



Association internationale des bibliothèques, archives et centres de documentation musicaux (AIBM)

International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML)

Internationale Vereinigung der Musikbibliotheken, Musikarchive und Musikdokumentationszentren (IVMB)

# Belgium, report 2008

## Music Topics in Library Associations

A specific music library association does not exist in Belgium, nevertheless there is a growing presence of music related subjects in the activities of the more general library associations, e.g. during the information conference of the Flemish Library Association ([www.vvbad.be](http://www.vvbad.be)) in September 2007, a FRBR application for music in public libraries was presented ([www.vcob.be](http://www.vcob.be)); another presentation focused on the European project *Variazioni*, a content enrichment portal where music institutions and user communities will be able to integrate and to enrich musical content, such as courses, teaching material, articles, thematic webs, etc. ([www.variazioniproject.org](http://www.variazioniproject.org)); there was also a panel discussion on the more general but all-too-relevant topic: “Too Many Digitization Projects, Too Little Vision?” In February 2008, the Association of Visual and Performing Arts Libraries ([www.okbv.be](http://www.okbv.be)) organized a meeting devoted to acquisition policy, with topics such as Auctions on the Web, Consortium Building for Electronic Publications, and Donations. A new publication by Mieke Lietaer with guidelines to handle donations was presented and distributed. Several presentations are freely available as slide shows or videos on the websites of the mentioned library associations.

## Acquisitions

In February 2008 the *Tsgrooten* antiphonary, a Flemish illuminated manuscript from 1522, was acquired by the Flemish Government for 400.000 Euro for the Flemish Heritage Library. This is the first time that such an important and representative music document has been acquired by the Ministry of Culture. It might be considered as a good counterbalance in times of reduced library budgets but some criticize the new situation in which acquisitions can become dependant from political decisions. In the meantime the antiphonary has been digitized and is accessible on the internet ([www.antifonarium-tsgrooten.be](http://www.antifonarium-tsgrooten.be)). The digitization is considered as a leading project in Belgium of an important Belgian musical source.

The Conservatoire of Antwerp received an interesting and very large donation: the fifty-meter long music collection of the Antwerp cathedral, one of the most important churches of the city.

## Exhibitions

Virtual exhibitions offers interesting possibilities to reveal the value of musical heritage. The Antwerp conservatoire is showing some highlights of its collection in “Het boek spreekt” ([www.hetboekspreekt.be](http://www.hetboekspreekt.be)). The Royal Library created an exhibition devoted to the violinist and composer Eugène Ysaÿe (<http://ysaye.kbr.be>).

## Digitization projects and publications



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A joint project of the Flanders Music Centre ([www.muzeikcentrum.be](http://www.muzeikcentrum.be)) and the Flemish Radio and Television ([www.vrt.be](http://www.vrt.be)) resulted in a large database with detailed information on Flemish music from the last 60 years. The database describes more than 110.000 songs mostly from the rock and pop recordings ([www.muzeikarchief.be](http://www.muzeikarchief.be)). The collection Yves Becko, mostly sound recordings of vocal music, is the subject of a digitizing and restoring project of the Royal Library in order to promote the collection and to make its content accessible. More than 700 photos from the collection of the Antwerp conservatoire are digitized and free accessible on the site *Conservatorium in Beeld* (<http://develop-it.be/fotoproject/zoek/beschrijving.php>). Resonant, the Flemish Centre for Musical Heritage, has made inventories of the nineteenth-century music collection of the cathedral of Mechlin and of several brass band collections in Tongeren ([www.resonant.be](http://www.resonant.be)). Early 2008 Flavie Roquet published the *Lexicon Vlaamse Componisten*, a huge lexicon of Flemish composers after 1800, containing more than 2.000 biographies. (ISBN 978-90-8679-090-6).

### **International activities and collaboration**

The Study Centre for Flemish Music added English translations of composers biographies on its website ([www.svm.be](http://www.svm.be)). Other international activities are the participation in RISM and RILM, co-ordinated by the Royal Library, and the contributions to RIPM by the Conservatoires of Antwerp and Brussels. Since 2007, the Belgian ISMN registration agency is operating and is run by Partitor vzw, a Belgian Music Publishers Association. The contact person is Marc Hofkens ([www.ismn-international.org](http://www.ismn-international.org)).

### **Towards a Belgian IAML?**

An inquiry is set up in order to know if a Belgian IAML branch should be viable. Some results: 36% of all members should like to start such a branch; linguistic problems are limited: only 9% of all members want to have all communications in French as well as in Dutch. Fifty percent expects to have an electronic newsletter, 27 % are dreaming of a website. Comparing the actual results with the previous inquiry, there is a positive evolution, but there are still some discussion matters, e.g., the structure of the organisation: should it be an independant association or a section from an existing library association. To be continued.

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