

STRING ENSEMBLES

FINDING MUSIC FOR STRING AND CHAMBER ENSEMBLES IN WESTERN'S MUSIC LIBRARY

Much music for strings in string ensembles and in combination with other instruments may be found in the Western Libraries Music Library. Some of this music will be found in obvious locations while other important repertoire is scattered throughout the collection - other collections are "invisible" - please see the final page of this pathfinder for information about the **Cobbett Collection**.

1. Finding a **KNOWN** piece of music

Any piece of music for which you know the composer and the title may be found by looking in the **Western Libraries Catalogue**:

www.lib.uwo.ca

Choose the **KEYWORD** (a.k.a. "Boolean") option of the Catalogue: combine the composer's name with a unique title, opus number, and/or thematic catalogue number, remembering to use "AND" in-between your keywords (to link desired terms).

E.g. **brahms and quartets and parts**

should retrieve *all* performing editions (as in "score and parts") of Brahms's string quartets - as owned by the Western Libraries Music Library.

If you are unsure of titles, opus or thematic catalogue numbers, refer to the various repertoire guides listed below, or consult "Works" lists in the articles on individual composers as found in **The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed.**, (29 vols. - or online).

NEVER USE AUTHOR, TITLE OR AUTHOR-TITLE to search for music, especially NOT for "prolific" composers!

2. Piano with **ONE** string instrument

For information on this topic, consult the handouts on individual instruments, e.g. **Violin, Viola, Violoncello**, etc.

3. Using the **SUBJECT** index to find music for string ensembles

a. **Strings in standard combinations**

Several chamber ensembles are considered standard combinations in which the instrumentation is consistently the same. For strings, these **Subject Headings** are:

STRING TRIOS

STRING QUARTETS

It is considered unnecessary to list the specific instrumentation as the user knows that the standard string trio consists of violin, viola, and violoncello and that the string quartet is always made up of two violins, viola, and violoncello.

Much important string ensemble music includes piano. The usual standard combinations are

PIANO TRIOS

PIANO QUARTETS

PIANO QUINTETS

For an explanation of these Subject Headings, see the handout **Piano Ensembles**.

b. Strings in non-standard combinations

Chamber ensembles which do not fall into the above standard categories are usually listed in the subject index under the number of instruments in the ensemble,

e.g.

TRIOS

QUARTETS

QUINTETS

SEXTETS

SEPTETS

OCTETS

NONETS.

If the ensemble consists *only* of stringed instruments, the basic Subject Heading are:

STRING TRIO

STRING QUARTETS

.
(*etc.*)

STRING NONETS

After each basic **Subject Heading** (**QUARTETS**, etc.) the instruments are organized in the following order:

keyboard

winds (includes woodwinds and brasses – these are sub-arranged alphabetically)

percussion

strings – arranged in score order

Some examples are:

TRIOS (PIANO, CLARINET, VIOLA)

STRING TRIOS (VIOLINS (3))

[note that since this is a non-standard combination the instrumentation is used]

QUARTETS (FLUTE, VIOLIN, VIOLA, VIOLONCELLO)

STRING QUARTETS (VIOLIN, VIOLA, VIOLONCELLO, DOUBLE BASS)

[A non-standard combination requires that instrumentation is listed!!]

QUINTETS (HORN, VIOLINS (2), VIOLA, VIOLONCELLO)

STRING QUINTETS (VIOLINS (2), VIOLA, VIOLONCELLO, DOUBLE BASS)

****IMPORTANT****

When using a **SUBJECT** search on the Western Libraries Shared Library Catalogue, you must:

- be very careful to input the instrumentation of the ensemble in the order explained above
- distinguish between those ensembles that consist of strings alone (*e.g.* STRING TRIOS) and mixed ensembles (*e.g.* TRIOS – which include other instrument types).

Note that the keyboard instrument is always listed first when there are more than two instruments in the ensemble.

4. BROWSING on the shelf for music

A perfectly legitimate way to find suitable music. Some useful call numbers for browsing on the shelf are:

M 349-353	– string trios
M 450-454	– string quartets
M 551-552	– string quintets
M 650-654	– string sextets
M 852	– string octets
M 952	– string nonets

For a complete explanation of these call numbers and others (strings in combination with other instruments), refer to **LC Classification/Class M, Music** located near the reference desk.

REPertoire Lists

For assistance in identifying appropriate repertoire for string ensembles the following reference sources are very useful:

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. + ML 118.M956 v.6t suppl.]

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

...**REPertoire** **LISTS**...Cont'd.

Music-in-print series [electronic resource].
Roslyn, PA. : emusicquest, [2002] -

Continues the following print monographic series titles:
Sacred choral music in print; Classical vocal music in print; Orchestral music in print; String music in print; Classical guitar music in print; Woodwind music in print; Piano music in print; and includes Miscellaneous music in print, with plans for more titles to be added.

Christensen, James. ***The String Players' Guide to Chamber Music.*** Chicago : Open Court, 2008. [MT 728.C48 2008]

Cohn, Arthur. ***The Literature of Chamber Music.*** Chapel Hill, N.C. : Hinshaw Music, c1997. [ML 128.C4C6 1997 v.1-4]

Substantial guide to chamber music, including biographical and other information useful for the writing of program notes.

v. 1. Abaco to Eggen - v. 2. Eggermann to Kyurkchiisky - v. 3. Labey to Ronsheim - v. 4. Röntgen to Zwilich.

Canadian Music Centre. ***Chamber Music for Strings in the Library of the Canadian Music Centre.*** [Toronto, ON: The Canadian Music Centre, 1993. [ML 128.S7C35 1993]

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.

Scott, William. ***A Conductor's Repertory of Chamber Music: Compositions for Nine to Fifteen Solo Instruments.*** Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993. [Ref ML 128.C4 S37 1993]

Works are listed by composer, by combination of similar instruments, and by title. Of particular interest, "Compositions Including String Combinations."

Rangel-Ribiero, Victor and Robert Markel. ***Chamber Music: An International Guide to Works and Their Instrumentation.*** New York: Facts on File, 1993.

A useful listing divided into three sections: composers before Haydn/Mozart; composers from Beethoven to our time: Master Quick-Reference Index. Organized by composer and title, instrumentation is listed in a grid.

Lawrence, Ian. ***The Twentieth-century String Quartet : An Historical Introduction and Catalogue.*** Lanham, Md. ; London : Scarecrow Press, 2001. [ML 128.C4L37 2001]

Further suggestions for ensemble literature may also be found by consulting repertoire lists for individual instruments - check the Music Library's pathfinders for individual instruments.

HISTORY of chamber music

For detailed and scholarly information on chamber music and its history, consult

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed. 29 vols. (London: Macmillan, 2001).

[The New Grove is located on the Dictionary Table, and also available to current Western students, faculty and staff - online - BE SURE to 'authenticate'!]

Useful information will be found in ***The New Grove*** under the following headings:

Chamber Music

Sources of instrumental ensemble music to 1630

as well as within the articles on:

String quartet

String trio

Quintet

Trio, etc.

Each article has an extensive bibliography (with cited titles listed in chronological order), and cites books and journal articles on the various chamber music-related topics - the Western Libraries Music Library has many of the books and articles cited in this bibliography.

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.

...**HISTORY of Chamber Music**

...Cont'd.

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 periodical** (**NOT** the title of the article!!) in the **Western Libraries Catalogue, e.g.**

Orchestra Canada

Some particularly useful titles are:

Baron, John H. **Chamber Music: a Research and Information Guide.** New York: Garland, 1987. [Ref ML 128.C4 B37 2002].

Provides much useful information on all aspects of chamber music: reference, history, studies by region/country, analytical studies, and performing practice. Chapter 6, Miscellaneous Topics, lists writings on: Patronage and Concert Series and Women's Studies (to name a few). Contains indexes of authors, persons, performing groups and subjects. Highly recommended.

_____. **Intimate Music : A History of the Idea of Chamber Music.** Stuyvesant, NY : Pendragon Press, 1998. [ML 1100.B36 1998]

Hefling, Stephen E., ed. **Nineteenth-century Chamber Music.** New York: Routledge, 2004. [ML 1104.N56 2004]

McCalla, James. **Twentieth-century chamber music.** New York: Routledge, 2003. [ML 1106.M33 2003]

Stowell, Robin, ed. **The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 [ML 1160.C36 2003]

King, A. Hyatt. **Chamber Music.** London: Chanticleer Press, 1943. [ML 1100.K4]

Fiske, Roger. **Chamber Music.** London: BBC, [1969]. [ML 1120.F48]

Ulrich, Homer. **Chamber Music.** New York: Columbia University Press, 1966. [ML 1100.U57 1966]

PERFORMING PRACTICE

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

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]

Carter, Stewart (ed.) **A performer's guide to seventeenth-century music.** New York : Schirmer]Books, c1997. [ML 457.P477 1997]

Stowell, Robin. **Violin technique and performance practice in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. [ML 855.S8 1985]

Loft, Abram. **Ensemble! : a rehearsal guide to thirty great works of chamber music.** Portland, Or.: Amadeus Press, 1992. [MT 140.L62 1992]

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 string players, held at Western's Music Library include:

Mozart, Leopold. **A treatise on the fundamental principles of violin playing,** translated by Editha Knocker. Oxford ; Toronto : Oxford University Press, 1985, c1948. [MT 262.M68 1985]

The history of musical instruments [microform] : manuals, tutors and méthodes. Reading, England ; Woodbridge, CT : Research

Publications, 1988 [MT 172.H477
1988]

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, **reels 2-4, Part 1, contain treatises 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 methodes from the F.J. Fétis Collection at the Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier, Brussels (26 reels).

Stowell, Robin. *The early violin and viola : a practical guide.* Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2001. [ML 855.S79 2001]

RECORDINGS of string ensemble music

Although most of the Music Library's sound recordings can be found via the **Western Libraries Catalogue**, many others cannot. Most commercially-recorded violin 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/digits only)
- include "sound" or "compact"
- be sure to type "AND" between each keyword

Very recent recordings may not yet be ordered – please check with the Reference Librarian.

If you are looking for a recording by a particular group, you may type that name as an **AUTHOR**:

e.g. **Joachim Quartet**

Rosé Quartet

Quartetto Gelato



Arditti Quartet

Penderecki Quartet



Quartet Canada



St. Lawrence Quartet



Juilliard String Quartet

In addition to commercially-produced recordings, there are hundreds of Western 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 recording for each and every Western 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. 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 recording's reference number - which will look like:

81-148c

81 = 1981

148 = the 148th recital taped that year
c = the 3rd work on the program

Mention that you wish to hear this item, and ask Mr. Godwin to place the recording in the Library. He will then leave the item at the Music Library's Circulation Desk – you may listen to same, upon surrender of appropriate identification.

Dubbing is NOT permitted in the Library, but you can make arrangements to purchase copies by applying at the Faculty of Music Main Office (T.C. 210).

"INVISIBLE" COLLECTIONS

a) The COBBETT COLLECTION

<http://www.lib.uwo.ca/music/Cobbett.html>

The Cobbett Association is dedicated to the preservation, dissemination, performance, publication and recording of rare and neglected chamber music of merit; chamber music which is no longer in the standard repertoire. To this end, the Association publishes a periodical (The Chamber Music Journal) and maintains a copying library for its members.

<http://www.cobbettassociation.org/history-and-background.htm>

The Cobbett Chamber Music Library contains mainly chamber music for strings - some 1,300 titles, which are NOT part of the standard chamber repertoire.

The Cobbett Chamber Music Library is housed in the Western Libraries Technical Services Department - Elborn College - University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, CANADA.

Titles contained in the Cobbett Chamber Music Library may NOT be borrowed.

To request photocopies of out-of-copyright titles (there are fees associated with this service), please visit the Cobbett Association's website (to access the Association's PDF order-form).

PLEASE NOTE:

Requests for photocopies (of out-of-copyright works ONLY) are RESTRICTED TO:

MEMBERS OF THE COBBETT
ASSOCIATION

MEMBERS OF THE AMATEUR CHAMBER
PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

and

Western Faculty, Staff and
currently-registered students*

b) The WHITBY COLLECTION

A gift from Drs. James L. and Margaret Whitby, this research collection is comprised of early published editions (vocal music, violin methods, works for violin and piano, string quartets). Eventually, the individual works will be listed on the Western Libraries Shared Library Catalogue. At present (2009), perform a KEYWORD search, using the phrase "James L Whitby" to find these editions.

RELATED HANDOUTS

Piano Ensembles

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Prepared by:

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Music Reference Librarian
The Music Library
The University of Western Ontario
rev. September 1988

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*Do take advantage of this opportunity while you are registered at Western!