Study Group on Access to Performance Ephemera – Post-Congress Report 2019

Meeting 1: Monday, July 15, 2019, 16:00 - 17:30

Katharine Hogg, **Chair of Study Group**

Minutes: Jennifer Ward, Secretary of Bibliography Section

Meeting attendees: Joanna Bullivant, Stefan Engl, Nienke de Boer, Ilias Kyriazis, Michal Lewicki, Rupert Ridgewell, Sabine Koch, Maria Albuquerque, Colin Coleman, David Lewis, Kevin Page, André Avorio, Elizabeth Nichol, Margaret Jones, Rainer Buland, Peter Linnitt, Katharine Hogg, Jennifer Ward. (18 people).

1. Introductions
Each meeting attendee introduced themselves, named their institution, and mentioned relevant ephemera projects they are working on.

2. Minutes of last meeting
Minutes of the meetings last year were reviewed, and a summary report on the work of the study group had been submitted to the IAML Board halfway through the year. This was displayed to give an update of some projects presented last year. (copy attached)

3. Musiconn project
An update on the Musiconn project, a pilot project to use crowdsourcing for ephemera, was postponed to the Thursday meeting (see Thursday's minutes below)

4. Ephemera updates throughout the year
Throughout the past year, Katharine added some resources, as she was notified of them or came across them, to the list of links called "Projects related to the history of musical performance," available through the IAML website (https://www.iaml.info/projects-related-history-musical-performance).

5. Prototype template for performance data
A couple of musicologists in the past couple years have approached Katharine asking if there is a model they can use to uniformly describe performances when they are creating a database. At that point there was none, but a model was presented by Catherine Harbor at a conference in London in 2018 in a presentation entitled "Building the Concerts Database: Textual Decomposition of Advertisements." After discussion it was agreed that it would be desirable for this Study Group to create a prototype template for performance data. A list of Harbor's suggested fields was presented and discussed, as summarised below:

Additional data for a concerts database might include: programmes/wordbooks, sound and video recordings (links), images of performance (photographs, prints, etc.), reviews (published and unpublished), and manuscript (private) records such as journals, letters with citations/digitised resources/location of original resource.

As can be seen in the Musiconn project, the "concert" is the main conceptual element to which everything is linked: there is a program, a review, photographs, etc., all of which link to the concert. It moves from a document-based approach over to a performance-based approach.

It would be useful for the group to create a template using a set of data. What is important would be a scope note about the use of each term. This would reflect viable practice and keep it grounded in something realistic. Elements can always be added later, and the template can be adjusted once other projects are involved. An example was that other kinds of performances (not only concerts or public performances)

could be described, such as when a woman writes in a diary that she played duets one evening. People can try out the schema with their own materials and see if it works.

It was noted that the Harbor template is for advertisements, but could there be a set of templates for different types of materials (thinking of ethnographers)?

It was clarified that "performance" here is based on Western ideas of performance, for which evidence (the ephemera) is available.

An approach at a definition of "ephemera" was made: Programmes, but also letters, reviews, diary entries, and also marked scores—material that gives more complete information and tells you more about the context and reception of a performance.

One question was brought up about managing contradictory evidence. One way is to input all information, but use a note to explain the circumstances (for example, in a case where an announced performer was replaced, input the person who was scheduled to perform, and then the person who took their place). Another way would be to create two events and link them on a higher level, because you know based on the evidence that these are the same event. Separate events are useful because, for example, Carnegie Hall might describe an event one way, and the New York Philharmonic might describe the event in another way. It is important to keep "wrong" dates, i.e. create separate events with cross-references in the notes, because there might be artifacts that refer to the other ("wrong") dates which need to be drawn together in the database.

Other points that arose during discussion:

- The ability of databases to communicate with each other: making datasets able to speak externally to each other.
- The importance of using identifiers
- VIAF (Virtual International Authority File) is strong on names, but currently weak on works and performers, as data in VIAF is taken normally taken from documents.
- Identifiers are sometimes misleading, because there are cases in which if you take the high-level work (opera) it masks the fact that the piece is actually an arrangement of something from the opera.
- MerMEId was pointed out as a platform that incorporates performance data.
- How can workload be reduced, especially when one person has to manage hundreds of performances? Perhaps this can be harvested from orchestra management databases.
- It is important to look at other kinds of evidence, such as diaries, which is where women would be mentioned more, or account books where people were paid.
- Institutions that organized the event needs to be included
- Perspectives on the data: There may be a case that one perspective combines information for findability, but when you flatten the data then you lose some other views that might be useful for scholarship. In linked data there is room for both. Data visualisation helps.
- The importance of making sure you're clear about the evidence sources, because we're all used to imperfect evidence sources.

Following the discussion it was agreed that Katharine Hogg would draft a template with the assistance of Peter Linnitt and any other interested parties, and circulate it to the group for comment and contributions.

Meeting 2: Thursday, July 18, 2019, 14:00 - 15:30

Katharine Hogg, **Chair of Study Group**

Minutes: Jennifer Ward, Secretary of Bibliography Section

Meeting attendees: Stefan Engl, Andreas Odenkirchen, Pedro Cravinho, Mariet Calsius, Peter Linnitt, Theresa Cronk, Jennifer Ward, Katharine Hogg. (8 people)

The meeting began by reviewing the discussions of the first meeting on Tuesday 15 July.

On Monday a prototype schema for describing ephemera in a catalogue record was presented and discussed. Peter Linnitt and Katharine Hogg will collaborate to further develop and test this out. This will be the main project of the year. A draft will be made, which will then be circulated.

Barbara Wiermann had intended to speak at this meeting but could not due to a scheduling conflict. She was to report on the Musiconn project, which was a pilot project at the SLUB Dresden for three months, and had updated Katharine Hogg, chair of the meeting, in advance. The project used open-source software and crowdfunding, but the funding for the pilot project has stopped. However, it was considered a success and the project leaders are now looking for opportunities to continue the work.

Other reports
Mariet Calsius, Belgium: Her institution (CEMPER) is undertaking a project about historical theatre decor, involving scenery and other elements. Eight collections have been located in private or city collections. The goal is to find a method for value assessment (see her paper presented 18 July in the session "Issues of collection management"). The project will end in September; the final output has not yet been decided, it may be a database or book.

Recommended article
Katharine Hogg had found a useful article about performance ephemera that includes a literature review: Jasmine Darlington-Rielly, "Music ephemera within library collections: a review of the literature", Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association vol. 68/2 (2019).

Building the Concerts Database: Textual decomposition of advertisements

Catherine Harbor

- Day of the week on which concert takes place
- Date: day, month, year
- Venue
- Type of performance (opera, vocal/instrumental concert)
- Description
- Notes
- Name of play with which concert was associated
- Performer names
- Performer activities/roles
- Works performed
- Composers of works
- Ticket type
- Ticket price
- Place where tickets sold
- Name of beneficiary/beneficiaries
- Description of beneficiary/beneficiaries

Additional data suggested for a concerts database – linked data
- Programmes/wordbooks
- Sound and video recordings (links)
- Images of performance (photographs, prints, etc.)
- Reviews (published and unpublished)
- Manuscript (private) records such as journals, letters
- Citations/digitised resources/location of original resource