

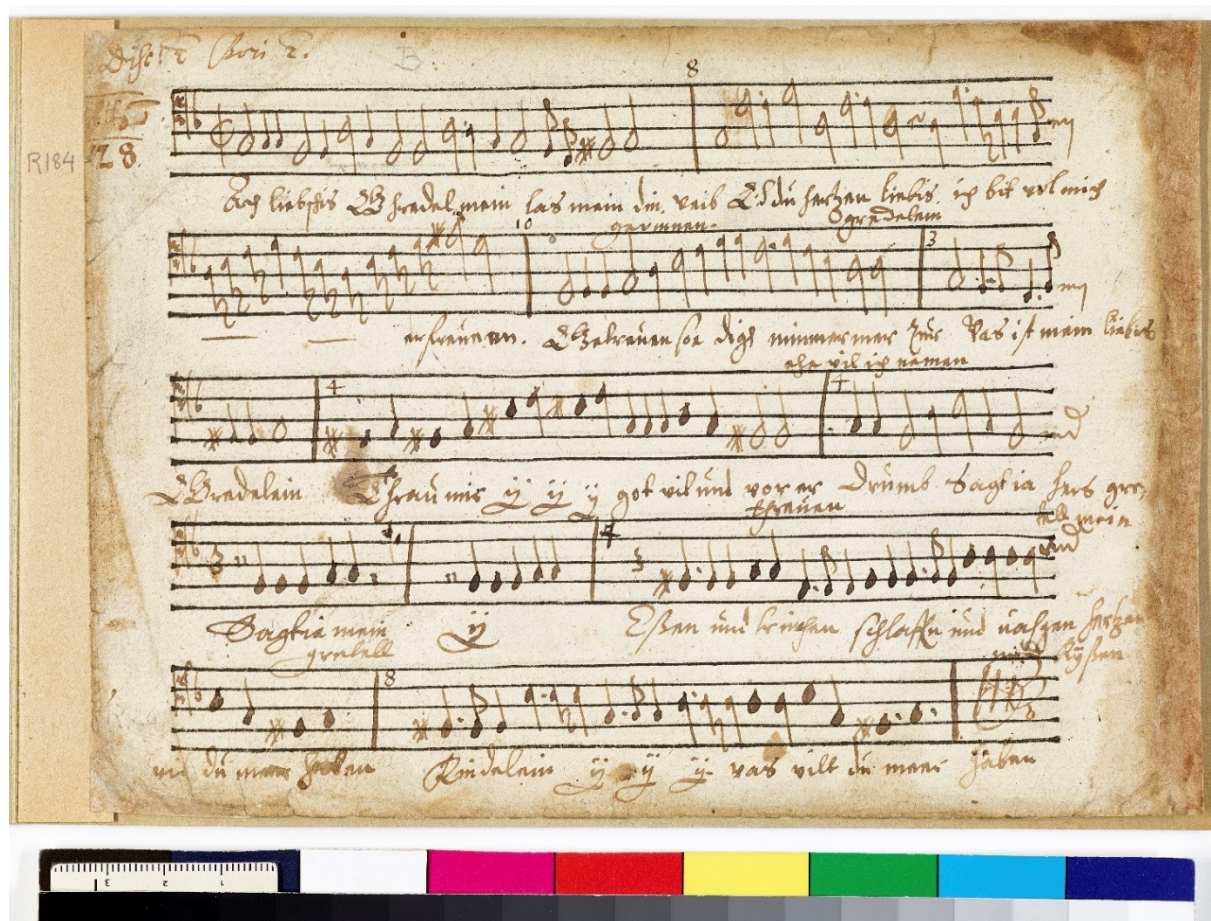
Digitizing musical cultural heritage in SDUB Special Collections

Anne Helle Jespersen, research librarian in music

The University Library of Southern Denmark (SDUB) possesses numerous special collections which have, so far, only been communicated to the outer world in the form of registration of the materials in our catalogue supplemented by short descriptions on our homepage. In 2017, we organized the Theme Forum for Special Collections and appointed an area coordinator. In this way, we have put more focus on these collections. The area of responsibility for the Theme Forum is: storage, maintenance, curation, usage, development, digitalization, availability, and communication.

There can be multiple reasons why we consider a collection to be a Special Collection: The collection consists of rare or unique works; the materials may have been collected by an important or famous person, and the content is significant for either research in this person, or in his or her particular research area; the collection is worth a great sum of money; the collection has a special topic and there are no similar collections in Denmark, or; the collections may consist of particular types of materials, e.g. manuscript fragments, jazz photos or sheet music.

The following is an example of a high-resolution scan of a music sheet from The Herlufsholm Collection, which stems from around the year 1600. The ruler in the lower left corner enables an impression of the actual size of the handwritten document, which is connected to the catalogue post 184 in RISM:



Below is a scan of a jazz photo from The Timme Rosenkrantz Collection, which is part of another Special Collection, the Jazz Collections. The photo is dedicated to Timme Rosenkrantz by Benny Carter himself, and, being approximately 80 years old, the photo bears signs of use and slitage:



SDUB has initiated a digitization of our Special Collection materials for more than one reason: Opportunity to create exhibitions online; accessibility for our own students and researchers as well as for the general public. It is difficult for researchers and others to travel to Odense see a given material in our

research reading room. Often, a user will be satisfied with a high quality digitization of a rare book, photo or fragment online; we have a responsibility for taking care of valuable and rare or unique materials in the best possible way, therefore loans and use should be minimal.

UNESCO's definition of cultural heritage contains of several categories and sub-categories. Artefacts such as the two presented, can be defined as pieces of tangible and movable cultural heritage which are important to preserve and pass on to future generations.

The Herlufsholm Special Collection has been a part of the university library in Odense since 1968. Originally, this collection belonged to the Danish Herlufsholm School in Næstved. The collection contains approximately 40.000 volumes as well as numerous etchings, lithographic prints and rare hand colored maps etc. The most valuable items are a donation from count Otto Thott in the 18th century – comprising approximately 6.000 volumes. As one can imagine, you may also find various types of music, including psalms, motets and madrigals and even music theory, some of it quite old.

RARA M 197

The University Library of Southern Denmark can boast a rather large selection of medieval manuscript fragments in the Herlufsholm Special Collection. Several of these fragments contain music (text and musical notation – typically square or diamond shaped notation). This gives us astonishing insights into the Gregorian chant of the Holy Roman Catholic Church as it was song in the medieval monasteries. Most of these fragments are attached to 16th or 17th century books as part of their binding. An example is a book on philosophy by the Italian scholar and renaissance humanist Marsilio Ficino, printed in Basel 1559. On the front and back of the book cover, a medieval manuscript fragment has been placed by a bookbinder. As far as we know the fragment dates to the 12th Century, possibly of English origin. Once this impressive book belonged to the Danish Latin poet Erasmus Lætus who had the bookbinder put his initials on the front side along with the year of acquisition (1580).

RARA Musik L 43

Among the numerous handwritten vocal works in the Herlufsholm Special Collection that are registered in the RISM* database, you may find a collection of 96 motets and madrigals by various composers (c. 1582-88). A peculiar thing is that this manuscript once belonged to – and was compiled by – Johannes Stephanus (1561-1625), who worked as an assistant for the famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601). The music in RARA Musik L 43 (originally from the Herlufsholm Special Collection) has been given the RISM numbers R 131-132. Once again, parchment fragments of Gregorian chant from the Middle Ages have been placed on the binding.

* Répertoire International des Sources Musicales

RARA L 31

Epistolarum astronomicarum libri is an original 1596 work by the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe who even had it printed in his own printing shop on the island of Hven (today a part of Sweden). The work contains the astronomer's scientific correspondence with William IV Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel. As far as we know, Tycho Brahe may have held the library's copy in his own hands. Perhaps, he even had special demands for

the appearance of the binding. The library's copy stands out with a beautiful medieval manuscript fragment on the cover, containing Gregorian chant and other liturgical elements of the church.

RARA Musik M 1

The French polymath Marin Mersenne (1588-1648) worked within numerous academic fields and wrote different treatises. Today, he is, among other things, known for the Mersenne prime numbers. Concerning music, Mersenne was the inventor of Mersenne's Laws that are used to describe the harmonics of a vibrating string. Of course, this special knowledge comes in handy when producing and playing the guitar or the piano. Mersenne's unique understanding led to the development of a theory of universal harmonies and he is often referred to as the father of acoustics. The Frenchman was also a priest and lectured on theology and philosophy. As part of the Herlufsholm Special Collection you can find a 1652 edition of the above-mentioned work on harmonics.

RARA Musik M 3

"Master of a Hundred Arts" is the later nickname for the German Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680) who among other things wrote a theoretical work on music with the title *Musurgia Universalis*, published in two volumes in 1650. The university library holds the first edition of this richly illustrated work that came to inspire both Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven.

RARA Musik M 4

One of the finest pieces of music from the Herlufsholm Special Collection is the *Polyhymnia panegyrica* of the German composer Michael Praetorius (alias Michael Schultze) (1571-1621) who was active during the transition from the renaissance to the baroque period. He is well known for numerous church compositions which would have fitted the needs of the Herlufsholm School in Næstved. However, the *Polyhymnia panegyrica* (1619) is inspired by the contemporary Italian styles of music and comprises 40 choral concerts. The university library holds three of the volumes (cum basso generali), X, XI and XIII, of this festive work that was meant for the European courts. Each volume is bound in a medieval manuscript fragment with liturgical music and texts. In addition, all three volumes are kept in an unattached parchment page that has been folded to this special storage purpose.

The intention behind Digital Library is to create an institutional repository for archiving and communication of the digitized materials in fx the Herlufsholm Special Collection and the Jazz Collections – this could be sheet music, photos and medieval fragments found in book bindings, but also materials such as video and sound recordings from the Jazz Collections. Digital Library is not yet finished or in operation, but several of our materials have been digitized and are ready to be integrated in the Digital Library.

At SDUB, we recently decided to use DSpace as our new digital library system. DSpace is an open source repository application that allows you to capture, store, index, preserve and distribute your digital material including text, video, audio, and data. The application is free for download. DSpace was designed to handle any format from simple text documents to datasets and digital video, and a 'community' is the highest level of DSpace content hierarchy.

DSpaces's has a built-in organizational structure of Communities and Collections, and three Collections Communities have been created so far in our Digital Library: Herlufsholm Library Collections Community, Jazz Photograph Collections Community, and Svend Asmussen Collections Community.

The Jazz Collections at SDUB in Odense have through donations and acquisitions since 1997 achieved the status of research archive of specialist jazz studies. The Danish Jazz Center ceased to exist in the 1st June 1997. A great deal of the collections was transferred to the former Odense University Library – including the Center's public collection, the Timme Rosenkrantz Collection, the Ben Webster Collection, the Radio Jazz Collection and, the Eric Lindemann Collection.

The collections at SDUB have since been enlarged due to purchases and donations, for example, the private collections of Svend Asmussen, Richard Boone, and a unique collection from the photographer Ole Brask.

The Jazz Collections consist of more than 6000 reel-to-reel tapes and a thousand acetate records containing both published and unpublished music recordings and interviews, hundreds of cine film recordings, more than 5000 photographs, AV-materials, books, sheet music, original handwritten arrangements and compositions, records, CD's, DVD's, Umatics ... and so on.

In 2016, SDUB published the catalogue, *En fotograf. En fan. En legende* (A Photographer. A Fan. A Legend). The publication concentrates on selected photographs from the Jazz Collections, some of them, hitherto, unpublished and private photos from jazz musician Ben Webster and jazz collector Timme Rosenkrantz. Some of the 140 private cine film recordings from the Ben Webster Collection have been used in the prize-winning documentary, *Cool Cats* (2016), produced by The Danish Broadcasting Corporation.

