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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When a friend and colleague learned that I was co-chairing the Performing Arts Roundtable, he passed along Peter Brook’s book, *The Empty Space*. Fittingly, as this issue of the newsletter is focused on theater archives. Brook reflects and elaborates on his work, his own theories and practices as a director, and how his aim to address human experience — how to connect the actor to audience — remains a constant investigation. As archivists in the ephemeral arts, I think we can draw many parallels in this mission to find and share truths.

One of the two session proposals endorsed by the Steering Committee for SAA’s 2012 conference, Beyond Borders, was accepted. “Archivist-Artist Partnerships: Learning from Three Case Studies of Creative Collaboration” will be chaired by Libby Smigel, Executive Director of the Dance Heritage Coalition, with the following speakers: Susan Brady, archivist at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; Cecily Marcus, curator of the Archie Givens, Sr. Collection of African American Literature, Literary Manuscripts, and the Performing Arts Archives at the University of Minnesota Libraries Archives and Special Collections; and, Alfred Lemmon, director of the Williams Research Center of The Historic New Orleans Collection.

I look forward to co-chairing with D. Claudia Thompson this year, and to working with the other Steering Committee members, Anastasia Karel and Cynthia Tobar. Helice Koffler and Jeni Dahmus, co-editors of the newsletter, are introducing new features in this issue, including a Performing Arts Roundtable member profile and student forum.

And of course, please do send along your thoughts and requests as we continue to make plans for the 2012 Business Meeting, and remember to check out (and participate in) the Performing Arts Roundtable’s blog at: [http://ephemeralarchives.wordpress.com/](http://ephemeralarchives.wordpress.com/).

Peter Brook’s “White Box” production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, staged inside a chasm of blank white walls, 1970
Developing the Arthur Miller Photo Archive  by Emma Winter

Emma Winter currently works as photo archivist for the estates of Arthur Miller and Inge Morath, and has worked as an independent archives consultant for photographer estates, the Magnum Foundation, and the Marcel Carne Archive.

The plays of Arthur Miller run daily in worldwide productions—from high school versions of The Crucible to Broadway and the major stages of London. To research and collect photos of this monumental playwright’s work is no small task.

The Arthur Miller photo archive originally started as a project to process Miller’s private collection of personal and theater photos. Miller was married to Magnum photographer Inge Morath for over forty years; the Arthur Miller photo archive was situated alongside both the family photos and Morath’s individual archive.

Within the estate, his photos—separate from his writing archives—were kept with Morath’s photography and their family and personal photos.

The Miller photo archive initially consisted of around 1,000 personal and production photos. The personal photo collection includes early photos of Miller’s childhood and family, portraits, photos of him at work, photos of him with others, as well as those taken at special events. The theater collection includes prints, scrapbooks, and some ephemera covering all of Miller’s plays and films. The theater portion of the Miller archive primarily documents early plays and productions, while the separate Morath archive contains many photos of Miller’s theatrical works from the 1960s onwards.

In the early stages of processing the on-site archive, I began to conduct research on images of Miller that existed outside of the collection, as additional portraits were needed for publishing, book covers, and other estate purposes. This search expanded into...
research for a centennial photography book project of Miller’s plays and productions. In addition to the contents of the physical archive, I broadened the research to include related archives, which would allow the estate to create a digital reference database for both the on-site Miller archive as well as other repositories.

With the guidance of core literature on Miller’s theater and history, I conducted extensive research into major productions, significant theater archives, and prominent theater photographer collections. While focusing on the more well-known stagings in New York and London, I also encountered numerous national and international productions of Miller’s work. Striking photos representing Miller’s plays could be found from different sources, yet inevitably the standout images proved to be those that brought together an outstanding cast and production team with a great photographer.

As the research database grew to represent both Miller’s archive and digital references to outside collections, I switched from using FilemakerPro to Archon, which I preferred for its archival structure, support of digital images, and flexibility in relating disparate ‘collections’. I obtained low-resolution digital images from the different archives and cataloged them into the database to facilitate research and image reference. The catalog includes key access points such as play title, main actors, photographer, venue, premiere date, and other pertinent details, and information on the location of the related repository.

The database currently holds approximately 2,000 images and will continue to grow. Among the archives consulted and researched were the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Billy Rose Theatre Division, including the Jo Mielziner Archive with set designs; the Museum of the City of New York; the University of Michigan; the Library of Congress; the Arthur Miller archive and the Fred Fehl photo collection at the Harry Ransom Center; and the Harvard University Theatre Collection, including the Angus McBean Theatre Photography Archive. In England, archives included the National Theatre Archives, London; the Theatre Archive of the University of Bristol; and the Victoria and Albert
The Theatre and Performance collections, London. Among the individual photographers’ archives were estates of Eileen Darby, Fred Fehl, Alfredo Valente, Paul Berg, Dan Weiner, Sam Shaw, and Eve Arnold.

Theater photographers were often sources of the most valuable photos. Their works capture a confluence of a great play, excellent stage design, and talented actors. Eileen Darby, Fred Fehl, Martha Swope, Angus McBean, and contemporary British stage photographers all infused their images of powerful productions with dramatic artistry.

Tracing archives revealed connections fruitful to my own research and also enabled the sharing of resources between repositories. For example, when I contacted the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to inquire if they had related images of Miller from his participation in a 1941 project as a field worker (recording speech patterns of talc miners in North Carolina), it turned out that they had no record or holdings of photos. I was able to provide scans of fourteen original images.

Similarly, a search for Angus McBean’s photos of the 1965 Old Vic production of The Crucible, directed by Laurence Olivier, began at the National Theatre archives. This investigation then led me to the Angus McBean archive at the Harvard Theatre Collection, which, in turn, had the original glass plate negatives but no prints, and then finally on to discover the original prints at the Victoria and Albert Theatre and Performance collections. Throughout the research process, fellow archivists were exceedingly helpful at recommending further sources.

In addition to English language productions in the U.S. and England, Miller’s theater was widely produced and appreciated on
international stages. Of particular note was the 1983 production of *Death of a Salesman* in Beijing, China, which Miller directed, and which was well documented in photos by Morath. Photos surfaced of productions in Israel, Poland, Mexico, Italy, France, Argentina, China, Canada, and India, and included scrapbooks sent to Miller in the 1950s and 1960s from theater groups around the world.

The Arthur Miller photo archive is a visual record of Miller the playwright and individual, through youthful portraits as a writer in Brooklyn to his later life in Connecticut. The scope of images of Miller’s plays demonstrate how each could be interpreted as the most American of plays, yet be adapted to international and local settings. While I was going through customs for research in London, the airport guard brightened at the mention of Miller’s name, proclaiming “*View from the Bridge,*” which serves as a reminder of the profound scope and reach of his work. The photo archive has developed into a select trove of images of the renowned playwright’s life and work and a visual documentation of his enduring legacy in the history of theater.
As Roundabout Theatre Company’s archivist my days are primarily spent processing documents that chronicle the productions mounted by the institution. As one might imagine, these documents consist of costume and scenic sketches, calling scripts, performance reports, and the countless other renderings, notes, and correspondence that reveal months’ (and often years’) worth of behind-the-scenes visionary planning.

These history-laden documents provide the foundation from which my understanding of this particular theatre institution is formed and provide the necessary backdrop for understanding the ways in which theatre companies evolve over time as well as the communities that nurture and support that evolution.

Roundabout Theatre Company is today known as one of the country’s largest not-for-profit theatre institutions. It calls “home” the Times Square/42nd Street corridor with slight extensions west (Studio 54 on 54th Street) and east (Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre home of the Laura Pels Theatre on 46th Street and the Stephen Sondheim Theatre on 43rd Street). Operating within the Off-Off, Off-Broadway, and Broadway communities (four unique locations encompassing five stages) our programming extends beyond the stage and into the New York school system where hundreds of students each year participate in after-school and in-class theatre-based lessons.

To focus solely on the breadth of Roundabout’s current mission is to lose sight of its most obvious charm. That is to say, while Roundabout in 2012 is a major performing arts institution, at heart it is still the bootstrap company from 1965 with the same overriding mission: to remain fiercely dedicated to its collaborators and artists; to operate within the framework of a family (with application of that concept applying to staff, audiences, and theatre and education communities); and to provide the highest caliber theatre possible to its audiences.

The seeds of Roundabout’s work were firmly planted in the early years in a neighborhood far removed from the glitz of modern day Times Square. In its first two decades, two Chelsea theaters only three blocks apart provided the literal stage upon which Roundabout Theatre Company was built.
Off-Off Broadway’s Only Repertory Theatre

Gene Feist and his wife, the actress Elizabeth Owens, founded Roundabout Theatre in 1965 with finances generated by a letter campaign to friends and neighbors requesting donations of $10 for the creation of an “Off-Off Broadway repertory company.”

Long associated with dramatic theatre in New York, Gene and Elizabeth saw a need for an Off-Broadway subscription-model company dedicated to producing classic revivals. Their goal was to mount quality productions of the world’s classic plays at affordable prices. In literature generated by the company in its first decade, the words repertory and resident were used interchangeably. The notion of creating a resident repertory company in Chelsea defined much of the company’s early direction and development.

By the time Roundabout Theatre arrived on the scene, Chelsea had already seen the beginnings of gentrification after many years of neglect. Fifty years prior the district was a lively hub of theatre, making it a logical choice for the burgeoning company. Within the context of contributing to neighborhood revitalization, Roundabout hoped to provide a much-needed cultural outlet; within the context of New York theatre at large, Roundabout was positioning itself to be an important contributor to the Off-Broadway movement.

Roundabout’s first theatre was a subterranean 150-seat venue at 307 West 26th Street (now home to the Upright Citizens Brigade) nestled in the basement of a supermarket. With limited resources the fledgling company sought ways to establish relationships with its small but loyal audience and sought to cultivate an artistic home in which ensemble players and artists were free to explore their crafts in a nurturing environment. The company was comprised of a consistent group of players and craftspeople who mounted three to four productions a season.

Theatre for the Many Rather than the Few

From its beginning Roundabout’s interest was in classic and contemporary plays “chosen from the world’s drama repertory” by playwrights as diverse as Strindberg and Odetts. Not all but many of Roundabout’s subscribers lived in or around the neighborhood; many were residents of the Mutual Redevelopment Housing Co-Op (more commonly known as the Penn South Co-Op) where the theatre was located.

In early publicity materials, Roundabout stated its goal to offer staged plays between October and March with musical revues programmed between April and June. In its first season, Strindberg’s The Father was offered along with Harold Rome’s musical revue Pins and Needles, setting precedent for the company’s subsequent staging of award-winning musicals in the years that followed.

In its second season (1967-1968) Roundabout temporarily lost its lease forcing its productions of Waiting for Lefty and The Bond uptown to The Masque Theatre on 42nd Street. This move aside, during its first two decades the company rarely performed outside the Chelsea area until its move downtown to Tammany Hall (aka the Union Square/Christian C. Yegen Theatre) in 1984.

By its third season Roundabout published an official report on activities. This illustrated book contains the earliest document identifying Roundabout’s core mission. In the report, Roundabout refers to itself as a “non-profit, integrated, intimate, repertory theatre [concerned
Roundabout’s report on activities, “A State Chartered and Federally Tax Exempt Non-Profit Theatre”, circa 1969

with audience development and education and provides metrics on theatre audiences and detailed geographical statistics on the Chelsea neighborhood. The report was distributed to numerous city and government agencies with the purpose of bringing attention to Roundabout’s theatre work in Chelsea and to secure funds to develop a larger theatre facility in the area.

During the following three seasons Roundabout continued to program a variety of plays and musical revues. By 1974, less than ten years after inception, the need for a larger venue was unavoidable. Roundabout had established itself as a legitimate Off-Broadway company and had sufficiently outgrown the 26th Street location due to greater numbers of subscribers and an ability to attract notable stage and television actors, directors (both American and British) and outstanding design teams.

A Theatre with a Mission

In response, Roundabout secured a lease on the former RKO cinema at 333 West 23rd Street (now used by the School of Visual Arts) between 8th and 9th Avenues. The cinema was converted into a 352-seat theater, boasting “the largest physical stage of any theatre in New York, measuring 95 ft. deep and 60 ft. wide.” This new location with twice the seating capacity, coupled with the existing 26th Street location (which was still under lease to Roundabout), theoretically allowed the company to mount six to eight productions on two stages simultaneously during a 52-week season.

Roundabout opened its second Chelsea theatre with Arthur Miller’s All My Sons, starring Beatrice Straight (Tony Award-winner for her portrayal of Elizabeth Proctor in Miller’s The Crucible, 1953) and screen and television actor Hugh Marlowe. Subscription numbers rose from 100 in the first years to 14,000 by 1974. By 1975, Roundabout was using both venues to house a variety of dramatic and musical programs and then went one step further: it began showcasing masters of modern dance.

In fall 1975, Roundabout announced a series of dance programs. Known as a “joint project of TAG Foundation, LTD., Roundabout Theatre Company, Inc., and Twelve Dance Companies”,
the programming was sponsored through TAG Foundation (an organization at the time dedicated to providing technical and administrative services to dancers). These programs provided Chelsea audiences a unique opportunity to see Merce Cunningham and Dance Company, Rachel Lampert and Dancers, José Limón Dance Company, Meredith Monk/The House, Erick Hawkins Dance Company, and Louis Falco Dance Company, just to name a few. Although short-lived (the program ran two to three seasons) through the dance programming Roundabout showed its ability to broaden the scope of its mission for the benefit of its audiences.

Unfortunately, by the late 1970s, Roundabout was facing serious financial trouble due primarily to its inability to manage the company’s rapid growth over a relatively short period of time. In 1983, new management was brought in to salvage the company and its reputation. Todd Haimes (then-managing director but the company’s artistic director since 1989) along with dedicated staff worked tirelessly to reconcile the financial deficit. Under Todd’s leadership, they succeeded and ultimately positioned the company for its upward trajectory from small Off-Broadway in Chelsea to large regional theatre on Broadway.

In keeping with a desire to change the company’s operations, Roundabout began looking for a new venue in which to re-establish itself. In 1984, Roundabout leased the Union Square Theatre at 100 East 17th Street (now home to the New York Film Academy), ultimately leaving behind the original Chelsea neighborhood which had been its touchstone during its formative years.

Roundabout Theatre: Thirty Years after Chelsea

Now, nearly thirty years later, not only has the company survived many moves but it has worked hard to earn the respect of audiences and critics by mounting productions on, Off, and Off-Off Broadway that resonate with audiences from all walks of life, and has consistently showcased the incredible work of artists as diverse as Jason Robards, Brian Friel, Natasha Richardson, Christopher Plummer, Jane Alexander, Harold Pinter, and the countless other artistic collaborators Roundabout has been fortunate to work with these many years. Further, Roundabout has steadily played an important role in revitalizing the neighborhoods in which it operates (the Union Square neighborhood, once seedy, became home to farmers markets and upscale shopping and dining; 42nd Street, not long ago a run-down peepshow district is now one of the most electrifying theatre and tourist areas in New York City) and has managed to remain true to the vision established in those tiny Chelsea theatres nearly a half-century ago.

Without the resources provided through the institutional archives a vast majority of Roundabout’s history would be lost or merely speculative. Systematically identifying materials which document Roundabout’s unique history benefits not only the institution but also the larger theatre community by providing an open door into the workings of this unique institution, its productions, and its lasting legacy as one of New York’s beloved cultural institutions.

Notes

1Publicity materials generated by Roundabout Theatre Company, circa 1965.


Ask the Angels: An Interview with Jennifer Homans
by Helice Koffler

Jennifer Homans trained as professional dancer at the North Carolina School of the Arts, American Ballet Theatre, and The School of American Ballet. She performed with the Chicago Lyric Opera Ballet, the San Francisco Ballet, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Currently the dance critic for The New Republic, she has written for The New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, The New York Review of Books, and The Australian. She earned her BA at Columbia University and her PhD in modern European history at New York University, where she is a Distinguished Scholar in Residence. Her book, Apollo’s Angels: A History of Ballet was a finalist, 2010 National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction and named one of “The 10 Best Books of 2010” by the editors of the New York Times Book Review. It was issued as a paperback by Random House in November 2011.

What was your inspiration or motivation for writing Apollo’s Angels?
In a way the book came out of my own biography. When I was a dancer I wanted very much to read about the history of ballet, and I didn’t find the kind of books that were both historical in terms of dance, but also broader culturally. That was kind of lingering in my mind all of the years that I was dancing, and when I finally stopped dancing and then did a PhD in modern European history, it all came together. It didn’t come together all at once. But I one day realized, “Oh, I could write that book!” And I’m now equipped because I have this training in historical research that will really give me the tools to get the answers to the questions that I had at the beginning: Where do these steps come from? What did they mean? What were the ideas behind them? How did they change over time? How were they related to larger political and cultural events, like Romanticism or modernism? How were they related to revolutions? What happened to ballet when it went from the French court and passed through the Enlightenment and the French Revolution? Those were the kinds of questions that sent me on the way and informed the research as I went. So I suppose that was the inspiration—from the point of view of the dancer and from the point of view of the historian.

When you were studying dance was dance history a part of the curriculum at the School of American Ballet at all?
It was not a part of the curriculum. That was another way in which there was a sense in my mind that there was a hole here. We did not study the history. If anything, there was unstated, but pronounced feeling that what we were engaged in was NOW and the future. It wasn’t the past because we weren’t dancing the classics and the nineteenth-century ballets. We were focused on new creation—today, now. It was a kind of paradox in a way because there was that on the one hand. On the other hand, most of my teachers were Russians who had been born in the nineteenth century and they were a walking piece of history, each one of them. [They created] a sense of curiosity over where they came from—and they would tell stories, about Imperial St. Petersburg, or Paris in the 1920s. So there was both history all around us and a sense that we weren’t going to learn it in any kind of formal way or study it because we were engaged in this new artistic enterprise.

Do you feel that studying dance history would be beneficial as a component of dance training?
Oh I do think so. Yes, I think it’s very important for dancers to have training in the history of
their art form. It pleases me very much when I hear of dancers who are reading the book because I feel it is almost a resource tool. I found things in the history that people can use. Just the way musicians look back and they say, “Here’s a composer that we haven’t thought about for a while. Let’s look at that music and see what it can give us or how it can inspire us.” We can’t quite do that in dance because we don’t have the adequate notation and source material. But I hope that in this history I’ve been able to capture something of the projects and ideas that people in the past have been interested in that might end up being relevant to dancers and choreographers today.

Do you think it might spur their creativity?

I think that knowledge always furthers creativity. It’s always good to know more than to know less. And so to the extent that the book can broaden our understanding of where ballet came from, and why it took the forms it did, then it seems to me a net gain.

Where did you primarily conduct your research? Were there a few archives or libraries in which most of the material was concentrated? Or did your research take you all over the place?

Well, it took me all over the place, but there were a few places that were more important than others. The first was the archives at the Paris Opera. The second was the Archives Nationales. Both of those because the entire first half of the book is really about the French origins—and moving into Italy and Denmark as well—but the French origins are given a lot of attention, a lot of time. And that was a period, especially the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when there were a lot of holes in what we knew. So I ended up going back to primary source material. Whereas for other periods—for example, the twentieth-century Balanchine period, or [Jerome] Robbins, or [Antony] Tudor—I worked mainly from secondary sources because there’s been so much done that I didn’t really need to go to the primary sources as much. I did do primary research, but not as much.

The other library that was really important was the New York Public Library, which has an amazing dance collection and is very accessible. And they have, as you probably know, a lot of microfilm of documents that are in other archives. I especially used archives from Italy. I didn’t spend very much time in Italy—I just used the archives here. I did go to the library and the archives in Denmark, in Copenhagen, and those were very useful as well. I did not use libraries so much in Russia. There I did mainly interviews. When it came up to the modern period I started focusing more on oral history and interviews with people who had been there.

Following up on that, what kind of materials did you look at and who helped you? Were you able to find things yourself or did you rely on librarians or archivists?

Oh, I think librarians are key. I relied heavily on librarians who knew the materials and the sources obviously much better than I did and so would steer me towards things. For example, when I was at the Paris Opera at one point, I asked [the librarian], “Do you happen to have any of the shoes of Marie Taglioni?” “Oh yes!” he said, “in fact we do.” And took me downstairs to the basement and into a part of the collection which I don’t think is normally accessed, and showed me all of these things that were there, not just the shoes, but costumes and other things they held, which turned out to be very important to how I made sense of the material. So I think that librarians can often be vital.
Did you find any notable differences between archives and libraries in North America and those in other countries?

I did and the main difference is accessibility. The New York Public Library and other archives I worked in here are open and accessible. You have to go through a certain process in order to have permission to use the ones in Europe, especially in France. The Danes were pretty open as well. In Denmark I just walked in. Russia was much more difficult. I did do a little bit of archival research in Moscow and there was a lot of paperwork I had to go through and credentials I had to establish in order to be allowed to look at materials.

The archives in Russia are just not organized enough. I was looking at some of [Marius] Petipa’s papers in the A.A. Bakhrushin State Central Museum and they just were all sitting on a shelf somewhere and not very well-cataloged, but available. Once I got through the door they were available, so I’m not complaining.

As archivists, we’re interested in how easy it is to find things in our collections. And if we are saving the right sort of material. Do you have any thoughts on that subject? For example, did you find what you were hoping to find? Was there something missing from collections that would have helped you?

Oh, tons! But I don’t think that’s your fault. The problem with dance is that there are so many holes. So little was saved and often the dancers themselves were not literate or didn’t leave things. Dance historians are a little bit like Medievalists in a way, or people working on antiquity, because they’re trying to use very few documents to learn a lot of things. Today people are much more aware that an artist’s personal papers, for example, have great value to scholars and so they are more likely to be preserved than they were even a hundred years ago. So that’s helpful. Obviously when things are online it’s even easier. If something is online and cataloged, then you can figure out what you need from it very easily without taking the time and energy to actually go to the collection and see what’s there. I know people are moving in that direction, but I think that’s a very great thing.

It’s good to know that people do find descriptions useful.

Yes, the descriptions are very, very useful.

I had watched a TEDx talk that you did and you used the phrase about being “lost in the archive.” Do you find the research process to be in any way comparable as an “out of body” experience as say performing was?

That’s a good question. I would say that it’s not an “out of body” experience, but an “in mind” experience, which has some similar features in the sense that you enter another world. If you spend day after day working in an archive with material that has a consistency to it, that allows you to piecet together the mindset and the sort of atmosphere that those artists, or thinkers, or anybody was working in. Then you sort of exit your own world and enter that world. In that sense, I think research can be like a theatrical experience. Performers are trying to create
worlds on stage, and when you’re in those archives trying to understand an array of materials, it is also creative process. It’s not laid out for you. It’s just like somebody scattered ‘what happened’ all over the floor. The pieces—or some of them—are there and you have to put them together into a picture or a landscape that makes some sense. So there is something creative going on there that’s very painstaking and meticulous. And you have to be really honest about what you’re doing. But it also has that quality of theatricality and making worlds—even though these worlds are rooted in historical fact and historical evidence, as opposed to being rooted in pure imagination. I hadn’t thought about that before, it’s a good question.

What were some of the things that you found in your archival research that particularly excited you? Or that you found surprising?

One thing that I can point to is that I found that any assumptions I had about progress—about the art form starting in one place and becoming, for example, more and more technically difficult over time—were sort of shot down by the evidence that I found. Especially in the early nineteenth-century archives in Paris and in Denmark, which all pointed to technical advances and a state of classical technique that was as difficult as anything people use today. So the idea that the technique just got more and more and more [advanced] suddenly became untrue and I had to rethink how to tell that story of the evolution of technique. And I rethought it in terms of the politics and culture from which it grew. That was one surprise. Probably the biggest one.

Did you find any kind of notation or documentation that you were really amazed by?

You mean a “smoking gun” document of some kind?

Yes.

Not really. I mean, one of the things that was really very important was when I found those toe shoes of Taglioni [at the Paris Opera archives]. And it was important because I could see exactly from the toe shoe where she was standing and how it was that she was dancing.

It had more use than just being some kind of fetish object?

Oh yes, absolutely! It was a key to understanding the particular kind of movement. We have lithographs, we have descriptions, we have all of these materials that can tell us things. But when you actually see: “Oh look, the scuff marks are here, she was standing on that part of the shoe, not the other part,” it really tells you a lot. I was trained as a dancer myself, so I know what it means to stand back on your metatarsals a little bit and what it means to stand way over on full pointe. It changes the entire balance and the structure of the body and of the technique that comes out of it. So that ended up being very important. And there are also shoes of Taglioni and several other dancers from that period in St. Petersburg. In both cases I used those very extensively.

Based on your research experience, is there anything that you would advise current performers or dance companies to do in terms of documenting their own history?

I think it’s routine at this point to film performances, which is very important. If people could have some awareness about keeping the notes and documents that a choreographer uses when they’re making a ballet, what-

18th-century French music manuscript with dance notation, Les petites danse [sic] ou bien, Les tricotés [Papillon]
ever those might be (and they’ll be different for every artist), that would be extremely valuable. The other thing that they used to do, which people don’t do so much anymore because we think that it’s all online, is clippings files of press reports from a particular period or for a particular production or a particular artist—all of which I found enormously helpful because it gives you a kind of snapshot of how a work was received, which is extremely helpful and very labor-intensive to put together after the fact.

Going back to your other question, the other thing that comes to my mind that was very important was a series of handwritten choreographic notes that I found from the early nineteenth century—and they had music with them. They weren’t whole ballets, but they were sections of ballets or sections of classes. And that way I could actually go back into the studio and do the steps to the music that they were using, which was another way of getting inside the technique and understanding what it was—how people moved. And once you understand how people moved you can understand something of what they believed.

Dance books are hardly ever noticed in the mainstream press or media. Were you surprised by the book’s reception?

I was surprised. I spent fifteen years in the archives working on this alone. I’d often come home and think, “I’m the only person in the world who thinks this is absolutely fascinating stuff!” So when the book came out and received so much attention, I was, of course, delighted. I would have written it even if I had known it wouldn’t receive the attention, but it was very nice that it did. And I think it was very good for the dance world to have the art form recognized as something important and something with a long and valuable history—as part of our civilization.

The Epilogue is the one section of the book that has generated the most controversy. Was it always part of your plan or did it evolve organically?

It was not part of my plan. Actually when I started the book I assumed that it would have, as it were, a happy ending. But in the course of the decade or so that I was doing the research, I became more and more disillusioned with the state of the art and with what I was seeing. What people don’t get sometimes is that the epilogue is the epilogue to the history. It’s not just this freestanding essay on where we are today. It is: Where are we today in the timeframe of this four hundred year evolution? I don’t talk about Christopher Wheeldon or [Alexei] Ratmansky or even Billy Forsythe, who are, of course, major figures on the scene today. Those people are still working, and this is a history book. So my idea was to try to sort out some of the main themes of today and to ask the question: Does dance still have the same relevance today? And the same power—artistic power—that it had at various other moments in its history?

It hasn’t always had a central place in culture. There have been many times in its history when it’s fallen to the side. Looking at where we are today and at the times when ballet was central—like in France in the Romantic period, or in Russia at the turn of the century, or in America in the 1950s and ’60s—these were moments when ballet really mattered. Today it doesn’t. It’s not the same thing.

So I was trying to say that and some people got upset. But it created a conversation and to me that’s all to the good. The more we can interrogate and question and try to understand the art form, the better. I have devoted my life to ballet, so I’m the first to want it to succeed. But I also want to be honest about where we are and to talk about that. Because it’s a discussion about more than whether this or that ballet or this or that choreographer is any good. It’s a
discussion about the place of etiquette, formality—where a classical art form, an idealized, Apollonian art form, fits into today’s culture. So it’s about ideas and values as well as about particular instances of dance.

What are some of your own favorite dance history books or most influential books?

I’m very fond of [Tamara] Karsavina’s memoir, called Theatre Street. I also like the memoirs of Alexandra Danilova, of Allegra Kent. But I have to say that I relied less on dance books than I did on general history books, cultural histories of the period—of any period I was working in. If we stick with the early nineteenth century example, I drew heavily on the work of Ivor Guest, who did a lot of the very important primary work in that field. But I also was reading widely from [François-René de] Chateaubriand and [Théophile] Gautier and other cultural figures from the period and from historians who had studied them, as well as the dance.

Was it more of a challenge to write about historical periods you hadn’t experienced personally than it was those that you lived through?

It wasn’t. I’ve seen a lot of the ballets of Balanchine and saw them when he was alive and working, so I have a feel for those dances that I can’t possibly have for dances that have been lost—that were performed in the late eighteenth century, for example. At the same time, proximity to something also blinds you in a way. It makes it harder to step back and try to understand the culture behind what made those dances. Because you’re in it. You’re so in it. And we’re still in it in a way. It was more of a challenge to write about things in the present in that sense than it was to write about things from the past—where the limits were much clearer. I knew what I didn’t know. And I knew what I couldn’t know and so I had to depend on other sources. And that all makes it a lot clearer. Writing about dances that you do know means that you have to invent a language in order to write about dance. And it’s very hard to translate dance into language without ruining the dance.

Are there any major revisions or additions to the paperback edition?

There are a few corrections that people very kindly pointed out to me, which I tried to incorporate. There are one or two that won’t go into the paperback, but will go into the next edition. But not very many. And I did not change anything of substance. My view is that a book is also a product of its time and this book had a certain integrity. Whether I’ve changed my mind about something since then is a different question, but the book itself stands for what it is and what it said in 2010. Because it too is a historical document in the end, right?

Jumping off that as a final question, do you have any plans to donate your own research materials to a repository some day?

What a good question since I said that everybody else should! And no, it hadn’t occurred to me. It had not occurred to me although I have two giant file cabinets full of notes! But I will consider it now that you asked me the question.

That would be great. Are you going to continue to write about dance, do you think?

I am going to continue to write about dance, yes. The next book that I write will probably be about George Balanchine.

Oh good. We’ll all look forward to that.

Thank you.
Establishing an Archives: How a Major U.S. Orchestra is Doing Its Due Diligence

by Bob Scarr

Bob Scarr is a freelance trombone player in the Atlanta area. He is currently in a Development Fellowship program with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and very passionate about preserving the institutional memory of the ASO.

“What are we doing about our archives?”
This pertinent question asked from one to another earlier this year began a season of learning for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and a time of careful thought on how we go not just about establishing our archives, but preserving our heritage.

We are beginning our 67th season and there is a story to tell. The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) is recognized as one of America’s leading orchestras. The ASO performs more than 200 concerts each year and is known for the excellence of its live performances, presentations, renowned choruses, and its impressive list of Grammy Award-winning recordings. This year, the ASO staff began asking itself questions: What is the most effective way to preserve and promote our wonderful heritage? Why do we want to establish the archives and what would be our mission? Do we house our collection on-site or look to an outside archival repository? How do we sustain it long term, and how do we make the materials available to others?

At the suggestion of John Sparrow, the general manager of the ASO, we began looking for another performing arts organization to see up close what a “best practice” institution looks like in terms of its archives. I decided to cold call Frank Villella, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s archivist, to ask a few general questions. What I thought was going to be a five minute introductory phone call turned out to be an hour-long conversation covering a range of topics from records management schedules to finding aids, from facilities to security. I heard such terms as arrangement, processing, and description for the first time. Oh, and that other word—provenance. Frank extended an invitation for me to visit Chicago and see the orchestra’s archives. He even hinted that he might put me to work. I could not wait.

On the morning on June 7, 2011, I arrived at Frank’s office. I had no idea what was in store for me when I walked in to the Rosenthal Archives of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO). I was greeted by over 2,400 linear feet of materials related to the founding, operation, and governance of the CSO.
tion houses manuscripts, printed books and music, architectural plans, scrapbooks, press clippings, programs, photos, sound recordings, films, and videos. Just seeing how the various collections were cataloged, arranged, and displayed was amazing. Frank was generous with his time, and yes, he did put me to work the next day.

Worth noting are two important “take-aways” from the visit. First, I could see that the CSO Archives are such an integral part of the organization. The Archives may not be a revenue generator, but it certainly supports all the other CSO departments by providing reference services and research. Not only does it support the internal customer, but also historians, researchers, and scholars outside the organization. Secondly, I saw a strong institutional commitment to the Archives. The CSO Archives were formed in 1988 to celebrate the 100th anniversary in 1991. Since then, the Archives has grown due to this long-term commitment from the institution. If pictures are worth a thousand words, then the visit to see the CSO Archives was worth a novel.

This summer I joined SAA and the Performing Arts Roundtable (PAR) to further my archival education and establish some connections. Searching online, I found past PAR newsletters and saw the name Bridget Carr of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). Knowing a little about the rich history of the BSO I figured it was worth a call to inquire more about the archives. After a phone conversation with Bridget, I planned a short visit in July.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives houses programs, press clippings, posters, photos, administrative files, and an extensive collection of radio broadcast tapes of concerts and commercial recordings. The audio-visual collection makes up about one third of the entire holdings and contains commercial recordings and radio broadcast master tapes of the BSO, the Pops, and the Boston Symphony Chamber Players.

Robert Spano conducts the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra on opening night of the 2011 season
The Archives also houses a collection of films and broadcast quality videotapes dating back to the 1940s. Again, just to see the layout of the archives was something I will never forget. Bridget treated me to a behind-the-scenes tour of one of America’s premier concert halls. I got a chance to see a dozen or so archival displays. Every year, Bridget prepares display units showcasing the remarkable history of the orchestra, Symphony Hall, and the artists and conductors of the past. She shared some of her valuable insights on grant writing with me: “You've got to bring a consultant in to assist in writing the grants due to the technical nature of an archival program. And when you do bring in a consultant, make sure you have a clear understanding of your expectations. What do you want the consultant to do?” She encouraged me to look for opportunities to further my education even if it’s just an introductory course.

In August I attended a two-day course, “Understanding Archives: An Introduction to Principles and Practices,” at the SAA conference in Chicago. The workshop was facilitated by Polly Darnell, Archivist and Librarian of the Shelburne Museum, and Anne Ostendarp, Consulting and Project Archivist. These two ladies have teaching skills beyond anything I have ever seen. They engaged the class and brought forth lively conversations on what could have been sleeping pill topics of accession, preservation, and original order. The course covered other basic archival functions such as appraisal, arrangement, reference, outreach, and facilities planning. The best part was sitting with twenty-eight other participants from organizations throughout the country, all with an experience level far different from mine. How enlightening it was to gain a broad perspective by hearing from so many individuals as they discussed the challenges they face in regard to storage, funding, and staffing. As the ASO begins to develop a comprehensive plan for the future, I can now understand some of the basic archival processes. The course was well worth the time and effort to attend, for me as well as the ASO.

In September the ASO management team invited eight Atlanta-area archivists in for lunch. Atlanta has a goldmine of outstanding archivists. Guests included Richard Pearce-Moses, Director of the Master of Archival Studies program at Clayton State University, and principal author of *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*; Paul Crater, Atlanta History Center; Brenda Banks, Banks Archives Consultants; Kevin Fleming, Popular Music and Culture Archivist at Georgia State University; Marie Force, Archives Manager, Delta Air Lines; Chris Paton, Archivist, Columbia Theological Seminary; David Stanhope, Deputy Director of the Jimmy Carter Library & Museum; and, Kerrie Cotten Williams, Archivist, Auburn Avenue Research Library. As one of the guests commented, “Gee, this is like a reunion of the Society of Georgia Archivists.” For the ASO it was a wonderful way to connect with the archival community in Atlanta. Topics included discussions on on-site archives versus outside collaboration,
funding and sustainability models, and how to prepare prior to hiring a consultant. For two hours, our guests helped crystallize what our core activities should be in the coming months in terms of developing a plan of action.

Many U.S. orchestras have established their archives to center around an upcoming anniversary. A key point in the discussion was our goal of developing the Archives to celebrate the ASO’s 70th anniversary in 2014. Richard Pearce-Moses noted: “Don’t just focus on 2014 but think much further down the road. The establishment of an archival program implies a long term commitment for it to be successful. Oh and by the way, you should refer to this as a program, not a project.” Yes indeed—good stuff. The luncheon was extremely beneficial. We were honored by the participants’ presence and thankful for their willingness to take time out of their busy day to attend.

Where will we go from here? At this time, we are centering our activities on three fronts. First, we are currently doing a survey of over 350 boxes trying to briefly answer the who, what, when, and where of the contents. These boxes contain the administrative history of the ASO. (Point of clarification: currently the ASO recordings are a separate “preservation” initiative). As we compile notes on our paper files, the data is added to an Excel spreadsheet so that we can further sort and filter the information. We hope this documentation will be useful in showing a future consultant exactly what we do have on hand. It also helps clarify what we potentially could consider the ASO records of enduring value that should be preserved. Secondly, we are beginning to design and implement a records retention schedule if for no other reason than to identify what we consider to be our permanent records. As said at the luncheon, “It’s important that today’s records be available in the archives of tomorrow.” Finally, we are trying to put everything we have learned into a plan of action. A development plan that will cover our on-site or off-site options, what the costs will be and what the sustainability model will look like. We are beginning our 67th season and there is a story to tell. The ASO looks to the future with anticipation and excitement as we put our plan into action.

Robert Spano conducts the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra on opening night of the 2011 season.
I am truly happy that I attended the 2011 ASTR/TLA conference in Montreal this past November. Thank you to everyone who put in their time and effort to host a fun and interesting conference. I cannot wait to attend again next year. And a special thank you to the city of Montreal for allowing Americans a tiny taste of Europe without paying the expensive airfare. The smoked meat was also quite a treat.

Highlights of the conference:

1. Brian Herrera’s (University of New Mexico) lecture, “Towards a History of Casting” in Plenary 1: Acting Works. I thoroughly enjoyed Herrera’s exhaustive narrative of casting history from the labor union demands for typecasting in the 1860s to the resistance against typecasting in the 1950s. I was especially intrigued by his closing notes on the trend towards the machinery of the audition for entertainment value as exemplified by the popular reality audition shows as Top Chef and America’s Next Top Model.

2. ASTR President Rhonda Blair’s (Southern Methodist University) welcome speech. Blair’s heartfelt personal story of her life in the theater and her thoughts on the conference theme—economies of theater—were thought-provoking and humorous. Her insistence on our mortal need for nourishment before academic discourse culminated in laughter when she used an alliterative term for the fourth “F” of human behavior. I agreed with her answer to the question, “What is the urgency of meeting together for this conference?” Speaking to a room of people who depend on the bringing together of bodies for live theater, Blair recognizes that there is nothing like sharing physical space. In a world that sees a proliferation of screens, there is a definite urgency in coming together and relating to one another face-to-face. Most telling, these ending remarks were lost on those with their eyes glued to the iPhones in their hands and iPads on their laps.

3. My one-on-one café performance with Café Allongé, Spatula and Barcode. Before the conference, I signed up for a personal performance with an actor from the Café Allongé theater group to be held at Laika, a café in downtown Montreal. The group, who also held a special session “honoring and interrogating the role of jobs in the service economy in sustaining theatrical production,” invited all conference participants to free performances in a number of cafés around the city. I was lucky enough to be paired with James, who invited me to play in his Minecrafter world (the sandbox-building game) to enjoy a Brechtian video gaming experience. It was interesting to converse with a performer before, during, and after the “performance” in an ongoing dialogue about the notion of performance and the relationship between performer and spectator. For more information and photos of the conference performance, visit their blog at spatulaandbarcode.wordpress.com.

4. The American Theatre Archive Project (ATAP) Orientation. This is a project that is near and dear to my heart, and it was exciting to meet a number of archivists, dramaturgs, and students who share my interest in helping to preserve the wealth of records within our nation’s theaters. For more information on this exciting new project, check out the beta site at americantheatrearchiveproject.org.

5. Working Session 37: Intellectual Property and Performance: Negotiating Intangible Mediums of Expression. Those who stayed for the last day of the conference had a number of interesting working sessions to choose from. I was content with my choice to join working session 37 and participate in an interesting and, at times, challenging discussion on the issues of intellectual property in the performing arts. This session managed to stay more grounded than some others I attended by analyzing several relevant court cases, including the Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr., v. CBS, Inc., which called into question the copyright status of MLK’s “I
have a dream” speech in 1963. Like the others in attendance, I was relieved to have a lawyer in the room to help explain those aspects of intellectual property law that are still confusing to me.

**Advice for graduate students/newbies:**

Some of this advice is from personal experience and some is from the wise words of those more experienced than myself.

1. **Just attend!** Conferences actually have the potential to be really fun, as well as intellectually stimulating, especially if your only responsibility is to attend sessions and make new friends. And the student rate is pretty cheap. Now that I feel more comfortable, know some people and what to expect, I am much more confident to come back next year and take part in a working group and become generally more involved in the organization. As a student, I learned a lot just by talking with people about what they do in their jobs to get a better sense of my employment options and what skills employers are looking for.

2. **Couchsurf!** Now I know that couchsurfing isn’t for everyone, but if you enjoy meeting “locals” and sleeping on their couches for free, then couchsurfing is an excellent alternative to staying in a hotel. Although you may have to travel a bit further to get to the conference hotel, I find it worth it to stay with friendly couchsurfers and get to know the city with someone who lives there, as well as their friends, family, and pets. Plus, did I mention that it’s free? So go to couchsurfing.org and check it out.

In my couchsurfing experience, which spans over ten countries and at least fifty different hosts, I have come to the conclusion that couchsurfers are some of the nicest, most interesting, friendly, and hospitable people on the planet. It is also refreshing to pull yourself out of the conference zone for a portion of each day in order to get a breather from the intensity of the conference. It is easy to get used to the fact that everyone you meet at the conference speaks the same professional vocabulary as you and not everyone is as enthusiastic about Antonin Artaud and affect theory as you. I got a lot out of the simple exercise of coming back from the conference every night and summing up what I learned and what I found most interesting about my day at the conference. I was allowed a certain amount of reflection that is difficult to achieve within the conference bubble. Which brings me to my next point…

3. **Take a breather!** I think it is generally a bad idea to only spend time in the hotel with conference people the entire time. Even if you are staying in the hotel, try to get out, see some of the sights, and interact with the city outside of the hotel. Otherwise, you will find yourself burnt out fast.

4. **Don’t be shy! Say hi!** Of course going up to strangers and introducing yourself is not always the easiest or most enjoyable experience, but it gets easier every time. At a conference, at least, you are lucky enough to be in an environment that not only expects, but also encourages such friendly behavior. It was stressful to talk to strangers, but once I came out of my shell, I was pleasantly surprised to meet a number of interesting people, with whom I had a lot in common and enjoyable conversation.

5. **Be yourself!** If you have a passion for theater and theater research, then you will be in good company and it shouldn’t be hard to make a genuine connection with like-minded individuals. Stressing about networking and making the right impression only takes away from the fun of conversing with a community of people who share your interest and passion and from whom you can learn a great deal. I was happy to learn about the types of theater research that people do and how they use records and archives. This is the time to geek out with other theaterphiles who will laugh with you about the idea of a Beckett play on ice (how would the skaters handle all the pauses!!)

So, if you love theater and theater research as much as I do, you should consider attending the 2012 ASTR/TLA conference, Theatrical Histories, at the Sheraton Nashville Downtown Hotel from November 1–4.
Wendy Wasserstein Papers and Multimedia Exhibition at Mount Holyoke

The Archives and Special Collections at Mount Holyoke College presents The Uncommon Life of Wendy Wasserstein, a major multimedia exhibition of Wasserstein’s papers, from October 28, 2011, through April 15, 2012. The exhibition celebrates the grand opening of the Wendy Wasserstein Papers, a rich and extensive collection that spans Mount Holyoke alumna Wasserstein’s life and her path-breaking career as a Tony- and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright.

The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum lobby has been transformed for the exhibition to evoke New York City’s theater district with marquees for Uncommon Women and Others, The Heidi Chronicles, The Sisters Rosensweig, An American Daughter, and Third. The exhibition offers an unprecedented look into the life and development of one of America’s most important playwrights, and features correspondence, notebooks, and manuscripts; photos and archival footage of Wasserstein as a child and of her plays in performance; set designs and playbills; childhood diaries and school projects; and even a doll version of Pamela from Pamela’s First Musical.

A lifelong passionate theatergoer and the first female playwright to win a solo Tony Award, for The Heidi Chronicles in 1989, Wasserstein was a writer of great wit who created some of the theater’s most vibrant female roles: funny/sad Heidi Holland, the three sisters Rosensweig, the captivatingly uncommon women, and more. Her characters have been brought to life by many of our era’s greatest actresses. Though often grappling with issues particular to their gender, Wasserstein’s women want what every human wants: love, connection, meaning, relevance, integrity.

A yearlong series of public events will explore and celebrate the life and work of pioneering feminist playwright Wendy Wasserstein. Spearheaded by Archives and Special Collections and the Department of Theatre Arts, events include a playwriting symposium, theatrical performances, a lecture series, panels of visiting artists, and staged readings. Throughout the year, students and alumnae, faculty and staff, and the general public will participate in a sustained discussion of Wasserstein’s impact on American drama and her enduring connection to Mount Holyoke College. Full details on the exhibition and related events can be found at: http://www.mtholyoke.edu/wendywasserstein. For more information, call Mount Holyoke’s Archives and Special Collections at 413-538-2441 or email wasserstein-wm@mtholyoke.edu.

American Theatre Archive Project Update

The American Theatre Archive Project (ATAP) continues to develop regional teams of volunteer archivists, scholars, and dramaturgs to help preserve the archives of theater companies throughout America. ATAP’s training committee is developing a workshop for project archivists to prepare them to train theater staff in the basics of archival practice. Members of the ATAP training and steering committees and the NYC team offered the workshop on November 5 to New York-area archivists as a training exercise in anticipation of a local grant to support preservation of the archives of several New York City theater companies. Twelve New York-area archivists participated in the workshop and provided extremely useful feedback for future workshops. To join the project or to obtain additional information visit americantheatrearchiveproject.org or contact Susan Brady at susan.brady@yale.edu.

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Library and Archives Opens

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Library and Archives opened to the public on January 17, 2012, as the world’s most comprehensive repository of written and audio-visual materials relating to the history of rock and roll, serving the needs of scholars, educators, students, the media, and the general public. Access will be limited to some collections while staff refine the operating policies and procedures. The grand opening for the Library and Archives will be held during the week of April 8-14, 2012, when the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremonies come back to Cleveland. For more information, stay tuned to http://rockhall.com/library/.

Anastasia Karel, Assistant Archivist at Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum
25 Years of Performances Come to the Christopher Patton 20th/21st Century Consort Collection at UMD’s Special Collections in Performing Arts

Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA) at the University of Maryland is pleased to announce that it has received the last installment of live recordings of the 21st Century Consort, the Washington, D.C.-based chamber ensemble. With this most recent acquisition, the recording collection now documents twenty-five years of unedited performances. Part of SCPA’s Christopher Patton 20th/21st Century Consort Collection, the recordings capture the entirety of the ensemble’s performances from 1985 to 2010, reflecting over 110 concerts, 400 compositions, and 180 composers.

Founded by Christopher Kendall in 1975 as the 20th Century Consort, the ensemble specializes in contemporary classical music, emphasizing music by living composers as well as classic 20th-century compositions. The ensemble is made up of professional musicians from the Washington, D.C. area, including members of the National Symphony Orchestra. Since 1978, the Consort has been the resident contemporary music ensemble at the Smithsonian Institution’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, where it presents an annual concert series and coordinates concerts that complement the museum’s exhibitions.

Artistic Director Christopher Kendall and former Managing Director Christopher Patton donated the ensemble’s archives to SCPA in September 2002. After Patton’s death in April 2006, the Consort’s board renamed the collection in his honor; it is now the Christopher Patton 20th/21st Century Consort Collection. In addition to recordings, the collection consists of financial records, grant applications, programs, tour itineraries and records, correspondence, reviews, and over 700 scores.

A finding aid to the collection is available online at: http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/1771. The complete collection of recordings are also available online through the Consort’s website at: http://www.21stcenturyconsort.com/index.php/archive (to listen, users must first register for free membership).

For more information, please contact curator Vincent J. Novara at vnovara@umd.edu or at 301-405-9220.

MARAC’s Fall 2011 Meeting: Moravians, Music, Metal, and Metadata

MARAC’s Fall 2011 Meeting, entitled Moravians, Music, Metal, and Metadata, offered several interesting sessions for the performing arts archivist, including the “Moravian Collections” panel. Speaker Gwyneth Michel of the Moravian Music Foundation provided a fascinating depiction of how music was an integral part of daily church and secular life for the Moravians. The beautiful and complex worship music was performed and composed by dedicated amateurs. Of especial interest was the description of the Moravian trombone choir. Another fascinating panel was “Documenting Local Performance”. Gregg Kimball of the Library of Virginia filled in for Lewis Hipkins from the Philadelphia Folksong Society, sharing archival materials on “Documenting the Folk: 1931-39”, specifically the White Top Folk Festival. Also presenting was Dave Fry, the founder of Godfrey Daniels, a small folk performance space in Bethlehem. Fry is a musician and amateur archivist, who is single-handedly attempting to preserve the last thirty-five years of performances, art, and realia from his venue.

Hillary Matlin, Project Archivist and Researcher

BAM 150th Anniversary Archive Exhibition

The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) presents a special archival exhibition delving into the rich history of an institution a century and a half in the making. Original documents, archival video, photos, and more—many dating from the earliest days of BAM—illuminate the moments, memories, and cultural happenings that have transpired both on and off its stages. BAMart curator David Harper and archivist Sharon Lehner co-curate this free exhibition, which opened January 16 and is open to the public in the lobby of the BAM Peter Jay Sharp Building during normal business hours.
John Cage Unbound
at The New York Public Library: An Invitation to Contribute

To celebrate John Cage's centennial, The New York Public Library will soon launch John Cage Unbound - A Living Archive, an online multimedia resource devoted to the life and work of America's most influential composer. In partnership with the John Cage Trust and C.F. Peters, John Cage Unbound will feature select digital images of Cage's music manuscripts, correspondence, programs, photos, and ephemera drawn from the vast holdings of NYPL's Music Division. The centerpiece of the project, however, will be a rich video archive of John Cage interpretation with a special emphasis on the preparation and performance of Cage's work.

This is where you come in. NYPL hopes that you, your colleagues, students, and peers will contribute to the archive by uploading your own videos (which can be quite informal and short) of Cage performances to the site. The videos will be integrated into the archive for public access with the intent to document the variety of interpretive practices Cage's work inspires and indeed demands.

For those of you who are leading or participating in coursework this Spring that may include John Cage, contributing to John Cage Unbound would be an ideal project. Any works by Cage are welcome and the staff of the NYPL Music Division are ready to offer you guidance if you need it, be it technical, logistical, or simply suggestions as to what works might be appropriate for you.

We do hope, however, that your videos will favor the process of creating the work over the performance. We believe such documentation will offer the public the greatest insight into the challenges and rewards that come with performing Cage's music.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Jonathan Hiam, Curator, American Music Collection and The Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (jonathanhiam@nypl.org)

John Cage Exhibition at The Juilliard School

The Juilliard School Library and Archives has mounted a John Cage exhibition to celebrate Cage's centennial and FOCUS! 2012, Juilliard's 28th annual mid-winter festival of new music directed by Joel Sachs. The FOCUS! festival, "Sounds Re-Imagined: John Cage at 100," consisted of six free concerts and a panel discussion from January 27 through February 3. The exhibition highlights Cage's association with the school over the years, as well as his longtime friendship with composer and current faculty member Pia Gilbert, who loaned materials from her personal collection. Among the items on display are photos, correspondence, programs, documents, and scores including Cage's Haiku (given by Cage to William Masselos) and Cheap Imitation (autographed "this copy for Maro Ajemian with love, as ever, John Cage"), and Gilbert's Food, dedicated to and with text by Cage. The exhibition is open to the public by appointment through February. For more information, please contact Juilliard Archivist Jeni Dahmus at library@juilliard.edu.
Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Benefits from Mellon Foundation Grant

Thanks to generous funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s Orchestras and Their Archives initiative, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO) has undertaken an inventory of its archival materials, which include concert and rehearsal recordings, institutional records, news clippings, publications, promotional materials, photos, posters, and scrapbooks. Under the supervision of Archives Consultants Martha L. Berg and Molly Tighe, graduate students from the University of Pittsburgh’s Archives, Preservation, and Records Management program have entered item-level data about recordings into OPAS (Orchestra Planning and Administration System) and collection-level data about other records into Archivist’s Toolkit. Having this inventory in place will enable us to prioritize recommendations for digital reformatting and other preservation measures and to make more of our archival collections available to scholars and the public. This season, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the PSO’s move to Heinz Hall, we honor the past by making a commitment to preserving the orchestra’s rich cultural heritage for the enjoyment of future generations.

Martha L. Berg, PSO Archives Consultant

Fugazi and Dischord Launch the Fugazi Live Series Online Archive

The Washington, D.C.-based band Fugazi (Ian MacKaye, Joe Lally, Brendan Canty, and Guy Picciotto) played over 1,000 concerts between 1987 and 2003, covering all 50 United States, Europe, Australia, South America, Japan, and many points in between. Over 800 of the shows were recorded by the band’s sound engineers, often on high quality recording gear. The Fugazi Live Series, officially launched on December 1, 2011, is a complete online archive of these concerts and serves as a living document of the band’s output. Show pages feature data from the concerts and (when available) related photos, flyers, and MP3 downloads. Visitors are encouraged to comment and contribute images and recordings to fill the gaps. Initially the band released 130 concert downloads (100 new shows plus the 30 shows released on the now out-of-print Fugazi Live Series CDs). Additional downloads, photos, flyers, and related materials will be added regularly until the entire archive is available. Fugazi Live Series is a wing of the Dischord Records website, designed and produced by Dischord’s Alec Bourgeois and developed by Jerrod Blavos of Rec Center. Peter Oleksik, Lindsey Hobbs, and Amy Breesman archived the material. All shows were mastered by Jerry Busher except the 30 shows initially released on CD, which were mastered by Fugazi.

For more information, please visit: http://www.dischord.com/fugazi_live_series.
43rd Annual Theatre Library Association Book Awards Ceremony

November 4, 2011, the 43rd annual Theatre Library Association (TLA) book awards ceremony was held at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. TLA celebrated exceptional performing arts books and honored one of its outstanding members—and, for the first time, an outstanding student member. Longtime SAA Performing Arts Roundtable member Susan Brady, archivist at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, received the Distinguished Service in Performing Arts Librarianship. The first Brooks McNamara Performing Arts Librarian Scholarship Award was presented to Abigail Garnett, MLS Student, Palmer School of Library and Information Science, Long Island University. The awards ceremony was highlighted by presentations from the winning authors on the research and writing of their books:

George Freedley Memorial Award
Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare? by James Shapiro (Simon & Schuster)

Special Jury Prize Winner

Richard Wall Memorial Award
Empire of Dreams: The Epic Life of Cecil B. DeMille by Scott Eyman (Simon & Schuster)

Special Jury Prize Winner
Charlie Chan: The Untold Story of the Honorable Detective and His Rendezvous with American History by Yunte Huang, (W.W. Norton & Company)

Theatre Library Association Turns 75

The Theatre Library Association (TLA) celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2012. TLA was originally founded in 1937 as an affiliate organization of American Library Association. Speaking of 1937—we’ve in fact selected this as the theme of our anniversary year. On October 12, 2012, TLA is planning a special benefit following the Annual Book Awards at New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The program, featuring selections from live theater, dance, and American musicals, will highlight notable achievements in the performing arts in the year 1937. Further, notable theater practitioners will offer tributes to TLA and its distinguished achievements. In many respects, this will chronicle the evolution and transformation in documentation of the performing arts over the past century.

The Fall 2012 issue of TLA’s Broadsides newsletter will feature a 75th anniversary edition, and David Nochimson and Past-President Marti LoMonaco are co-editing a 75th anniversary issue for our Performing Arts Resources journal.

Kenneth Schlesinger, TLA President and Chief Librarian, Lehman College/CUNY

SAA Performing Arts Roundtable Visits the Joffrey Ballet

During the SAA meeting in Chicago last August, the Performing Arts Roundtable offered its members a behind-the-scenes tour of the Joffrey Ballet’s headquarters. Please see Helice Koffler’s write-up in the Fall 2011 issue of the Theatre Library Association’s newsletter, Broadsides (http://www.tla-online.org/publications/broadsideonline/Broadside39-1.pdf).

Next issue: Fugazi archives and more!

Interested in contributing to the newsletter? Please contact editors Jeni Dahmus (jdahmus@juilliard.edu) and Helice Koffler (hkoffler@uw.edu).