet music as [he] wrote it. And he sent me copies of the newspaper articles from the local newspaper. I then went online and found the photo, found the Congressional Medal of Honor citation. I thought, what an incredible way to further my knowledge . . . . [Now] when you Google “Danny Fernandez,” you get his citation, but most of the links are to the boxed set. This is a powerful tool...

"Music doesn't have the answers, but it can create an interest where otherwise there was none."
[Harrison] told me. He said, “I read about this young man in the newspaper, his parents lived in a little town very close to here. I felt really bad about what had happened to him, and I was inspired to write a song.” He said, “The next day I had the song. I took it to a friend who worked at a radio station, he cut me an acetate or something, and it got played a couple of times. Danny’s mother was obviously very pleased and that’s kind of how things went.”

To write a book or a magazine article back in the 1960s would have taken months to years, but music was a quick way to express oneself. So each time I find records, I feel as if I am pretty close to the source.

You’ve donated a lot of material to Special Collections in Performing Arts at the University of Maryland. Can you talk about this decision to donate, and how it felt? What do you hope will happen with these collections?

First, it felt good. By 1990 or 1991, when I decided I wouldn’t be teaching the course anymore, I had accumulated a very large collection. And certainly for the books, the satisfaction was not only owning the books, but I got a tremendous amount of satisfaction by being able to let students use them, and have others gain from them as well.

I want the collection to stay together. I spent a lot of time and effort to bring these things together from all over the world, literally, and so having been at [the University of] Maryland for at that point 20 years…. I thought, “All right, the campus is 20 miles from [my home], it’s close by, which means that I can get over there if I need to have access….”

The sheet music that’s gone over now to the University of Maryland, I think I’ve sent over everything prior to 1940 and everything post 1970. But I have another 10,000 pieces of music from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. These are original rock and roll sheets, some of them were worth $5, some of them were worth $15, but it’s a sizeable amount and I don’t want to sell them off one by one. I want them to be together where researchers can make use.

You mentioned the variety of materials that make up your collections — music, records, books, and more. Your collections at the University of Maryland contain some interesting realia as well, such as inflatable Beatles dolls and jukebox tabs. We know these materials have archival value, but I’m curious as to what role you see them playing for different types of researchers. How do you hope they will be used?

I like my senses to be stimulated. Not only aural stimulation — that is, not only listening to the music — but as I mentioned earlier, I found that visuals — in some cases it was photos of important people, like Winston Churchill — helped create perhaps a stronger learning pattern or learning response. If you see and hear, you have two mutually reinforcing experiences. This is why I could do a presentation on music alone, but I think music and visuals is even better.

Very early on [in the Vietnam War], you had this pro and con, push and pull. And it wasn’t long after [the song] “Eve of Destruction” that you got a word-for-word answer record. To me, it’s a more powerful message, if they see the sheet music for “Eve of Destruction,” hear the song, and then I talk about an answer record, you [start to] see a picture.

You also collect radio news clips, right?

As part of the course at the University of Maryland, students who wanted an ‘A’ in the class had to do an original project. So that was a reason for them to borrow books or borrow materials, but if they had no original idea, I said, “All right, what I’d like you to do is go to your radio and record for me an hour’s worth…and approach it in the following way: imagine if you have fallen onto earth from some strange planet, and all of your information about where you are has to come from what you hear on the radio. So
listen to the songs, listen to the public service announcements, listen to the news, listen to the ads, and then write up what kind of community you think you’re in.”

The students got their projects back, but a lot of them, if they had interesting stuff, I asked if there was any chance of my making a copy of it. And they said, “Go ahead and keep it, I don’t need it.” And so I accumulated a large number of cassettes with very interesting snippets of information. And as an archivist I said [to my students], “When you do this, you don’t turn in only the tape, but you do a log. So that the first 15 seconds are this, and the next 15 seconds are [this]... because I can’t go through an hour-and-a-half of tape without knowing what’s on it. So if you’re going to get the maximum number of points for your project, make a tape plus a log.”

And so I can go back to some of those logs and say, here’s an interesting commercial. And in fact it was a student who got me the news clip of the [May 1971] riots at the University of Maryland. So if you’ve got 300 potential assistants, who in order to increase their grade are encouraged to do a project. It’s wonderful.

**Going back to the boxed set: as you were developing it, I’m curious to know who you saw as your audience or audiences.**

I was completely certain that for me, the project would focus on the potential educational side as opposed to the music side. So, I said what I’d like to do is to develop a couple of themes. One of the themes is the draft, one of the themes is protest music, and one of the themes is counter-protest. So those were three that were very easy, because I knew there was considerable material to choose from. But then as I collected more and listened more it struck me that there were other themes, [such as] the peace movement. And it wasn’t until I began this project that I really became familiar with veterans’ music — songs by vets. I knew a little bit about music made by soldiers while they were in Vietnam, but only a little bit....

I wanted to educate, to enlighten, and to entertain. I did not put this together for the purpose of creating a great entertainment album. And therefore the [accompanying] book also emphasizes not so much the music but the lyrics. The last CD is all the lyrics to every song. So people could actually read [the lyrics]... And when the first review came out and said, “a college course masquerading as a boxed set,” I said, “Hallelujah.” The first reviewer has caught on to what my purpose was. I have to say that with the exception of the songs that we couldn’t license...of the 304 or so musical selections, I chose all but two. But I also asked for and was accommodated with regard to the news clips...the 30 or so speech segments, whether it’s Ike speaking about the military-industrial complex, or Johnson speaking about the Gulf of Tonkin, or Carter pardoning the draft dodgers, or Nixon about Kent

“...holding it close to me, is self-defeating. It really becomes good stuff when others have access to it and can learn.”

Hugo Keesing at Phan Rang Air Base, 1970. Dr. Keesing lived in Vietnam while teaching psychology courses for the University of Maryland’s Far East Division.
State and stuff like that. I said these will provide the kind of historical context that will add meaning to the music itself. So that the sequencing of songs on particular CDs was intended to tell a story.

Did you envision these materials being used by students, by those who had experienced the war in a variety of ways, or by researchers?

Ideally I saw, I see, a copy in every library in the country, whether it’s an academic library, a public library...I arranged it, so to speak, so that different CDs revolve around different concepts, different themes. So that if somebody is interested in protest music, they have 25 or 30 tracks that they can listen to...

and then depending on if they want to hear the 25 or 30 anti-protestor [music] — the flag waving, “it’s America, love it or leave it” — they have another CD they can go to. So they can cherry pick, they can decide what they want to hear. The one criterion is that the set needs to be balanced. It cannot become either a pro-war or an anti-war diatribe. And that was really also a question that a number of the people whose music is in here asked when I spoke to them on the phone or sent them e-mails: [they asked] “Who else? What else? What’s it going to be like?” And especially the Vietnam vets wanted to be assured that their music wasn’t going to be lost in a sea of anti-war sentiment. And I said “no,” and I had confidence that an objective listener would find about one-third pro, one-third anti, and one-third “can’t tell which.” So, neutral in terms of any political element as regards to the war.

You’ve obviously used primary sources abundantly in your own teaching, and you recognize the importance of doing so. I’m wondering what you think other teachers, or archivists and librarians, should be doing in terms of outreach, what they should be doing to get students interested in learning through primary source materials?

A couple of years ago — a couple of years for me is probably 10 or 15 — there were two books that struck me. One was Allan Bloom’s The Closing of the American Mind, and the other was E.D. Hirsch’s Cultural Literacy. Hirsch was interesting because, as part of his book, he said that there is a list of a thousand or so names and dates and places that every literate person should know, and that newspapers, magazines presumed people know. And so I decided that I was asked — this was Information Management and Intelligence, a librarians’ conference — how can teachers and librarians interest students and make them more culturally literate? Because cultural literacy sounds like a pretty heavy term, and it’s not just handing them a Plato or an Aristotle or something like that.

So I said how can, what can, we use in terms of popular culture, to increase the cultural literacy? Cultural literacy included knowing about Malcolm X, about civil rights, about Black Muslims, Magazines . . . . . . Hirsch’s catalog includes selective service, generation gap, and Vietnam War. So pictures or songs about draft card burning would be an introduction. Gum cards, I still have lots of these. I learned about the Korean War — look at this [takes out trading cards], “Children’s crusade against
communism. Fight the red menace.” I was collecting these gum cards in the early 1950s. So while I wasn’t really conscious as to what was happening in Korea, it was in retrospect an interesting source. Say, “What can you learn, and how can these relate to cultural literacy?” Get people interested. Get them to check out videos, to look at magazines. If you can excite someone, I think you can lead them to learning, without even their knowledge that they’re learning. It just kind of happens.

So pop culture. Librarians have incredible resources. Using them creatively, and finding the one or two things that get somebody excited, then helping them find more. In other words, [say] “I’ll start you out, look at this book, and if you have any questions, I can recommend some more things. And I’ll check a couple of Web sites to see what else might help you, put you in touch with somebody.”

There’s so much value to be found in material objects, objects that maybe aren’t so easily accessible online. You might have to go into a library, or an archive, or a museum to see them. And they’re wonderful teaching tools. What sort of role should we play in encouraging students to appreciate the breadth of material out there?

I sort of hope it’s there and built in. When I brought the actual objects to class, I put newspapers in plastic and thumb-tacked them onto a big board behind me. I brought records in picture sleeves. I’d come to class 45 minutes before class started, and I’d put all this stuff up. There were maybe 20 students out of the class who were always early, and who were always coming up to the front of the room to ask, “Can I take this down and look at it?” There were 250 who never did that. So, is there a way to reach those 250, or are you happy with the 20 who seem to look for ways to add to their understanding and knowledge? But if it’s not available, then nobody gets it. So to make things available, to make them visible, to literally let people know what is out there….

What I did do is when I was in Cleveland in May of last year I went to (then) not-yet-open Rock and Roll Hall of Fame [and Museum’s] Library and Archives and said, “Look, here is a list of all of the book titles that are at the University of Maryland.” I said, “You probably will never see many of these unless somebody else donates them. If somebody’s looking for them and you don’t have them, then you know where they are.” So, have libraries working together, make sure that somebody here knows that what they may not have is over there. I do what I can to facilitate the sharing of information because, I think, you use that term. Most teachers have that as their primary goal. How do you make information broadly available? How do you share it? Because holding it close, to me, is self-defeating. It really becomes good stuff when others have access to it and can learn.

Unfortunately, I don’t think everybody sees it that way. Nope.

But that’s a wonderful attitude to have. But how many of those people who don’t see it that way are teachers? It’s more fun sometimes when you give it away.

Well we’re definitely appreciative that you have. Is there anything else you’d like to share about Next Stop Is Vietnam?

I want to let people know that maybe [the boxed set] is touted as “the definitive,” but it’s not definitive by my standards. I have another — I could do a volume two with completely new material of equal quality. I’m hoping that there will be a volume two. If there is a volume two, and when that’s done, I’ve done as much with Vietnam as I can.

I’ve done something similar with World War II. I began collecting World War II sheet music. When I had 400 or 500 sheets, I thought I’d do a comprehensive listing. [But I thought] before I do that, let me go to the Library of Congress to be sure I haven’t missed anything. Eight hours a day, 15 or 16 weeks later, I had photocopied something like 8,000 sheets that the library had that I’d never seen. I went from the very first box to the very last box, the only person who had ever done that. And so whatever I didn’t have as an original, I have as a photocopy. So I have an online listing of about 11,000 World War II sheets. With all of the backup material there [in my collection]…I guess if I’ve got 11,000 World War II, and 4,000 Vietnam-related records, and I’ve just increased the database of Korea records, from the Korea Education Group’s three to 415 — I guess you could say I’m a somewhat compulsive archivist.
Art music in Europe expanded from church, to royal court, to concert hall, on its way to becoming what we now call the western classical tradition. In southern Asia, performing arts have followed a similar path, including one that American audiences have some acquaintance with (thanks in part to the Beatles): North Indian or Hindustani classical music. This style is played throughout the northern two-thirds of the subcontinent, from Afghanistan to Bangladesh. It can be sung or played on instruments such as sitar or sarode, usually accompanied by the tuned pair of hand drums called the tabla. One of the modern masters of this tradition spent more than 40 years teaching students in the United States: Ali Akbar Khan was trained practically from infancy by his father, Allauddin Khan, himself a towering figure in Hindustani classical music and part of an unbroken musical lineage going back to the 16th century.1

Ali Akbar Khan, or Khan-sahib, as he was affectionately known, was born in what is now Bangladesh, but spent most of his youth in the central Indian city of Maihar, where his father was the head court musician. His early life was entirely devoted to his musical training in the vocal and percussion traditions, as well as on the sarode, a lute-like instrument with a head made of goat skin and sympathetic strings. He was often taught alongside his sister, the accomplished sitarist Annapurna Devi, and later joined by sitarist Ravi Shankar. Khan-sahib gave his first public performance at the age of 13, and by the age of 20 he was working for All India Radio, Lucknow, eventually becoming its youngest director at that time, until his father was able to recommend him for the position of court musician to the Maharaja of Jodhpur. His em-
ployment at the royal court ended after seven years, following his employer’s death in a plane crash, but it would probably not have lasted much longer in any event; India’s independence from England spelled the end of subsidies to the princely states, so they would no longer be able to afford court musicians. Khan-sahib relocated to Bombay (now Mumbai), where he composed music for film scores, which he would continue to do throughout his life, eventually working with Satyajit Ray, Ismail Merchant/James Ivory, and other filmmakers. He continued to learn from his father, and taught many students as well, including violinist V.G. Jog and sitarist Nikhil Bannerjee. Eventually he established what would be the first incarnation of the Ali Akbar College of Music in Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1956.

The previous year, Lord Yehudi Menuhin had invited him to perform at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the first performance of its kind in the United States, and the first of many successful engagements for Khan-sahib in that city. During this period he recorded the first LP of Indian classical music to be released in the West and appeared on Alistair Cooke’s television show Omnibus. Beginning in 1961, Dr. Rosette Renshaw, an ethnomusicologist and former student of Nadia Boulianger, invited Khan-sahib to McGill University, Montreal, for a yearly series of concerts, along with classes and research, including work with a group of nuns exploring similarities between Gregorian chant and the North Indian dhrupad tradition.

In 1965, Samuel and Louise Scripps invited Khan-sahib to teach in California under the auspices of the American Society for Eastern Arts. Interest was great enough that a statement of purpose was drawn up in 1967, and the Ali Akbar College of Music (AACM) opened in Berkeley, with the first classes held in the Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) fraternity house that had been rented with the help of a small grant. AACM moved across the San Francisco Bay to Marin County in 1968. It has been at its current location in San Rafael since 1977, and Khan-sahib taught thousands of students there, six classes a week for nine months of the year, until his death at the age of 87 in 2009. He also taught at the Basel, Switzerland branch of AACM for several weeks each winter.

By the 1970s, Ali Akbar Khan’s musical influence was being felt throughout the San Francisco Bay area and around the world, having affected the development of musical styles from minimalism to psychedelic rock. He performed with musicians from a wide variety of genres, including guitarist Julian Bream, harmonica virtuoso Larry Adler, as well as leading a series of collaborations with jazz saxophonist John Handy and Carnatic violinist L. Subramaniam. When he was not teaching, he maintained a grueling tour schedule. His repertoire was such that he rarely repeated material in his thousands of concerts.

Khan-sahib was very inventive as a performer, but always taught in a very traditional style, in which the student must learn many compositions in a particular raag in order to understand it. He would compose material for the class on the spot, giving corrections as it was sung or played back to him. In this way the student could see the
composer’s methods, structure, and style unfold, as well as receive instruction on the actual making of music. A student of Hindustani classical music, whether vocalist, sarodist, or tabla player, practices and thoroughly assimilates these compositions, not unlike the way a lawyer studies case law. One can certainly play a through-composed piece as one would a concerto or aria, but performers at the highest level often add new material seamlessly into the existing compositions. Khan-sahib was also an accomplished vocalist, although he did not sing in performance, and he insisted that instrumentalists learn the vocal music as well, in the way that most musicians in South Asia are traditionally taught.

The Ali Akbar College of Music continues to teach Hindustani classical music in the manner and style of its founder, drawing on the rich legacy of compositions left by Khan-sahib and his father. This music has historically been taught directly by word of mouth, and will remain viable only as long as that is the case. However, those who are now working to maintain the integrity and continuity of the art form have new resources available to them that their forebears in the gharana (lineage) may not have imagined: beginning in the late 1970s, students were allowed to tape record classes, and within a few years the college began systematically recording and documenting all of Khan-sahib’s courses, eventually adding video capability.

By the early 1990s, there were thousands of hours of material, and Khan-sahib’s wife Mary, director of the Ali Akbar Khan Foundation, began work on putting it into a searchable database using the FileMaker Pro platform. This has evolved into the Ali Akbar Khan Library and Archive which, when it opens in 2013, will allow students and researchers to access class material, as well as an archive of hundreds of concert recordings, using search criteria such as rāg, tāla, lyrics (if a vocal piece), or other compositional elements. Over five thousand
compositions have already been cataloged, and the project is about two-thirds complete. More than just the compositions themselves, these class recordings show the compositional process in action in a way that has never been possible for any composer. The database allows students to simultaneously listen to a recording of the class and view the notated composition. The compositions are notated in a system called sargam, derived from the Indian version of the solfège, rather than staff notation, which would be more suitable to music composed in a fixed key. Sargam is easily learned as one gains familiarity with Hindustani classical music.

The Archive will be housed at the AACM campus in San Rafael, where users will have access to the database at computer terminals, as well as listening stations and facilities for viewing video of class and concert recordings. There will also be a reading room where researchers can examine reviews, press releases, concert programs, and other material.

Most of the work involved in creating and maintaining the Archive occurs in a space above the Ali Akbar College of Music Instrument Store, a few blocks away from the school. The basic cataloging of this material requires a considerable amount of knowledge, and the Archive staff is comprised of longtime students who draw on years of study and practice in order to identify raags and talas in cases where tape labels are missing or incomplete. AACM alumni have loaned their personal recordings of classes and concerts to help fill in gaps in the collection. The Archive is not a large operation, with a staff of three to five people at any given time, depending on the availability of funding. In the past four years, the Ali Akbar Khan Library and Archive has received grants from the Irvine Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the LEF Foundation, Tide Foundation, Rex Foundation, and ACTA, in addition to contributions from many individual donors.
teach and perform the music, the AACM and the Ali Akbar Khan Library and Archive protect an entire musical world that has traditionally transcended ethnic and sectarian boundaries. At many points in its history, there has been the fear that this legacy would be lost or be compromised. The use of modern technological tools and traditional teaching and practice are not mutually exclusive, but if used together will help ensure that this heritage is available to future generations of musicians and music lovers the world over.

Notes
1 Allauddin Khan’s teacher, Wazir Khan, was a direct descendant of Miyan Tansen, court musician of the Mughal emperor Akbar the Great.
2 Peter Lavezzoli, The Dawn of Indian Music in the West: Bhairavi; 2006 Continuum
3 http://www.themaestroandme.com/
4 http://aacm.org/shop/index.html
5 http://www.theconcertexperience.com/

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Like its South Indian (Carnatic) counterpart, Hindustani classical music does not use chords or harmony as music from the European tradition does. Instead, it is based on melodic structures called ragas or raags, usually accompanied by a fixed drone tuned to the tonic note. Raags are much more than mere scales or modes; they are highly refined systems with specific rules as to the order in which notes are played, what notes are given importance, how notes are ornamented, and how microtones (srutis) are used, with great attention given to phrasing and expressive qualities of playing or singing. Within these rules, the musician can compose in the moment during a performance, as well as use material learned from an instructor. In performance, a single raag may be explored for an hour or more, beginning with a section called alap that has no fixed rhythm. The alap itself may have several chapters, depending on how much time the performer has to develop the raag. After the alap, the tabla joins the performance, providing a rhythmic framework in a cyclical form known as tala. A tala has a fixed number of beats (such as 7, 10, or 16) and the tabla player helps reinforce this with a repeated set of strokes known as theka. Each time the soloist completes a musical idea, the tabla player is given the opportunity to play a short, often improvised solo section, and so the roles of soloist and accompanist are traded back and forth throughout a performance or practice session. The improvisatory aspect of the music allows for spontaneous interaction between the soloist and the tabla player, which can be one of the most exciting and accessible aspects of a Hindustani classical performance.

The line between performer and composer, which has solidified in Western classical music since the early 20th century, is indistinct in the Hindustani tradition. This means that every performance is simultaneously ancient, drawing on melodies and rules of engagement that are hundreds, if not thousands, of years old, and contemporary, being partly composed on the stage in real time. Until the 20th century, these traditions were held very tightly within families and never taught to outsiders. Allauddin Khan, along with contemporaries such as V.N. Bhattachande, realized that this music would not survive in the post-colonial world if it did not open up to the burgeoning middle class. They were confronting the same dilemma that court musicians in Europe had faced a century earlier with the loss of royal patronage, but in a more industrialized and interconnected global environment. Not content to allow his tradition to remain a regional one, Allauddin Khan sent two of his most accomplished students, Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar, abroad, to present their music on the world stage.

Ali Akbar Khan in concert with Swapan Chaudhuri, master percussion teacher at AACM for 30 years.

Biography of Author

Wallace Harvey had his first piano lessons from his mother Susan at the age of eight, and soon began studying European classical violin with James Stark and Claudia Shiuh. He continued with Dr. David Margetts while at California State University, Fresno, where he earned his BA in German (including a year at Ruprecht-Karls University in Heidelberg), with a minor in music, serving as concertmaster for the university orchestra and a member of the scholarship chamber ensemble. He began his studies in Hindustani classical music, including vocal, violin, and harmonium, with Maestro Ali Akbar Khan in 1993. He currently teaches voice, violin, and theory at Ali Akbar College, in San Rafael, where he continues to learn from Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri, Bruce Hamrn, and Alam Khan, in addition to working for the Ali Akbar Khan Library and Archive. He has accompanied vocalists including Rita Sahai, Shweta Jhaveri, and Tripti Mukherjee in performance, as well as provided nagma for tabla soloists such as Swapan Chaudhuri, Kumar Bose, Ashok Maitra, Uttam Chakraborty, and Indranil Mullick. He performs as a vocalist, violinist, and harmonium player throughout the United States, and is currently pursuing a MA in Humanities at Dominican University.
Creating Harmony at the Carnegie Hall Archives

An Interview with Gino Francesconi and Kathleen Sabogal by Cynthia Tobar

The Carnegie Hall Archives, established in 1986, documents the rich history of this legendary music venue, including events in its three halls, past musical performances, and the lives and work of former tenants of the studio towers. The archive contains over 2,500 square feet of documents, which consist of concert programs, promotional fliers and posters, music manuscripts, photographs, drawings, paintings, recordings, architectural records, and administrative files. Cynthia Tobar met with Carnegie Hall archivists Gino Francesconi and Kathleen Sabogal in April 2010 to discuss the mission and current state of the archives and digitization plans. The following report on their discussion is presented as an interview.

What is the purpose and scope of the Carnegie Hall Archives?

GF: When we started the archives in 1986 our documented history and our paper trail were pretty much gone for two administrations — the Carnegie and Simon administrations — and we barely had material from the Carnegie Hall Corporation. While many institutions may have more stuff than they know what to do with, we didn’t when we started. We began with a threefold mission. Our first goal was to document what we had in anticipation of the centennial. For example, our executive director at the time didn’t know how many Brahms symphonies we had done. So we aimed to help Artistic Programming. Another goal in preparing for our centennial included finding enough material to do an exhibition at Lincoln Center. The next part of our mission became to try a systemized way of collecting our history, filling in the gaps. From there we progressed to a records management program and then to a full-fledged archives program. At that initial stage, we wanted to collect as much history as possible about Carnegie Hall. Now we are collecting less, but we are more concentrated on managing what we have here and on ensuring that the paper and digital flow of information from this whole corporation ends nicely with us.

KS: It’s mainly about collecting anything that has to do with Carnegie Hall — what went on here, the performance history, and anything that has to do with the corporation. How we produce the concerts, how we run the shows, how our development department fundraises. All of this documentation will eventually be on our Web site.

GF: Right. It’s taken 20 years, but we did a lot, I think. Unlike, for example, the Boston Symphony, which seemed to have everything all piled up in the attic when they went about starting their archives. In our case, everybody had just walked out the door with things. The active, really aggressive period of collecting is over because we’ve done it.

Now you can focus on preserving the institutional history. What are the current issues relating to the collection, documentation, access, and storage of materials, particularly performing arts materials?

KS: I think for us the biggest thing is letting people know what we have. We have a good handle on what we have internally. Our collections are cataloged in Access, but now we have to let the public know more about what we have. By doing so, we hope it’ll bring more people in.

That segues into my next question, which is how is your archive currently providing access to researchers, both internal and external?

KS: We have a presence on the Web site that outlines general information — when we’re open, a scope statement about what we have, and contact information so that researchers can make appointments. We provide a lot of information via reports generated from our
OPAS database. For example, now it is easy to respond to questions like: how many times was a certain Brahms symphony performed, or, how many times did Isaac Stern perform? With OPAS, we have the capacity to make reports and e-mails, which we do a lot, but we also have people come in.

**Can you talk a little more about OPAS?**

KS: It’s a performance database. It also functions as a management database for Artistic Programming to track artists and personnel issues. We don’t use that side of it. We use it primarily to track our performance history — what happens down in the hall, what the repertoire was, who the artists were. We also can use it to locate a program for a specific event.

GF: Or producer.

KS: Yes, who presented the event, who produced the concert, etc. It’s an in-house database created by the company, Fine Arts Software. OPAS stands for Orchestra Planning and Administration System. Many orchestras and performing art centers throughout the world use it.

GF: I think it’s the fifth generation makeover.

KS: It was used by the American Symphony Orchestra League and then it sort of took off. Boston and Los Angeles [orchestras] use it as well, I believe.

GF: It was a way for them to keep track of their library. We also discovered it was very difficult to find a database to suit our unique needs — because we have so many different types of events. This is the latest version and it seems to work. We have almost 50,000 events catalogued.

KS: Right, and I’d say there might even be more.

GF: There may even be more. We still have a lot of gaps, but as it is now it’s an enormous database.

**What are you specifically recording in each database entry? Anyone who was involved with the production of a particular event, including performers?**

KS: The date of the performance, the time, who performed, what they performed and other information. For example, if it was recorded; whether it was a world premiere; location of an archival recording; or if there’s a commercial recording. That way, when somebody calls up and says, “Oh, do you have a recording of Harry Belafonte at Carnegie Hall?” we can say, “Yes, we do, and if you want to come and listen to it, you can.”

“... every department was very excited, including the head of our IT who said, ‘This is what we’ve been waiting for.’”

Displays at Rose Museum, Carnegie Hall
GF: The house manager has a separate database. They record information about things like: the weather, how many people came late, if the sound system went out.

KS: The house managers use it for production purposes. They’re using it more for programming.

KS: But it’s interesting for us because can also look up what the attendance was or who was in what dressing room, etc.

GF: Yes, and any house situations that came up.

**Which is really just fantastic information for a researcher who’s doing historical background research on a certain performance.**

KS: Right, and that database only goes back to the mid-1990s — they haven’t been using a database for that long. Our information goes back to 1891 in OPAS.

My next question is in regards to the archives’ aims of increasing access to the holdings via digitization. **What have your plans been so far? At what stage are you in regarding the implementation of digitization projects at Carnegie Hall?**

KS: We’re at the stage where the best thing to do is to create PDFs of finding aids and post them online for some of our collections.

Posting these simple PDFs is the quickest and simplest solution right now. We’re talking with our IT department about what the next step is in creating a real database that tracks all of our physical items in one database. We’ve got several Access databases which are difficult to merge into one. So the PDFs of finding aids online are the simplest solution right now. The Web site is also being redesigned.

GF: It’s a perfect time because we’ve hired a company to analyze, reassess and redesign, or at least offer suggestions for the whole Web site, and that will allow a more prominent role [for the archives]. And I think they go hand in hand. By the time that’s ready we’ll be ready. And we’ve also just done a digital asset analysis. This is the first time really where it’s gone through the whole building. As Kathleen was saying, it’s stored in different places, so hopefully now we’ll corral it all and be able to offer it to the public at some point.

**That will certainly help to centralize things and make the archives the gatekeeper of all this information about the institution, going back in time.**

GF: Kathleen had organized nine meetings that lasted all day long; yet every department was very excited, including the head of our IT who said, “This is what we’ve been waiting for.”

KS: This was an assessment by AudioVisual Preservation Solutions for our audio and video assets. It will include a report that will give us a workflow and guidelines about how to digitize the massive amounts that we have. For example, how much it will cost and how long it will take, so that ultimately, we can write grants. That will be the next step — we’ll get the report and then we’ll take it from there.

In regards to ownership of separate copyright, duration and scope of copyright, copyright and the Internet, what have you encountered?

KS: We just finished up working with our Marketing Department on a book about Carnegie Hall’s history. We helped them find the copyrights for the photographs, which seemed like a simple project, but it was quite difficult to track down photographers and then

**Displays at Rose Museum, Carnegie Hall**
all this material. So I think we have a good handle on what the copyright is for our audio and video collections, and for the most part Carnegie Hall does not own the copyright. We haven’t really delved into what that would mean for putting material online. I know that Interactive Services has put stuff online. There are some guidelines where you can put 30 seconds of something online without needing permissions or you get permissions and that’s usually what they’ll let you do. They’ve been able to put material online for educational purposes. In our cataloging of the collections we’ve made sure to note copyright if we know it.

I’d like to hear your thoughts on issues pertaining specifically to performing arts, such as capturing performances and other issues. There are so many nuances, relating to copyright and the value to researchers in the future.

KS: I think we’re probably doing both of those things because we have this OPAS database, which captures all of the pertinent information about a performance that can be sorted and given to researchers on different things. But then we’re also taking care of the actual physical items and other information that goes with that performance, the actual physical program or photograph or recording. And so I think it is interesting because for performing arts you want to be able to pull all this information together, for instance, how many times a Mahler symphony was performed, and you can only do that if you’ve got the information in an electronic format or somewhere where you can sort it and pull that out. But you also want to see that program from 1910 in some way.

GF: And then we’re unique in the sense that we don’t have our own house orchestra or ballet company or opera company. We’re like a hall out on Long Island waiting to be rented for a wedding or a Bar Mitzvah. We are producing more and more of our own events and the education wing makes us really distinctive and unique. But unlike, say, Bridget Carr [archivist] at the Boston Symphony where I remember one time I was on the phone with her, and a guy from the Boston Symphony came by and said, “Can I have a copy of the tape from the performance last week?”, there that’s the norm where they record their performances archivally. Here, because of different unions we can’t do that yet, but at some point [it might be possible to] record anything we want here archivally, and then it would be an amazing resource for people because as opposed to just being a resource for the New York Philharmonic, Boston, or the Cleveland Orchestra, here somebody could come by and study all of them and compare one to another or come here and see country and western music or whatever it is, and become digitally what we are traditionally. Whereas it’s a wonderful cross section of performance history in our country.

KS: Yes, I think you’re right, that is an issue with performing arts archives. You are capturing performance history but you also have to make sure that the artist is okay with that. If we did do an archival recording, we’d have to ask. You have to ask permission of the artist and they can say no. You have to get the stage hands to give permissions, so there are a lot of those things. So you can record the static information, so to speak, but if you want to capture more of that it takes a little time to figure out. Artists are more amenable to things like that: knowing that it’s an archival copy and it stays here, people can listen to it here but it doesn’t leave the archive.

GF: When I did a Bernstein exhibit I found a rare clip of him on YouTube. And then when I went and tried to find the owner, he said, “Well, where did you find it?” I said, “On YouTube,” and two days later it was gone. I think that’ll happen less and less, people will see YouTube for its commercial advertising quality, you know, and instead of people thinking, “Oh, jeez, you know, I could have made money on that.” Instead it becomes a much vaster topic and you can reach a greater audience in that way.

Gino Francesconi and Kathleen Sabogal can be reached at archives@carnegiehall.org.

Mrs. I.R. Keller’s painting studio, Carnegie Hall
**Members’ News**

**Special Collections in Performing Arts at the University of Maryland Acquires 500th WAPAVA Video**

Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) is happy to announce that the James J. Taylor Collection of the Washington Area Performing Arts Video Archives (WAPAVA) has acquired its 500th video recording. Founded in 1991 by Jim Taylor, WAPAVA is one of only two active public archives in the country devoted to videorecording theater and other performing arts.

When the collection was transferred to the University of Maryland (UM) in December 2004, the holdings consisted of approximately 385 productions—all of which had been filmed and post-produced by Taylor using his own equipment and financial resources. Upon his death in February 2005, WAPAVA’s Board of Directors assumed responsibility for continuing Taylor’s vision, which is why this milestone is so remarkable. WAPAVA thrives thanks to a devoted nucleus within the Board, specifically Jackson Bryer (Professor Emeritus of English at UM), Stephen Jarrett, and Irene Wagner.

Through grant funding, donations, and Board contributions, WAPAVA is able to hire professional videographers to film the productions, creating an ideal special collection for performing arts scholarship.

Perhaps it is appropriate that the 500th WAPAVA video is Waiting for Godot. This 2004 production mounted by the Washington Shakespeare Company was one of the later films shot by Taylor. It was recently rescued from a post-production backlog by grant funding.

WAPAVA videos are regularly used by UM classes in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies, as well as by those in literature, philosophy, and religion. Local and national theater companies, dance companies, and other performers have come to the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library (MSPAL) to take advantage of this unique source of performance documentation. While the official archive for WAPAVA is at SCPA, videos from the collection are also available for use at DC Public Library’s Washingtoniana Division (MLK Branch). WAPAVA videos are available for researchers any time MSPAL is open.

Vincent J. Novara
Special Collections in Performing Arts
University of Maryland

**Cuban Heritage Collection Acquires Repertorio Español Records**

In January 2011, Cuban Heritage Collection (CHC) Archivist Beata Bergen and Web Communications Technician Rudo Kemper traveled to New York City to inventory and pack up the records from the New York-based theater company Repertorio Español. In the midst of a snowstorm, we packed a total of 76 boxes, which include an assortment of records, photographs, promotional materials, correspondence, and other items that will become available to researchers for the first time.

One of the oldest Hispanic theater companies in the United States, Repertorio Español produces Latin American, Spanish, and Latino theater productions. It was founded in 1968 by two Cubans, the late producer Gilberto Zaldívar and artistic director René Buch. “We are very proud of Repertorio Español’s artistic contributions to society since its founding in 1968,” said Associate Producer José Antonio Cruz. “The Company’s achievements have had a considerable influence in the preservation of Spanish and Latin American culture in the United States. In addition, its productions have made a unique contribution to the American theater field.” When asked why the Company decided to donate its archive to CHC, Cruz noted, “It is of utmost importance to have the Company’s accomplishments preserved as an example for future generations of what may be achieved for the benefit of our Hispanic communities. Given Repertorio’s founders’ Cuban heritage, we couldn’t think of a better place than CHC to bring context to what they have achieved through their tireless work at Repertorio Español.”

After an initial visit to Repertorio’s premises in January 1988, the research team visited the company again in July last year to assess and appraise the
records, we are delighted to finally have this invaluable archive in our Collection and look forward to making it available to the public. The acquisition of the records of this historic theater company will serve to fortify our existing collection of Cuban and Latino theater and further promote scholarship in this field.

We were introduced to Repertorio in 2005 by Dr. Lillian Manzor, Associate Professor in the University of Miami’s Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and Director of the Cuban Theater Digital Archive. We are extremely grateful to Repertorio Español, the late Mr. Zaldívar, Mr. Buch, Executive Director Robert Weber Federico, and Associate Producer José Antonio Cruz for trusting us with their legacy.

For more information about CHC’s theater collections, visit http://www.library.miami.edu/chc/collections/theater/.

Maria R. Estorino  
Deputy Chair & Chief Operations Manager Cuban Heritage Collection University of Miami Libraries

Paul Taylor Dance Company Archives Online

The Paul Taylor Dance Foundation is pleased to announce that the Paul Taylor Dance Archives has been made available to the public as of June 30, 2011. The Foundation received a grant from NHPRC to process, catalog, and provide online access to the Paul Taylor Dance Archives (http://www.ptdc.org/archive/ and ArchiveGrid). The project began on July 1, 2010, and was conducted by the Winthrop Group, Inc. in coordination with the Taylor Foundation. The funding enabled the Foundation to continue to preserve Taylor’s work, and provide access to more than 50 years of documentation to the worldwide dance community, researchers, and the general public.

Announcing Fellowships in Dance Archives

The Dance Heritage Coalition (DHC) has received a three-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program to provide on-the-job training for 21 students pursuing master’s degrees in library or information science at ALA accredited programs. The program will increase the visibility of, and access to, dance material, raise the number of librarians specializing in dance, and provide these 21 students with skills that can be used in all specialties of librarianship. This award of $526,072 — with matching non-federal funds of $280,115 — is one of only three in the IMLS grant program that specifically targets performing arts.
collections (the other two being grants to the Association of Research Libraries and Wayne State University Libraries).

In the last 10 years, the DHC has created fellowships that place the candidate in a major American dance archive, after which the Fellow completes a practicum sharing newly acquired skills with a smaller archive, such as in a dance company or historical society. Information on how to apply for the Summer 2012 program will be available in October. Please contact the Coalition staff at DHC@danceheritage.org to be placed on the program contact list or to nominate master's candidates.

**New York Public Library for the Performing Arts Exhibitions**

*Residue: An Installation by Eiko & Koma* opened in the Vincent Astor Gallery on July 19 and will remain on view through October 30, 2011. This exhibition features 11 video installations and many examples of handmade fabric sets and costume pieces, created during their 40-year collaboration. The Jerome Robbins Dance Division and Archives of the Recorded Moving Image have been working with the Japanese-American choreographers to preserve their dance, art, and video. Two free evenings of film screening and discussions are being offered in conjunction with the show, including one scheduled to take place on October 6, 2011 in the Library’s Bruno Walter Auditorium. Eiko & Koma performed a new site-specific work, *Water*, in the Paul Milstein reflecting pool on July 27-31, as part of the Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors Festival.

*Dance Theatre of Harlem: 40 Years of Firsts*, the exhibition developed as part of an ongoing collaboration between the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and the Dance Theatre of Harlem Archives, continued its national tour, opening for a six-month stay at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit.

**American Choral Directors Association Archives Finishes Grant Project to Create Online Finding Aids**

In 1959, a group of choral directors formed the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), an organization dedicated to the promotion of high-quality choral conducting in the United States. In creating this organization, the group inadvertently shaped and recorded the history of American choral music during the last half of the 20th century into the present. Thanks to their foresight and prolific collecting, they created an archive of choral music history totaling approximately 800 linear feet, including collections donated by noted choral legends and 30 years of recordings that document the nation’s amateur and professional choirs. Also prominent are ACDA documents that tell the story of this organization, which has advocacy as its core mission, along with a commitment to promoting excellence in choral music.

The organization collected with abandon for 30 years. When hired by the ACDA in 2006, my job was to create order and make the contents accessible. For three years, I worked alone while handling all of the other typical jobs that a lone arranger encounters. In 2009, ACDA was awarded a basic processing grant from the National Archives and Records Administration, which enabled us to hire two library students as interns. Thanks to them, the archives put basic order in the collections and created 18 MARC records and 18 EAD finding aids. Processing was minimal, but regardless of this, we made discoveries: we found a draft of a speech by Robert Shaw from the early 1960s, a manuscript of a book by Dr. Charles C. Hirt, and over one thousand books that had never been catalogued or even reviewed for inclusion.

Each collection is rich in correspondence that provides a glimpse of these choral giants as individuals and professionals. Music score markings offer researchers much insight into the minds and talents of these illustrious men and women. The recordings demonstrate the sounds and techniques used by the best choral
directors in the country, and the national documents of ACDA tell the interesting story of how it grew to become the respected organization that it is today.

The finding aids available at http://acda.org/archive/finding-aids have made our holdings accessible to the public in a way never before possible. Researchers can now peruse the titles of the series (for donated collections) or subseries (for organizational records) for a brief idea of what each collection holds. Anyone with an interest in choral music is encouraged to look at the finding aids and visit the ACDA Archives. The history of American choral music is ripe for historic investigation and its holdings are a treasure for anyone who loves choral music. With this first hurdle out of the way, the ACDA Archives can continue to plan for its future and continue to make records and recordings available to choral music enthusiasts.

Christina Prucha CA
(Archivist of the ACDA, 2006-2010)
Currently archivist at Logan College of Chiropractic in St. Louis, Missouri
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Toilers in the Field
In February 2011, Annemarie van Roessel began as new Reference Archivist for the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (LPA). She works primarily with the Billy Rose Theatre Division, with responsibilities across collection management, acquisitions, reference, and some processing.

Also new to the New York Public Library is Digital Curator for the Performing Arts, Doug Reside, who began his position in early 2011. Doug is working with all the research divisions at LPA to create innovative digital projects, including a new “Musical of the Month,” blog where he posts the libretto of an important early American musical in a variety of formats and supplements it with associated photographs, vocal scores, and the occasional audio file. For an example, see his post on The Black Crook.

Kat Bell, a recent graduate of Texas Woman’s University, has received a Fellowship in Preservation to assist the Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH) company archives. She is documenting her progress on a blog that features pictures as well as an account of the work she is doing.

This groundbreaking dance company is recovering from a fiscal emergency, but it sees its legacy as being key to its long-term survival. Funds to assist DTH with an inventory of its holdings and preservation work come from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Save America’s Treasures federal grant program, both administered by the Dance Heritage Coalition. Funds supporting Kat’s work come from The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation as well as individual donors to the DHC’s Fredric Woodbridge Wilson Memorial Fund.

Next Issue: theater archives and more!