

## **Report of the final meeting of the Working Group on Access to Performance Ephemera. 19.6.2017**

In the absence of Paul Banks, Katharine Hogg chaired the meeting. This was the final meeting of the project group, but a proposal to form a new Study Group on Access to Performance Ephemera was approved by the Board at its mid-year meeting in February and will be put forward at the General Assembly on 20 June 2017.

**Present:** Colin Coleman, Catherine Ferris, Peter Linnitt, Rupert Ridgewell, Barbara Wiermann, Stefan Engl, Andre Avorio, David Day, Jon Bagues, Klaas Jaap van der Meijden, Katharine Hogg

There were no minutes from the previous meeting in Rome in 2016. The group considered the areas identified for future work in the proposal for the new study group, and reviewed the current situation in those areas:

The proposed IAML Study Group on Access to Performance Ephemera will:

### **1. Review developments and new (mainly online) resources**

- The IAML website lists of datasets and projects which need updating. Katharine Hogg would update with projects of which she is aware, and asks those present to notify her of any other developments. Ann Kersting-Meulemann's presentation at this conference included a number of developments; the slides are now on the IAML conference website ([http://www.iaml.info/sites/default/files/pdf/ppt\\_riga\\_kersting-meuleman\\_2017-06-21.pdf](http://www.iaml.info/sites/default/files/pdf/ppt_riga_kersting-meuleman_2017-06-21.pdf))
- The [British Music Festivals database](#) was looked at and discussed; this database includes location, performers, repertoire, a location for the information source (but not a description of the source), but no hyperlinks. It is based at Oberlin College in Ohio, USA.
- As many datasets are compiled by academics rather than librarians they do not necessarily address interoperability and international standards for descriptions, or address issues of sustainability beyond their project life
- The InConcert pilot project in the UK brings together several existing datasets, including the Concert Programmes Project and the Concert Life in 19th Century London database, which aimed to take 'slices' of 4 years of concert life in London in the nineteenth century and study them intensively using a variety of sources. Rupert Ridgewell reported that the challenges are raised by the sheer volume of data and the problem of 'triangulation'; the project has completed its pilot phase but there are no plans at present for continuation
- The British Library plans to initiate a crowd sourcing pilot project to create a database of theatre programmes using scanning and OCR, created by the British Library digital scholarship department and musicologists. Rupert Ridgewell reported that the project aims to use a TEI solution; it is not clear whether the software is available to others.
- The Dresden library (Sächsische Landesbibliothek) is part of a project to create an infrastructure to allow crowdsourcing for performance ephemera. Barbara Wiermann reported that this has been funded for 3 years and is currently at the consultation stage.

## **2. Exchange information about new IT and bibliographic strategies**

- Peter Linnitt raised the concept of an ‘event’ database linking ephemera related to it, rather like the ‘work’ concept in FRBR, which is an approach often used by musicologists rather than the cataloguing by collection traditionally favoured by libraries
- David Day raised the question of authorities and there was a discussion about the large number which are not on VIAF (only 30% of David Day’s records for the opera database at Brigham Young University) and that all the work in creating these names is not shared. It was pointed out that names can be added to Wikipedia and from there will be added to VIAF.
- There are 110,000 work identifiers on the Alexander Street Press database, but there is no international database of ‘uniform titles’ as a basis for their performance archive
- It was suggested that in the UK the Association of British Orchestras might have a useful database. This would be investigated.
- Rupert Ridgewell reported that the British Library has now started cataloguing programmes received via Legal Deposit at item level, but with very basic metadata
- Peter Linnitt reported that the Royal College of Music has an almost complete set of programmes from one venue, the Wigmore Hall, and the venue also a database for its archives. This would be investigated.

## **3. Promote ways to maximise the impact of relevant datasets and digital resources**

how to maximise impact of available resources?

- Promotion is currently by listing projects on the IAML website
- Sessions at IAML conference to promote and discuss developments
- British Music Festivals Database has been mentioned in IAML blog and has been promoted via MLA in article by Charles McGuire

## **4. Explore innovative methods to curate and interpret data employing a range of Digital Humanities techniques, such as crowdsourcing and text mining, in order to release the full wealth of information embedded in collections of performance ephemera.**

- It was agreed that it would be desirable to use Open Source Software for performance data capturing the event, and it needs to be sustainable in the long term. Using TEI for OCR’d data is currently the accepted method for data capture; linked data does require an ID which is then transferable.
- Peter Linnitt and Katharine Hogg will consider the possibility of the Royal College of Music and the Gerald Coke Handel Collection exploring a pilot project on creating a database; perhaps a development from the Concert Programmes Project.

## **Items discussed in 2016 which were not covered this year:**

RISM OnStage project: Lausanne base, scanned images of concert programmes, index of composers and performers and OCR full text search

Ann Kersting-Meulemann had reported that at Frankfurt University there are 50,000 concert programmes, not yet catalogued (20,000 of them on card catalogue), and some albums from individuals with photos and memorabilia; and 100,000 playbills in their theatre section. Her [paper presented in Riga in 2017](#) has further information on this.

Barbara Wiermann had mentioned the idea of e-deposit for programmes being developed in Germany

There was a discussion on the need to utilise existing databases, e.g. Paul Banks’ database on Mahler, Simon McVeigh’s concert database – and how to take on other people’s data which might be lost.

This group should have a role in offering advice/platform for private researchers.