

Music Library Organization: Extension to the Sanchez, Waldron Report

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report

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By

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Abstract

This report details the finalization of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute choral music library organization interactive qualifying project and is meant to be read within the context of the Sanchez and Waldron report written for this project. In order to complete this project the choral music library organization was finished and the current implementation of the choral music library database, which was devised of and created during this project, was installed upon a single stand alone machine for dedicated library use. Further changes which are likely to be made to the library as well as the database were considered in the finalization of this project with hopes that future interactive qualifying projects of this nature will be completed more smoothly than this particular project. Recommendations for these future music library projects were then made.

Introduction

This report is written to detail the completion of the choral music library reorganization at WPI. This project has been ongoing for many years and a number of interactive qualifying projects. The completion of this project means that the choral music has been transferred from folders into boxes and that those boxes have been numbered. A electronic database was created for cataloging the music and this database was installed on a dedicated computer in Professor Delorey's office.

State of the Library

Prior to the completion of this project a fraction of the music in the library had been transfer to boxes by an earlier incarnation of this project. Also, during that time the electronic database was created.

Although the project was finished in a small amount of time the amount of work required to leave the library fully organized was staggering. Thankfully many people including other IQP groups and work study students pitched in.

Methodology

The library was reorganized by taking the music from its folder and placing it in a box. The box was then numbered with a unique number and labeled with the music's information. This information as well as the number was noted so that they could later be entered into the choral music library. This process was repeated hundreds of times until all of the music in the library was boxed.

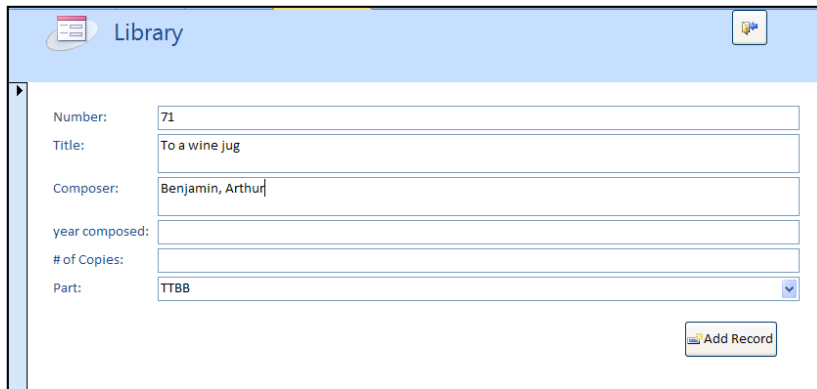
The boxes, which are used to store the music, are J.W. Pepper and Sons File-Finder boxes that are specifically made for choral music. These boxes have a place on the side to write the ID number of the box/music the composer/arranger as well as the title of the piece.

The information, which was recorded on each box, was also recorded on cataloging sheets along with additional information, which will be useful to have in the database. The information taken down on the cataloging sheets is; the box ID number, the composer, the title of the music, intended accompaniment for the music, and intended choral arrangement, as well as the intended voices. The accompaniment for the music could be selected from a list on the sheet, which included piano, accapella, or orchestra.

While the possible choral arrangement included; SATB SSAA, SA, and TTBB. The choral voices, which were intended for the music were either men's, women's or mixed.

The numbers on the boxes continued a discrete progression. The reason for selecting such a numbering system is described in the previous report, but basically is so that users of the library can have an easier time searching for the music they want as well as making the job of returning the music to its correct place easier.

The database, which catalogs the choral music library, was taken from the WPI intranet where it existed in a certain form documenting the success of the past IQP. The database was installed on a standalone computer for dedicated library use. This was done per the request of Professor Delorey. This allowed for the information from the catalog sheets to be added to the library database completing the reorganization of the music library as well as the digitizing of the library catalog system. The catalog information is added directly to the database manually, but once entered should make use of the music library easier. Below the catalog entry mechanism is shown for the library database.



The screenshot shows a web-based form titled "Library" with a light blue header. The form contains several input fields and a dropdown menu. The fields are labeled as follows:


- Number: 71
- Title: To a wine jug
- Composer: Benjamin, Arthur
- year composed: (empty)
- # of Copies: (empty)
- Part: TTBB (dropdown menu)

An "Add Record" button is located at the bottom right of the form.

Results

As a direct result of this project the choral music library is much better organized, and easier to use. It is likely that the music will last longer in better condition in the new boxes compared to the folder they were being stored in. Also the electronic database should allow for the contents of the library to be easily searched and queried against.

Use of the library catalog system is done with a simple search query on the library database, as shown below.



The screenshot shows a web-based search interface. At the top, there are two tabs: "Switchboard" and "Search". Below the tabs, the text "Search using filters:" is displayed. There are four input fields for filtering: "Title", "Composer", "Part", and "Number". The "Part" field has a dropdown arrow. To the right of the search bar, there is a magnifying glass icon. The interface is styled with a light blue background and white text.

The completion of this project sees the library in cleaner, more useable, and more presentable form than ever before.

Conclusion

In conclusion the choral music library has finally been completely organized. The music has been boxed up so that it is more easily accessed as well as better preserved. The electronic database has been moved to one single location so that it may be used with the library. Although this project is completed it is likely that others will look to improve the music library, through standardization, digitization, and accessibility. It is suggested that once the library database has used and deemed satisfactory it be offered over the WPI network to all users, so that the contents of the library may be searched remotely. This would likely be best done by making use of one of WPI's SQL servers, and would require that the database which is presently in Microsoft Access be converted to an SQL variant.

There is much which could be done once the library records were made available to the network, consortium schools could be given access to the library database, in a mutual exchange program. It is likely that making library data accessible to other schools and organizations would first require standardization so that the information for the library is similar and up to par with other music libraries which could be viewing the data.

Although the database in its current form is easy to use it is not intuitive and it is advisable that the documentation for the database, from the previous IQP report be made available to all library database users.