

Howard B. Waltz

Music Library Landmarks in Colorado

Editorial preface: The first and as yet only detailed history of the University of Colorado (CU) College of Music, Grant Klausman's doctoral dissertation of 1967 discusses events between 1877 and 1951. Klausman's work is fine for what it is but obviously needs updating. The most recent half century of activity on the Boulder campus involved colorful local figures, such as Hugh McMillen, Storm Bull, Berton Coffin, Cecil Effinger, and Everett J. Hilty. The wide-ranging impact of these men was added to that of individuals long gone from Colorado but whose influence has lived on here even as it was felt nationally and internationally. CU students and faculty as well as the townspeople of Boulder vividly recall the early days of contemporary pianist David Burge and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer George Crumb, to name only two of the many soon-to-be-famous teachers who resided in Boulder during the 1960s.

As a next step toward compiling a record of the dynamic musical life of the University of Colorado at Boulder, and a necessary prelude to a full narrative history, the American Music Research Center hosted a "Heritage Conference" in October 1998. Thirty living witnesses—former students, retired professors and friends of the College—gathered in Boulder for a day of conversations, recollections, and reports about their experiences at CU. Photographs and anecdotes were shared. Everyone had a story to tell. Fortunately much of the dialogue was recorded on tape.

One of the most focused presentations was made that day by Howard B. Waltz, a beloved emeritus professor of piano who taught on the CU faculty between 1943 and 1975, and remained active with the college's programs until his death in 1999. In his introductory remarks Waltz recognized the centrality of the Music Library to the development of a fully functioning university music program. Since he was present at the founding of this component of CU—indeed he should be recognized as the principal founder of the Music Library—and among its strongest advocate for years, he was clearly the person in the room best equipped to narrate its history.

The seed that Howard Waltz planted has now grown into a mighty tree.

The current College of Music Library employs six full-time staff members and a dozen student workers. Materials are housed on two stack levels and in large off-site storage facilities. There are 120 patron desk spaces, and users have access to more than 110,000 books, scores, and sound recordings. The current head of the library, Laurie Sampsel, expends approximately \$140,000 each year on building the collections. In 1995 the library added a state-of-the-art Audio Center that provides listening stations for seventy-two users in a variety of formats—a far cry from the “two record players with earphones” purchased in 1948.

Waltz’s chronological list of landmarks presented here in cool printed form unfortunately lacks its author’s inimitable style of delivery, filled with personal warmth, wry humor, passion for music and incisive critical tone. It is our hope that soon a more elaborate tribute to Howard Waltz, a published volume consisting of his own extensive writings and letters written to him, will supplement this necessarily brief teaser.

A Short Historical Sketch of the College of Music Library from 1943 to 1975

The danger in this activity is that one tends to wander and perhaps dwell on personal moments. I’ll try to avoid that. For this meeting today we have been asked “to record those happenings and activities which appear to have been *most significant* for the College.” I immediately thought of the library for two reasons: (1) I think a library comes *first* in an educational institution, and (2) I was involved with ours for thirty years.

I arrived on this campus in early August 1943 to join the piano faculty. The university had about 3,300 students [including 100 music majors] and a dozen music faculty, and the town of Boulder between 12,000 and 15,000 residents. I had scarcely arrived when Dean Rowland Dunham asked me to take over his Music Appreciation class. I asked for, and received, a semester to prepare.

I was a bit shocked to find the music collection housed in a corner of the Humanities library, in a space about the size of the front desk area in our present library. There were several Music Education series, a few textbooks, a couple of reference sets (such as Grove’s *Dictionary*), scattered periodicals, and scores that filled about an eight-foot shelf in the stacks. Music biographies were shelved separately with all biographies [in the main library].

The record collection consisted of a Carnegie Grant of several dozen 78 rpm records augmented by a few albums given to the library by Dr. Paul Louis Faye. Carnegie had also contributed a console record player. All this was housed on the fifth floor of the Norlin [main] Library in the room which, at the time, ran the width of the building from north to south. This room had a large fireplace at each end, and Dr. Faye had also donated several pieces of furniture and a few oriental rugs. It was known as the



Courtesy of Howard Waltz

A music history class in the Music Room, c. 1950, being taught by Everett J. Hilty. The room, currently housing the Center for British Studies, is located on the top floor of the Norlin Library.

Music Room because the Music Appreciation class met there. [The room currently serves as the reading room for the Center for British Studies.]

In examining the catalog of music courses I found that Music Appreciation was the *only* literature or history course, and that it was open to *all*—music, sciences, engineering, freshmen, graduate students, etc. Enrollment was large—upper nineties, sometimes over a hundred. Since there were no listening facilities, the only *music* heard was heard in class. I also learned that two years of harmony but no counterpoint or analysis of any kind was offered. Students were expected to purchase their own scores. It was the prevalent philosophy at that time that you didn't depend on the library, you bought your own materials.

So—no one used the library and no one paid any attention to it. The Dean ordered the books but didn't spend even the small budget, which was, as I remember, \$200.

In 1944 I asked for, and received, permission to order books and scores—all subject to the Dean's approval, a task that I did alone until 1958 when a committee formed of which I was chairman. I sat in my studio and filled out orders, in longhand, and kept a card file of things on order and a file of the things which had come in. It wasn't difficult to decide *what* to buy because we *needed everything*, but it meant poring over catalogs,

usually from second-hand companies, trying to find things and get good prices on them. Two English outfits, Blackwell's and Kenneth Mummery, were especially helpful.

At the same time, the U.S. Navy operated a Japanese-Chinese language school on campus. These were still World War II years, remember. The students were ensigns, and a lot of them were graduates of Ivy League schools. The instruction was terribly intense. There were about five of those students assigned to one instructor who was Japanese. (We had a lot of Japanese families here in Boulder at that time.) [The military men] literally lived the language. They heard newscasts while they were eating meals, for instance. So these people needed some kind of atmosphere where they could let down a little bit. With the help of a graduate assistant, Ralph Cripe ('46), I organized programs of recorded music in the Music Room of Norlin. These were meant primarily for the ensigns, but other students came also, as it was a relaxed, pleasant place to study.

I said to Ralph one time—we alternated evenings, going up and playing these records—"Every time somebody sticks their head in that back door, you put a mark down." So at the end of the year, we had an attendance record, and I used that figure in a letter that I submitted to Dean Farrell Dyde, pointing out how important this was. Strangely enough we got an allocation of \$200 to buy some more records, the first record budget we ever had.

One day in 1945, in the hall of that really old building, not this old building, the *old* old building [The Medical Building, now razed, housed the College of Music for many years on the present site of the University Memorial Center.], I was stopped in the hall by a senior student, who said, "Mr. Waltz, who was Massenet?" (I wouldn't be surprised if someone had asked me that today.) Well, that did it! I immediately stormed into the Dean's office, as only young crusaders can storm, and I argued as forcibly as I could for the addition of a Music History course to the degree program. I came out of the office, of course, with the job of organizing the course.

In 1946, the History of Music course was added in the junior year for the degree program. I tried to combine history and form and analysis. And of course the library then became very important to support these developments. In 1948, the first listening facilities were established in a small room on the third floor of Norlin. It had two record players with earphones. Helen Lingelbach, a graduate student in organ at the time, was hired for twenty hours a week to work in that room. Although she received her degree I think in 1950, she stayed until 1955 in that job. Also in 1948, Professor Cecil Effinger was hired to take over the theory offerings and to teach composition.

In 1951, Warner Imig was named the Dean of the College of Music, and the whole philosophy toward the library began to change from that point forward. [The study of Music History and Literature began to gain respect as a separate endeavor.] Dean Imig hired Professor William Clendenin to



Courtesy of Howard Waltz

The first listening facilities for the College of Music, located in the Norlin Library, 1948.

take over the Music History area. The annual book budget by 1952 was up to \$400!

In 1954, the Doctor of Musical Arts degree was organized, and I think this is a terribly important thing as far as the College of Music is concerned, because that degree, plus undergraduate degrees with emphasis in Theory and in Music History and Literature, placed even greater demands on the Music Library. It also had a tremendous effect on the graduate and undergraduate standards. Students had a mark to look up to because we attracted strong DMA candidates.

In 1959, the music collection was removed from the Humanities Library and became a separate division. Temporary space was found for the library, some faculty offices and a classroom on the third floor of Norlin. William McClellan became our first Music Librarian. By that time the book budget had increased dramatically to \$1,300. Quite a jump! The library budget continued to grow, reaching \$6,000 by 1963. By then Mr. McClellan helped with inventories and was doing most of the book ordering, largely with recommendations by the College of Music Library Committee.

Beginning in 1952, the College also received wonderful support from the Committee on Allocation of Graduate Research Funds. I submitted requests by letter every year, specifying reference sets or additions to the general literature collection, and by January of 1963, over those eleven years, we had received \$15,320 from that committee. During the next two

years we received an additional \$3,800. A separate budget was kept for the record library and equipment, with the largest amount coming in 1963 when \$5,000 was allocated to buy record players and tape decks.

Mrs. Gerd Schiotz [wife of singer Aksel Schiotz] became music librarian in 1965, when Mr. McClellan resigned. Generally speaking, up to this point through the 1960s, deciding what to buy hadn't been a problem because everything was needed. The collection had become fairly adequate in a broad sense. But with the addition of faculty, particularly in theory and history, the demands began to be more specific on the library, and numerous letters came to Dean Imig, to me, to the head of Norlin, and to the music librarian citing weaknesses in certain areas, inadequate listening facilities and equipment, lack of space, theft, and a need for additional staff. In 1967 there were twenty-five music courses and sixteen non-music courses with listening assignments. At the time I was a bit irritated, for it always seemed to come down to lack of money and perspective. (Everybody seemed to think that I had the money, but I didn't.) There was one year when the main library budget was held up, and fortunately Dean Imig made funds available from the Fiske [major bequest] account, which enabled us to keep periodicals coming and to buy necessary books. We were blessed that year because the rest of the campus didn't have money.

Looking back on it, those concerns, demands, and complaints served a good purpose, for it meant that decisions had to be made and priorities established in our ordering. After much discussion, in January of 1969, the Library Committee drew up a Statement of Purpose. Also in 1968, there was discussion about establishing a divisional library to be housed in the College of Music, the first mention of that. This was wishful thinking of course, but it became reality eleven years later when we moved into the present space. Kent Hirst succeeded Gerd Schiotz as Music Librarian in 1968 and served until 1976.

In 1970, sometime in the early 1970s, the Music Library was moved into the former Business Library, in Norlin on the second floor at the south end of the building. Good space, wonderful space. In 1975, I retired, and Dr. William Kearns became the Chairman of the Library Committee. In 1976, Arne Arneson became the Music Librarian. During the 1978-79 academic year, the Library Committee drew up a new and very detailed Collection Policy. The budget at this point was up to \$22,500. In January of 1979, the Music Library moved from Norlin into the new facility, where it is presently.

What happened after I retired I have to leave to others. I'd be interested myself to know how things developed and how the library was run. In talking to Ms. Sampsel, I've discovered that the current budget—now remember us with \$200 back in 1943—the current budget is over \$100,000.