Collection Development Policy for Music

1. Overview

1.1 General coverage of subject in OULS.

Oxford’s library resources in the field of music are almost certainly the finest in the university sector in the U.K., being concentrated in the Bodleian and Music Faculty libraries. The Bodleian’s music collection, with about 500,000 items of printed music, 60,000 books and journals, and 5,000 manuscripts, probably rank it amongst the top dozen music research libraries in the world, with rich all-round holdings, as well as having a number of outstanding special collections of international standing. The Music Faculty Library, originating in a loan collection of music formed in the early years of the 20th century, is the primary teaching collection, with most of its stock borrowable. It has ca. 18,000 items of printed music, and 18,000 books and journals; it also houses the main sound recordings collection of the university, with ca. 15,000 LPs and 4,500 CDs. Whilst college libraries also make substantial provision for undergraduate studies in subjects like History, English and Classics, most, quite justifiably in view of the spread of students, cater very little for music students, who are therefore heavily reliant on the resources of OULS libraries.

1.2 Legal deposit

The Bodleian houses the legal deposit collections in music. Basic reference material and major journals (both legal deposit and purchased) are on open shelves in the Music Reading Room, with the great majority of the collection in the closed access bookstack (much of it, however, in close proximity to the Reading Room). Printed music has been regularly received under legal deposit since about 1780; the comprehensiveness of receipt has varied greatly over time, but donated collections and purchases have done much both to fill in gaps and to provide splendid collections of earlier British musical publications. In the last 20 years a large ‘grey’ area has developed with self-publishing composers and a growth of music ‘published on demand’. Such publications are received very erratically under legal deposit (even from mainstream publishers), and the legal position remains unclear. In the case of non-deposit, some purchases are made of the more significant material in these categories, but, finances permitting, much more could be attempted. The Bodleian has never rejected the popular music of the day – resulting, for example, in its wonderful collection of Victorian and Edwardian music hall songs – and the latest pop albums are received alongside the works of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. It should be noted, however, that sound recordings (unless adjuncts to books) do not come within the provisions of British legal deposit, unlike the situation in many other countries.

1.3 Electronic Resources

Music has comparatively few subscription databases. Apart from Grove Music Online, the electronic version of the New Grove Dictionary of Music (widely used by both music and more general users and now part of Oxford Music Online), Oxford currently subscribes to RILM Music Abstracts, RISM (manuscript series) and RIPM (19th- and early 20th-cent. retrospective music periodical index). All are accessible through OxLIP+ and SOLO. A development of RIPM to offer full text of the
periodicals indexed is expected within a year or so, which promises to be of great use, but undoubtedly will have financial implications. Other possible resources, such as *IIMP* (International Index to Music Periodicals), which offers full-text journals, will be kept under review, though in many cases there is substantial duplication with other electronic provision. For e-books see under 2.1; for online listening resources see under 2.4.

1.4 Formats

Music as an academic subject probably involves a greater variety of formats than other any subject – not only books and journals in all the various musicological sub-disciplines, but scores of printed music, sound recordings and audio-visual materials all having to be accommodated within the budget.

1.5 Languages

Music being essentially international in its nature, books and journals are acquired in a wide number of languages, although English naturally predominates, especially at undergraduate level. Amongst the foreign languages, German, French, Italian and Spanish are the most prominent in that order, but the large number of major composers from Eastern Europe also means that literature in Russian, Czech, Polish and Hungarian is also acquired in significant quantities, as well as occasional items in other languages.

2. Teaching collections

The main teaching collections for Music are housed in the Music Faculty Library. Unlike most other subjects, library materials in the form of scores and recordings are often needed for use in lectures, classes and tutorials, so the proximity of the library and teaching/lecture rooms is an important feature of the setup.

2.1 Books

The Music Faculty Library purchases books predominantly to support undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses, mainly in English, although given the essentially international and multi-lingual nature of music, important works of reference and biography in other Western languages are also acquired. Books appearing on reading lists in related non-musical disciplines (e.g. theatre history, general aesthetics) are not generally purchased for the Faculty Library, but are available in the Bodleian and other OULS/college libraries. Requested copies of theses available on demand are acquired for either the Bodleian or Faculty libraries, when they would be of general interest, otherwise users are advised to make use of ILL. Although E-books have so far not been conspicuous in the music field, they are beginning to make an appearance, and their acquisition, especially as substitutes for multiple copy provision, will be kept under review.

2.2 Journals

Some rationalisation of duplicated holdings between the Bodleian and Faculty periodical collections has recently been made, although hard-copy formats of some
major British journals and a small number of foreign titles (largely in English) are still subscribed to by the Faculty Library. Electronic access to current issues is becoming available for an increasing number of music titles; the university has subscriptions for many of these (mainly through bulk packages), and this will be extended as finances allow. It is expected that moves towards online-only access for many journals will increase in the coming years in accordance with general OULS collection development policies. For back issues of ca. 60 core journals, JSTOR is found most useful, and is widely used by both undergraduates and researchers. Access to a range of free electronic journals in the field of music is being provided through Oxford University e-Journals.

2.3 Printed music

The Faculty Library subscribes to collected editions of many major composers – they are the bedrock of any academic music collection – and to a number of other important series, such as *Musica Britannica* and *Early English Church Music*. Copies of other important historical editions and facsimiles are purchased (mostly for loan), and a representative collection of the works of contemporary composers is aimed at – part of the objective of the undergraduate curriculum being to enable students to acquaint themselves with as wide a range of music as possible. Music is acquired primarily for study purposes rather than to meet performance needs, although particularly the piano, solo vocal and chamber music collections do get used in both private and public performances. Students taking the performance options in examinations, however, would expect to acquire their own copies (which they could freely annotate) rather than rely on library material. Orchestral parts and sets of multiple copies of vocal scores are not acquired. Printed music is, however, naturally subject to rather more wear and tear than ordinary books (partly by virtue of the folio size of most music), and consequently allowance needs to be made for replacement of worn-out material. (The long-term value of the Bodleian’s reference-only copies is nowhere better demonstrated than in the relatively pristine condition of most of the music stock, which music publishers themselves often call upon when they discover they have kept no archive copy of a particular item.)

2.4 Sound recordings

The Music Faculty Library houses the main sound recordings collection in the university, and in addition to purchases, it is fairly regularly offered donations of collections – though (especially if of a general nature) these may be declined, owing to likelihood of duplication and processing costs. The standard Western art music repertoire is fairly well covered, even in CD format, so new purchases are concentrated on recordings of contemporary music and rarer older repertoire. The need for comparative recordings is considered, particularly in the light of performance studies options, and given the current release on CD of historic recordings from the pre-LP era. (Taken across the various LP/CD/online formats, there already exists a good basis for comparative studies of much standard repertoire). A representative sample of jazz recordings is also maintained, for use in conjunction with the jazz options/lectures offered from time to time. The Library subscribes to two online listening services for music students, Classical Music Library and Naxos, which are very popular. Subscription levels allow for only a small number of simultaneous users, so students are warned not to give information on access to non-music students. It is not designed as a general leisure resource for the whole university, which would entail a large increase in cost.
2.5 DVD/Videos

The Music Faculty Library maintains a collection of (mainly) opera recordings on video, and, more recently, on DVD. It is added to as appropriate (usually at staff or student request) – the primary aim is to extend coverage of opera titles, rather than acquire different productions of the same opera.

2.6 Microforms

The Music Faculty has a collection of microfilms, mostly of individual manuscripts of the Medieval and Renaissance periods, acquired by donation or at the request of individual members of staff and students; it is added as appropriate.

2.7 Level of provision

At least one copy of each music book on reading lists is purchased wherever possible. A short-loan collection of high-demand books has been set up, initially funded by the Dalton Fund, and additional copies are purchased as considered desirable. (The Bodleian’s reference-only copies also serve an important back-up function for such material.) In the future e-books will probably begin to play an increasing role in providing such access but coverage of music titles is currently limited. Multiple copies of scores for lecture/class use will be purchased if necessary, although the standard repertoire appears to be reasonably well catered for.

3. Research collections

The research collections in Music are principally housed in the Bodleian, allowing for in-depth study of a wide range of musicological disciplines. For certain sub-disciplines (e.g. analysis) the Music Faculty’s resources are often sufficient for some research purposes, while in the field of ethnomusicology, resources are of necessity more scattered (see under 6. Note on Ethnomusicology).

3.1 Books

Books are purchased for the Bodleian in the various branches of music and musicology in a wide range of languages, and in as great a depth as funding permits. Concentration is on Western art music, although scholarly work on more popular genres (primarily in English) is also acquired. While some important monograph series are supplied on standing orders, generally a selective approach is applied to titles, in order to make best use of available funds.
3.2 Journals

The Bodleian has an impressive collection of music periodicals, including fine sets of major 19th-century French and German titles, and both Western and Slavonic languages are covered. Current subscriptions cover a wide range of journals, including composer yearbooks. While the number of current titles taken is good by other UK university standards, it falls far behind those subscribed to by major USA institutions. In particular, the depth of coverage of publications of societies devoted to individual composers and instruments leaves room for improvement.

3.3 Printed Music

The Bodleian aims to collect composers’ collected editions and other major scholarly Denkmäler series in a comprehensive manner. As wide a range of facsimiles and significant other new editions of older music is acquired as the budget will allow. In the field of contemporary art music, it is aimed to collect major international figures such as Boulez, Stockhausen and Elliott Carter comprehensively, whilst the works of established lesser figures are purchased in a selective manner – again budgets are the main restraining factor, the scope for acquisition being vast. Assessing the long-term significance of the younger generations of contemporary composers is always a problematic area, and inevitably retrospective collecting has to be done on various figures, whose stature only becomes apparent with the passing of time. On the more popular side, material such as transcribed jazz scores and vocal scores of Broadway musicals are acquired.

3.4 Sound Recordings

In addition to material received by legal deposit as parts of books or music scores, the Bodleian purchases CDs of local music recordings (e.g. of college choirs), as an adjunct to its archive of local concert programmes.

3.5 Microforms

In addition to a number of microfilms of individual music manuscripts, the Bodleian has a large collection of the commercial packages of microfilms of the music manuscripts of both its own and other British collections. They are widely used, especially for collation of sources. The collection is added to as funding permits, and there is certainly scope for extending it to available continental collections.

4. Special Collections

The Bodleian has extensive special collections in both manuscript and printed form from medieval times onwards. Whilst British music lies at its core, there are large and highly important collections of material such as 17th-century Italian instrumental music, and first and early editions of the Viennese classical period. Amongst the copious 19th-century collections, the printed editions of Chopin and Berlioz are outstanding, as is the Harding Collection of American songs, while the Deneke Mendelssohn Collection makes the Library one of the two principal centres of Mendelssohn research. The Bodleian has been exceptionally fortunate in the number of outstanding collections to have come its way in the past 40 years (mostly by donation), including the Deneke, Harding, Tenbury and Tyson collections, which
have radically increased its international profile. Suitable additions are made, especially to areas with already strong holdings, as opportunity and funding permit. The Bodleian also has substantial holdings of concert and opera programmes, both local and national, several important older collections having been added in recent years; it is regularly added to both by legal deposit and donation. The manuscripts and older printed music of the Music Faculty Library were transferred to the Bodleian in the 1990s; the Faculty retains a small collection of older treatises on music, and the Frank Howes collection of folk music. The Bate Collection of Musical Instruments has a reference-only donated collection of books on instruments and instrumental tutors.

5. Subject coverage of selected purchased material in OULS

Books and journals: Historical musicology, musical bibliography, compositional techniques, music theory and aesthetics, analysis, instruments and performance practice, ethnomusicology. Works are only exceptionally purchased in the field of foreign music education, and only academic titles on western-style popular music are considered for acquisition. Printed music: western art music, folk music, musicals, jazz (representatively). Sound recordings: western art music, plus representative collections of folk music, musicals and jazz. Video/DVD: mainly opera, some folk music.

Note on Ethnomusicology

With ethnomusicology impinging greatly on other fields like social anthropology and area studies, library provision also tends to be somewhat diffuse. The Indian Institute Library and Bodleian Japanese Library cater for the traditional music of their respective countries, whilst the Balfour Library also acquires some music-related literature, particularly of an anthropological nature. The Bodleian has substantial resources of European and American folk music collections and related literature within the main music and book collections, and takes general ethnomusicalogical literature and journals, whilst the Oriental department also collects relevant material for its geographical area. The donated Frank Howes collection in the Music Faculty Library is primarily European and American in its scope. Resources for ethnomusicalogical studies are currently under review.

6. Subject Consultant for Music

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