

MUSIC IN THE METROPOLITAN TORONTO LIBRARY

When the new Metropolitan Toronto Library opens its doors in September its music collection, formerly at 559 Avenue Road, will be reunited with the extensive collections of the former Central Library. The event will no doubt mark the beginning of new life for the music department: greater space within a beautiful interior; increased facilities for fuller use of the collection; better exposure for its core materials; a superior location at the cross-roads of the city.

To celebrate our move, we invite readers of the Newsletter to join with us on a tour of the Music Department of the Metropolitan Toronto Library.

Situated one short block north of Bloor Street at 789 Yonge Street, the new library is a stone's throw from the University of Toronto campus at the juncture of the Bloor and Yonge Street subway lines. We enter the building on its south-west diagonal. As we pass through the outer foyer, swishing fountain waters ease us through the entry turnstiles and into the library proper. To our immediate right are the fabulous glass-fronted art deco elevators which could whisk us up to the top floor of the building. But we shall cross the main floor so that we can look up from the atrium to enjoy the colour and architectural flow of the levels above and around us. How attractive is the contrasting warmth and coolness of the interior: the red-rust of the carpeting on this ground floor which falls away to tones of burnished gold as one ascends to higher levels; the ivory walls and stair wells; the blonde wood cool, yet suggesting a warmth that chrome or steel never could; the cool green of the vines cascading from every floor level. You can't miss the banners falling into the atrium to mark the locations of the various departments. Look there! "Music" symbolized by the energetic baroque "music-maker".

We shall take the stairs to the second floor. Here just off the stairway towards the south-east corner of the building are Music's open stacks. Here you'll find the basic materials of the collection: scores of all kinds--orchestral, opera, choral, instrumental ensemble, vocal, solo instrumental; performing parts for ensembles of up to 12 instruments; method books and self-instruction manuals for a variety of popular instruments. Here are the principal encyclopedias in English, French, German and Italian; dictionaries; bibliographies and discographies; catalogues of other library collections (the New York and Boston Public Libraries; the recently published record catalogue of the Sibley Music Library of the Eastman

School of Music in Rochester, N.Y.); here, too, are biographies, histories, books on theory and composition, conducting, instruments and their construction, music education, music of other cultures.

Remember that while our collection stresses classical music, we have piano-vocal scores of Broadway musicals, collections of contemporary folk and popular songs, books on popular artists and current newspaper clippings covering the whole gamut of the popular music scene. Our record collection includes a developing area of the best in jazz, while recently we've begun to add albums of Canadian progressive music. You'll see our audio facilities extending along the south wall--30 listening carrels equipped with turntables--though tape deck and cassette players are on hand. But before we reach the audio area, don't miss the periodicals to the left. We have about 250 current subscriptions covering opera, folk, jazz, instrumental and vocal fields as well as the principal audio, education, musicology and trade journals. And extending down along the face of this last stack you'll find our collected works and historical sets. We have the works of 61 composers and something like 27 different historical sets: things like *Musica Britannica*, *Earlier American Music*, *Chefs-d'oeuvre classique de l'opéra français*, and *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae*.

As we approach the service desk area, notice the circulation desk. You know that while the library as a whole is a reference library with materials not available for direct loans, music scores and instrumental parts will continue to circulate. It makes sense, doesn't it, since music is a performing art. Speaking of performing--at last we have facilities to allow for performance right here in the department! Check out the two studios beyond the audio service desk. The smaller is equipped with an electric piano and headset for individual use, while the larger studio with a fine new upright piano will enable a number of persons to work together either playing or discussing music they are studying. Patrons are bound to welcome the possibility of trying out scores or of reading through music that cannot leave the library--the out-of-print items, the scholarly reference editions, or the song collections. Here, right at hand on shelves behind the information desk are many of the "fact" books, directories, indexes, thematic catalogues and song books which are heavily used by staff in the course of a normal day in the library. In the stack area behind the desk we house our recordings, microfilms, recent runs of bound periodicals and our cabinets of historical sheet music, our concert programmes, choral octavo pieces, picture files and those valuable files of current clippings on almost every musical subject you can think of.

Did you know that the Music Department has near-complete holdings of the programmes of the Toronto Symphony, the Promenade Concerts, the Mendelssohn Choir concerts, as well as hundreds of concert programmes reflecting the musical life of Canada as far back as the mid 19th century? We value our collection of early Canadian sheet music, too. It's a fascinating resource of some 2,000 pieces accessible through its indexing by composer, title, publisher, place of publication, year of publication, and even by cover illustration. While we have hundreds of pieces of non-Canadian sheet music still unprocessed, indexed and filed for reference use are thousands of 18th, 19th, and 20th century items. We have indexed and on file as well single copies of octavo choral pieces for use as a reference source in reviewing or choosing repertory.

Much of the earliest material is housed in the Special Collections Room, an environmentally controlled stack and reading area here on the second floor. Fortunately, our early scrapbooks of musical life in Canada--the scrapbooks of Frederick Torrington who played such an active part in the musical life of Montreal and Toronto after coming to this country from England in the late 1850's, along with an additional seven large volumes of clippings entitled "Music and Musicians"--were sent out for microfilming just this summer and so the film will finally make this material available for researchers. A dozen volumes of clippings and press notices relating to the Mendelssohn Choir from its inception are due for future filming. Our special collections include more than Canadian materials, of course. There's a variety of interesting items from such early imprints of Zarlino's Le Istitutioni Harmoniche of 1562, Kircher's Musurgia Universalis of 1650, John Playford's An Introduction to the Skill of Musick of 1669, and Thomas D'Urfey's six volume set Wit and Mirth; or pills to purge melancholy, of 1719-1720. It might be worth noting that access to the Special Collections Room is planned to be by pre-arranged appointment only. We, too, are feeling a staffing crunch!

I see that one of you is propped up against the catalogue. Had enough? Well, let me conclude with a few words about our catalogues. Our record catalogue standing in front of the audio desk is a dictionary catalogue with entries for composer, title, performer. The book and score catalogues are divided: author/title entries separate from subject entries. Don't let "Old" and "New" confuse you. Let me explain. Prior to July 1975, the music collection used a classification scheme developed at Brooklyn College in New York (of all places!). It was a modified simple Dewey scheme. Material added to our collection since July 1975 has been classed according to Dewey--the scheme used by public libraries in Ontario. Therefore, our patrons must always look in two places to search for composer/

author, title or subject entries--until our old collection is reclassified, that is. A promise! The catalogues, you'll see, also house our indexes: vertical file materials, picture files, choral music, sheet music, song index.

There you have it; our tour is over. I suggest you make your way past the Fine Art and Theatre Departments to those classy elevators at the other end of the floor. Take one up to the fifth floor and then come all the way back down to the main floor. Some sight! Then out and across the street for a bowl of stone soup at the Spice of Life.

Isabel Rose.

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LETTERS

From Eldo Neufeld

My reason for writing to you is to comment on statements made in the most recent CAML Newsletter by Mr. Sanford Cohen in his review of the Lynn Jarman and Mount Allison University catalogues of Canadian music. In the review he mentions the fact that the uniform titles for selections from the Canadian Music Centre Microfilm collection have been derived almost entirely from the cataloguing prepared by the University of British Columbia, which, he says, was "a grievous error". I was the cataloguer who did that cataloguing, and will be the first to admit that some of Mr. Cohen's complaints are justified. However, some reaction to his comments needs to be made.

As a new full-time cataloguer, this was my first large undertaking, in 1970, and some errors were made in the formation of uniform titles. Naively, I used the catalogue issued with the films as the basis for forming those titles. Before the project was even finished, we had orders for completed sets of analytics, and our cataloguing administration was impatient to sell them. I was not in favor of selling, knowing that further work would be required.

Since that time, we have reexamined the whole project, and corrections have long since been completed. The unfortunate part of the situation is that Mr. Cohen had access only to that first set of analytics, and that the errors they contained have been perpetuated in these two new catalogues.

If there is anything we at UBC can do to rectify the situation, we would be more than happy to do so.