



*RIPM, Le Répertoire International de la Presse Musicale:
Preserving and Providing Access to the Historic Musical Press*

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RIPM – Répertoire international de la presse musicale, or, Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals – digitizes, indexes, and provides access to music periodicals originally published between 1760 and 1966. RIPM’s publications offer online access for the first time to extensive collections of rare, primary source music periodicals. By the end of 2018, RIPM will have treated nearly 500 music journals, produced a database of more than 900,000 annotated citations and its online collections contain over 1,350,000 full text pages.

Founded in 1980 as the fourth international Repertory, or R-project, RIPM was established to provide access to eighteenth-, nineteenth- and twentieth-century music periodical literature and to facilitate and encourage research based on this often neglected documentary resource. While the importance of this immense body of literature has long been recognized by the musicological and music librarianship communities, RIPM represents the first effort to undertake and to coordinate retrospective periodical indexing on an international scale.

The development of musical romanticism in the nineteenth century coincided with the parallel development of musical journalism and the creation of a very large number of periodicals dealing entirely or in part with musical activities. Specialized music journals—more than 7,000 published between approximately 1700 and 1966 have been identified, a number which has grown with continued bibliographic research—constitute a remarkable documentary resource that is of primary and unquestionable importance to the music historian. Moreover, as the discipline of musicology developed—along with its methodologies and focused interests—one observes the creation of musicology journals, the contents of which set the standard for the modern discipline and constitute an invaluable corpus of literature. Viewed collectively, this remarkable documentary resource permits us to explore music and musical life in a very detailed manner, as it developed and as it was perceived by its contemporaries.

Yet in spite of the importance of this literature, three problems prevented this material from being systematically examined: (1) the limited number of libraries possessing the journals, (2) the difficulty encountered when one attempts to locate specific information within an available source, and (3) the decaying physical condition of original copies. Clearly, gaining bibliographical control, access and preserving this exceptional source of information is of profound importance to music librarians and musicologists—a fact, moreover, which has been recognized since at least 1900 when Oscar Sonneck decried the “mind-numbing, tantic work” of turning thousands of pages in search of information.

Created specifically to resolve the problems surrounding this scholarly impasse, RIPM functions under the auspices of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML) and the International Musicological Society (IMS). RIPM also

benefits from the collaboration of scholars and institutions in some twenty countries, a principal editorial headquarters in the United States, and a network of Partner and Participating Libraries in Europe and the Americas.

RIPM's four principal online publications are organized into two series, each with two current publications. My talk will discuss these publications, provide an overview of journals included, and highlight RIPM's current initiatives for each.

Annotated Series

RIPM Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals (1760-1966)

A highly-annotated, scholarly index to nearly 300 complete runs of music periodicals. Begun in print in 1988, and released online in 2000, the database is approaching 1,000,000 annotated records. The print series completed with 318 volumes. The database is updated every six months.

RIPM Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals with Full Text (1760-1966)

If the dream of the 1980s and 1990s was to bring to light the contents of an immensely important and complex corpus of literature, today it is, understandably, to bring the literature itself to one's desktop, in a coherent, accessible format and with the speed of a mouse click. Thus, after many years of preparation for the immense task of digitizing and placing online the vast majority of journals that RIPM has indexed, the RIPM Online Archive of Music Periodicals (Full-Text) was released in May 2009. Today, it contains nearly 200 full-text periodicals, accessed through the *RIPM Retrospective Index*.

Preservation Series

European and North American Music Periodicals

Released in January 2018, RIPM Preservation Series: European and North American Music Periodicals is the first database collection in the new series. It contains 105 rare, full-text journals comprising some 600,000 pages. The periodicals in the collection deal extensively with musical life in the United States as well as in Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Spain and the U.K.—and include a number of monumental journals such as *Musical America* (New York, 1898-1922), *Le Guide musical* (Brussels, 1855-1919), the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* (Berlin, 1847-1896) and several early musicology periodicals.

RIPM Jazz Periodicals

This project has been undertaken with the collaboration of the Institute of Jazz Studies of Rutgers University which houses the largest collection of jazz periodicals in the world. This collection will initially contain 100 jazz periodicals; the expected release date is 2018.

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Yet, for all the successes of RIPM, we must ask how can RIPM continue to meet the needs of scholars and librarians worldwide? With increasing globalization of librarianship and musicology, and to better reflect the international scope of the historic musical press, we intend to continually expand our geographic and language scope to increase coverage of music journals published throughout Asia. However, before beginning this work we must first answer several

important questions. Which journals are the most important for musical research, in different countries and languages? Which libraries hold important collections of journals? What bibliographic work has already been accomplished?

We hope that fruitful discussions and possible collaborations arising from this forum will allow us to continue this important work: of providing access to an important and immense body of literature to librarians and scholars worldwide.