

Minutes of the Introductory Meeting of Repertoire International d'Iconographie Musicale, held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the AIBM at the Hochschule für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften, St. Gall, Switzerland, Thursday, 26 August 1971

The session was introduced by Dr. Harald Heckmann (Kassel). In preparation for this session Dr. Heckmann reported that he had sought out the term "musical iconography" in a number of standard reference works. Grove, MGG, Larousse, Apel's Harvard Dictionary yielded not a trace, nor is an entry planned for the supplement of MGG. Only Riemann (and Sinziy [which is based on Riemann]) devotes half a column to the subject, and concludes with the observation, "Die Katalogisierung der Quellen zur musikalischen Ikonographie steht noch in den Anfängen." From this, Dr. Heckmann observed, one can establish that 1) for music historians in general iconography is still more or less a "quantité négligeable," and 2) that the basis for a systematic survey of the iconographical sources has yet to be laid. That is why we are here. Dr. Heckmann also noted that it is appropriate that this meeting takes place at a congress of music librarians because 1) AIBM and IMS have long worked profitably together on such projects as RISM_U and RILM, 2) that librarians understand the task of documenting sources, and 3) that it is the profession of the librarian to gather sources of information. Pictures, like books, manuscripts, music and musical instruments, are sources of information.

Dr. Heckmann was followed by Prof. Barry Brook (New York) who called attention to previous abortive attempts at indexing musical iconographic sources, notably those proposed by Leichtentritt, Scheurleer and Hess. (Later in the session A. Hyatt King also

called attention to an article written by Barclay Squire in 1931 pointing out ~~makingxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the need for a "comprehensive catalogue of paintings and drawings of musicians which are scattered in public and private collections in Europe and America.") Prof. Brook proposed several possible acronyms for the undertaking, the original one, RICOM, having been strongly opposed as being too similar to ICOM. He reported that his visits to a number of European museums, art historians and special collections revealed that very little is currently begin done with subject indexing or the study of the subject content of their holdings. There do exist, however, several major methods of iconographical classification, notably the Index of Christian Art at Princeton University and Hans van de Waal's Icon-Class system. The cataloging of musical iconographic materials is many years behind the cataloging of music. It is, in fact, just about where Pitner was when he began his bibliographic work in music. Prof. Brook noted that this new venture requires 1) an organized body of source material, 2) a methodology or tested body of research techniques, 3) schools for the training of iconographers, and 4) relatively inexpensive methods for the exchanging of documents. Ideally, each country should have a major center where all of the information on the sources is gathered (as is done with RISM and RILM), so that this information can be exchanged between centers or between a center and an individual scholar. Prof. Brook suggested the following desiderata for iconographic-bibliographic control: 1) that all cataloging be accompanied by a reproduction of the work catalogued, 2)

RISMUS
RILM
IRMI

that all cataloging be designed for future computerization, and 3) that all cataloging use some kind of standardized minimal fiche so that information can be readily exchanged.

Prof. Brook then introduced Prof. Emanuel Winternitz (New York) who spoke on "Accumulation and Interpretation of Iconographical Evidence -- Verbal versus Visual Retrieval." Prof. Winternitz pointed out that musical treatises of the Middle Ages and Renaissance contain an abundance of material focusing on theoretical matters, but reveal little on the actual techniques of performance, grouping of ensembles and the like. He then discussed six types of problems likely to be encountered by the cataloger of musical iconographical materials -- cases in which the purely visual evidence is blurred, therefore requiring additional interpretation by the indexer:

- 1) Pictorial Symmetry. The principle of visual symmetry often takes precedence over realism in depicting the ~~XXXXX~~ number and/or the construction of instruments.
- 2) Pseudo-Archaeology. Errors are likely to result from the free imitation of Greek or Roman scenes by Renaissance artists.
- 3) Allegorical-symbolic demands often outweigh contemporary practice, as in some depictions of the Renaissance lira da braccio.
- 4) False Perspective. Different parts of the same instrument are sometimes realized in a combination of two different perspectives, thus creating the image of an instrument which never actually existed.

- 5) Copying Copies. One of the most important sources of error in interpreting visual materials, here demonstrated, among other examples, by several illustrations of later copies of the hydraulis from the Utrecht Psalter.
- 6) The distortion of three-dimensional works of art [when transferred to two-dimensional media].
- 7) Context. The context of the musical scene is often essential to its correct interpretation.

Prof. Winternitz then posed the question, "Will the cataloger be able, without sufficient training, to pay attention to the problems of this kind?" He closed his lecture with two requests:

- 1) A plea for the accumulation of visual materials in visual form. "No verbalization can do justice to the concrete, complex, individual configuration represented in a work of art, ^{to the} ^{the} infinite number of subtle lines, curves and shapes in painting that constitute the arms, hands, fingers of the player moving his fingers over the strings of a fiddle." 2) A plea for the systematic training of catalogers in the technique of interpretation, including some familiarity with the various styles and techniques by which the visual arts portray the objects in various periods of history.

Prof. Winternitz was followed by Mme. ^{de} Chambure (Paris), who presented the first of two discussions of "Problems of Cataloging and Classification of Iconographic Materials." She described the cataloging of the collection of iconographic materials which ^{is} part of the musical instrument ^{collection} of the Conservatoire.

This collection of pictures originally began as Mme. ^{de} Chambure's

will eventually become
At present it is a
part of the Recherche Cooperatives Sans Programme of the C.N.R.S.

own personal collection of photographs, slides -- even postcards -- of works of art of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries. The collection has since been expanded to cover the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries as well. It serves a most diverse clientele, from school children, to scholars, to researchers from the movies, theater and television. Because of this diversity the cataloging must be simple and direct, easily understood with as little assistance as possible from the curator. The basic fiche or catalog card is printed on white cards and has five principal entries:

- 1) the artist;
- 2) the title or theme (in capital letters);
- 3) the instruments, dancers, singers, ensembles, etc., represented;
- 4) the location of the work; and
- 5) the origin of the document (the name of the photographer, museum, etc., from which the photograph was obtained).

These catalog cards are then duplicated so that there are enough of them to file at least one in each of five fichiers:

- 1) by the name of the artist, with cross-references when the artist is in dispute;
- 2) by theme or title (with additional cards for subsidiary themes, if there are any);
- 3) by repository;
- 4) by instrument, with a separate card for each instrument or ensemble represented, as well as separate cards for prominent

parts of instruments or other details which are clearly depicted (bows and types of partbooks, for example); and 5) by the source of the photograph.

The photographs themselves (18 x 24) are mounted on cardboard, with the names of the instruments on the margins and with arrows pointing from the name of the instrument to the representation of the instruments. There are as many reproductions of the photograph as there are instruments ~~represented~~ ^{depicted} in it, as well as enlargements of prominent and important details of instrument construction. There is also a fichier de recherche, on pink cards, which indexes the location of reproductions in books or catalogs. The collection attempts a broad coverage of Western art from the thirteenth through nineteenth centuries, but there are also areas of specialization, notably French painting, and especially fourteenth- and fifteenth-century French frescoes, certain painters (Baschenis, Monari, Strozzi, the Caravaggistes), certain themes (the Five Senses, banquets, David, Salome's Dance) and lute roses.

The second of the two discussions of "Problems of Cataloging and Classification of Iconographic Materials" was presented by Prof. Howard Mayer Brown (Chicago). Prof. Brown noted that his book Musical Iconography -- A Manual for Cataloging Musical Subjects in Western Art Before 1800, written with Joan Lascelle, is soon to be published by the Harvard University Press. Prof. Brown pointed out that a musicologist needs to know three kinds of things about a work of art:

- 1) The basic bibliographical information: the name of the artist who created the work, the title of the work, when and where it was created, the medium, the size, the present location, and the books or photo archives in which one can find a reproduction.
- 2) The subject matter, without which knowledge it is impossible to evaluate the material properly.
- 3) The sort of musical information it contains: what instruments are shown, how large the groups are, for what occasions the musicians are playing, etc.

In indexing the instruments depicted, Prof. Brown stated that they have tried to divide Western European instruments into a few relatively simple families, whether this is anachronistic or not. Thus a "guitar" is anything that follows certain criteria, whether or not the term "guitar" was used in the period in question. They have also tried to make the system correspond not so much to the way instruments were really built as to the way they look in pictures.

The Brown-Lascelle system uses a central card for each work of art, plus many detailed sub-indexes -- by country, century, kinds of instruments and ensembles depicted, subject matter, etc. In creating the analytical categories for the sub-indexes they have tried to build the categories ~~for~~ on broad enough lines to include more examples than many individual researchers will need in order that an overly discriminating system not hide more than it reveals. Prof. Brown emphasized that any indexing system

of this kind should be devised so that some works can be analyzed incompletely and still fit into it and so that additional information can be inserted into the index at any stage. He also emphasized that it is absolutely essential that a reproduction accompany the work sheet or index card for each item.

In the discussion that followed the formal presentations, Prof. Brook noted that the project has the support of AIBM, IMS and CIMCIM, and that the presidents of these organizations have designated Dr. Heckmann, Mme de Chambure and himself to serve as temporary chairmen. He stressed the importance of not attempting to operate in a musical vacuum but rather within the framework of the indexing projects of the museum organizations and art historians.

Dr. Heckmann observed that if we, as musical iconographers devise a system and begin indexing collections of paintings, prints, photos, etc., we will surely be followed by the theologians, the architects, the shipbuilders -- each wanting to do their own indexing as well. Should we not try to create a broader organization with the art historians and index the material from all aspects at once? This observation was seconded by Prof. Winternitz, who noted that such indexing would settle from the very beginning the crucial problem of the context; and from a commercial point of view the indexing that would result would appeal to many more consumers.

Prof. Dr. Alfred Berner (Berlin) added that working with art historians and museum experts is very important because many works of art are no longer in their original state and only they can tell us if the work in question has been altered or restored.

Dr. Albert Schug (Cologne) called attention to the fact that there are already a number of national organizations working on the documentation of museum objects: in the United States the American Museum Computer Network, in England the Information Retrieval Group of the Museum Association and in Germany the Arbeitsgruppe für Museumsdokumentation. These three groups have developed common principles of documentation which they have agreed to follow, and these principles were to be presented at the Paris meetings of ICOM the following week. In the meantime, these principles have been tested for their possibilities for the computer documentation of museum objects and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City has already computerized an index of its 25,000 objects (although without a subject approach). Dr. Schug observed that in museum documentation the problem of iconography is doubtless the most difficult. For iconographical purposes, however, one might compare the indexing document to a painting with a huge background area with an endless number of plots into which one can bring information as it becomes available, thereby filling out the background. Thus it is not necessary to commence the indexing of ~~every~~ every aspect of a work all at once as long as provision has been made in advance for all of the material entered to be compatible with the over-all indexing system or

common documentation plan. One does not begin with a huge questionnaire which must be perfectly and completely filled out. One fills in what one can and someone else can come in and fill in whatever he has to add. What is important is that from the beginning a common system must be used in which scholars can work together, and one must remember that this is not the sort of thing one begins today and has tomorrow.

→ BARRY: Write up De Mink's demonstration.

Minutes of the informal working session of RIDIM held at the Hotel Ekkehard, St. Gall, Sunday, 29 August 1971

Attending: Prof Barry Brook (New York), Sergio Paganelli (Bologna), François Lesure (Paris), Dr. Norbert Böker-Heil (Oberhöchstadt), Brigitte Geiser (Bern), Dr. Tilman Seebass (Zürich), Dr. Victor Ravizza (Bern), Prof. Dr. Walter Salmen (Kiel), Dr. Clemens von Gleich (The Hague), Friedhelm Schulte-Tigges (Darmstadt), Dr. Albert Schug (Cologne), Prof. H. W. Janson (New York), Dr. Harald Heckmann (Kassel), Prof. Barry Brook (New York), Comtesse H. de Chambure (Paris), Prof. Emanuel Winternitz (New York), Dr. Meraljka Kos (Zagreb), Henri De Mink (Leiden), Prof. Mary Rasmussen (Durham, New Hampshire), Herta Schetelich (Leipzig), Dr. Imogen Fellinger (Berlin-West), Manna Schiødt (Copenhagen), Vladimir Fedorov (Paris), Liesbeth Weinhold (Munich), Dr. Irmgard Otto (Berlin-West), Richard Lepert (Brussels), Prof. Howard M. Brown (Chicago), Dr. Edmund Bowles (Falls Church, Va.), Frédéric Thieck (Neully s/Seine), Barbara Lambert (Boston), Yvette Fedoroff (Paris) and Jean Jenkins (London).

The working session was primarily concerned with five broad topics: I. The General Organization of RIDIM; II. Visual Documents and the Exchange of Information; III. Frederick Crane's Bibliography of the Iconography of Music; IV. A Checklist of Iconographical Sources and Indexes; and V. Methods of Indexing. The following is a summary of the principal points discussed for these topics.

I. Organization. Mme de Chambure reported on Thursday that there was firm opposition to the acronym RICOM from the president of ICOM because it was too similar. At that meeting several alternative acronyms were presented. At this meeting two votes were taken. The first, to plead our case with ICOM for keeping RICOM, lost 10-12. The second, ~~was~~ between what seemed to be the most popular alternatives: RIDIM (Repertoire Internationale d'Iconographie Musicale) or IRMI (International Repertory of Musical Iconography/ Internationales Repertorium der Musikikonographie). RIDIM prevailed 13-8.

During the course of the discussion an organization based on the following tentative structure evolved, drawn ~~up~~ ^{by} mainly from suggestions by Prof. Brook, ~~and~~ Dr. Heckmann and M. Fedorov.

- 1) A commission mixte-- an overall policy-making group composed of two or three representatives from each of the sponsoring groups.
- 2) Working research groups in each country, with each country responsible for setting up its own organization. These groups would be in charge of gathering the information

located in their own country. They might also want to establish smaller groups to consider problems of cataloging, computerizing, etc. The research groups should include art historians, museum people, and computer specialists so that whatever systems are evolved will be computerizable and will fit into the framework of general art history documentation.

- 3) A committee d'honneur made up of museum directors, business people, amateur enthusiasts, etc. who can give advice and assistance of an extra-musicological nature.

II. Visual Documents and the Exchange of Information.

Each country should establish a center where the information gathered can be deposited. Some large countries like the United States will probably need several centers, while some small ones might want to join together in a regional group (Salmen). The national centers would not only collect information but also facilitate its exchange between centers and between a center and an individual scholar. The information deposited at the national centers would largely consist of some sort of indexing document for each relevant work of art. It was generally agreed that this indexing document should be accompanied by a visual document (photograph). Opinion varied as to the desired size and quality of this visual document. Prof. Brown suggested that high quality was not necessary -- that the photograph should serve simply to identify the work of art and its contents. Prof. Janson proposed that it at least be enlargeable to 5" x 7". Dr. Seebass expressed the hope that the photograph be of publishable quality and standardized as to price and quality, observing that it is not very helpful

to have to correspond with a national center for an informatory photograph, find that it is unsuitable for publication, and then have to write again to another photographer or museum and order another. Prof. Brown pointed ~~xxxx~~ out that such quality would be impossible to realize without holding back the project for years, and Mr. Heckmann and Mme de Chambure called attention to the copyright problems which would be raised by Dr. Seebass's proposal. Mme de Chambure also brought up the problem of how to mount or file the photograph with the indexing document, noting that photographs glued on to index cards make them bulky and ^{may} ~~are~~ ~~always coming~~ ^{become} unglued.

Prof. Brook attempted to summarize the problem of the visual document and its exchangeability as follows: the visual document should be uniform, easily exchangeable, and as inexpensive as possible. If we wish to set an ideal standard, then the national centers should try to gather their reproductions as 8" by 10" glossy photographs suitable for rephotographing. After a large number of these photographs have been assembled, the centers should ask a filming organization to rephotograph these reproductions in an inexpensive way so that they could be re-distributed to other national centers or individual subscribers. The indexing material could be photographed adjacent to the reproduction, on separate cards, or both. If a scholar needed a publishable reproduction he could write to the relevant national center [provided that they are empowered to deal with the matter of copyright]. Some possibilities for the inexpensive distribution of the visual document are Microfiche, Hans van de Waal's postcard-size document (which

includes also a brief bibliographical description) or a ^{*}35mm individual fiche with 2 cm at the top for bibliographical information, which can be filed in a narrow drawer.

III. Frederick Crane's Bibliography of the Iconography of Music.

Frederick Crane's A Bibliography of the Iconography of Music -- a 41-page bibliography of catalogues, calendars, collections of prints and reproductions, illustrated histories, pictorial biographies and studies -- was distributed at this session. It was accompanied by Hans van de Waal's A Preliminary List of Iconographic Literature in the Field of Music Compiled from the Files of Iconclass -- Prentenkabinet/Kunsthistorisch Instituut der Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden. A composite of these bibliographies, with additions and corrections (to be sent to Prof. Brook) will be the first publication of RIDIM. Dr. von Gleich requested those present to make a special attempt to find more entries from their countries of museum exhibit catalogs -- an area in which the Crane bibliography seems at present especially weak. Profs. Salmen and Brook proposed that in the future the national centers or a group of selected centers take on the responsibility of keeping this bibliography up to date.

IV. A Checklist of Iconographical Sources and Indexes.

Prof. Brook proposed that RIDIM prepare an annotated checklist

of all extant collections of musical iconographical source material (a preliminary questionnaire for this has been designed by Mme de Chambure and Frédéric Thiéck), and a checklist of indexes and collections of reproductions devoted to musical iconography (including some general photograph collections with subject indexes).

V. Methods of Indexing.

Prof. Brook proposed that the indexing of the sources be done by means of a pre-designed, standardized, computerizable card. The card would have space for entering the basic bibliographical information (artist, title, Allocation, medium, etc); space for listing the instruments depicted; and a printed set of categories for types of setting, musical activity, occasion, performers, etc. (i. e. a general heading "Occasion" followed by a short list of the specific occasions most frequently encountered by iconographers: wedding, funeral, hunt, battle, dance, etc.) Thus catalogers could simply check off most of the desired information. Blank spaces would be provided within each category for entering information not covered by the printed lists. The card should be so designed that one need enter only as much as one is sure of and that additional information can easily be inserted whenever it is acquired. Prof. Brook passed out examples of a card he and Prof. Rasmussen had designed to serve as a point of discussion for the development of such a card.

In the ensuing discussion Prof. Brown pointed out that if one gives an inexperienced cataloger fixed categories he will probably be able only to think of the answers he has been given. Dr. Schug noted that the American Museum Computer Network began with an experiment allowing indexers a free choice of terms and gradually reduced the number of terms to compile a thesaurus of the ones most used. A number of other experiments in indexing with both fixed and free categories were proposed, including sending out two cards, one with many specific categories printed on it, the other with only the broad headings (i.e. "Occasion") and a blank space for the details to be filled in with whatever terms the indexer wishes to use (Rasmussen); free answers to general questions like, "Where does the musical activity take place?" (Brook); a card with fixed categories on one side, free categories on the other (von Gleich); or a card with fixed categories plus the statement, "If the card is too difficult to fill out, write it up in your own language using the card as a guide" (Brook).

Prof. Brook noted that the proposed categories were the result of tabulations made mainly from Prof. Rasmussen's large index of iconographical materials. Prof. Rasmussen was of the opinion that probably 90% of the indexing could be done satisfactorily using a fixed card, but that there would always be a percentage of information that would not be covered by the printed categories. She also pointed out that some sort of organization on the card (all comments pertaining to the kind of musical activity taking place being entered in a pre-determined place on the card, for example) would facilitate the sorting and eventual computerization

of the information. Prof. Brook added that a card with a number of fixed possibilities stabilizes the answers for this purpose.

Prof. Janson observed that as the card then stood it was impossible to include anything ethnographical; and Miss Jenkins emphasized the necessity of integrating ethnographical materials from the start, as well as the importance of a uniform and clear definition of the instruments.

Dr. Böker-Heil noted that whatever card was tentatively agreed upon should be carefully tested by several iconographers on a selected body of material. Profs. Brook and Rasmussen replied that the card had already been in effect extensively pre-tested but that it would also be sent out to a number of iconographers for additional comments and revision.

Prof. Dr. Salmen pointed out that the best of index cards is of no use if one does not have well-trained experts to use it. He reported on cataloging experiments with his students -- not trained in iconography or organology, but still university students of musicology. The rate of error was 30%. Much too high. He proposed that we seek means in the near future of establishing -- in conjunction with art historians, instrument experts and iconographers -- two-week courses in places like Leiden where we can train catalogers to fill out these cards with a minimum of mistakes.

Prof. Schug emphasized that the project need not actually integrate with general museum/art history indexing but only be compatible with it. One need not erect a super-organization but one should keep to the principle of mutual exchange of [compatible] information. One must index only what one is sure of. Guesses on an index card invalidate it.