Belgium, report 2010

The Royal Library has purchased the private collection of Marc Danval. This collection, with more than 12,000 records and an huge amount of ephemera, is considered as the largest jazz collection in Belgium.

The Flemish Music Centre launched a new bibliographic database, free accessible, with no less than 10.000 articles on music, recently published by the Flemish press.

OKBV, the Art Libraries Association, which also includes performing art and music libraries, organized a successful meeting and workshop on collection development and policy. During another meeting of OKBV the ‘cafeteria syndrome’ was discussed: a cafeteria is generally considered as more important than a library. In museum and education buildings, the cafeteria takes a central place in the building, while the library has to disappear more and more somewhere in the basements. But there are two exceptions. A new library building is constructed in Antwerp for the joint use of an Art Centre, the Flemish Architecture Institute, and the Conservatoire. The ‘Waalse krook’ is the name of a project by the city of Ghent for a new building for the public library and the Centre of New Media. The architecture competition has just finished.

Other interesting meetings were the two-day conference in Oostende, with 40 presentations about e-books, web 2.0 and digitization. This conference was organized by the VVBAD, the Flemish general library association. In May 2010, the Royal Library organized an international colloquium with a historical-musicological approach to the subject The Musical Heritage of Brussels.

Jan Dewilde published an article in Bibliotheek- en archiefgids on the problems of musical heritage in the Conservatoire libraries. In January 2010, the Flemish Music Council launched a new periodical publication, Toccata, with memorandum texts in order to stimulate the political debate on different issues such as musical diversity, musical heritage, copyright, etc.

Heritage still is the main topic in Belgium. A new institution is established: the Flemish Heritage Library. It is not a physical library but a network organization. One of its activities is the support of the Flemish Short Title Catalogue, devoted to printed editions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for text as well as music. The Antwerp Conservatoire was the first library in Belgium to be awarded the Flemish Heritage Library Quality Label. This quality label does not give more financial support, but it is considered as a sign of recognition of the functioning of the institute.

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