



Music Expertise in Broadcasting and Orchestra Libraries:

Position statement on broadcasting and orchestra libraries

Throughout history music has contributed to the human understanding of the world and is an integral expression of cultural life and community. The UNESCO Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 27 states that “(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.”

Broadcasting and Orchestra Libraries play a large role in cultural life around the world, and are key institutions contributing to the public dissemination of musical expression and heritage. These institutions collect, preserve, and provide access to our written and recorded musical heritage and legacy. Librarians and Archivists working in broadcasting centres and performing ensemble libraries have unique and required skills and knowledge including but not limited to cataloguing, copyright, research, music publishing, music rental and sales, performance and music reading skills, and often copyist skills. These skills and knowledge require education and experience in music, performance, as well as librarianship and archives. The distinctive and unique skills required by Music Librarians and Archivists working in broadcasting and orchestra libraries are fundamental in the dissemination and distribution process of our written and recorded musical heritage, benefiting music creators and users. The roles employed by Librarians and Archivists make it possible for broadcasters and orchestras to contribute to the cultural life in their communities.

Public dissemination of music of all genres and across all forms of communication is key to engaging in the cultural life of our global community. Broadcasting and orchestra libraries are at the forefront of collecting and preserving local, regional, and international music and disseminating it across airwaves and television, as well as to performers, ensembles, public audiences, and researchers. Broadcasters and orchestras provide access and the opportunity for the public to engage in the musical and cultural life in their communities, and it is integral to preserve and build the libraries and archives that protect and provide access to the musical and cultural record collected by these institutions. Music is a key part of cultural life, and also plays a role in cultural economies. The positive impacts of supporting institutions that disseminate, create, and preserve music extend into the economic health of society.

Broadcasting and orchestra libraries not only collect, preserve, and disseminate written and recorded music, they also play a key role in the creation of music. Broadcasters support artists through playing recorded music on their airwaves and television networks, and often are the first institutions to receive copies of new music and records by a recording artist. Broadcasters pay for this music, supporting the economic health of artists, as well as distributing this music to the broader public – contributing to the creation of audiences and cultural networks. Orchestras are also heavily involved in the creation of music, often

working directly with living composers to create and commission new works, as well as performing and recording them. This direct involvement in the creation of new music is crucial to making music happen in our communities. Unfortunately, these institutions are often under threat due to a number of factors that can range from changing music listening habits and technological shifts, to the redirection of funds out of cultural industries and information preservation and dissemination activities.

Broadcasting and orchestra Librarians and Archivists work to acquire, catalogue, preserve, and provide access to recorded and written music and its surrounding documentation. Broadcasting Music Librarianship requires honed skills in research, which are used to analyse recordings and musical performances, making it possible to create specialized metadata that provides crucial information to producers. This metadata allows for recorded music to make it to the airwaves and artists to collect royalties. Orchestra Librarians also practise specialized research skills, often honed through established careers as performers. The Orchestra Librarian is a crucial member of the ensemble, and must have knowledge in music publishing, engraving, copyright, cataloguing, and research among other skills in order to liaise with the range of stakeholders it creates to make a live orchestral or ensemble performance happen. The Music Librarian in the Orchestra makes it possible for the orchestra to have music on stands at the time of rehearsal and performance. Broadcasting Music Librarians and Archivists may also work as Orchestral Librarians and Archivists in the increasingly rare instances of radio orchestras. These positions require an extremely specialized set of skills, education, and flexibility, making it possible to bring music to public audiences through live and recorded performance, as well as through radio airwaves and television services. Broadcasting and Orchestra Libraries are important institutions in the cultural life of their communities. Through providing services that centre on collecting, preserving, and disseminating written and recorded music and cultural heritage to the public, these institutions play a major role in ensuring cultural life is shared among all members of society, providing a democratizing and essential role in our communities.

“There are an infinite variety of tyrannies and dystopias, but they all share one trait: the ferocious opposition to free thought, open minds, and access to information. Where people are free to learn, to share, to explore, feel and dream, liberty grows. This is why the library matters so much. It is a democratizing and liberating force like none other.” - Margaret Atwood