Theses and Dissertations from Print to ETD:
The Nuances of Preserving and Accessing those in Music

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Important products in an academic library's collection are Masters Theses and Doctoral Dissertations since they represent a wealth of scholarly and artistic content created by Masters and Doctoral students in the degree-seeking process. Each has experienced an evolution to a new format, electronic. Many of these are PDF files, using the Adobe Acrobat software. Until very recently, though, those files with accompanying materials were separated. This chapter further discusses several issues inherent in this process. These include access, use, re-use, preservation, storage, integration with other systems, copyrights, and permissions. The successful management of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs) requires effort across the entire lifecycle to ensure that ETDs are managed, preserved, and made accessible in a manner that today's users expect. Given the pressure of reading more in less time, today's users demand access to various formats regardless of temporal and spatial restrictions and the types of devices used.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Because dissertations must constitute original research, each is unique to the bibliographic world. As such, a cataloger provides original descriptive cataloging for each dissertation. Often the subject has not made literary warrant, and so several other subjects must be supplied to sufficiently create access to the dissertations. In music, however, the author achieves originality by analyzing a specific composer or composition(s), or applying a unique approach to a composition's study. The subject may also be an aspect studied in several previous works, but this is the first time it is studied in relation to a specific work. Extended Techniques in Stanley Friedman's Solus for Unaccompanied Trumpet, by Scott Meredith, is one example. While not the first to study extended techniques of the performance of the trumpet, he is the first to apply this to Solus.

In previous years, the thesis or dissertation was produced in multiple copies by use of carbon paper. However, musical dissertations retained the original examples, written in black ink on music manuscript paper that the author glued into the document. This was before the advent of the photocopy, and prior to the later introduction of software needed to produce notated music. Many universities also classify theses and dissertations together in one sequence, sometimes assigning arbitrary numbers. Other libraries, though, have chosen to classify each dissertation within the subject of its writings.

At the University of North Texas, the Libraries processed and cataloged one copy of each dissertation for the archives, classed together, in a Dewey Decimal classification symbolizing these works: 379 N81d. Catalogers then assigned a number to each, mostly in a chronological order. Simultaneously, the cataloger described the microfiche issued by UMI. By 1999, students were mandated to submit their theses and dissertations electronically. Musical dissertations and theses were issued with accompanying physical items (sound tape reels, audio cassettes, compact discs, videocassettes, both 1/2 and 3/4 inch widths, and videodiscs, which are 12 inches in diameter). Since, these were not conventional manuscript materials, they posed a challenge to those processing materials prior to their housing in the libraries. This process has evolved, and for several years, the College of Music submitted the recordings directly to the library. Today, though, the College of Music records the recitals, and sends the audio file to a librarian for audio and digital services. In a cataloging approach that foresaw the evolution to Resource Description and Access (RDA), all manifestations of each thesis or dissertation title (print, electronic, microfiche) are unified in a single bibliographic record, although each item may retain a different call number.