

# Double Bass

(Fr. *contrebasse* ; Ger. *Kontrabass* ; It. *contrabasso*)

## FINDING MUSIC FOR DOUBLE BASS IN THE MUSIC LIBRARY

The Western Libraries Music Library contains much music for the double bass major. Some of this repertoire will be found in obvious locations, while other important repertoire is scattered throughout the collection. The **SOLO MUSIC REFERENCE COLLECTION** (see 5 below), housed in the Choral/Band/Orchestral Library (TC-134), may also yield some interesting repertoire options.

The Music Library's holdings are listed on the **Western Libraries Shared Library Catalogue**, which is accessible from almost anywhere in the world. Each Western student is given a Western Identity (email username + password), through which the University and Western Libraries will communicate with you. Your Western Identity username and password are REQUIRED to access our licensed electronic indexes and database subscriptions. To use Western's e-resources while off-campus, you must AUTHENTICATE each time you visit the Western Libraries' website. Follow this URL for details and instructions:  
<https://www.lib.uwo.ca/offcampus/remote.html>

### 1. Finding a KNOWN piece of music

Any piece of music for which you know both the composer and the title may be found by choosing the **CATALOGUE** tab on the Western Libraries homepage: [www.lib.uwo.ca](http://www.lib.uwo.ca).

Choose the **KEYWORD** search option to combine the composer's name with a unique title, opus number or thematic catalogue number with spaces between your keywords (using a space = the Boolean "AND" operator). This will help to narrow your search and find desired items quickly.

**e.g., Hindemith sonataS (double bass)**

*should* retrieve Hindemith's double bass sonata - both scores and recordings

(note the use of the PLURAL OF THE GENRE - sonata**S** - you must use the plural to find scores and recordings!).

**e.g. concertos (double bass) part**

will retrieve those editions (piano reductions) which come with a separate double bass part

If you are unsure of titles, opus or thematic catalogue numbers, refer to the repertoire guides listed below or consult "**Works**" lists in articles on individual composers in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (29 vols.). (This product is available online to currently-registered Western students.)

Don't forget to look in collections of music by your composer (the library finds it cheaper and more convenient to buy all the sonatas of a composer in one volume than to purchase single sonatas, *etc.*).

### 2. BROWSING on the shelf for music

Most, but not all, double bass music can be found in the following areas:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>M 55 - 58</b>    | (double bass alone - no accompaniment)  |
| <b>M 237 - 238</b>  | (double bass with piano or continuo)  |
| <b>M 238</b>        | (double bass sonatas)   |
| <b>M 1018</b>       | (double bass with full orchestra, full scores and/or accompaniment reduced for piano – concertos, etc.) |
| <b>M 1118</b>       | (double bass with string orchestra, full scores and/or piano reduction of orchestral score)             |
| <b>MT 320 - 330</b> | (studies, methods, and technique for double bass)   |
| <b>MT 331</b>       | (orchestral excerpts)   |

For a complete explanation of these call numbers and others, see the book **LC Classification/Class M, Music** located near the Music Reference Desk.

### 3. Using the SUBJECT Indexes

Particular types of double bass music will be easily found using the subject index of the Western Libraries Catalogue.

#### \*\*\* WARNING \*\*\*

If you use the Subject Heading

**"DOUBLE BASS MUSIC"**

you will find **miscellaneous** solo works only. Most music will be found under the specific **genre**, **e.g.**

**SONATAS (DOUBLE BASS AND PIANO)**

**SUITES (DOUBLE BASS)**

**CONCERTOS (DOUBLE BASS)**

**CONCERTOS (DOUBLE BASS) – SOLO WITH PIANO**

**CONCERTOS (DOUBLE BASS WITH STRING ORCHESTRA)**

Other useful Subject Headings include:

**DOUBLE BASS – HISTORY**

**DOUBLE BASS – INSTRUCTION AND STUDY**

**DOUBLE BASS – METHODS**

**DOUBLE BASS – STUDIES AND EXERCISES**

**DOUBLE BASS – ORCHESTRA STUDIES**

Accustom yourself to looking for the specific genre and instrumentation when using the Subject Index.

For a more complete listing of the Subject Headings employed by Western Libraries, please see the **Library of Congress Subject Headings**, 5 large red volumes, located near the Reference Desk.

### 4. ENSEMBLES using the Double Bass

For information on this topic, consult the handouts **String Ensembles**, and **Piano Ensembles**.

### 5. Double Bass Music in the SOLO MUSIC REFERENCE COLLECTION

A few titles (mainly unaccompanied and twentieth-century music for the double bass) may be found in the Solo Music Reference Collection. These are housed in the Choral/Band/Orchestral Music Library (Rm. 134, T.C.).

The general classification number for double bass music in the **SMRC** is

## MUS 4055.

The section is organized alphabetically, by composer's surname.

## REPertoire LISTS

For assistance in identifying appropriate repertoire for the double bass (alone and in combination with other instruments), the following reference sources are very useful:

Grodner, Murray. ***Comprehensive catalog of music, books, recordings, and videos for the double bass***. 4th ed. Littleton, Colo. : Grodner Publications, c2000  
**Ref ML 128.D6 G76 2000**

Includes publisher contact information.

Planyavsky, Alfred. ***Geschichte des Kontrabasses***. Tutzing : H. Schneider, 1984.  
**ML925.P53 1984**

Despite being written in German, there is an abundance of useful information in this classic volume. The *Anhang* (appendices) offers:

- bibliographies of writings (in English, French, German, Italian and Czech) about the double bass
- repertoire lists including: methods, studies, repertoire anthologies, orchestral studies, chamber music (with lists of duos, and all ensembles from trios through nonets - with or without piano), concert literature (includes both accompanied and unaccompanied works, and works with orchestra), and transcriptions
- discography and indexes

## ...REPERTOIRE LISTS...

Farish, Margaret K. *String Music in Print*. 2nd ed. New York: Bowker, 1973.  
Ref ML 128.S7 F4 1973 + Supplement at  
Ref ML 118.M956 v.6 suppl. 1984

A classified list of solo, study, and chamber works. Includes stringed instruments with voice and stringed instruments with electronic tape. Old, but still useful.

Rangel-Ribeiro, Victor. *Chamber Music: An International Guide to Works and their Instrumentation*. New York: Facts on File, c1993.  
Ref ML 128.C4 R3 1993

Organized in three sections: Composers to the Time of Haydn and Mozart; Composers from Beethoven to Our Own Time; and Master Quick-Reference Index, this source indexes works for 3-20 performers in easy-to-read, concise charts – highly recommended!

Rabson, Carolyn. *Orchestral Excerpts: A Comprehensive Index*. Berkeley, CA.: Fallen Leaf Press, 1993.  
Ref ML 128.O5R2 1993

Indexes this repertoire for all standard orchestral instruments. Very handy.

Canadian Music Centre. *Canadian Chamber Music=Musique de Chambre Canadienne*. [s.l.]: CMC, 1980.  
Ref ML 128.C4 C34 1980

This work also includes solo works for instrumentalists.

## PERIODICALS for Bassists

*American String Teacher*

*Double Bassist*

*The Strad*    *Early Music*

*The Galpin Society Journal*

*Orchestra Canada / Orchestres Canada* – becomes *OC News* (1998 - 2001) and later:

*Forum (Orchestras Canada)*

*International Musician* (the A.F.of M. publication)

## HISTORY of the Double Bass and its Music

The following two books are available in the Music Library:

Brun, Paul. *A New History of the Double Bass*. Villeneuve d'Ascq : P. Brun Productions, 2000.  
ML 920.B785 2000

Planyavsky, Alfred. *The Baroque Double Bass Violone* Lanham, Md. : Scarecrow Press, 1998.  
ML 927.V63P613 1998

Another great resource for detailed and scholarly information on the history of the double bass family and its repertoire, is the article in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (29 vols.) (London: Macmillan, 2001).

[Ref ML 100.G8 2001 located on the Dictionary Table - and available online.]

The extensive **bibliography** lists additional books and articles on the topic; the Western Libraries Music Library has many of the cited works.

When using a bibliography, please be sure to distinguish between books (*titles always listed in italics*) and periodical or journal articles ("titles always listed within quotation marks") to save yourself valuable time.

Call numbers for books may be found by searching by either **AUTHOR** or **TITLE**, or by using a **KEYWORD** search to combine author and title words.

Call numbers for journal articles may be found by searching for the **title of the journal** (**\*\*NOT\*\*** the title of the article !!) in the Western Libraries **Shared Library Catalogue**. So, if your citation looks like this:

Chapman, D. "Historical and practical considerations for the tuning of double bass instruments in fourths." **GSJ** 56 (2003): 224-233.

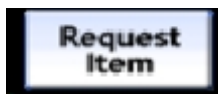
The italicized **GSJ** is an abbreviation for the title of a journal. You need to figure out the full title, in order to find it in **The Western Libraries Catalogue**. WHERE to find the list of abbreviations? Check the FRONT of the NEW GROVE DICTIONARY -under Bibliographical Abbreviations – or, if you are using grovemusic.com, then click on the abbreviation.

Once you have identified the full title (*Galpin Society Journal*), simply do a **JOURNAL TITLE** search, note the call number and locations - find the volume you require - and note whether it is available at the Music Library - or from one of our

storage locations. If the journal is available online, you may click on the appropriate link - scroll down on the bibliographic record display in order to see which database offers the volume/year that you require.

When you search in **The Western Libraries Catalogue** by **TITLE** for a periodical, journal, newspaper or magazine title, you will notice that **the call number is the same for ALL of the volumes**: the volume number/year will then identify the particular bound volume you require - be sure to note the location (RDL, ARCC, WWW, or MUSIC) of the volume(s) you seek.

Occasionally, you will notice that the older volumes are in a location labelled **STORAGE - Use "Request Item"** - you can request needed volumes by clicking on this icon:



[located below the Western banner - and above the "title" box] and then following the instructions given on the **The Western Libraries Catalogue** screen. You will receive an email notification once the item has been delivered to the Music Library.

## PERFORMING PRACTICE

Historically informed performance is an ongoing consideration for all performers. Following are titles which may prove useful to double bassists:

Cyr, Mary. *Performing baroque music*.  
Portland, Or. : Amadeus Press, 1992.  
**ML 457.C9 1992**

A practical guide to all aspects of Baroque music performance.

Hefling, Stephen E. *Rhythmic alteration in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music : notes inégales and overdotting*.  
New York : Schirmer Books, 1993.  
**ML 437.H43 1993**

One can often gain a useful perspective on performing practice, by consulting the tutors and methods of past eras. These historical sources provide valuable information on fingerings, and on how to perform figures, ornaments, crescendos, etc.

Sources of particular interest to double bassists, held at the Western Libraries Music Library include:

*The history of musical instruments [microform] : manuals, tutors and méthodes*. Reading, England ; Woodbridge, CT : Research Publications, 1988  
**MT 172.H477 1988 pts. 1 & 2 guide**

A 36-reel microfilm set of tutors and methods, many of which were written by the leading virtuosi of their day. While many of the sources will contain material of interest, **Part 2** contains tutors dealing with bowed instruments. Each Part has its own printed index, located in the Music Reference area (call number listed above).

**Part 1. Instrumental tutors from the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, Oxford** and the private library of Philip Bate (10 reels).

**Part 2. Tutors and méthodes from the F.J. Fétis Collection at the Bibliotheque Royale Albert Ier, Brussels** (26 reels). Tutors for bowed strings will be found on **reels 2-4** of this series - reel six contains double bass tutors by Hero, Labro and Verrimst.

Additional information regarding Performing Practice can be found in a variety of sources, both online and print:

- [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com) (see the articles on "Performing Practice" and "Ornamentation")
- **ML 457** is the classification section for performance practice - see the books by Donington, Kivy and Leppard
- Search the Libraries Catalogue by SUBJECT: **performance practice**

## RECORDINGS of Double Bass Music

In a hurry? It's always handy to find a list of recordings (discography) compiled by a teacher or performer. Following are two titles which offer discographical information for the bass player:

Grodner, Murray. *Comprehensive catalog of music, books, recordings, and videos for the double bass*. 4th ed. Littleton, Colo. : Grodner Publications, c2000.  
**[Ref ML 128.D6 G76 2000]**

Planyavsky, Alfred. *Geschichte des Kontrabasses*. Tutzing : H. Schneider, 1984.  
**ML 925.P53 1984**

A **KEYWORD** search is the most effective way to quickly find a desired recording: Although most of the Music Library's sound recordings can be found via the **Western Libraries Catalogue**, many others cannot. Most commercially-recorded double bass music for which you know the composer and the title may be found via a **KEYWORD** search:

- type single, significant keywords (e.g. the performer's [or composer's] surname)
- include a significant word from the title of the work
- include the opus number (numerals only)
- include "sound" or "compact" ("sound" retrieves ALL sound formats; "compact" retrieves ONLY our CD recordings)
- remember that a "SPACE" in-between keywords = "AND." This means that BOTH terms must be present to appear in your search results
- if you are looking for older records (i.e. not CDs) put your search phrase in parentheses, and be sure to EXCLUDE CDs by using the phrase "AND NOT":

#### **((DOUBLE BASS) SOUND) AND NOT COMPACT**

Alternately, if you are looking for a recording by a particular performer, you may type his/her name following the **AUTHOR** command:

e.g. **KARR, GARY**

To locate **recent** recordings (after first checking the **Western Libraries Catalogue** by **AUTHOR** (i.e. performer) or by **KEYWORD**), consult the Reference Librarian: we may wish to order a copy for the Music Library.

## **Don Wright Faculty of Music RECITALS**

In addition to commercially-produced recordings, there are hundreds of **Don Wright Faculty of Music Student/Faculty/Guest Artist Recitals**, which were taped during the period 1965 - the present.

Until 1988, or so, recitals were automatically taped for archival purposes. After that time, the process became much more selective – so that one cannot rely upon finding a tape for every Don Wright Faculty of Music performance.

Access to the Don Wright Faculty of Music's recordings archive is provided by computer-

generated indexes housed in the LAST row of the Reference Section – nearest the Reference Librarian. They are in pale blue cardboard covers. Should you find a performance you would like to hear, you must:

**make note of the appropriate reference number – from the left-hand column!**

Then, leave a note for **Mr. Mike Godwin** – in his mailbox in the Main Office (T.C. 210) stating your name and the tape reference number – which will look like:

**81-148c**

**81 = 1981**

**148 = the 148<sup>th</sup> recital taped that year**

**c = the 3<sup>rd</sup> work on the program**

and ask that he place the tape (it may be a CD) in the Library. He will then leave the tape at the Music Library Circulation Desk – you may listen to same, upon surrender of appropriate identification.

**Dubbing is NOT permitted in the Music Library**, but you can make arrangements to purchase copies by applying at the Faculty of Music Main Office (**T.C. 210**). Please note that older recordings are in storage, and it will take some time to retrieve and reproduce them.

## **RELATED HANDOUTS**

*Piano Ensembles*

*Using the Solo Music Reference Collection*

*String Ensembles*

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