

**Music and Performing Arts Library**  
**Unit Annual Report**  
**July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023**

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## **I. UNIT NARRATIVE [5 PAGES MAX]**

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The Music and Performing Arts Library (MPAL) serves one large school (Music) and two smaller departments (Dance and Theatre), all three of which are actively engaged in scholarship, creation, and performance and require a wide variety of materials in different formats. We house over 400,000 items on site and serve an estimated 1,000 students and 150 faculty as our core constituents, in addition to the numerous individuals on and off campus who regularly use our collections and services for scholarship and enjoyment.

### **CHALLENGES AND CHANGES**

MPAL's challenges in 2022-2023 could instead be classified as positive growing pains. We were able to fill our two vacant civil-service staff positions as of May 16, 2022. This led to a return to our longer hours (after having reduced them by 30% in 2021-2022). In re-envisioning our staff positions we gained significant capacity in the areas of student and collection management, acquisitions support, gift processing, and night and weekend supervision. The latter allows us to make better use of our student wage budget. We were also able to fill our vacant graduate hourly position in Special Collections to continue projects in that area.

### **ACTIVITIES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS & PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS**

Our major activities and accomplishments are described below in the context of the goals we set last year. These activities jointly contributed to the Library's goals (as annotated with strategic direction points below). They also contributed to the overall University goal of student success through making MPAL and our collections, services, and facilities more welcoming, functional, and visible. Our ongoing efforts to diversify our collections, promote works by and about historically underrepresented artists, and to engage students in thinking creatively about how and why they use information across the various formats directly support Illinois Student Learning Outcomes 2. Creative Inquiry and Discovery and 4. Social Awareness and Cultural Understanding.

***MPAL Goal 1: Increase visibility of our collections by improving cataloging and creating digital collections** [SD1. Pro-active and trusted partners in scholarship, discovery, and innovation; SD2. Transformative learning experiences]*

- Continued regular collaboration with ACS regarding MPAL cataloging projects and priorities. ACS staff made significant progress made on improving Marcette records and MARS mismatch records and began reclassification of MPAL's Dewey Decimal scores to integrate collection in LC classification.
- Resumed efforts to increase discovery of materials in our Special Collections by hiring and training new graduate hourly for Special Collections who inventoried select sub-collections and added those items to the [Répertoire International des Sources Musicales \(RISM\) catalog](#).
- Ingested new materials into Special Collections related to the Temperley estate and Hymn Tune Index (HTI) project and worked with IT and an external stakeholder regarding the [HTI database migration to a new platform](#).
- Carried out several catalog maintenance projects and started new workflows to improve accuracy of MPAL's holdings:

- Reviewed records with no holdings or items; corrected locations for items that had been transferred to; reviewed items with 38888\* barcodes.
- Re-engaged with CAS processes for reviewing missing/in-transit items.
- Tried new e-resources per faculty request and subscribed to one new tool.
- Continued School of Music programs database data entry.
- Highlighted collections through displays, such as our monthly theme-based exhibits and our New Items Display that includes physical items (books, scores, recordings) and e-books and has a focus on including materials by or about historically underrepresented groups and topics.

***MPAL Goal 2: Improve the diversity and usability of our collections, services, and spaces (as appropriate)*** [SD1. Pro-active and trusted partners in scholarship, discovery, and innovation; and SD4. Strategic investments for a sustainable library environment]

- Continued inventory, shelf-reading, deduplication, and other weeding efforts, including:
  - Special Collections inventory (over 100.),
  - Deduplication of non-U of I dissertations on microfilms (~5,700) and print (~115) where full text is available in ProQuest,
  - Deduplication of monographs in MPAL's various locations (~760 items withdrawn),
  - Started weeding project in the MT call number range, a particularly tight area of our stacks.
- Continued to improve representation of historically excluded voices in collections:
  - Applied for, received, and spent \$5,000 in DEIA retrospective collection funding from the AUL for Collections in Spring 2023.
  - Hosted an iSchool practicum for a DEIA analysis of our playscript collection; learning where we can make improvements.
  - Adjusted score approval plans to include more BIPOC and women composers and purchased additional titles via firm orders.
  - Continued to prioritize underrepresented creators and topics in firm orders.
- Continued to acquire, process, and maintain non-traditional collections that meet emerging user needs:
  - Processed additions to and rehoused items in the board game collection.
  - Added several new items to loanable tech pool based on patrons' requests.
  - Added a tranquility kit to align with Orange Room's offerings.
- Created new workflows to more efficiently process and track patron acquisition requests and other firm orders and to assess gifts, getting materials into patrons' hands sooner.
  - Took in large collections from emeritus faculty members (Nettl, Heiles, and Temperley), each of which required significant donor communication and coordination with Facilities.
- Developed new hiring processes for students, resulting in a more diverse student staff; created new training and documentation materials for student workers.
- Collaborated with Library and Facilities staff and contracted architects to conduct a formal feasibility study to explore options for a renovation to make MPAL more welcoming and usable for 21<sup>st</sup> century patrons and staff:
  - Sought feedback from Dance, Music, and Theatre students and faculty and MPAL staff, gathered collection and space use data, and conducted IRB-approved patron survey.
- Made improvements to existing spaces to meet user needs:
  - Swapped in nine new tables (from UGL) with outlets in reading room.
  - Transitioned from assigned carrels to assigned lockers for student use, making the carrels open use.

- Prepared a Library Innovation Grant proposal for equipment to create an audio transfer station for public and staff use and are currently seeking funding support.

***MPAL Goal 3: Create new ways to engage students with MPAL collections and encourage student success*** [SD2. Transformative learning experiences and SD3. Societal and global impact]

- Helped Dance faculty meet their need to preserve departmental theses, which do not go through the Graduate College.
  - Communicated with IDEALS colleagues regarding creation of the community and media preservation needs.
  - Worked with Dance faculty to create appropriate workflows and candidate coversheet, as these theses, like School of Music DMA theses/projects, are input by MPAL staff.
- Returned to in-person programming and events, including collaborating with other units in the Library and the School of Music. These events included game nights (August 2022, with Global Popular Culture Librarian), DJs N the Library (March 2023, part of HPNL's Blaxtravaganza series), Retro Media Night (October 2022, an event allowing patrons to browse media collections that are in closed stacks), pre-concert lectures and held pop-up libraries of related materials for U of I's Philharmonia (October and December 2022) and Symphony Orchestra (April 2023) concerts, targeted de-stress events at the start of the semester and Reading Day/Finals week, and an in-person player piano demonstration open to the public (November 2022).
- Encouraged student and faculty participation in MPAL exhibits and promoted MPAL's collections and services through exhibits outside of MPAL. These included:
  - An exhibit by graduate students in DANC 520 titled [Listening Between: Finding Choreographic Traces and Meanings in the Stacks](#) that also included accompanying performances and discussions in the library,
  - An exhibit by graduate students in MUS 523 titled ["It's a Long Way to Tipperary": British Song in World War I](#),
  - An exhibit of Puerto Rican music to support the *Encuentro Puertorriqueño de Creación Musical* symposium (March and April 2023),
  - A case in the Main Library N/S corridor as part of the Arts & Humanities Division Libraries exhibit (August 2022) and for the themed "Winter" exhibit (Dec 2022-Jan 2023).
- Expanded MPAL's social media presence by launching an Instagram account (@mpalillinois) that is used to promote MPAL's collections, services, and spaces, and to engage students through treasure hunts, Q&As, and more.
- Created time-sensitive pop-up displays of MPAL materials around different themes.
- Created and distributed the MPAL newsletter in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023.
- Initiated new approaches to support undergraduate student research in required music courses through dedicated drop-in consultation hours and hands-on in-library activities; these were well received by both students and instructors.

## GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

MPAL employed two state-funded .25 FTE graduate assistants in FY23 (total of .5 FTE). Each GA spent six hours a week providing in-person reference service at MPAL's service desk. In addition, they worked on special projects at the desk and during their remaining four hours per week, with major examples listed below.

### *Collection Development, Maintenance & Promotion*

- Completed collection assessment and related ordering of new items (award winning playwrights, spirituals).
- Managed MPAL's monthly new titles display, prioritizing historically excluded voices and topics.
- Conducted initial research for Illinois Songs digital exhibit.
- Developed themed pop-up displays (Halloween, self-care during finals).

### *Instruction & Research Support*

- Completed review of published MPAL LibGuides and created standardized templates and guiding documentation for future work.
- Developed new online content ([Finding Spirituals](#)) and continued significant overhauls of other existing guides.
- Assisted with design of and helped facilitate in-library activity for MUS 313 students (part of required undergraduate curriculum).
- Assisted with drop-in consultation hours for MUS 314 students (part of required undergraduate curriculum).

### *Outreach & Engagement*

- Updated and created website pages about [Facilities & Technologies](#) in MPAL, including a dedicated page for [Accessibility](#).
- Created monthly guides to engage people attending events at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.
- Managed MPAL's [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts and supervised undergraduate student assistants in creating content.
- Organized and executed outreach events (Reading Day events, Retro Media Night).

### **MPAL GOALS FOR FY24**

1. Continue to engage students and faculty in Dance, Music, and Theatre in various ways that support their work, such as:
  - a. developing relationships through customized in-class instruction and reference consultations,
  - b. offering creative opportunities to connect with MPAL and its collections and spaces,
  - c. offering events, services, and instructional materials specific to creators, performers, and scholars in the arts.
2. Continue to develop, maintain, and assess collections to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century patron needs by:
  - a. selecting materials that represent the diversity of offerings in dance, music, and theatre,
  - b. carrying out additional deduplication work, and
  - c. exploring options for adding new MPAL materials that originate in electronic (PDF-only) form other than printing and binding (*this is an unmet goal from last year due to Chris Prom's and Kyle Rimkus' absences from their usual roles in FY23*).
3. Continue to enhance visibility and discovery of MPAL's general and special collections, such as:
  - a. explore options for adding unique MPAL materials ([RISM](#) holdings, etc.) to the Library's Digital Collections (*another unmet goal from FY23 due to Chris Prom's and Kyle Rimkus' absences from their usual roles in FY23*).
4. Continue to develop services and spaces that meet 21<sup>st</sup> century patron needs. This includes:
  - a. develop an audio transfer station and BYO Device space for music creation,

- b. advocate to and work with Library Administration, Facilities, and Advancement concerning MPAL's much-needed renovation.
  - c. study and assess patron needs and expectations surrounding library spaces (and related access to services and collections).
5. Plan for staff retirement by assessing current staff roles and responsibilities and current and future unit needs and goals, make temporary coverage plans, and make request to Library Administration to fill the position.

## UNIT NEEDS

**MPAL needs the ability to transfer larger amounts of materials to the Oak Street Library Facility.** While we are addressing our mounting collections space crisis through deaccessioning duplicates and other means, this will not solve the problem. Given that we are one of the largest music collections in CARLI and the BTAA (if not the largest), with many unique items, resorting to deaccessioning non-duplicates is not ideal for the preservation and access of these materials for researchers, performers, and students.

On a related note, staff and patrons would very much benefit from a **reclassification of the thousands of DDC materials in our collection into LCC**, as both our scores and books collections are split between the two numbering systems, causing confusion for patrons, leading to greater likelihood of shelving errors, and effectively reducing accessibility of the collection. ACS music catalogers are slowly making progress in this area. However, many hundreds of DDC items are already fully cataloged and could either be moved to OSLF if there were capacity (see above) or reclassified to integrate the whole collection into one numbering scheme.

MPAL and its patrons would benefit greatly from **technology improvements** including better options for overhead scanning of large materials (as music scores are often much larger than books). While we currently have a ScanSnap overhead scanner, a **Bookeye** scanner or scanners would be ideal. We also need funds to create an **audio transfer station** for LPs, CDs, and cassettes. MPAL often receives requests to reformat audio materials in small amounts either for course reserves or research purposes. The equipment we have used for this in the past no longer functions and it needs to be replaced. We would like to expand this into a self-service offering for to patrons (as we do with scanners for print materials) as well as use it for staff needs.

We have also explored repurposing an existing space to make a **digital music creation space (with relevant technology)** to supplement what the Media Commons and School of Music already offer. More and more patrons across disciplines are interested in this functionality and by offering space and equipment we would expand and democratize access. This space would be more DIY than the Media Commons, allowing patrons to bring their own devices and experiment.

MPAL patrons and staff would also benefit greatly from an extensive **renovation** of our entire public and staff spaces. We lack standard accessibility components such as an elevator, hands-free doors, and to-code stairs. In addition, we have sagging ceiling tiles. Our layout does not function well for 21<sup>st</sup> century research needs or enhance collection accessibility (and in places actively reduces physical accessibility as mentioned and also due to shelves that are too close together in some areas). The space is wholly unwelcoming, and it is unpleasant to spend long amounts of time in due to dingy floors and walls, uncomfortable seating, and fluorescent lighting.

## II. STATISTICAL PROFILE

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### 1. FACILITIES

- User seating counts (206 total)
  - 106 seats at study tables,
  - 18 at public workstations,
  - 16 “soft” chairs,
  - 16 study carrels,
  - 6 individual research rooms,
  - 8 individual listening carrels—2 for LPs, 2 for cassettes, and 6 for CDs,
  - 6 listening/group study rooms--each accommodate an average of 6 individuals
- Number of hours open to the public per week (if applicable)
  - Summer II 2022: 40 hours
  - Fall 2022: 74.5 hours
  - Spring 2023: 74.5 hours
  - Summer I 2023: 40 hours

### 2. PERSONNEL

#### *Faculty*

- Kirstin Johnson (1.0 FTE)
- Kate Lambaria (1.0 FTE)

#### *Staff*

- William Buss (1.0 FTE)
- David Butler (1.0 FTE)
- Josh Hankemeier (1.0 FTE)
- Josh Hollingsead (1.0 FTE)
- Alex McHattie (1.0 FTE)

#### *Graduate Assistants/Hourlies/Practicum Students*

- Amanda Crego-Emley (.25 FTE Graduate Assistant, Graduate Hourly Summer 2022)
- Margot Cuddihy (.25 FTE Graduate Assistant)
- Janelle Lyons (.25 FTE Graduate Hourly, funded by King Endowment)
- Caleb Britton (Practicum student, Fall 2022)
- Anna Vanseveren (Practicum & Graduate Hourly, Summer 2022)

#### *Student Assistants*

- FY23 wage budget **\$34,877**
- 12 students staffing 86 hours or 2.15FTE

### 3. USER SERVICES

- Gate Count (as reported during FY23 Sweeps Week programs)

While MPAL gate counts, like other library locations, are still down compared to pre-pandemic, our combined sweeps week totals for 2022-2023 are **2,622** which is **153%** more than the combined total for

2021-2022, which was 1,719. This is in part due to a return to our normal hours after a 30% reduction in 2021-2022 due to being short-staffed.

- Circulation (from Alma fulfillment reports)
  - At MPAL desk: **10,848** (4<sup>th</sup> busiest after Main Stacks, ILL, and Grainger; in addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> most renewals occurred at our desk).
  - MPAL's collection: **11,368** (5<sup>th</sup> most after Main, OSLF, SSHEL, and Grainger) (2,276 of which were media items); with an additional 5,892 renewals.
- Reference interactions (from Desk Tracker)
  - Total number of interactions in FY23: 2,181
  - Total number of reference interactions (excluding Directional/Hours) in FY23: 1,944
- Presentations (from the Instructional Statistics database)
  - Number of presentations to groups: 31
  - Number of participants in group presentations: 633

#### 4. OTHER STATISTICS (OPTIONAL)

ACS staff added over 4,500 items to MPAL's collections, which are processed and shelved by MPAL staff.