
My Role in the Ensemble: Incorporating Performing Arts Web Archives into Music Division Special Collections Stewardship

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MARAC College Park, MD
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Session: Web Archives and Curation of
Special Collections

*Thoughts and opinions are entirely my own and do not represent
those of my employer or the U.S. Government.*



Good morning! My name is Melissa Wertheimer, and I'm a Music Reference Specialist at the Library of Congress. I'm also the Music Division's web archives collection lead. Thoughts and opinions are entirely my own and do not represent those of my employer or the U.S. Government.

My portion of this session is "My Role in the Ensemble: Incorporating Performing Arts Web Archives into Music Division Special Collections Stewardship."

I'm going to share my experiences curating multiple web archive collections, writing collection development policies for web archives, how web archiving enhances the Music Division's special collections holdings, when web archiving isn't the best mode to acquire content, and advocating for using web archives.

Music Division Web Archive Collections



2011

Performing Arts Web Archive

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/performing-arts-web-archive/about-this-collection/>



2018

LC Commissioned Composers Web Archive

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/lc-commissioned-composers-web-archive/about-this-collection/>



2019

Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/professional-organizations-for-performing-arts-web-archive/about-this-collection/>



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First, here's a quick overview of the three ongoing thematic web archive collections I curate for the Music Division.

The Performing Arts Web Archive was started in 2011; I took over management of this collection in 2018. This collection now contains websites related to the Music Division's special collections and rare materials creators and will be the collection I focus on today.

I created the LC Commissioned Composers Web Archive in 2018 to contain websites of composers commissioned with Music Division funds to create new works of music. I presented about my appraisal strategies for this collection at MARAC Morgantown in 2019.

In 2019, I created the Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive to document the range of professions within the performing arts through unions and professional membership organizations.

I also contribute social and cultural content to an event-based

collection, the Library's interdisciplinary Coronavirus Web Archive.

Why Web Archiving?

Have you made it official in a collection development policy?

(Why should paper and media have all the fun?!)

Why web archiving? In my opinion, it's vital for the performing arts. This content can include press kits, online concert calendars, artist statements, employment and guest engagements, and works lists growing or shrinking. Sometimes, this content is only "archived" by the artist or organization on a website and nowhere else.

This born-digital content can disappear at any time, yet can have vital information and evidence about a person, ensemble, organization, or artistic movement over time; the value is in the aggregate.

So how can we ensure that we prioritize this web-based content in our repositories? Collection development policies! Collection development policies are vital to the archives profession for many reasons, including to guide our decisions and back them up, as even justify staff and budget growth.

By show of hands:

- How many of you include web archiving in your collection development efforts?

- How many of you have general collection development policies for your repositories?
- Whose collection development policies include web archives?

Remember, they're not written in stone and can be revised as times, our patrons, and our collecting scopes change. After all, why should paper and media have all the fun?!

Music Collection Policy Statement

<https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/music.pdf>

Revised September 2022: IV. Collection Policy // E. Web Archives

"The Music Division curates collections of web archives that enhance and contextualize current holdings in print, digital, and manuscript formats. Websites related to creators of the Music Division's special collections continue to be added to the **Performing Arts Web Archive**. This ensures that as legacies become more born-digital, archival evidence such as online concert calendars, works lists, programs, artist statements, perusal scores, press kits, and blogs are preserved.

Websites of composers commissioned with endowed Music Division funds - including but not limited to the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation, Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation, McKim Fund, and Dina Koston and Roger Shapiro Fund for New Music – continue to be added to the **LC Commissioned Composers Web Archive** to support current and future research of contemporary Western art music, jazz, and their creators.

Websites of local, national, and international performing arts organizations related to unions, licensing, education, technology, professional development, medicine, and scholarship continue to be added to the **Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive**. This collection particularly expands upon materials in Subclass ML received in print by the Music Division in the early through mid-20th century, such as membership pamphlets, conference proceedings, programs, and posters.

New web archive collections will be proposed and curated in accordance with collecting priorities and staff initiative as set forth by the Web Archiving Supplementary Guidelines."

So, with all these web archive collections under my care since 2018, I decided to make this growing collecting priority official in Summer 2022 when it came time for the Music Division to update its Collection Policy Statement. Section IV, Collection Policy, already existed. Web Archives is the new section. The PDF is publicly available.

I wanted to make it clear that web archiving is important for our repository in addition to the institution's digital strategy, what the various web archive collections I've built are for, and how the contents fit into the division's larger priorities and focuses.

More examples of collection policies with web archives

Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpsstate.html>

- Web Archives Supplementary Guidelines (revised July 2022): <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf>
- Social Media Supplementary Guidelines (created November 2021; revised July 2022): <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/socialmedia.pdf>
- Comics and Cartoons Collection Policy Statement mentions “web comics”: <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/comics.pdf>
- LGBTQIA+ Studies Collection Policy Statement lists a web archive collection: <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/lgbtqia.pdf>

International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC)

- Page with links to policies from national libraries around the world and universities in the U.S. and Canada: <https://netpreserve.org/web-archiving/collection-development-policies>

Here are some more links for inspiration.

All of the Library of Congress Collection Policy Statements and Supplementary Guidelines are publicly available online. You can see that the institution overall has documents specific to both web archives and social media. While these greatly inform my work, they don't address the details of how web archiving fits into the Music Division's priorities, which is why I wrote a new section for us.

You can also read samples of how web archives are mentioned in a few other Library of Congress subject policy statements to get ideas of the range of ways that web archiving is discussed as both a mode of acquisition and format.

I also highly recommend the International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC)! It has a great reference page on its website with web archives collection development policies from national libraries around the world, as well as ones from American and Canadian universities.

I encourage you all to give writing collection development policies that include or are specifically for web archives a try!

Performing Arts Web Archive

2011



<https://www.loc.gov/collections/performing-arts-web-archive/about-this-collection/>

***Contains web-based content related to the Music Division's current special collections and rare material holdings.
(Processed and unprocessed collections!)***

- Websites of individual special collection creators
- Websites of corporate body special collection and organizational records creators
- Websites maintained by special collection creators' estates
- Memorial / legacy websites maintained by heirs of special collections creators

So what does incorporating web archives into the Music Division's special collections look like in practice? Well, since this division and institution far pre-date my web archiving efforts, I've definitely played catch-up the past few years building seed lists to reflect past acquisitions. But now I've got a great rhythm to collaborate with colleagues to get the websites into donor discussions as negotiations occur.

By a show of hands, how many of you collect:

- Papers of individuals?
- Organizational records, either internal or external?

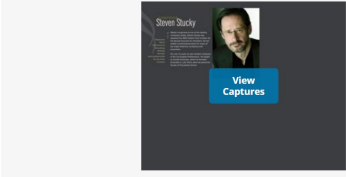
Well, websites exists for all of these, and the Performing Arts Web Archive is where I put this content. Let's look at some examples.

Performing Arts Web Archive

Websites of individual special collection creators

Steven Stucky Papers (<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu022018>)

- <http://www.stevenstucky.com/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0025891/>

<p>WEB ARCHIVE</p> <h3>Steven Stucky, composer</h3>  <p><small>View Captures</small> Some content may be under embargo. See the Rights and Access statement for more information.</p>	<h4>About this Item</h4> <p>Title Steven Stucky, composer</p> <p>Summary Steven Stucky (1949-2016) was an American composer. In 1991, he was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress for the composition Four Poems for A.R. Adams for baritone and chamber ensemble. The Music Division received a holograph score in 1993 (https://lccn.loc.gov/93704131). The Music Division is the repository for the Steven Stucky papers (https://lccn.loc.gov/2014572570).</p>
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Questions to consider...

- Did the composer's official works list change over time?
- Did the composer change management or publishers over time?
- Is there a downloadable press kit? How is the person marketed?
- Is there a discography?
- Are there PDFs and other documents not received with the paper collection?

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First, let's look at websites of individual special collection creators.

The Steven Stucky Papers is a finding aid hot off the press. The composer died in 2016 (before I started at the Library), but luckily his widow kept the website live for a few years after his death.

The first link on the slide is to the permalink to the EAD finding aid. The second link is the URL for his personal website, which is no longer live. The third link is the digital collections page where you can access captures in our instance of Open Wayback (the screen shot on the left).

To let users know why websites are archived, I write abstracts that include links to finding aids and online catalog records (this is the screen shot on the right with the orange bracket).

While our web archives currently aren't full-text searchable, these abstracts are! That means when someone types "Steven Stucky" into the search bar of our digital collections, they'll find not just the finding aid or mentions of the composer in LC press releases, but also this web

archive.

The questions to consider below the images are helpful ones to think about when appraising the informational and evidential value of websites of individuals. These and more can help you decide if the website truly enhances or duplicates the physical collection you receive.

For example, can we learn about how the composer was marketed by management through a downloadable press kit?

Performing Arts Web Archive

Websites maintained by special collection creators' estates

Andre Kostelanetz Collection (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu016011>)

- <https://andrekostelanetz.com/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0008016/>

<p>WEB ARCHIVE</p> <h3>Andre Kostelanetz</h3>  <p>View Captures Some content may be under embargo. See the Rights and Access statement for more information.</p>	<h4>About this Item</h4> <p>Title Andre Kostelanetz</p> <p>Summary Andre Kostelanetz (1901-1980) was a Russian-born American conductor, arranger, and pianist. The Music Division is the repository for the Andre Kostelanetz collection (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu016011). A digital collection is available: https://www.loc.gov/collections/andre-kostelanetz-collection/about-this-collection/.</p>
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Questions to consider...

- How long after the person's death was this website created?
- Does the estate refer website users to the collection at the Library of Congress?
- What resources are endorsed about the person, such as books?
- Is there media embedded on the website that is not part of the collection?

The Performing Arts Web Archive also has websites created and maintained by estates of deceased individuals, such as the conductor, arranger, and pianist Andre Kostelanetz.

Again, there are a few new considerations, but in the end they all speak to how legacy is curated, which is an interesting topic that many digital humanists could use web archives for!


For example, does the estate endorse a particular biography over another?

Performing Arts Web Archive

Memorial / legacy websites maintained by heirs of special collections creators

Howard Ashman Papers (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu013002>)

- <https://www.howardashman.com/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0008009/>

<p><small>WEB ARCHIVE</small> Part of His World: Celebrating the Work of Howard Ashman</p>  <p><small>View Captures</small> <small>Some content may be under embargo. See the Rights and Access statement for more information.</small></p>	<p>About this Item</p> <p>Title Part of His World: Celebrating the Work of Howard Ashman</p> <p>Summary Howard Ashman (1950-1991) was an American lyricist, librettist, playwright, and director. The Music Division is the repository for the Howard Ashman Papers (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu013002).</p>
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Questions to consider...

- Is there evidence of fan interaction with the website or blog?
- Are website users to the collection at the Library of Congress?
- What resources are endorsed about the person, such as books?
- Is there media embedded on the website that is not part of the collection?

Are there differences between an estate's website versus when a family member of a deceased collection creator maintains an ongoing website or blog in memory of the person?

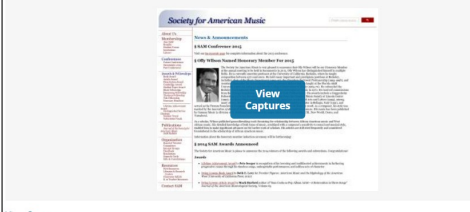
For example, this website created by lyricist Howard Ashman's sister is an opportunity to explore that. Also, how does this web content compare to the professional and creative documents in his papers?

Performing Arts Web Archive

Websites of organizational records' collection creators

Society for American Music Records (<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu013005>)

- <http://www.american-music.org/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0009655/>

<p>WEB ARCHIVE</p> <h3>The Society for American Music (SAM)</h3>  <p><small>View Captures Some content may be under embargo. See the Rights and Access statement for more information.</small></p>	<p>About this Item</p> <p>Title The Society for American Music (SAM)</p> <p>Summary The Society for American Music (SAM), an educational organization founded in 1975 by a group of American music enthusiasts, is dedicated to promoting the study, teaching, creation, and dissemination of music in the Americas. The society was named in honor of American musicologist, librarian, and editor Oscar G. T. Sonneck (1873-1928), the first critical scholar and bibliographer of American music, and first chief of the Music Division of the Library of Congress. In 1999, the organization changed its name from the Sonneck Society for American Music to the Society for American Music. The Music Division is the repository for the Sonneck Society for American Music records (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu013005).</p>
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Questions to consider...

- Do the organization's marketing and logos change over time?
- Are any records missing from the collection created by committees or officers listed on the website?
- Are there PDFs or publications not received with the paper collection?
- Are there digital-only publications available on this website or a subdomain?

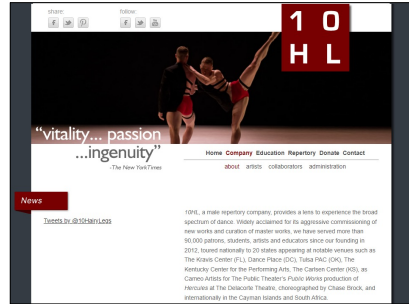
Here's an example of an archived website for an organization whose records we hold, the Society for American Music. This organization is still active, so you have chances to compare captures as far back as 2002 to the live web!

Organizational records certainly have their own unique challenges compared to personal papers. So, questions to consider may both overlap and be different. A big one in today's world has to do with online-only publications produced by organizations. Sometimes these publications are simply PDF newsletters uploaded to a page in the directory, and other times organizations create entirely new URLs subdomains. You'll need to decide if your staff and data budgets, as well as your collection development policy, make capturing content like this feasible, let alone desirable.

I also like to use archived lists of board members and committee chairs to see if records of those officers are missing from the collection.

Website as complement, but no substitute

The case of the 10 Hairy Legs Dance Company



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With all these possibilities, when can web archives leave us and our born-digital collecting efforts wanting?

The Music Division's acquisition of the 10 Hairy Legs Dance Company records is a born-digital early pandemic success story to be sure. The company had folded and reached out to our Dance Curator Libby Smigel about their legacy. This included their website and social media – but at this point in the pandemic, the Library had put a moratorium on new web archiving acquisitions!

Website as complement, but no substitute

The case of the 10 Hairy Legs Dance Company

10 Hairy Legs Dance Company website

- <http://10hl.org/pages/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0035296/>

Overall, captures looked great!

The screenshot shows a webpage titled 'Currently Active Repertory'. It features a video player for 'Andy Warhol's Bleu Movie' with the following details: Choreography: Raja Feather Kelly, Quintet, Length: 21:26. Below the video player is a paragraph of text: 'The quintet alludes to the 1970's gay club scene and the nature of fleeting attraction and romance. It features an originally composed score by Bryan Strimpel, lighting by Tuce Yusak and costumes by Asa Thornton. This work was commissioned by 10 Hairy Legs and debuted at BAM Fishman on June 8, 2017.' To the right of the video player is a large black box with the text 'Sorry This video does not exist.' An orange arrow points from the video player to the error message.

<https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20210216230309/http://10hl.org/pages/repertory.php>

I made a case to the Collection Development Office and Web Archiving Team to grant emergency crawl permission for both the website and Twitter account. Both were granted due to small size and the short term nature of the crawls. Overall, this was a success.

But as I anticipated from past web archives undertakings, there were major challenges with this website's embedded media that warranted clear communication with the donor. The screen shot on the left from the web archive is from the company's active repertory page as of shuttering, which included embedded Vimeo videos for each work. In the web archive, if you click "play," you get this "Sorry" pop-up window – and no video.

Website as complement, but no substitute

The case of the 10 Hairy Legs Dance Company

10 Hairy Legs Dance Company website

- <http://10hl.org/pages/> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0035296/>

Website Challenges:

- Vimeo player – no content because separate web domain (player.vimeo.com) wasn't part of proposal; videos would be donated
- Some PDF files missing
- January 2021 solution: crawler switched from Heritrix to Brozzler, scoping widened
- Artificial tweaking from owner prior to takedown



<https://webarchive.loc.gov/all/20210216230225/http://10hl.org/pages/home.php>



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There were some other challenges as well. In addition to the videos issue, there were some PDF files missing. The donor also artificially tweaked the website with this badge indicating that they're archived at the Library of Congress. Not a huge deal, but definitely not how the website looked when the company was active.

Website as complement, but no substitute

The case of the 10 Hairy Legs Dance Company

10 Hairy Legs Dance Company Twitter page

- <https://twitter.com/10HairyLegs> → <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0035296/>



Twitter Challenges:

- Earliest tweet: April 4, 2019 – missing media
- Twitter's continuous scroll interface
- Data limits still affected Heritrix crawler, as well as Heritrix innate capability
- In the end, more about evidential value than informational value



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Libby connected me with 10 Hairy Legs Executive Director and Archivist to communicate instructions and guidance about website and social media.

My major recommendations:

- Twitter: download Tweet history and donate that file with collection
- YouTube and Vimeo: Donate original videos uploaded to platforms with collection
- Instagram: donate original photos and videos uploaded to Instagram with collection; download account history and donate that file (donor decided to exclude Instagram from archives)

Here you can see screen shots of our attempts to capture the Twitter account with crawlers. Media is missing, and Twitter's continuous scroll interface doesn't play nicely with crawler technology.

Website as complement, but no substitute

Lessons:

- CONSIDER whether web archiving is the best way to acquire born-digital content
- COMMUNICATE with your colleagues; express desire to collaborate to help each other solve problems and ease labor
- COMMUNICATE with your donors; express interest and ask probing questions

In donor conversations, I like to say things such as...

- When soliciting papers:
“I noticed that you also have a website with rich information about your life and career. It would be such an important part of your legacy to preserve alongside your papers, as well as provide an additional resource to future users for research and reference.”
- Using previous web archives permissions contact as an ice-breaker to begin the solicitation conversation:
“We were last in touch in [year] about adding your website to the [Title] Web Archive. Thank you so much for granting permission! You can now view released captures here [collection link].
I am now contacting you because the Music Division is interested in...”

Between the videos and social media, this is definitely an instance of evidential value, not informational value – which I share with you all as a cautionary tale if you solely rely on web archives to obtain this sort of content!

When soliciting papers from donors, I like to say things such as...

“I noticed that you also have a website with rich information about your life and career. It would be such an important part of your legacy to preserve alongside your papers, as well as provide an additional resource to future users for research and reference.”

I’ve also used previous contact about web archiving as an ice-breaker to begin a conversation about acquiring papers.

Web Archives in Finding Aids

Performing Arts COVID-19 Response Collection (multiple web archives)

Finding aid permalink: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu021055>

Related Material

Through the Dina Koston and Roger Shapiro Fund for New Music, the Library of Congress Concert Office established [The Boccaccio Project](#) to commission ten pairs of composers and performers to write and perform brief solo works to be premiered online over the course of ten weekdays in June 2020. Scores for the ten commissions are individually cataloged in ML30.29a Case and videos of the virtual world premieres are in the Library's [digital collections](#).

The Library of Congress [Coronavirus Web Archive](#) is an inter-disciplinary digital collection of archived web-based content related to the pandemic curated by a team of subject specialists across the Library. The Coronavirus Web Archive contains the following projects represented in the Performing Arts COVID-19 Response Collection: the ARCO Collaborative Alone Together Project, *Broadcast from Home* by Lisa Bielawa, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Fanfare Project, *Gratias Tibi* by José Luis Domínguez, the Creative Repertoire Initiative, *Full Pink Moon: Opera Povera in Quarantine*, and Play at Home.

The Silkroad Artist Response Project is part of the [Performing Arts Web Archive](#). The [LC Commissioned Composers Web Archive](#) and [American Music Creators Web Archive](#) include archived websites of several composers represented in the Performing Arts COVID-19 Response Collection.

The green hyperlinks to web archive collections are permalinks. For example, the "Coronavirus Web Archive" permalink is <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.natlib/collnatlib.00000163>. It redirects to <https://www.loc.gov/collections/coronavirus-web-archive/about-this-collection/>.

Of course, after all the work of liaising with donors, accessioning, processing, and web crawling, we get to description. I'm spearheading a practice in the Music Division to get web archives added to the front matter of finding aids. This screen shot is from the Performing Arts COVID-19 Response Collection. It's a more detailed example of how many web archives relate to a single special collection because of the breadth of this artificial collection and the amount of overlap with the Coronavirus Web Archive. But, it makes it clear to users that the full story behind any work in the collection requires using web archives, too.

By show of hands, how many of you mention web archives in your finding aids?

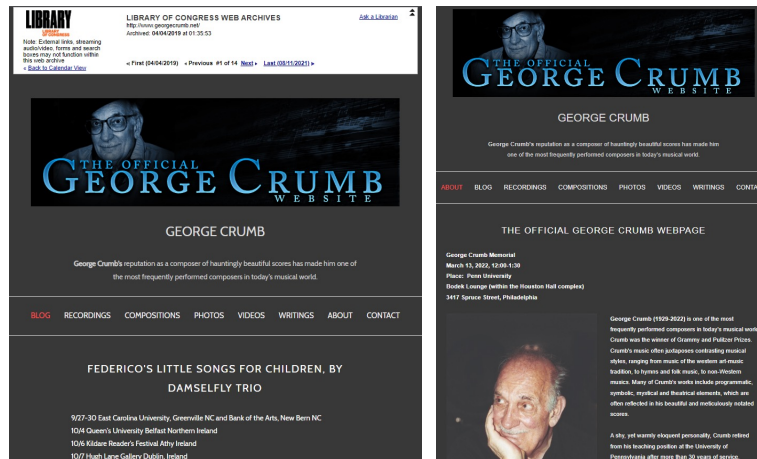
Web Archives Collection Advocacy

Research Orientations

I take time to demonstrate web archives at research orientations for relevant topics.

Example: Graduate seminar on the music of American composer George Crumb (1929-2022).

- Information literacy exercise: "Compare the first capture from April 2019 to the live web."



Once our finding aids are out there, we need to advocate for our collections to be found and used. I prioritize web archives in this way.

For example, I recently held a research orientation for a local graduate seminar about the composer George Crumb, whose papers we hold. I asked the students to participate in an information literacy exercise comparing our first capture of his website in 2019 when he was still alive to the live web now many months after his passing.

I'm sure many of you promote paper primary sources in this way. Does anyone else here do it for web archives?

Web Archives Collection Advocacy

Blog Posts for *In the Muse*

- For ease of use, created a “Web Archives” blog category in our menu
- Announce release of new performing arts web archive collections
- Mention web archives in blog posts as resources alongside books, scores, finding aids, and digital collections
- Create content that guides readers through use cases for web archives
- Stay in touch with Web Archiving Team for cross-posting possibilities (double the readership!)

Dance in Our Web Archives
April 5, 2021 by Melissa Wertheimer

National Dance Week 2021 begins April 19th, but the Music Division loves dance throughout the month and entire year! We often promote our dance special collections and stories of dancers and choreographers within them on this blog, and you can explore these past posts with the blog category tags “Dance” and “Women in Dance.” Today’s post, though, gives an early launch to National Dance Week by featuring dance, dancers, and choreographers within archived websites at the Library of Congress Since 2018, I have been curating and managing the Music Division’s web archive collections, and I’ve selected some dance highlights for you all to click through and enjoy.

Performing Arts Web Archive

Began in 2011, the Performing Arts Web Archive was the Music Division’s first web archive collection. It contains web content that relates to subjects and creators in the Music Division’s special collections and rare materials.

For example, the Music Division is the repository of the Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation collection. The Ailey School is the official training school for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, so the Ailey School’s archived website is an important part of our web archives. I encourage you to explore this December 2019 capture about the Ailey School’s 50th anniversary celebration events. Can you find this content on the live Web of 7 Doubtful – ephemeral historical content indeed! The website of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is still under embargo, but check back a year from now to explore archived captures.

The archived online resource the Glen Tetley Legacy is also a great tool for any Music Division researchers who wish to further contextualize their work with the American Ballet Theatre Archive and Martha Graham Collection. Dancers Responding to AIDS (DRA) is another organization archived in the Performing Arts Web Archive. The Dance Heritage Coalition is an organization that no longer exists, but its web content is preserved with us!

LC Commissioned Composers Web Archive

Screen shot of a February 7, 2010 capture in the web archives of the Dance Heritage Coalition’s Improbable Dance Treasures online exhibit. This page from the online exhibit features an online “L. Lindbergh. This live captured website has faded away.”

Announcing the Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive
May 3, 2021 by Melissa Wertheimer

I am excited to share the Music Division’s latest web archive collection, the Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive! This collection contains websites and select social media to document professional networks in the performing arts over time. The collection items are those of professional, labor, and advocacy organizations at regional, national, and international levels. Its initial batch of 65 archived websites is ready for you to explore in our digital collections. By the summer, expect at least 100! My seed list for the collection is quite large – over 500 unique URLs.



Screenshot of a September 12, 2005 capture of the Actors' Equity Association website in the Professional Organizations for Performing Arts Web Archive. Note the news on the homepage about the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the theater community. This particular capture is incidental (incomplete), but captures from May 2009 onward are deeper crawls.

I also make web archives known as a resource through blog posts I write for our division’s blog *In the Muse*. I reference web archives as resources right alongside books and scores, announce new collections, and walk readers through use cases.

Does anyone else write about web archives for their institution’s blog?

Web Archives Collection Advocacy

Research Guide: Dance Research at the Library of Congress

Dance Research at the Library of Congress

This guide helps users navigate the wide variety of resources related to dance at the Library, including reference materials, special collections, music scores, and databases.

Introduction

Reference Materials

Online Exhibitions

Digital Collections

Special Collections

Dance Material in General Collections

Using the Library of Congress



Ecole de Mouvement. Pen and watercolor drawing of students at Branislava Nijinska's Ecole de Mouvement, 1919. Branislava Nijinska Collection, Library of Congress Music Division.

Most archival material related to dance is available from the Music Division in the Performing Arts Reading Room. However, many valuable dance resources are also available throughout the Library of Congress: Prints and Photographs Division, Manuscript Division, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, American Folklife Center, and in the general collections.

Because of the many locations in the Library of Congress for dance research materials, this guide is organized by resource type. Use the navigation menu on the left-hand side of the guide to learn more.

<https://guides.loc.gov/dance/>

Performing Arts

Ask a Librarian

Have a question? Need assistance? Use our [online form](#) to ask a librarian for help.



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I also advocate for web archives in online research guides (known to many of you as LibGuides). I list web archives as digital resources in addition to digital collections of scanned items. This example is the guide for dance research, which has many examples of web archives.

Anyone here list web archive collections alongside other digital collections in LibGuides?

Web Archives Collection Advocacy

Research Guide: Performing Arts Web Archives at the Library of Congress

Performing Arts Web Archives at the Library of Congress

This guide describes digital collections of web archives related to the performing arts, how to navigate the collections, potential research questions, and how web archives relate to Music Division holdings.

Introduction

Websites play a special role as evidence of culture and creativity. In the performing arts, websites include content specific to the field, such as concert programs, multimedia of performances and compositions, press kits and promotional materials, repertoire lists, biographical sketches, discographies, tour calendars, and more. Web archives are rich resources necessary to fully research, understand, explore, and document the performing arts in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Websites are born-digital records that are uniquely ephemeral - they can change or disappear at any time. Web archiving uses technology to create copies of websites so that the information, look, and feel of the content is both preserved and accessible. Web archive collections are curated digital collections that can be either *event-based* to document a specific moment in time or *thematic* to bring together related web archives with shared subjects.

The Library of Congress began its web archiving program in 2000. In 2011, the Music Division's participation in the program began with the Performing Arts Web Archive. Music Division staff curate three ongoing web archive collections and contribute performing arts content to Library-wide multi-disciplinary collections.

Web archive collections are accessible through the Library of Congress Digital Collections. Most performing arts web archives are available to offsite users. Select web archives are only available to onsite visitors at the Library of Congress through a reading room computer or while connected to the Library's free Wi-Fi network.

Performing Arts

Ask a Librarian

Have a question? Need assistance? Use our [online form](#) to ask a librarian for help.

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Screenshot of the Web Archive collections landing page at the Library of Congress.

<https://guides.loc.gov/performing-arts-web-archives/>



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I also created an online research guide solely about performing arts web archives, and it's the first one at the Library of Congress to only focus on web archives. I include why web archives are important, sample research questions for each collection, and related collections created by other divisions.

Has anyone created a LibGuide – or even a finding aid - just for web archives at your institution?

For Fun & More Information

Web Archives category of Music Division's blog *In the Muse*

- <https://blogs.loc.gov/music/category/web-archives/>

Web Archiving category of Digital Content Management Section's blog *The Signal*

- <https://blogs.loc.gov/thesignal/category/web-archiving-2/>

Library of Congress Web Archiving Program:

- <https://www.loc.gov/programs/web-archiving/about-this-program/>

**2022 – 2023 National Digital Stewardship Alliance Web Archiving Survey
(open through November 4, 2022):**

- <https://forms.gle/axWqYoP5ziYix3RP7>

Thanks! Stay in touch!
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Enjoy these Library of Congress links to blogs and web archiving information!

Also: if you do have web archiving at your institution, quick plug: please take the survey I helped to create for the National Digital Stewardship Alliance! We want to know what you're up to.

Thanks so much for your time, and I look forward to all of you being in touch.