Collecting Local Music in Canadian Libraries: A National Survey

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Outline

● Background
● Method: survey research
● Results
● Discussion
● Next steps
Our Project

Sounds of Home

Explores the connection between music and place as it relates to the practices of local music collectors in cultural heritage institutions in Canada.
Why Study Local Music?

- Reflects broader artistic and social developments
- Part of local history
- Can represent diversity of communities
- Growing interest from cultural heritage institutions
- Often overlooked as area of study
Research Objectives

1. Identify locations of local music collections and their characteristics

2. Understand how collectors perceive the value of collecting local music

3. Document local music collection management practices and identify areas where practices may be improved
Theoretical Frameworks

“Music Scenes”

Popular music studies approach which considers local music as documentary evidence of broader cultural formations

Special Collections

Scholarship in library and information/archival sciences, which speaks to the value of collecting and documenting rare or unique artifacts
“...the importance of locality, and local structures of feeling, in revealing the significance of musical life—and the connectedness of music to other aspects of local history, heritage and culture.”

(Bennett, 2015: 24)
“...we must not only help our collections speak to the needs of our communities, but to use our collections to help build community. Our access points and our technologies should allow members ... to converse with each other and in their own minds, with artifacts that house ideas, expressions, and emotions from all times and places.”

(Wasner, 2014: 333)
Develop a collections plan outlining formats, materials types, geographic boundaries, time frame, musical genres.

Consider the collection purpose and local music collection activities of other institutions.

Online access: Descriptive content, interaction with collection materials, or digital download.
Collection development: online vendors, born digital purchasing.
Community engagement: online promotion, marketing, communication, crowdsourcing information gathering.

Consider: cataloguing, processing, storage, collection development or local music materials.
Skills needed: donor relations, handling historical or archival materials, original cataloguing, and local music research.

Contextual framework

TECHNOLOGY

- Online access: Descriptive content, interaction with collection materials, or digital download.
- Collection development: online vendors, born digital purchasing.
- Community engagement: online promotion, marketing, communication, crowdsourcing information gathering.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Communities may include: scholars, local historians, musicians, students, or teachers.
- May include: outreach, communication, relationship building, collection development.

WORKFLOWS

- Consider: cataloguing, processing, storage, collection development or local music materials.
- Skills needed: donor relations, handling historical or archival materials, original cataloguing, and local music research.

SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Consider: description, preservation, access points, storage.
- Access may include: reference, lending, online viewing/streaming, digital download.

CONTENT

- Develop of a collections plan outlining formats, materials types, geographic boundaries, time frame, musical genres.
- Consider the collection purpose and local music collection activities of other institutions.

CONTEXT

- Local music community
- Institutional mandate
- Resources
- Collection scope

COMMUNITIES MAY INCLUDE:

- Scholars
- Local historians
- Musicians
- Students
- Teachers

MAY INCLUDE:

- Outreach
- Communication
- Relationship building
- Collection development
Research questions

1. What are the local music collection management practices in Canadian libraries?
2. Where may practices for collecting local music be improved?
Method: survey research

- Electronic questionnaire in English or French
- 20 questions (18 closed/4 open ended): demographics, collection scope, collection development, promotion, access, preservation
- Follow up questions: identifying collections, follow up interviews
- Participants from Canadian libraries (105 distributed)
- Distributed via email
- Open for 3 weeks
Demographics
Collection Scope

Q5 What formats are included in your local music collection(s)?

- Sound recordings: 13
- Video recordings: 9
- Notated music: 8
- Concert Programs: 8
- Instructional materials: 7
- Printed ephemera: 7
- Posters: 7
- Photographs: 7
- Monographs: 6
- Music manuscripts: 5
- Objects: 3
- Other: 3
Q16 Where is the physical location of the local music collection(s) within your institution?

- Archives or special collections: 8
- Interfiled with other music collections: 6
- Onsite storage: 5
- Special collection within a music library: 4
- Other: 1
Q8 Who are the users of your local music collection(s)?

- Community members: 3 Tertiary users, 8 Secondary users, 5 Primary users
- Researchers: 2 Tertiary users, 2 Secondary users, 1 Primary user
- Students: 2 Tertiary users, 6 Secondary users
- Donors: 2 Tertiary users, 1 Secondary user
- Visitors from other communities: 1 Tertiary user, 1 Secondary user
promotion

Q10 How are the local music collection(s) promoted?

- Community engagement: 9
- Events: 8
- Online advertising or social media: 8
- Print promotional materials: 4
- Writing a scholarly article: 4
- Development of collection-specific branding: 3
- Radio or podcasts: 3
- Media promotion: 2
- Development of promotional film: 1
- Other: 5
- Not applicable: 2
Sources of Acquisition

Q12 How often do you acquire local music materials from the following sources?

- Individual artists and bands: Rarely 1, Occasionally 5, Frequently 4, Very frequently 1
- Donations: Rarely 2, Occasionally 4, Frequently 4, Very frequently 1
- Community based organizations or groups: Rarely 3, Occasionally 1, Frequently 4, Very frequently 3
- Music stores or vendors: Rarely 3, Occasionally 1, Frequently 4, Very frequently 2
- Music label or publisher: Rarely 3, Occasionally 3, Frequently 3, Very frequently 2
- At events: Rarely 3, Occasionally 5, Frequently 5, Very frequently 0
- Create sound recordings: Rarely 3, Occasionally 2, Frequently 1, Very frequently 0
- Social media: Rarely 1, Occasionally 4, Frequently 0, Very frequently 0
- Other: Rarely 1, Occasionally 0, Frequently 0, Very frequently 0
Discussion

- Local music collections are complex, divers, and require unique strategies for management.
- Partnership may be a key aspect of local music collection work.
- Community impacts all aspects of local music collecting and collections.
Next steps

Expand focus to include broader cultural heritage community, private collectors...
● Qualitative analysis of survey data
● Interviews and site visits
● Expand digital libraries focus
● Local music collecting symposium/edited collection [Stay tuned!]
Questions?

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