The Music Library Association

Founded in 1931, the Music Library Association is the professional association for music libraries and librarianship in the United States.

The mission of the Music Library Association is to provide a professional forum for librarians, archivists, and others who support and preserve the world’s musical heritage.

In 2011 MLA became the US branch of the International Association for Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centres.
Collection Overview

- Repository: Special Collections in Performing Arts, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

- Presidential Collection, 1931–2017 [ongoing]

- Regional location of Atlantic Chapter Archives

- Archives of chapters without local repositories

- Records of chapters that no longer exist

- About 300 linear feet; in flux with ongoing chapter transfers, de-accessions, and re-appraisal

- Paper documents, financial ledgers, printed publications, sound recordings, photographs, copy negatives, scrapbooks, microfilm, realia, born-digital files, and musical scores
A Complex Custodial History

• Founding through 1970s: Library of Congress

• February 5, 1982: MLA Archives transferred to the University of Maryland, College Park

• November 5, 1982: Joint Committee on the MLA Archives forms with 8 voting members: 4 from MLA and 4 from UMD

• Records regularly accessioned since 1982
A Complex Custodial History

- May 2012: MLA Archives Policies Task Force recommended creation of a Special Officer position, Archivist


- Refined policies and established regional archives, implemented the Processing and Appraisal Project in 2015
A Complex Custodial History

• Second Archivist appointed February 2017 for a 5-year volunteer position

• Began as the graduate student hired for the 2015 Processing and Appraisal Project

• 2015 Project included revised collection arrangement, chapter records transfers, re-appraisal, weeding

• Current focus includes finding aid, appraisal, access, and collection advocacy
MLA Archives: Who’s Involved?

COLLECTION

USERS

CREATORS

RECORDS

COLLECTION

STEWARDS
MLA Archives: Relationships

- MLA Archivist
- MLA Board of Directors
- SCPA Curator
- Research Requests
- Accessions
- University of Maryland
MLA Archives: Relationships

SCPA Curator — policies — University of Maryland
MLA Archives: Relationships

- appraisal & re-appraisal
- transfers & de-accessions
- recommendations
- collection development
- information access
- processing personnel & supplies
- storage needs & space
MLA Archives: Relationships

- reports
- budget requests
- recommendations
- collection development
- collection advocacy
MLA Archives: Relationships

MLA Board of Directors → SCPA Curator

funds
The Collection and Its Future

- About 90% of the collection is unprocessed
- Grants will be the processing future for this collection
- Collection finding aid still in progress
- Advocacy to promote scholarly value of the collection
- Challenge to physical arrangement: 30 years of changing archival practices
THANK YOU!

Melissa E. Wertheimer
archivist@musiclibraryassoc.org
December 2017
Addendum for Ingest into Digital Repository
University of Maryland (DRUM)

• Additional research by the MLA Archivist for the collection-level finding aid has revealed a completed custodial history

• Documents consulted include former UMD curators’ files, MLA Board minutes, issues of Notes (MLA’s quarterly journal), miscellaneous MLA committee records, additional records

• 1967–1974: Juilliard School Lincoln Center Library, NY, NY


• 1982–present: University of Maryland, College Park, MD

• First location on UMD campus was Hornbake Library; second and final location on UMD campus is the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library

• Names of the repository changed over time: Special Collections in Music to 1996 and Special Collections in Performing Arts 1996–present

• 1st Archivist, Jane P. Franck (1967–1977); 2nd Archivist, Sandy Rodriguez (2013–2017); 3rd Archivist, Melissa E. Wertheimer (2017–present)