

International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres

United Kingdom and Ireland Branch

Excellence Award for Music Libraries 2019 Award Winners – Citations

| Library Name | Comments |
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| <p>Gerald Coke Handel Collection</p> <p>WITH DISTINCTION</p> | <p>Excellent achievements by a very special library, continually developing and reaching out to scholars.</p> <p>A shining example of a library that totally excels in all it does and uses every available opportunity to further enhance the collection, the staff, and the richness of the service it provides.</p> <p>This is an excellent application, demonstrating how it is possible to provide an excellent service by making the most of the available resources and exploiting other opportunities to the full. Programme of digitisation, professional involvement, offering training opportunities to students, using creative opportunities to publicise the collection and offering a professional service all contribute to a high level of excellence, and thus deserving of award with distinction.</p> <p>This is a model of how a highly-specialised collection can be made accessible to a broad range of visitors and researchers. Their outreach activities in particular are to be commended. This is an outstanding music library of a very special sort, and its highly-professional staff are doing a wonderful job. I have no hesitation in recommending a distinction.</p> <p>This is a library housing a collection of international importance. By its nature, its holdings and therefore service is specialized, but within those special parameters I believe the Library meets all the criteria which would determine an Excellence Award. Points which stuck out for me include: collaboration with the London Handel Festival; a display to coincide with Theodora at the Proms; the editing and production of an annual Handbook for Studies in 18th-century English Music; lunchtime talks by the Librarian. I note that the application singles out IAML as an important route for professional development, 'which can be difficult in a small organization'.</p> |

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| <p>Royal Northern College Music Library</p> <p>WITH DISTINCTION</p> | <p>Excellent conservatoire library, responsive to its own users, performers and scholars.</p> <p>An outstanding conservatoire library with highly skilled staff and very good access that is constantly thinking of new and innovative ways of developing the service (e.g. live streaming of concerts, Teaching and Learning Award, pop up sessions in the café, digital information screens, feedback walls, auto-enrolment of new staff, and refresher training).</p> <p>I'm happy to recommend a distinction award for the RNCM. I liked their "Planet eStream" service (making recordings of college performances available), that's clearly an area where they have expertise to share. I liked the fact that staff have a weekly 30-minute training session, plus a supportive performance review and feedback process. I liked their Moodle site, their info lit training, the increased support for students of popular music (this last one a fairly limited thing, but at least they thought about it), and I liked their "You said, we did" initiative. Good job, guys.</p> <p>I appreciated the tabular layout of holding statistics, and I note the important regional specializations running through the Special Collections and Archive holdings. I also like that these holdings are exploited (for example, the Making Music in Manchester during World War I exhibition; and that they are available online.</p> |
| <p>Cardiff University Music Library</p> | <p>Significantly, the only British university library to have submitted, managing with limited staff, ensuring music knowledge is widely available and with excellent feedback.</p> <p>An excellent library with staff that are brimming with imaginative ideas for developing the library and engaging with its users.</p> <p>I should like to have had more evidence of, and information about, collection development and how this links with the teaching curriculum & research taking place in the School.</p> <p>Throughout, there is a thorough demonstration of good practice, development, and innovation, as well as many charming, human, and engaging points: for example, the Facebook group, collaboration with Archivist and History Professor, School Staff Publication exhibitions, the Student Library representative. I love the user feedback comments at the end of the application. 'The best library and librarians in the world' says it all. This is a comment not from one of us assessors, but from a real life library user: it should be taken seriously.</p> <p>Commendations for community membership scheme, co-operation with Royal Welsh College and student feedback.</p> |

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| <p>City of London: Barbican Music Library</p> | <p>Excellent collections, outward-looking approach, ambitious exhibitions</p> <p>Excellent collection, staff and accessibility. Its programme of exhibitions has brought in new users and drawn the library to the attention of lots of new users. This is a library to visit to get ideas and be inspired.</p> <p>The programme of events, exhibition, outreach and partnership working is to be highly commended and definitely worthy of sharing with other colleagues.</p> <p>I certainly commend them for the high quality of their staff team, and for outreach and exhibitions.</p> <p>The holdings of the Library are very comprehensive, but I note that there is a policy that, rather than holding orchestral sets, these are sourced for borrowers through ILL as required (though the reason for this policy is not stated). The online resources are impressive, as are the qualifications and experience of the staff members (who all 'work exclusively in the Music Library'). I was very interested to read, under 'Partnership Work', about the exhibitions programme. In my experience, these exhibitions are always hugely interesting, professionally curated, well attended, and attract much comment. They provide a fine example of the sort of 'outreach' that a music library can achieve. I'm also pleased to see the Library housing the G&S Society collections.</p> <p>Commendations for Unsigned London scheme and effective use of social media.</p> |
| <p>Community & Youth Music Library (CYML)</p> | <p>A model of a library which ensures its own continuation, with good, responsive staff</p> <p>A performance sets library that punches well above its weight and plays a key role in interlibrary loans and sustaining music groups. Skilled staff, responding 24/7 to enquiries, ensures it both understands its users and obtains funds to continue to develop and improve.</p> <p>CYML provides a valuable service in limited circumstances. I am aware what is involved in making this service viable. The Trustees, administrator and volunteers are to be congratulated</p> <p>Some good work with grants that could be shared with others, and clearly they have gained a lot of knowledge during the transfer of the service from the LCC/GLC to CYM. Their apparently high levels of user satisfaction are also to be commended.</p> <p>I enjoyed learning about how this uniquely funded and structured library is run and was particularly impressed by the way this service</p> |

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| | <p>blends the wide and varied experience and services of professional and qualified people, and volunteers. I am sure that this particular mix gives a special and cherished flavour to what this library does, and how it goes about its business. CYML provides a valuable model upon which other libraries could usefully and profitably base themselves. I was particularly struck by the wide customer base served by CYML</p> <p>Commendation for innovative delivery within restrictions of postal mode of user interaction.</p> |
| <p>Henry Watson Music Library, Manchester</p> | <p>A fine library which is continually developing and responding to local and wider needs.</p> <p>A fantastically vibrant music library with excellent access and staff that fully develop and exploit its rich and abundant resources to provide an excellent service and attract a broad range of users. Partnerships and events have further enhanced the library and heightened awareness of the collection.</p> <p>HWML clearly knows its audience and has been re-vitalised since the building refurbishment. Although the staffing issues are recognised and understood I find it disappointing that such a prestigious collection of national importance serving a significant music population does not employ more musically qualified staff. The general accessibility and opening hours for the Library is good; the lack of availability of the library's large performance sets collection through ILL is disappointing and it isn't clear if the Library will source materials which are not stocked by it.</p> <p>They show themselves to be innovative in the large amount of musical instruments and associated equipment such as amps that they have available; and their reference point is also a model for others to follow. However, I worried that the chief music librarian will soon be retiring and feel that this is a service in some danger, even though Manchester is such a "library city".</p> <p>The lists of organizations with which the Library co-operates (under 'Partnership work...') is hugely impressive and shows that it is at the epicentre of music librarianship in the highly developed musical life in Manchester and northwest England. Similarly, under 'Engagement with users', the list of achievements is staggering, nicely summed up by the statement that the Henry Watson is part of 'the most visited library in the country' (Manchester Central Library) – and clearly the Henry Watson's activities contribute to making that so.</p> <p>Commendation for innovative DJ mixer/composition facility for users.</p> |
| <p>Jerwood Library (Trinity Laban)</p> | <p>An excellent conservatoire library, well-staffed and resourced, never sitting on its laurels.</p> |

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| | <p>A rich and highly developed collection of print and online resources ably supported by a highly skilled and knowledgeable team of staff that truly fully engages with students and staff in a way that will influence their use of libraries throughout their lives.</p> <p>The Library offers everything to be expected for a conservatoire. Its engagement with users & potential users and programme of user education deserve special commendation.</p> <p>Jerwood made good points in its application in regard to its nimble and imaginative acquisitions policy and deserves high marks for its provision for those with disabilities, which at Trinity Laban turns out to be quite a high percentage of core users. They clearly have lessons to share with the rest of us in this latter area. I was also impressed that the staff all have an FHEA qualification, that shows dedication and commitment.</p> <p>The notes on the special collections interested me: together, these are of national significance. I was glad to see a detailed statement of the acquisition policies – these are pragmatic, well-thought out, and (in the application’s own words) ‘agile’. It’s important that part of the policy is to respond to user recommendations. The Library team (big!) is uniformly highly qualified, professionally developed, and at the same time ‘hands on’.</p> <p>Commendation for disability awareness and single interface search facility.</p> |
| <p>Nottingham Performing Arts Library Service (NPALS)</p> | <p>Good example of an innovative response to difficulties, seeking to extend its services in ways which might be models for other libraries under threat</p> <p>A library that has quickly become a beacon to other music libraries both in terms of its work as a performance sets hub and its revolutionary custom-built library management computer system.</p> <p>It has become an exemplar for potential ways of working together with other libraries / organisations and should be commended for it. There is definitely evidence of sustained good work and practice with potential to be adopted by others.</p> <p>The recasting of the performance sets service over the past few years. They also deserve credit for increasing their social media outreach, but for also using more traditional methods such as printed leaflets, having regard to their mixed demographic.</p> <p>I was glad to read the extensive ‘Background and Context’ provided at the start of the application. It tells a familiar story of the vicissitudes of cuts and service withdrawals, and how these were faced and overcome by pragmatic and forward-thinking decision making. I loved the 2017 National Hearts for the Arts Award for the</p> |

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| | <p>best local authority arts initiative for its innovative work to provide an outstanding, cost-effective service, and would like to think it appropriate to match this in terms of recognition by adding a IAML Excellence Award.</p> |
| <p>OUP Music Hire Library</p> | <p>High time that we recognised the excellent work of publishers’ hire libraries. OUP’s is a great model.</p> <p>One of the most outstanding music publishers hire libraries in the world with flexible stock and good worldwide access to meet demand, combined with highly qualified staff that fully regards the needs of its users.</p> <p>It’s good to hear that chamber music is mostly available for sale rather than hire – this has always been an issue for conservatoires in particular, and I should like to commend OUP for taking that decision. The information about Yumpu and audio recordings being made available was also news to me and which, I think, is worthy of wider publicising. OUP’s co-operation with the sector is notable.</p> <p>OUP offers an exemplary hire service, and clearly has a role in sharing best practice. It also has strong leadership and a good team of people below the leader. There was a certain lack of innovation (though how exactly one can innovate very much in a service that is of necessity finance driven, is a difficult question to answer.)</p> <p>Commendation for expertise in copyright and business matters.</p> |
| <p>Royal College of Music Library</p> | <p>A very highly regarded music conservatoire library with an amazingly rich physical and online collection supported by a highly knowledgeable and experienced staff. Also, a library that makes a significant contribution to the interlibrary loan of vocal sets to other libraries and choral societies.</p> <p>The RCM library is another strong example of what a conservatoire library should be. The examples of using the collections in the academic programme are interesting, as is the work with academic colleagues to embed online resources.</p> <p>The RCM is one of the UK’s great library collections. It has great and experienced staff. However, I wanted to see innovation, not just “we have a great collection”, and I didn’t see it in this application, although hopefully there is innovation going on.</p> <p>Clearly, this is a world-class music library – the stock is extensive and comprehensive, the special holdings are simply magnificent (for example, but not limited to) the list of composer manuscripts. There’s a natural emphasis on performance history. Staffing is comprehensive and impressive (in quantity and qualification), and I like the fact the aspects of the collection are looked after by specialists (string music by a string player, for example). I was interested to see the detail given on cataloguing (both achievements</p> |

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| | <p>and plans). I also note that the Library, as well as being represented in IAML also participates in the Hire & Orchestral Library Group (facilitated jointly by the Music Publishers Association and the Association of British Orchestras librarians) – demonstrating a willingness to be involved with the wider music making scene, including discourse with music publishers. The almost totally positive user survey results tell their own story for this Library.</p> |
| <p>Trinity College Dublin Library</p> | <p>Library achieves wonders with fairly limited staffing.</p> <p>An impressive legal deposit library led by a distinguished music librarian who works closely with staff, students and other music librarians and whose engagement with performers has stimulated research and resulted in radio programmes, concerts, CDs, and publications.</p> <p>The leading role of TCD Music library in the sector in Ireland cannot be overstated. The collaboration and co-operation is a good example to others.</p> <p>TCD limps along with just one qualified – and very, very dedicated – staff member. But however well this staff member does, being effectively a one-person show makes it really difficult to do anything innovative. I fear slightly for the future of this service.</p> <p>As a Legal Deposit Library, holdings of printed books and printed music are bound to be comprehensive, and thus we are looking at the way these are accessed, and other, special, aspects of the Library’s holdings. In my view, the access arrangements for the printed collections are generous and all-embracing; and the special collections are of national importance for Ireland. Development through purchase of non-legally deposited items is also impressive. I was interested to read of the Music Library’s participation in the Research Collections Division, and the integrated approach that has resulted from this.</p> |

Personal Achievement Award 2019 Award Winners – Citations

| Name | Comments |
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| <p>Claire Marsh, Leeds College of Music Library</p> | <p>Clearly respected and intent on innovation and development. Full marks!</p> <p>She is clearly very highly regarded and has demonstrated leadership skills, transformed working practices, improved access to the collection, overseen a smooth move into new premises, provides excellent customer service, and has developed a welcoming team.</p> <p>I know she has also been very supportive of staff in other music libraries (and the former Yorkshire Music Library) and she has also been instrumental in introducing a new resource discovery system.</p> <p>Claire has successfully instituted a number of new policies and procedures and is working collaboratively with colleagues.</p> <p>Claire Marsh earns a Personal Achievement Award for her efforts in managing change, and for her outreach efforts to a very wide and diverse constituency of users. The experience that she has built up in this area may well help her become a mentor for others who find themselves required to re-cast a music library service. I support an Award for Claire wholeheartedly. It is good to read about such professional and dedicated work.</p> <p>I would highlight the following as examples of development/innovation: (1) access to Junior Department students and families, and the public; (2) move into new premises; (3) staffing re-structure; (4) balance between donors/public, and student requirements. I believe that Claire is fully deserving of a Personal Achievement Award.</p> <p>Commendable management within institution and servicing of lifelong learners.</p> |
| <p>Jude Paton, Nottingham Performing Arts Library Service (NPALS)</p> | <p>Clearly the leading light in NPALS' success, collaboration and development. Full marks.</p> <p>Jude has clearly been instrumental to the success of NPALS and deserves the award for continuing to develop its revolutionary library management system; promoting the service using social media, events, and open days for other library staff; maintaining partnerships with Making Music and networking with other music librarians to</p> |

exchange ideas and further develop herself and the service she offers; her commitment to interlibrary loan of sets and keeping a good balance of support to other library services and the needs of the Nottingham; her fundamental understanding and support of her customers; and being a shining example of what it truly means to be a music librarian.

Jude's commitment to her job, going above and beyond the call of duty and initiating some interesting developments are clearly demonstrated here. Jude definitely deserves the award

A clearly admirable effort on Jude Paton's part in developing, promoting and, to some extent, recasting the Nottingham Performing Arts Library Service. Her sponsor's supporting statement recognises Jude's great personal commitment to the service, and – equally importantly -- to its promotion. The work that Jude has done in developing the loans system for performing sets presents a good example and model for others to follow, moving the service forward and therefore helping it to remain sustainable. This part of Jude's work in itself would justify a Personal Achievement Award; but Jude's other achievements in the period under review clearly go far beyond. Top marks!

Jude's various achievements are manifold, and almost speak for themselves in the application: (1) initiating a smart payment system; (2) social media profiles; (3) writing staff manuals; (4) offering advice to other libraries; (5) relationships with the community; (6) supporting make music day. I believe that Jude is fully deserving of a Personal Achievement Award.

Effective transition strategy, use of technology, staff development, networking and community engagement.

Excellence Awards 2019 – Judging panel

Dr Charles Inskip, (Chair of the Judging Panel) Senior lecturer, Programme Director, MA Library and Information Studies, University College London

Dr. Ingrid E. Pearson, Research Fellow in Performance Practice, Royal College of Music

John Wagstaff, Librarian, Christ's College Cambridge

Peter Baxter, former IAML (UK & Irl) President and Senior Librarian at Surrey Performing Arts Library

Anna Wright, Immediate IAML (UK & Irl) Past President and recently retired Head Librarian at RNCM

Simon Wright, Head of Rights & Contracts, Music, Oxford University Press

Pam Thompson, former IAML (UK & Irl) President and Head Librarian at RCM

Excellence Award Advisory Committee

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