

Saving a Concertina Legacy: Developing and initiating a plan for archiving and making available concertina music arranged by Boris Matusewitch

Report for Music 391: Independent Study

Lafayette College

Laura Wu '20

Advisor: Prof. Mary Roth

Background

The concertina, a member of free-reed musical instruments, is invented by Charles Wheatstone (1802-1875) around 1829 and 1830 in the United Kingdom. Wheatstone was originally trained a physicist, but after being brought up to the United Kingdom by his uncle, a musical instrument maker, and saw all the instruments in the free-reed instrument family, he started designing an instrument that would become known as a concertina. Concertinas contain buttons on both sides that open valves to reeds. By pressing a button that opens a valve to a reed and by expanding or contracting the bellows in the middle of the instrument, the musician can create a musical note. This easily-mastered new instrument was a success in the nineteenth century. The English concertina was initially an instrument that was played among upper-class society. As it became more easy to manufacture, the cost of an instrument was less and the concertina eventually gained popularity among the English working class bands and its use spread across Europe and into Asia. However, the instrument's popularity rapidly declined in the beginning of the twentieth century due to the rise of other instruments such as accordions and pianos and the advent of new media technologies such as radio and telegraphs. However, in the 1960s, a modest but continuing renewal of interest in the concertina arose within Britain's folk music, thus bringing this instrument back on stage of history.

Gregory Matusewitch was a Russian concertinist who played in concert halls in Russia and Europe. He moved his family from Minsk, Belarus to the United States in 1923. Boris Matusewitch, Gregory's younger son, became a successful concertinist and the teacher of the instrument in New York City. In Boris's many years of teaching and playing concertina, he arranged many popular tunes for the English concertina, handwriting the music for his students. Boris's handwritten concertina arrangements are now the property of his son Eric Matusewitch and his former student, Randy Stein. To better preserve these valuable music and also to make the arrangements available to concertina players, Eric and Randy are hoping that an archive can be found that would preserve Boris's musical arrangements.

Goals

The goals of this independent study project are as follows:

- Assess the size and condition of the music collection that has been made available to Prof. Roth by Eric and Randy.
- Identify at least two music library archives in the United States or Britain that might be willing to permanently house the digital collection and document the requirements and process for making a request to have the collection housed by each library.
- Communicate with the International Concertina Association (www.concertina.org) and determine whether the ICA is willing to provide access to the digital collection for concertina players.
- Develop and demonstrate a documented procedure to digitally scan pieces from the collection at a level of quality sufficient for the pieces to be digitally archived.
- Determine an appropriate format for indexing the collection that will be compatible with archival needs.
- Determine whether it will be possible to create an index of the collection (including title and other relevant textual information associated with each piece) using existing software to mine the scanned documents for the necessary indexing information.
- Using existing software if available or by data entry if necessary, develop and demonstrate a documented procedure to create an index of digital scans made from the collection.

General Procedure

1. Initial communication with Eric Matusewitch regarding the project.
2. Initiation of the Independent Study Proposal -- the general plan and timeline.
3. Consulted the Music, Computer Science, and Digital Scholarship Services (DSS) Departments, as well as the Special Collections and College Archives at Lafayette College regarding the archiving process and relevant music indexing technology problems.
4. Identified and reached out to potential archives.
5. Scanned 72 pieces of music samples by the DSS Department.
6. Learned about music copyright issues.
7. Created an inventory of the music collection.
8. Created WordPress Page and provided access of the 72 pieces of music scans.
9. Prepared application to the Library of Congress to house the collection.

Detailed Documentation

1. *Prof. Roth communicated with Eric Matusewitch, Randy Stein, and International Concertina Association regarding the project.*

The son of the concertinist Boris Matusewitch, Eric Matusewitch, has 72 pieces of concertina music arranged by Boris Matusewitch in the 20th century, which are valuable for the concertina development in the United States. Randy Stein, the former student of Boris Matusewitch, also has around 600 pieces of concertina arrangements by Boris. Eric and Randy would like to make these music sources available to the concertina players. As a concertina player and a member of the International Concertina Association (ICA), Prof. Mary Roth has communicated to Eric and Randy and decided to initiate an Independent Study opportunity at Lafayette College to develop a plan to make these concertina arrangements archived and available.

2. *Initiated the Independent Study Proposal, set up the general plan and timeline.*

For the one-semester Independent Study, Prof. Roth and the student, Laura Wu, started with the 72 pieces of music provided by Eric Matusewitch. Prof. Roth initiated the Independent Study Proposal, which is attached in the Appendix A. and, together with Laura, set up the goals of the study and the general plan to carry out each goal. They met twice a week and discussed the progress of the study.

3. *Consulted Music, Computer Science, and Digital Scholarship Services Departments, as well as the Special Collections and College Archives at Lafayette College regarding the archiving process and relevant music indexing technology problems.*

At the beginning of the independent study process, Prof. Roth and Laura consulted Prof. Larry Stockton in the Music Department regarding the general project idea and Prof. Liew in the Computer Science Department regarding the music digitalization using computer science. Currently, there is no research projects relevant to the progress of converting the handwritten music sheets to digital musical notes conducted by the Computer Science Department. They also reached out to the Digital Scholarship Services (DSS) Department and consulted the scanning application for educational use at Lafayette College. The DSS Department agreed to provide scanning service to the project. In addition, Laura consulted the Special Collections and College Archives and had an interview with one of the archivists, Elaine Stomber, about her daily job as an archivist and the general archiving procedure. The detailed interview is attached in Appendix B. As written in the interview content, because handwritten sheet music of Boris Matusewitch is beyond the collection range (rare books collection, manuscript collection, and college history archives), Lafayette College Archives is not able to meet the music archiving needs for the project.

4. *Identified and Reached out to relevant college archives and special music archives in New York City, where the Matusewitch family lived.*

The archives at the University of Pennsylvania, New York University, and Princeton were the first targets. After researching these college archives, Laura found that for reasons similar to those given by the archives at Lafayette (the music was neither an academic work of a faculty member or an alumnus and it was not relevant to the school history) that the music sheets could not be archived at those institutions. Even colleges with famous music programs or special music collections normally do not accept general donations from outside.

According to the *Matusewitch Family Story*, Boris Matusewitch attended City College of New York (CCNY) for the 1936 - 1937 academic year. Laura reached out to CCNY twice regarding the music archiving, but CCNY did not respond.

Another college archives that has been reached out was the Central University of New York (CUNY). Professor Allan W. Atlas, who is also a former student of Brosi Matusewitch, used to work at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center at CUNY before he retired four-and-a-half years ago. Prof. Allan Atlas was the director of the former Center for the Study of Free-Reed Instruments, which flourished under the umbrella of The Barry S. Brook Center for Musical Research and Documentation from 1999 through 2014. The Center was devoted to fostering and serving as a resource for research on all aspects of all free-reed instruments, both West and East, both in art and vernacular repertoires. To that end it first published *The Free-Reed Journal*, and then, in conjunction with the International Concertina Association, *Papers of the International Concertina Association*. In addition, the Center oversaw the development of a small research archive of primary and secondary materials. Based on the CUNY's reply, the Center for the Study of Free-Reed Instruments is no longer functioning. Even though CUNY does have an archive of concertina music, but they are not interested in expanding the archive.

Prof. Allan Atlas provided another connection, Dan Worrall, who has a project for a concertina archive at Fondren Library (the Woodson Archives) at Rice University. According to Prof. Allan Atlas, Dan Worrall has written extensively about the Anglo concertina from a sociological points of view. The Woodson Archives at Rice University has agreed to take Dan Worrall's collected material on the concertina for safekeeping. It includes the copies of almost all early tutors of various concertina types, full sets of concertina journals from around the world, and etc. Dan Worrall would be happy to include the Boris Matusewitch material. The website with their catalogue of the Woodson Archives provides accessibility to researchers worldwide. Rice University has a very good music department, so that the concertina music material is not too far out of the ordinary for them.

Randy's friend Jennifer put us in touch with the Music Division of the US Library of Congress. Library of Congress. The Library of Congress acquires materials in all formats--books, periodicals, maps, music, prints, photographs, recorded sound, videos, electronic, etc.--and in all subjects, except technical agriculture and clinical medicine, from all over the world. The Library of Congress obtains material by purchase, exchange, gift, transfer from other government agencies and through the Cataloging in Publication (CIP) program and copyright deposit. Copyright deposits make up the core of the collections, particularly in the Library's holdings of maps, music, motion pictures, prints, and photographs. In order to archive the material at Library of Congress, an inventory including the size, formats, and original composers of the collection will be needed.

As for the special music archives in New York City, the ARChive of Contemporary Music (ARC) became one of the choices during researching. ARC is a non-profit archive, music library, and research center located in New York City since 1985. It contains more than three million sound recordings and ninety million songs in all known formats. ARC accepts donations of all forms and genres of popular music that are freely given and without conditions. After receiving the Independent Study Proposal, ARC is interested in the music but would also need the information similar to that required by the Library of Congress.

Towards the end of the project, after consulting the music holder, Eric Matusewitch and Randy, the three archives possibilities are Library of Congress, the Woodson Archives at Rice University, and the ARChive of Contemporary Music. Among the three possibilities, Library of Congress is the first choice of this Independent Study due to its accessibility to researchers and reliability as an academic library.

5. Scanned 72 pieces of music samples by the DSS Department.

In order to better present the form, size and format of the 72 pieces of music that are available to the project to the potential archives and concertina player members of ICA, high-quality scanning of the music is necessary. Julia Stomber, the student associate, helped scan the 72 pieces of music. The types of file of the scanning that the DSS department can produce includes a single PDF of all the music combines, separate PDFs of each piece of music, separate TIFF files of each piece of music with high quality, and JPGs of each page of music.

In the end, separate high-quality TIFF files and a single combined PDF file were produced by the DSS department. Prof. Roth separated the large combined PDF file into small individual files of each piece of music. Both of the TIFF and PDF files are later used for the establishment of the WordPress page to present the music to the archives and ICA.

6. Learned about music copyright issues.

One thing needs to be paid attention during music archiving is the copyright issue. Boris Matusewitch is the arranger of the concertina music but not the composer who is the person has the copyright of the music. Original arrangements are considered to be derivative works in copyright law, and they have enough originality to be considered copyrighted objects in their own right. That means that the sheet music that are scanned for this project is definitely copyrighted, and the copyright owner will be the person who inherited the sheet music at the time of the author's death. If the music scans are considered to be put on the WordPress page online, the explicit permission to publish the materials on the website is needed from the copyright owner, which is Eric Matusewitch.

Additionally, if the original arrangements are of songs that are still in copyright, the permissions from the original composers of those songs (or whoever holds their copyrights currently) are also needed before the music scans are put on the WordPress page. If the songs are more modern, they are most likely in copyright. If the songs were composed prior to 1923 or are popular folk songs, then they are most likely in the public domain. Therefore there is no need to clear copyright on them for the web publication.

For this project, to solve the copyright issue, the music publication on WordPress page is divided into two categories: music scans in the public domain and the music scans under copyright. The details regarding the WordPress setup is discussed in Step 8.

7. Created an inventory of the music collection.

To better understand the form, size, and formats of the 72 pieces of music that are available to this project, an inventory is created which includes the number in the original index provided by Eric Matusewitch, name, original composer, date, copyright, notes from the arranger, scanning version, availability, and number of pages. There are mainly three scanning versions: original scans, copy scans, and PDF scans. The original scans are scanned from the original handwritten music sheets. The copy scans are scanned from the copies of the original handwritten music. The PDF scans normally do not take the whole space of the paper and have clear signs on the paper. Some music are hard to distinguish if they are the original handwritten music or the copies versions, which are put under the unclear category.

Laura searched the dates of composition and original composers of all the 72 pieces of the music. Some folk songs, such as the Russian folk song, *Around the Samovar*, are hard to find the composer names and the composition time. Some relatively old songs, such as *La Pompadour* composed by H. Idle in the eighteenth century, only have the rough composition time rather than the detailed dates. For music which were composed before 1923 and the folk songs, they are put into the public domain category. Most of the collection have one or two pages, while some have more pages. In addition, the arranger,

Boris Matusewitch, added some notes of the music on the sheets, mostly at the up-right corner on the first page to further indicate the features of the music.

8. *Created WordPress Page and provided access of the 72 pieces of music scans.*

To provide information about the music collection, an online contextual content page was considered to be built for this project. Originally Prof. Roth and Laura considered to use Omeka site to publish the music scans to the archives and ICA members. However, realizing that the Omeka sites are public by default, and there is no way to avoid them being indexed by search engines and therefore discoverable. To avoid this, setting the site to unpublished is needed, but unpublished sites can only be viewed by people who have administrative user accounts to the site. This means that the website can not be shared out to even a targeted audience without publicly publishing the site, or requiring the guests to create user accounts and access the site through the administrative interface, which is something that not many people are likely to be willing to do.

Due to complexity of using Omeka site, WordPress site replaced the original Omeka site idea. A WordPress site can host some structured content pages about the collection, pages that would be public and can easily be shared out and have safely indexed by search engines, and include a list of contact email addresses for parties interested in accessing the concertina music arrangements, at which point Prof. Roth and Laura could communicate with them and share the certain materials out at their discretion. The site can be found at: <https://sites.lafayette.edu/boris-matusewitch/>

The WordPress page is built under Sites at Lafayette with the help from the Technology Department. The site menu includes four parts: *Home, About, Music Samples, and Documents*. The three types of scanning versions music are presented under Music Sample section with six samples of each version in screenshot JPG files. Under the Documents section are the digital scans of music both in the public domain and under copyright, Background, Interview with Lafayette College Archives, Project Proposal, and Bibliography. The music scans pages provide accessibility of downloading the music scans which are in individual PDF files. To better protect the music under copyright, the visibility of the page showing the music scans under copyright is set up from “Public” to “Password protected”.

9. *Prepared for the application to the Library of Congress to house the collection.*

To document the procedure of the independent study, this report is written by Laura at the end of the project. Towards the end of the semester, Randy provided 600-800 more concertina music arranged by Boris Matusewitch to Prof. Roth and Laura. These music will also be included in the whole collection which will be ready to be housed at Library of Congress. Prof. Roth and Laura are still finishing the scanning of the newly provided

materials. Up to the time when Laura is writing the report, Prof. Roth has sent out an email to the Library of Congress regarding this project, including the Wordpress Site URL and the inventory of the 72 pieces of music. They are still waiting for the response from the Library of Congress.

Appendix A

Proposal for MUS 391: Independent Study

Laura Wu '20

Advisor: Prof. Mary Roth

Saving a Concertina Legacy: Developing and initiating a plan for archiving and making available concertina music arranged by Boris Matusewitch

Introduction

Boris Matusewitch (1918-1978) was a professional concertinist who performed at nightclubs, at the Carnegie Recital Hall, was a featured soloist with orchestras, and, in a partnership with Rod Strong, developed and performed an innovative combination of concertina music and dance. Boris was also the son of concertinist, Gregory Matusewitch (1886-1939) who was from Minsk, Belarus and who performed on the concertina in Europe and the United States during the early 20th century. Boris taught hundreds of concertina students from his studio in New York City during the mid-1900's. The history of the Matusewitch family can be found at Matusewitch (2015).

Boris's legacy with respect to concertina music includes a large number of polyphonic arrangements of popular tunes from the mid 1900's. Music written specifically for the concertina is limited. These arrangements, written by an well-known concertinist for his students, represent an important collection. Prof. Roth, an amateur concertina player, has been provided access to Boris's arrangements through his son, Eric Matusewitch, and through one of Boris's former students, Randy Stein.

Goals

The goals of this independent study project are as follows:

- Assess the size and condition of the music collection that has been made available to Prof. Roth.
- Identify at least two music library archives in the United States or Britain that might be willing to permanently house the digital collection and document the requirements and process for making a request to have the collection housed by each library.
- Communicate with the International Concertina Association (www.concertina.org) and determine whether the ICA is willing to archive and provide public access to the digital collection.
- Develop and demonstrate a documented procedure to digitally scan pieces from the collection at a level of quality sufficient for the pieces to be digitally archived.
- Determine an appropriate format for indexing the collection that will be compatible with archival needs.
- Determine whether it will be possible to create an index of the collection (including title and other relevant textual information associated with each piece) using existing software to mine the scanned documents for the necessary indexing information.

- Using existing software if available or by data entry if necessary, develop and demonstrate a documented procedure to create an index of digital scans made from the collection.

Approach

Laura has already read the Matusewitch (2015) paper in preparation for this project. To further attain the goals of the project, Laura will meet twice a week with Prof. Roth and will work approximately 8 to 10 hours per week on the project. She will also work with faculty members in the Department of Music, faculty members in the Department of Computer Science, and staff in the College's archives as needed.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this project, Laura will be able to demonstrate:

- General knowledge of the history of concertina music and Boris Matusewitch's role in that history;
- Understanding of the requirements to request digital archival storage;
- Understanding of the scanning and indexing requirements necessary for archival digital storage of music;
- Knowledge of existing software for reading and indexing scanned digital files of handwritten musical arrangements (if it exists); and
- Ability to scan and index musical arrangements to meet the digital archive requirements.

Deliverables

At the end of the spring semester, Laura will complete the following:

- A written report of the project including discussion and/or documentation of each of the goals listed above; and
- A written plan detailing her recommendations for how the complete collection can be digitally preserved and archived.

References

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Appendix B

Interview about Lafayette College Archives

Laura Wu & Elaine Stomber

02/14/2019

1. What are your mission as an archivist?

The department serves as an academic repository at Lafayette College. The three main collections are respectively rare books collection, manuscript collection, and college history archives.

The Special Collection and College Archives houses 15,000 volumes of rare books. They are locked in a special space where has climate control and fire suppression system. The temperature and humidity remain constant throughout the year, because too humid climate will cause the deterioration of book materials and the breaking of binding.

The manuscript collection contains alumni's personal papers affiliated with Lafayette College and their research papers. Most of the research papers are from humanity majors, such as History, Art, International Affairs, Government and Law, and Anthropology and Sociology.

The department also documents the history record of the Lafayette College naming back to 1826 and mini books of Easton. The archives have the earliest record of the history of Lafayette. The collections are primarily in paper, but also sound recordings, pictures, and films. An interesting collection is an audio recording of a sermon in the Chaplain's office.

Nowadays as the technology advances, the department uses digitalization to archive the collections and documents. When records are transferred to Lafayette Archives, the archivists try to respect original order as much as possible to organize the documents, guess how researchers would want to approach them and post the materials information on website. Most researchers are students and professors at Lafayette College.

Besides collecting and arranging the materials at Lafayette Archives, the department also provides an array of classroom instruction opportunities in some First-Year Seminars.

2. What is the procedure to archive?

The first step is contacting people who want to make donations, whether or not the materials fit the telescope of Lafayette Archives. In order to make the valuable materials discoverable, the archivist will help donors to find another repository if Lafayette Archives is unable to collect the donations.

For people outside the college, the archivists also need to consider the donor agreement signing and copyright issue to make sure the copyright is cleared. Once the copyright is

established, the archivists will do an initial survey to get a sense of the materials and assess the conservation issues. Then they will develop a processing plan of the collection and an inventory folder of the collection.

3. When you do archive paper/digital documents, what are your requirements

The contents of the documents are the most important criteria not the format. If the material is original artwork not the copy, then it will be housed at Lafayette Art Collection. The College Archives tend to have more paper documents, art sketchbooks, smaller drawings, and reproductions art works.

4. Is there ever a charge to archive?

There is no cost for researchers. However, there is a huge cost of equipment, such as buying boxes, folders, maintaining the climate control and fire suppression systems, and hiring people to be trained. The staff in the collection archives also have to obtain the ability to build the online platform and digital repository infrastructure to enable the materials searchable by researchers.

5. How to order the materials?

The archivists try to be consistent with the original order of the materials if they come in collections. If the materials are come in single pieces, then they are most likely out in chronological order. Each collection is put in individual folders with an inventory.

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