

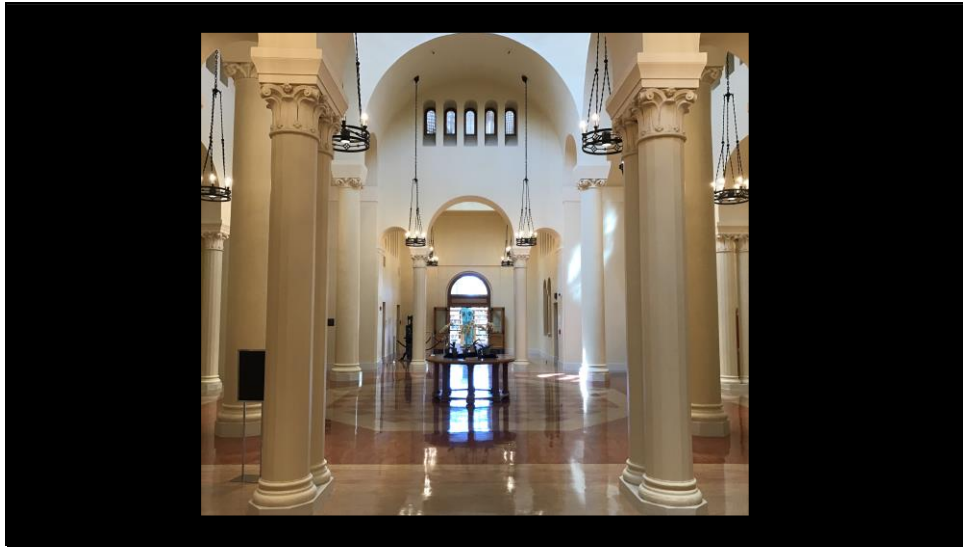
Slide 1

Digitizing rare music manuscripts at Stanford : a progress report

Ray Heigemeir, Stanford Libraries

Thank you for being here. I'm eager to tell you about a project that I began several years ago and is now nearing completion.

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The origins of this project lie in past attempts to scan (or microfilm) the memorial library of music collection, referred to as MLM, which is our premiere rare music collection and is located in the Green Library Department of Special Collections. It is in fact one of the libraries most-used special collections. In 1944 an anonymous inquiry came to Stanford Libraries asking if there was interest in acquiring a collection of antiquarian music materials. The benefactor was George Keating, a New York businessman whose sons attended Stanford. Keating was not a musician, but was a collector with a variety of interests, including the works of Joseph Conrad, works on the history of warfare, medical history, and early sound recordings. The music collection was conceived as a compilation of as many examples of music scores in the hands of the composers as could be acquired. Keating's wish was that the collection honor the Stanford alumni who lost their lives in World War II. The Memorial Library of Music was thus established. My colleague Mimi Tashiro published a full account of the collection's history in Notes, December 2018.

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The MLM Collection case in the Reading Room. It has since greatly expanded and is also housed in other secure locations.

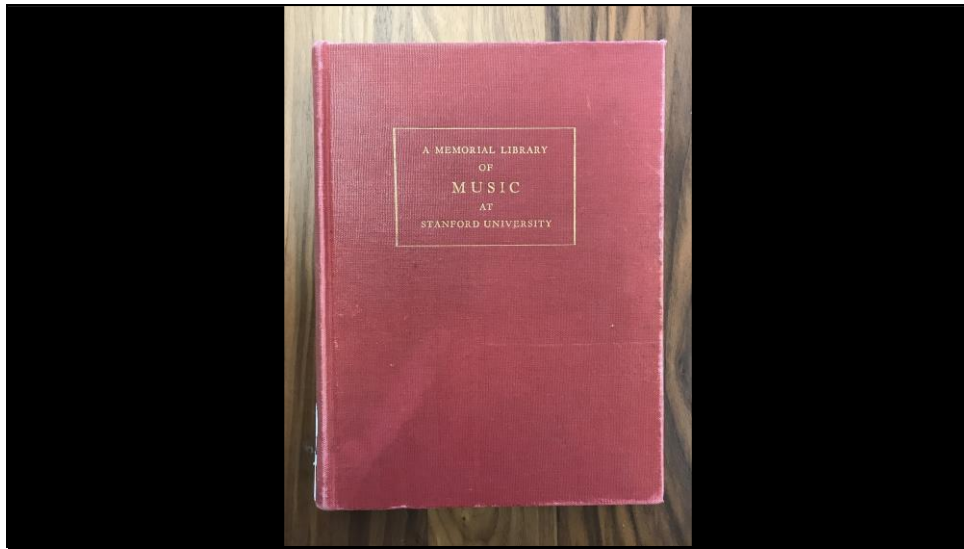
The Memorial Library of Music : manuscripts, first & early editions

Catalogue published 1950

The first proposal to provide full access to the collection, in the 1980s, would have created a microfilm master set for sale, with accompanying catalog records available in RLIN. A second proposal from around 2010 would have digitized the entire collection and along with full catalog records. For various reasons, these attempts failed to move forward. In 2017, I decided on a different and more modest approach, which was to uncover a “hidden collection” made up of the most unique materials, namely our manuscripts, pulled from the Memorial Library. As I began to consider the content, I remembered that there were a few manuscripts located in other collections, as well as free-floating items that were acquired over the decades. If they were manuscript, they were in my sightlines. Little did I know that the “few” would turn out to be “many” and that I was on a literal journey of discovery.

The project goal was to locate, physically examine, briefly catalog, scan, and (eventually) release all items to our online catalog and to our online exhibit environment. I worked closely with our preservation staff, our digital lab staff, and my colleague Kevin Kishimoto, Head of Music Metadata.

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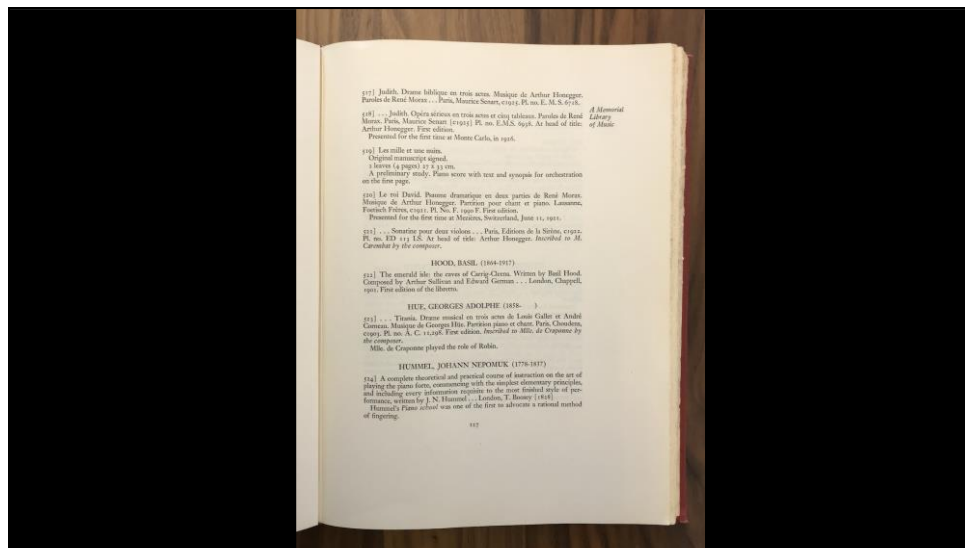


The MLM catalog was assembled by Keating and Nathan van Patten, Director of Stanford Libraries, and was published in 1950. In the 1951 review published in *Notes*, Otto Albrecht found more than 170 rather clumsy errors of varying kinds, including title transcriptions (he cites 80 errors with French titles alone), composer birth and death dates, and the imprecise use of the term “original manuscript.” He describes the cataloging practice as “original.” Albrecht states: “It is a great pity that a collection potentially one of the finest in the country should be off to a bad start, and should be represented by a catalog so disgracefully full of mistakes that could easily have been avoided through advice to be had within a stone's throw of the editor's desk.”

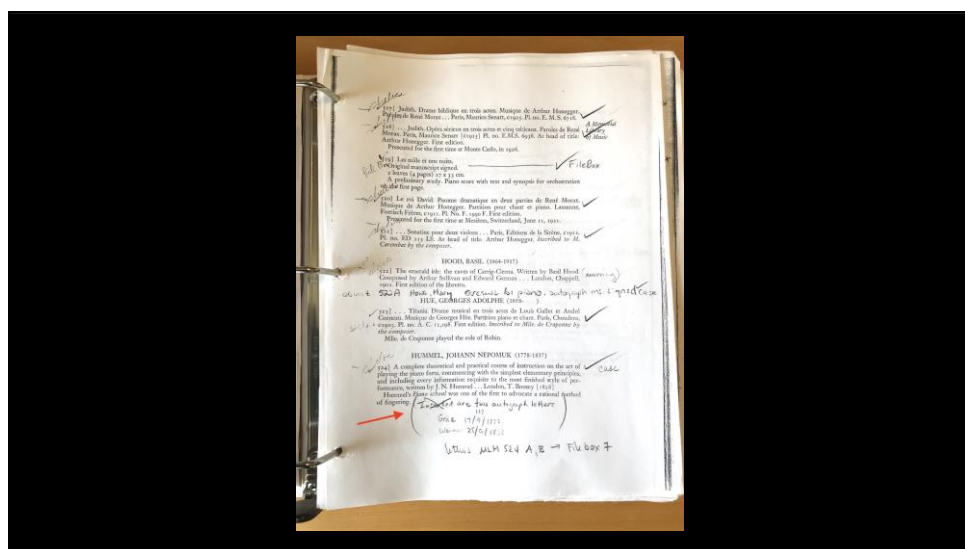
To his credit, Albrecht worked with Van Patten to include corrected entries in his 1953 Census of autograph music manuscripts of European composers in American libraries. Needless to say, correcting errors is another aspect of the project and we will rely on robust reporting from any interested researchers.

To begin the work, I combed through this catalog and typed addendum lists, as well as our online catalog and collection finding aids to populate a spreadsheet of potential items to digitize. As an example, let's look at Hummel.

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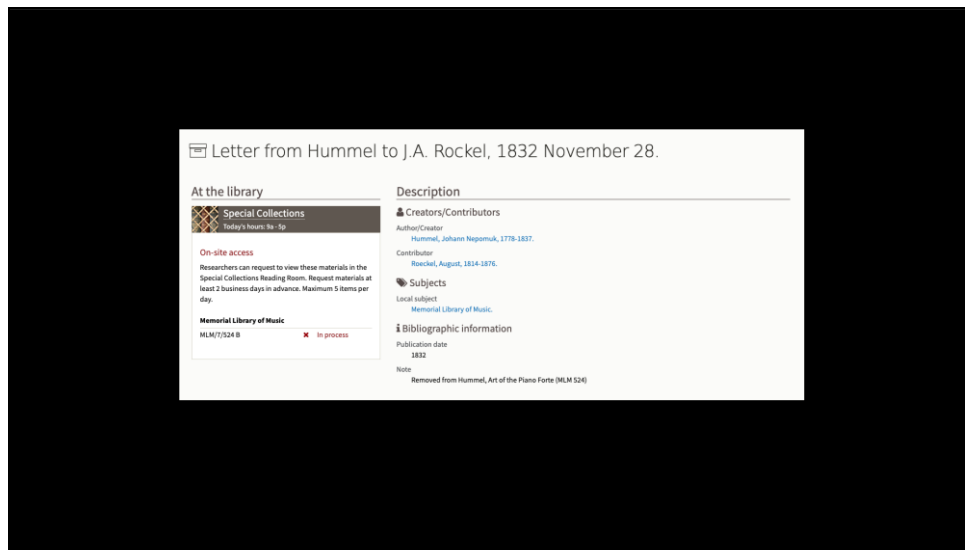
Here is a sample page from the “clean” copy of the catalog, with the entry for Hummel’s treatise at the bottom. In many cases, manuscripts were inserted in relevant printed volumes. The presence of a manuscript or letter was then described, and any removal or relocation was noted in the desk copy of the catalog. In this case, though, two letters were inserted in Hummel’s treatise, though they were not included in the catalog entry.



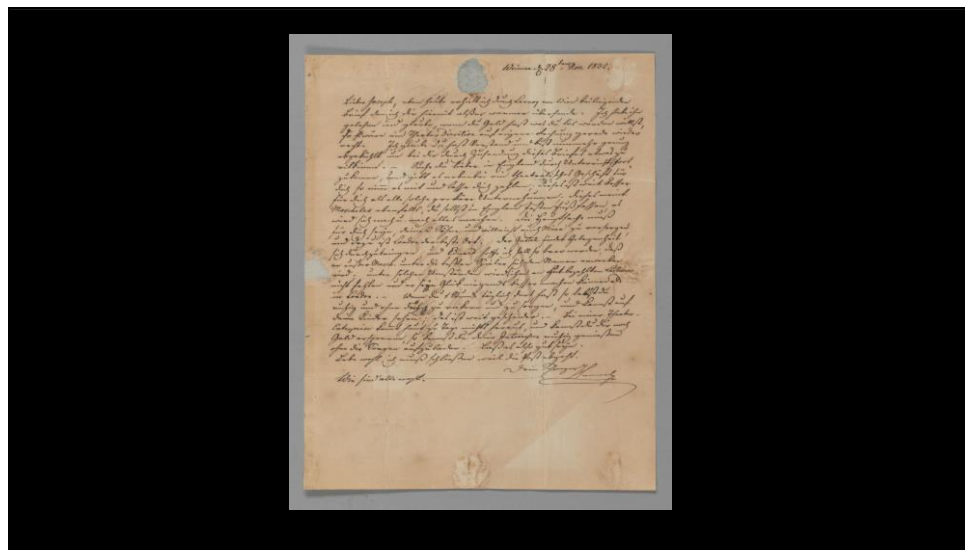
Here is the page in the desk copy of the catalog kept in the Special Collections Department. It has been heavily annotated over the years, and is inaccessible to anyone but staff.

As preservation staff removed the Hummel letters from the printed treatise, I annotated the print catalog as well as created simple online records.

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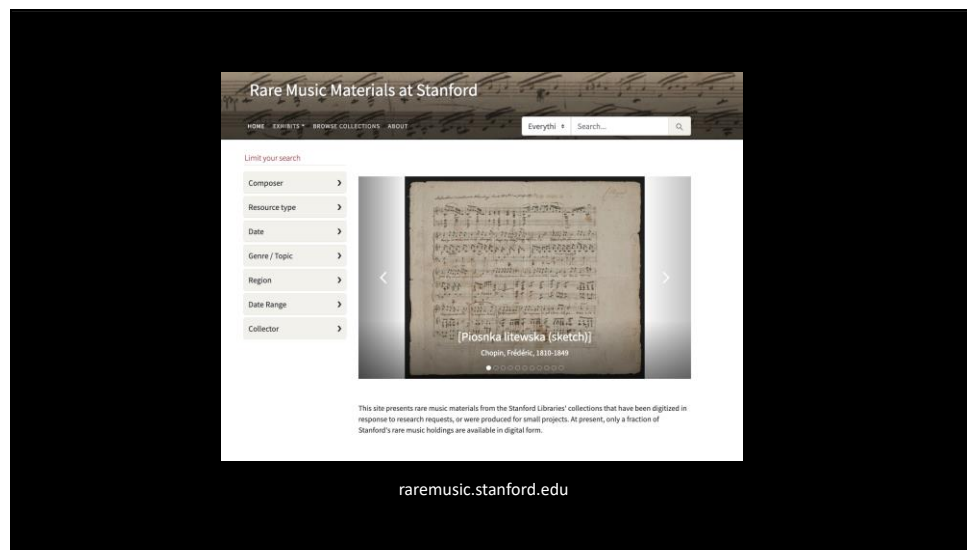


Here is the basic record for the letter. I created these for several hundred items and now all items have at least a minimal online presence. Full cataloging for the project materials is underway but will not be completed for some time. In the meanwhile, these brief records allow us to link images to metadata and to release the images to our catalog and our online exhibit. Fully cataloged records will also be discoverable in a google search, which we know is increasingly useful.



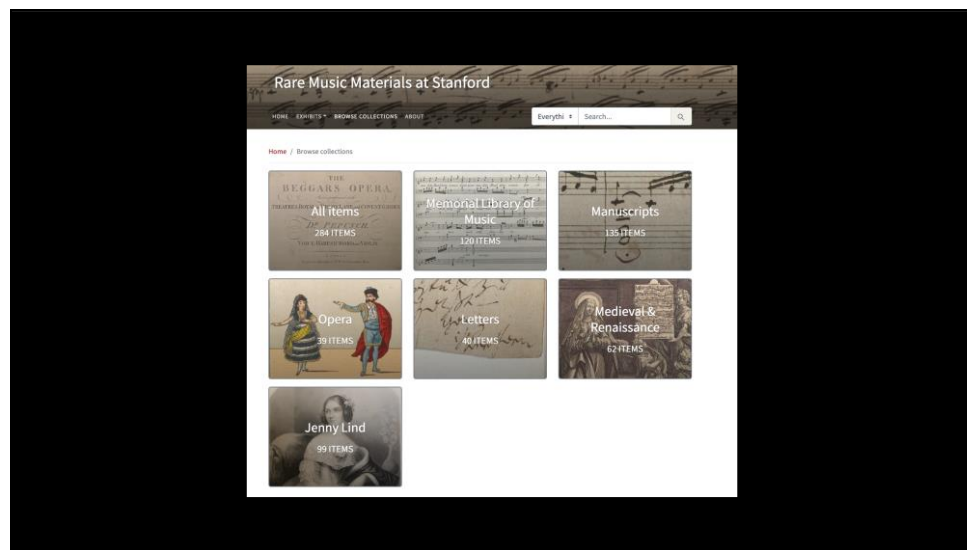
And here is one of the Hummel letters, after removal from the volume and some gentle preservation treatment.

Slide 10



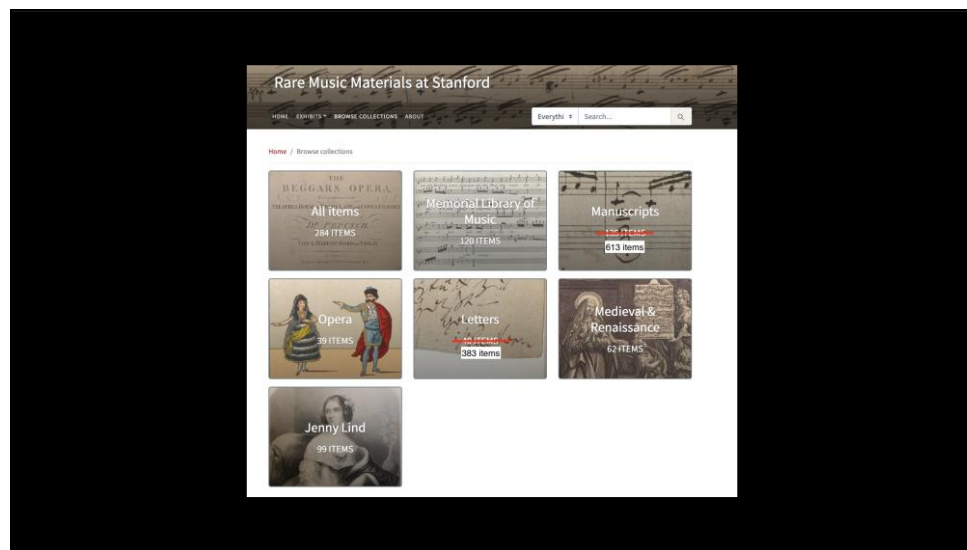
Spotlight is Stanford's online exhibit environment, and here is the home page for the rare music exhibit. Images are stored for long-term preservation and access in the Stanford Digital Repository and all are freely available for close viewing and download.

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The exhibit gathers together all rare music items that have already been scanned for research and teaching, or for publication. Some, including a collection of medieval miniatures, are pulled in from another exhibit. The categories you see are based on tags chosen by the creator (me!) to facilitate browsing. Notice that 135 score manuscripts and 40 letters have been made available thus far. At the completion of the project,

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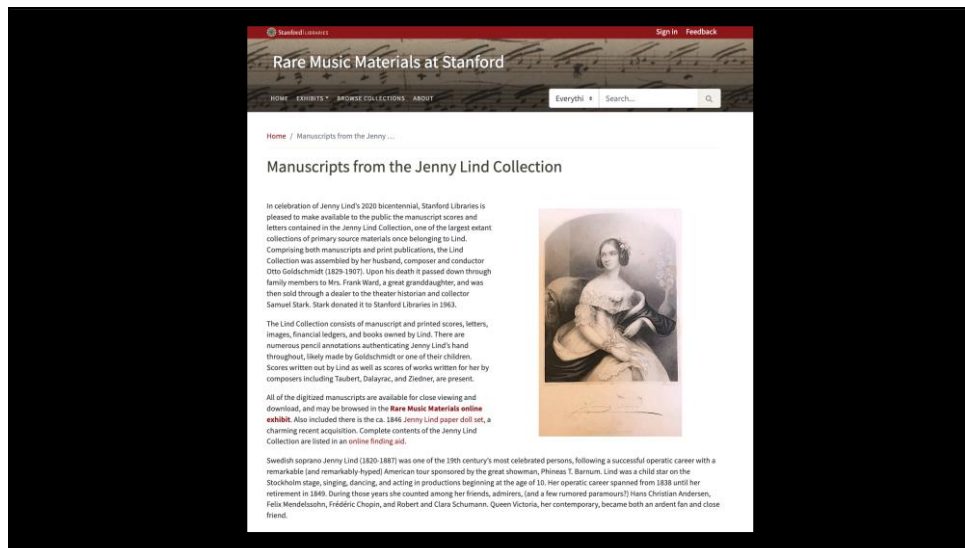


...the score manuscripts, including complete works, sketches, fragments and autograph quotations will increase in number from 135 to 613 items, and letters will increase from 40 to 383. All objects are IIIF compliant, and thus can be united in digital environments with other similar items. Due in part to Keating's unorthodox collecting methods, there is a great variety of material to consider, and I think of them as puzzle pieces, with each piece belonging to its own puzzle. I would now like to use the remainder of my time to give you a sampling of the content, hopefully showing the breadth of the collection.

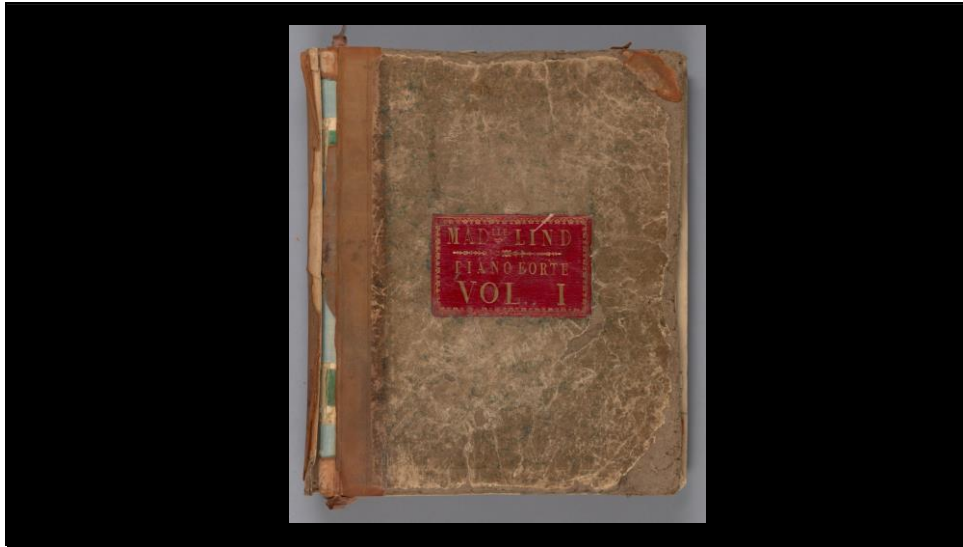
Our first goal: the Jenny Lind Bicentennial

We began working in batches, with materials from the Jenny Lind Collection as our first priority. Our goal was to make images available in celebration of the Jenny Lind Bicentennial which took place in 2020. Stanford has a significant collection of Lind materials, acquired from theater historian Samuel Stark, who purchased it from Lind's descendants. Working on this first batch with a calendared goal in mind, allowed us to begin getting a sense of how much time would be needed to identify and prepare materials, estimate costs of the digitization work, and set up the lab equipment for maximum efficiency.

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You can find an exhibit essay in spotlight which puts Lind's collection items in a biographical context. It also links to all of the digitized materials, to the online finding aid, and calls out the Lind paper doll set, which was an unusual recent acquisition. We have since acquired an additional group of Lind letters, some written from her American tour, and we will include them in a future phase of processing.



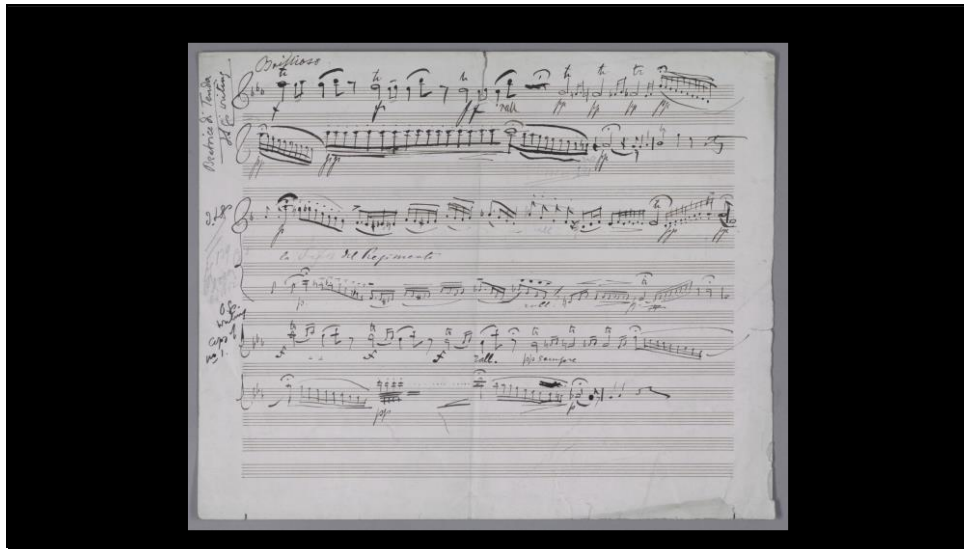
Among the collection items are the two volumes of music prepared for Lind's American tour. This volume was photographed before preservation treatment and captures the significant signs of wear that occurred over Lind's 93-city tour.

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And here is the first selection, an aria from Donizetti's Elixir of Love. If there are any singers present and you have the interest, I would be curious to know your opinions on this version which seems to stray from the published version of the work.

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Another interesting collection item is a sheet of cadenzas in Lind's hand. Along with letters, there is also a copy of Lind's contract with PT Barnum in Swedish translation, and several financial ledgers which may shed light on Lind's concert earnings and her related philanthropic activities.

Complete works

Henry Purcell

Te Deum and Jubilate
[1697]



Here we have Purcell's *Te Deum*, which is one of the earliest scores in the collection from the common practice period. It is a 44-page manuscript and is signed by the composer.

Wolfgang
Amadeus Mozart

Concerto for 3
pianos, K. 242
[1776]



The Mozart triple piano concerto, K. 242, consists of a full set of solo and orchestral parts. It is primarily in Leopold's hand, with occasional markings by Wolfgang (as an unknown hand has helpfully pointed out here at the bottom of the 1st violin part)

Prior to scanning, the part were given a gently cleaning and are now housed in a custom-made presentation box.

Luigi Cherubini

Medée
[1797?]



The 528 page full score of Cherubini's *Medée* includes an aria with two pages significantly blacked out. An interesting fact: This manuscript was once blasted with x-rays! In 2011, the German musicologist Heiko Cullmann conferred with Stanford physicist Uwe Bergmann on applying an xray technique that had been used successfully on the Archimedes palimpsest. The manuscript was subjected to the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource to make visible the notes hidden by the carbon smudging. He succeeded and published his findings in a National Geographic news story. The newly-uncovered aria section was included in Cullmann's 2012 edition of the work, and the whole of the original manuscript, though still smudged (!) is now available through our catalog.

Johannes
Brahms

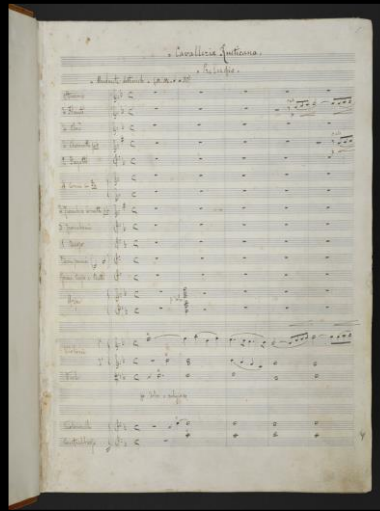
*Tragische
Ouvertüre*
[1880]



Here we have the Brahms Tragic Overture. I included the two-page spread, or “book view” to show our lab’s best practices in photographing the gutters. This is a necessity when handling objects with tight bindings.

Pietro Mascagni

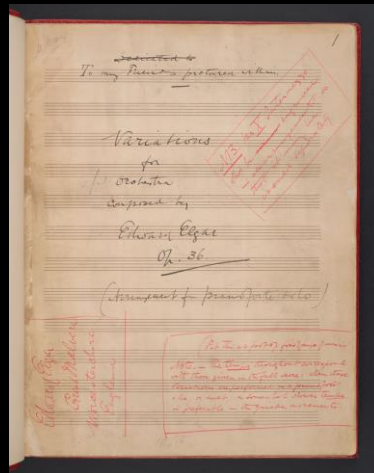
*Cavalleria
rusticana*
[1890]



Cavalleria rusticana is the original manuscript submitted for the competition that vaulted Mascagni to sudden fame. It is already available through our catalog and exhibit, and has been used to inform performances in Livorno as recently as last year.

Edward Elgar

Variations for
orchestra, op.36
[1899]



Elgar's piano reduction of his Enigma Variations is on fairly acidic paper and had many small tears from past handling, I suspect by a pianist's page turns. Our conservation team did an excellent job of repairing the paper in advance of photography.

Edward Elgar

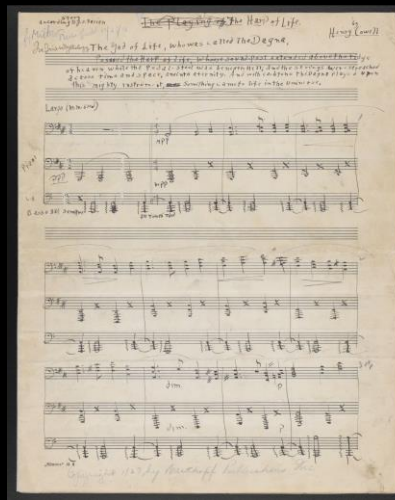
Variations for
orchestra, op.36
[1899] : Nimrod



And here is the famous Nimrod variation.

Henry Cowell

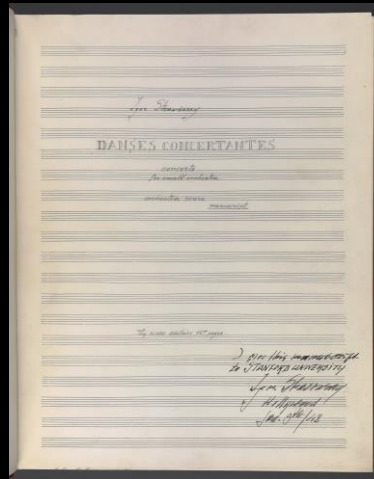
The God of Life
(*Harp of Life*)
[1924?]



The score for the Harp of Life shows Cowell's notation for performing tone cluster chords, one of the new performance techniques he invented. His widow Sydney Cowell stated that this was one of only a few surviving manuscripts showing tone cluster notation. Stanford has several Cowell manuscripts, and a personal connection in that Cowell grew up at the edge of the campus. He later taught a course on rhythmic movement in the department of hygiene and physical fitness (this was before the existence of the music department)

Igor Stravinsky

*Dances
concertantes*
[1941-2]

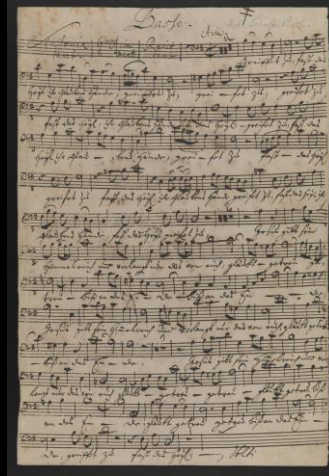


The dances concertantes score was given to Stanford by the composer to add to the Memorial Library. We are not able to make it public as it is under copyright. This is true for a small number of scores, and after the project ends I plan to seek out copyright holders to ask permission to make their scores available to the public.

Fragments & sketches

Johann
Sebastian Bach

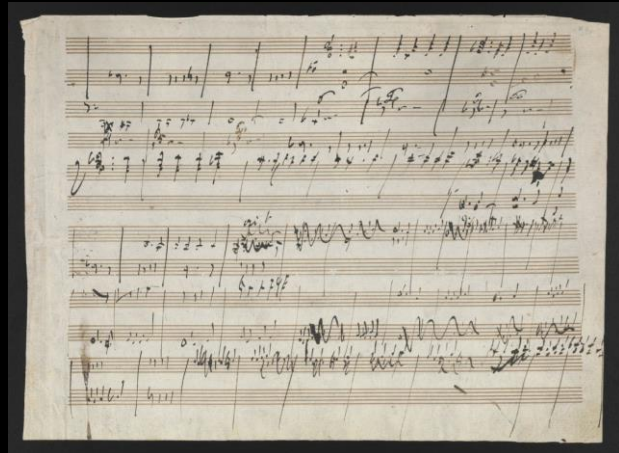
Basso aria from
*Ich liebe den
Höchsten*
(BWV 174)
[1729]



A single leaf by one of the most famous names. The bulk of the performance parts for this cantata are held at the Riemenschneider Bach Institute at Baldwin-Wallace University.

Ludwig van
Beethoven

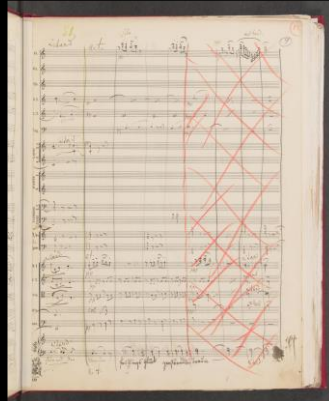
Quintet in C
op. 29
[1801]



And another famous name. The MLM catalog erroneously describes this as a piano reduction.

Johann Strauss

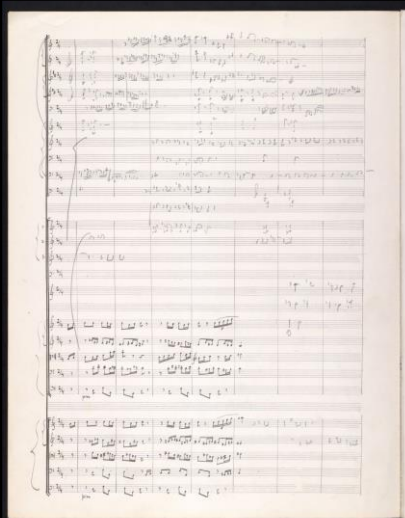
Simplicius
[1887]



Johann Strauss is a well-known name but *Simplicius* is not among the works he is known for today. These sketches were in a box and were a jumble of loose signatures and leaves (122 leaves in total). I had a graduate student assistant attempt to put it into some order, but we aren't 100% sure of the outcome. Alas, we have limited time to spend with any one item.

Bohuslav
Martinů

Sketches for
string sextet
[19--?]



Are there any Martinu fans in the audience? Here we have sketches for Martinu's string sextet, dedicated to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. It is autographed and dated 1949 on the cover, and I assume this is in preparation for the orchestrated version published in the 1950s.

Claude Debussy

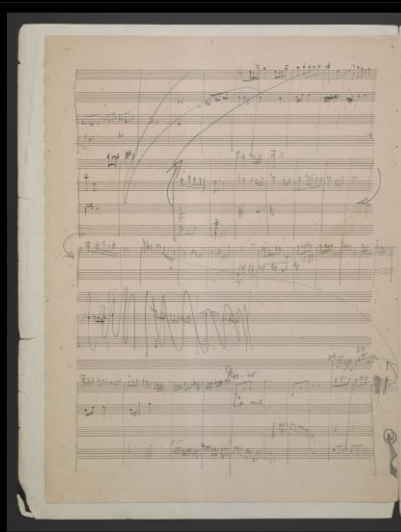
La Saulaie
[1896-7]



A Debussy sketch. This song exists only in three known sketches, one of which is at Stanford, the others at the Library of Congress and the Debussy Museum near Paris. Intended for baritone and orchestra, it was never completed. I read that Debussy referred to it as a “nightmare”

Gustav Mahler

Symphony no. 3
[1893]



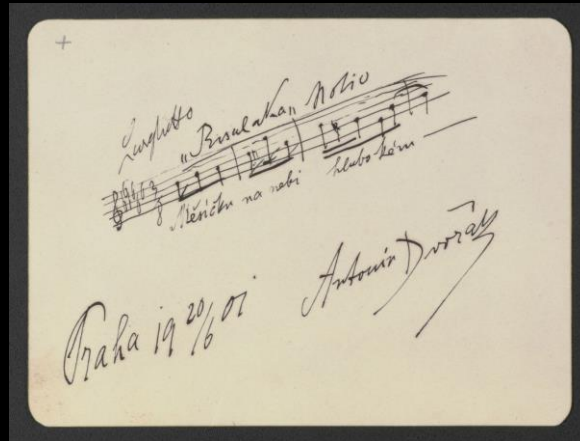
Here we have Mahler. This exuberantly messy sketch for the third Symphony has a cover inscription in which Mahler recounts having given a friend a tree branch, which later grew into a tree. Perhaps there is there some hidden meaning there?

Autograph musical quotations

We have a large number of autograph musical quotations, as single leaves, on photograph portraits, as well as inscriptions in printed scores.

Antonín Dvořák

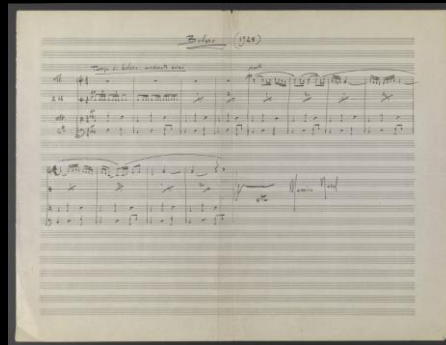
Rusalka
[1901]



Of course I wanted to include this! This is a souvenir as good or better than a picture postcard. These items raise the question, What can we learn from musical quotations?

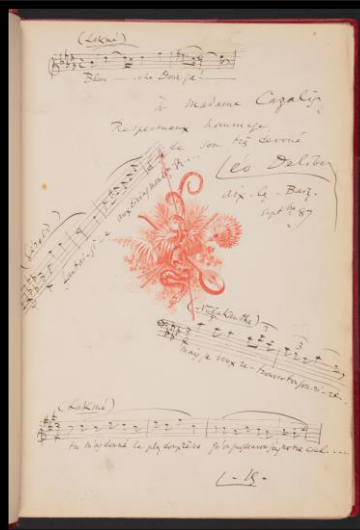
Maurice Ravel

Bolero
[1928]



Here we have Bolero. You can see Ravel's very neat and precise handwriting. I suspect this may have been presented as a gift, rather than as a quick note for someone.

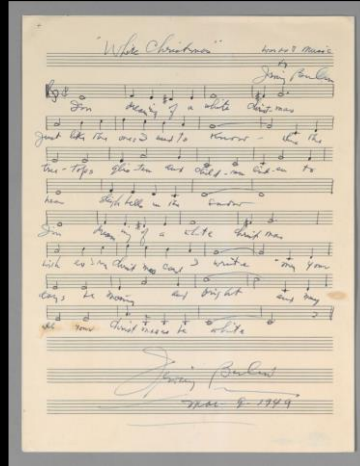
Léo Delibes
[1887]



Here the lucky recipient got not one but four quotations. Madame Cazalis is I assume the wife of the French poet Henri Cazalis, whose works were set to music by a number of French composers active in the later 19th century.

Irving Berlin

White Christmas
[1949]



Here is Irving Berlin's White Christmas. This may have been written out as a holiday gift for a friend or admirer. When I hold show and tell sessions for students, this item is popular for holiday selfies.

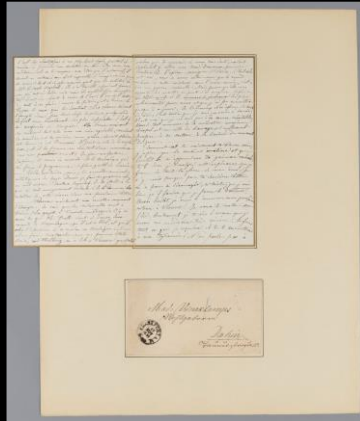


Letters

I was pleasantly surprised to find so very many letters that were hidden within our collections. And since the project cutoff, I have uncovered more!

Henri
Vieuxtemps

52 letters



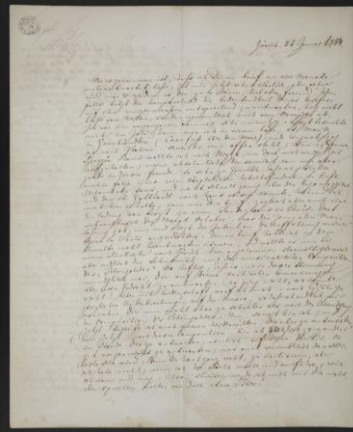
Vieuxtemps letters were written primarily to his wife, Josephine, from various cities on his concert tours. All of the letters were meticulously matted in large paper leaves by the collector, a practice that seemed somewhat unusual, but that I found in other collections as well as in one of our extra-illustrated volumes.

Constanze
Mozart letter to
Gaspard Spontini
March 1838

Hier die ungeschriebene Seite des ersten Foliums; und die Kopse in
 der Querschrift sind diejenige, und Kopse die ungeschriebene Seiten
 sind diejenige. Hier die ungeschriebene Seite des ersten Foliums
 und die Kopse in der Querschrift sind diejenige, und die Kopse
 sind die ungeschriebene Seiten. Hier die ungeschriebene Seite
 des ersten Foliums und die Kopse in der Querschrift sind diejenige,

Here Constanze Mozart corresponds with Spontini concerning the sale of a piano. This was one of two letters marked as “lost” in early inventories of the Memorial Library collection. As an aside, having digital surrogates for these manuscripts now provides some buffer against loss to theft or catastrophic destruction, in that we now have a record of these items existing at a specific place and time. This is an added benefit of digital projects that may not always be recognized.

Richard Wagner
letter to
August Röckel
January 1854



Wagner writes to August Rockel in an important 14-page letter on, among other topics, truth, nature, art, and the psychic motivations of characters in the Ring cycle. It was also marked as lost in the 1980s, and, due to an error in annotating the print catalog, scholars were long forced to work from a photostat instead of the original.

Both the Mozart and Wagner letters are safe and sound in our library vault.

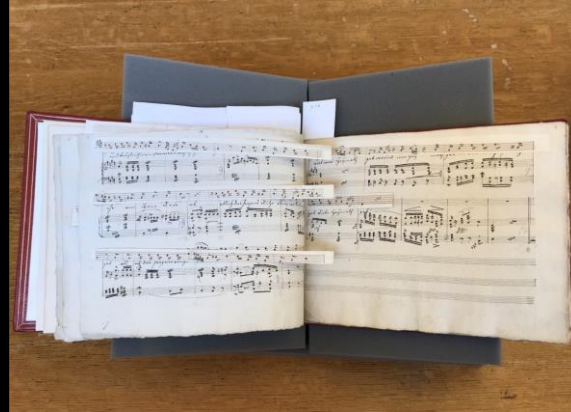


Surprises & mysteries

Finally, there were some surprises, some unusual items, and some mysteries.

Carl Maria
von Weber

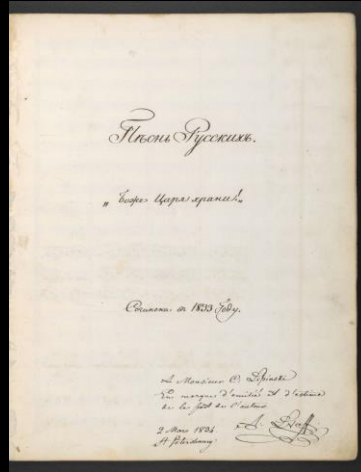
Oberon (piano
score of Act II)
[1826?]



This piano score for Act 2 of Oberon surprised us with the challenge it presents to our digital staff. Each page has at least one overlay, if not several. This item is not yet scanned, and it will require a special set up to photograph effectively without causing any damage.

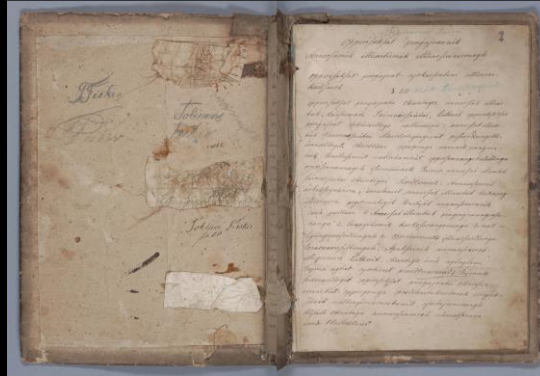
Aleksei L'vov

Бóже, Царя́
хранí!
(God save the
Tsar!)
[1833-4]



Here we have the Russian Imperial anthem, Dedicated to C. Lipinski, and dated 1834. I found reference to a Karol Lipinski, who was first violinist of the Tsar's court in 1831, but cannot confirm him absolutely as the dedicatee. I enjoyed learning about this slice of tsarist Russia, one of many mini-research excursions I took as time allowed.

[Alaskan Inupiaq
Lutheran hymn
text?]



Very much a mystery item, this volume was found in a collection of miscellaneous musical items belonging to The Sloss family (it also originally included the Constanze Mozart letter). It was donated in the 1930s by Mrs. Sloss, a San Francisco socialite whose husband made his fortune in maritime fur trading along the pacific coast. It was misidentified as Aleut in the finding aid. I contacted a language expert in Fairbanks, Alaska, who suggested it was in Inupiac and that the word “Lutheran” was included, which may hint at it being hymn texts (?)

[anon.]

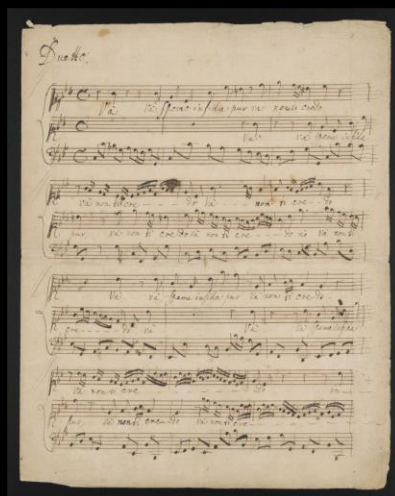
Suite in F
[17--?]



Our print catalog proudly claims this is “one of the earliest existing manuscript of Bach, discovered by Manfred Gorke in 1929.” That was later disproved and it is now believed to be by an anonymous composer in the Buxtehude orbit.

Georg Frideric
Handel

Va, speme infida
[1710-11?]

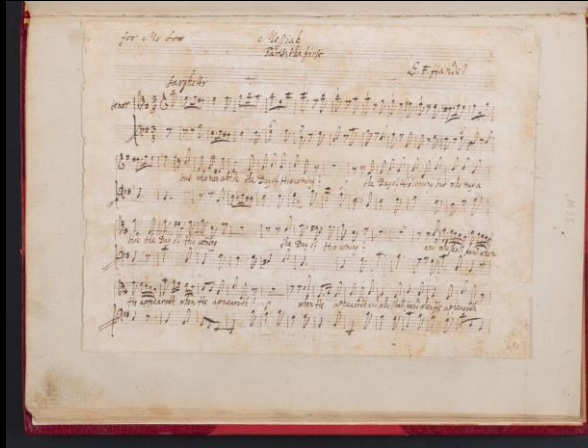


Our catalog also lists two Handel autographs. Here is one. It turns out that this is not an autograph but was recently identified as being in the hand of Elizabeth Legh, one of Handel's copyists. This identification is featured in a recent article by Dr. Andrew Jones in the *Handel Jahrbuch*, volume 66, from 2020.

George Frideric
Handel

Aria from
Messiah

Tobia Nicotra,
forger
[early 20th c.]



This is the other Handel manuscript, which is still pasted into an early edition of the *Messiah*. It was uncovered as a forgery in the late 1920s, then somehow found its way back onto the antiquarian market, and into our collection. Nicotra, under an assumed identity, somehow became entangled with Arturo Toscanini's son who purchased a forged Mozart score from him, which led to a criminal investigation. He was known also to have forged documents by such names as Richard Wagner, Christopher Columbus and Lorenzo Di Medici.

Album amicorum
of Amalia
Rådberg
[1825-35]



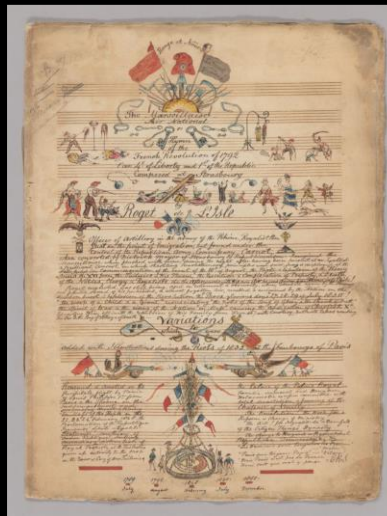
This amicorum was one of my early discoveries and quite a surprise indeed. Rådberg was Jenny Lind's older half-sister. It took some time for me to figure out that in the center of the wreath of forget-me-nots was the tiny ribbon that was actually a handle. Pulled up gently by preservation staff,

Album amicorum
of Amalia
Rådberg
[1825-35]



There was found a lock of hair, and the inscription in French “never forget mother’s advice”

Variations on *La Marseillaise*
[185-?]



And finally this item, miscataloged in 1990 as an “art print” is in fact variations for a treble instrument and keyboard. The composer is uncredited and currently unknown. We will have a section in the exhibit for mysteries. Your detective work will be much appreciated!

Variations on *La
Marseillaise*
[185-?]



Here is a page from the treble part. There are hand-colored illustrations throughout.

Variations on *La
Marseillaise*
[185-?]



And the last page. We hope to complete project scanning by the end of calendar 2022, and release the bulk of images early next year. After the metadata is complete we will also contribute to RISM, and to the Library of Congress Musical Treasures Consortium.

Thank you! Questions??