Book Reviews

Edward Swanson

Shelflisting Music: Guidelines for Use with the Library of Congress Classification: M. 2nd edition. By Richard P. Smiraglia. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow and the Music Library Association, 2008. 37p. $15.00 softcover (ISBN 978-0-8108-5418-5). Music Library Association Technical Reports 30.

A Manual for the Performance Library. By Russ Girsberger. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2006. $45.00 softcover (ISBN 978-0-8108-5871-8). MLA Basic Manual Series 6.

Richard P. Smiraglia, professor at the Palmer School of Library and Information Science at Long Island University, published his first edition of *Shelflisting Music* in 1981, a time when most libraries kept a card shelflist and when the card catalog proliferated as the primary means of accessing the library's holdings. Libraries have undergone significant changes since that time, increasingly automating their card catalogs to provide online access to patrons. Despite the change in means of access, the intellectual process of shelflisting music remains intact. It continues to be a complex process in which additional guidance is warranted.

Smiraglia's guidelines are intended to be used with the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) M schedule. They "represent an update and expansion of those first set in print by Virginia Cunningham in 1961, and incorporate rules presented by Helvi Jaakola at the 1971 Institute on Library of Congress Music Cataloging Policies and Procedures" (ix). He further bases his guidelines on years of experience as a music cataloger, evident by his practical suggestions throughout the text.

In keeping with the first edition, this technical report contains an analysis of the shelflisting process through the use of flowcharting, helpful tables, shelflisting guidelines with examples, and a glossary. In fact, the changes between editions are minor, consisting largely of wording differences, updated references, and the addition of the introductory statement to the instruction sheet for shelflisting music materials from the *Subject Cataloging Manual: Shelflisting*.[1] Given the intricacies of the content that these guidelines are meant to accompany, this technical report serves music catalogers or those catalogers whose responsibilities include the shelflisting of music; in other words, Smiraglia assumes a general understanding of LCC and shelflisting.

Smiraglia's presentation of his music shelflisting guidelines is concise but thorough, dense but effective. Particularly noteworthy is the section "Guidelines for Shelflisting Music," in which he provides an organized narrative of his guidelines complete with helpful examples that clearly demonstrate the author's intent. When using this guide in shelflisting music materials, it is important to distinguish between the *process* of shelflisting and the *application* of the shelflisting guidelines. The two are undoubtedly interconnected; however, Smiraglia makes the distinction by separating them, so becoming familiar with the overall structure of the book is necessary before attempting to make practical use of it.

In light of the fact that the Library of Congress published the first edition of their shelflisting manual in 1987, and that today it can be accessed both in print and online, it is unfortunate that this particular technical report was not issued simultaneously, if not exclusively, as an online publication, available through download purchase or through subscription service. The flowcharts are a perfect demonstration of why an online format might have been a more appropriate medium. Due to the limitations of page length, a symbol bearing Greek lettering is presented in order to connect between charts that run over more than one page. These limitations do not exist online; furthermore, the online format could easily address the font size issue so that the reader would not need to make use of a magnifying glass in order to read the flowcharts. The flowcharts themselves are tremendously useful and describe at the most granular level the thought process the cataloger must use to properly shelflist music materials.

Other materials are available that offer coverage similar to that of Smiraglia's *Shelflisting Music*, in particular the guidelines presented on the Yale Music Cataloging website.[2] Nevertheless, no other individual has presented a guide quite as thorough and with as much clarity as Smiraglia; oftentimes other available guides make reference to his guidelines. The author clearly met his objectives for the publication of the second edition by providing updated content that is as relevant today as it was in 1981. But in a world where so many of the tools used in cataloging are accessible online through Cataloger's Desktop or other products, the opportunity to offer these valuable guidelines in this format may have been overlooked.[3]

A Manual for the Performance Library is intended to assist the performance librarian in the myriad processes necessary to support a performing ensemble's needs, from acquiring scores and parts to preparing and distributing them. Considering the wide variety of performing ensembles and their affiliations, a performance

librarian can be a student, a volunteer, a musician in the ensemble, or one in a team of librarians. In his manual, Russ Girsberger, the ensemble librarian at the Juilliard School, provides "the basic principles and practices for acquiring, processing, preparing, and distributing music to performers . . . [and] procedures for the organization, cataloging, care, and preservation of the library's holdings" (ix).

The manual begins with a chapter defining the duties of a performance librarian through a survey of desirable qualifications and responsibilities most often listed in job advertisements. This is especially informative for those interested in pursuing a career as a performance librarian. Girsberger's book is logically organized, covering acquisitions, cataloging, processing, part preparation, distribution, and other related duties. Following the text is an extensive appendix containing examples of forms, sample categories for musical forms and subject headings, and a list of recommended supplies for the performance library. He also includes a short glossary, comprehensive bibliography, and an index.

Although Girsberger claims to provide the *basics* of operating and maintaining a performance library, he is thorough in his use of examples, strategies for problem solving, and inclusion of checklists and reproducible forms. In this way, it is evident that the manual not only serves as a starting point for the new performance librarian but as a reference tool for the more seasoned performance librarian. Because the author handles each primary responsibility separately, any chapter can be isolated and consulted; however, if the content of the chapter does not delve into the depth of coverage needed, Girsberger provides a valuable bibliography that will lead the reader to resources that expand on specific topics, such as copyright and preservation, that fall outside the scope of his manual.

As the author has attempted to produce a manual that can address all ensemble types, there are some sections that may not apply to a given reader, notably the section on bowings. Girsberger does an excellent job of encompassing the various aspects of the wide range of performing ensembles, addressing everything from paper-based libraries to fully automated libraries. As a result, decisions must be applied on the basis of what would most appropriately fit the needs of the particular ensemble and considering the available resources. However, Girsberger never explicitly stresses the need for keeping a local practices-and-procedures manual. While implicit in the decision-making process, it carries enough significance to warrant emphasis in a manual that aims to be inclusive.

Surveying the literature reveals the manual's uniqueness in coverage. Whereas other handbooks and manuals focus on a particular type of library, Girsberger provides overarching guidelines for the performance library, regardless of size, means, and type. By highlighting the common responsibilities and challenges, *A Manual for the Performance Library* is an accessible and useful tool for the full spectrum of performance librarians.— *Sandy Rodriguez (rodriguezsan@ umkc.edu), University of Missouri– Kansas City.*

References

1. Library of Congress, Cataloging Policy and Support Office, "G800 Music Materials," in *Subject Cataloging Manual: Shelflisting*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, 1995).
2. Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Music Cataloging at Yale, www.library .yale.edu/cataloging/music/musicat .htm (accessed Mar. 16, 2009).
3. Library of Congress, "Cataloger's Desktop," http://desktop.loc.gov (accessed May 18, 2009).

Index to Advertisers