

EDI Perspectives

Collections Amplifying Diverse Voices

At American University in Washington, D.C., the library supports the university's culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). From collection development to programming, the library is eager to promote access to information in creative and exciting ways.

In winter 2021, the American University Music Library staffers faced a challenge: How could they promote their diverse collections in a digital environment? To address this, the library created Collections Amplifying Diverse Voices (CADIVO), a browsable collection of music scores by composers from underrepresented communities. Initiated by music and performing arts librarian Nobue Matsuoka and Music Library coordinator Amanda Steadman, CADIVO is the answer to the community's requests for these scores and an interactive way to discover them.

BEYOND THE SPREADSHEET

Before CADIVO, library users were unable to search the catalog or library website for scores by diverse composers. There was a demand for these works and a way to find them. To assist users, Matsuoka and Steadman maintained a spreadsheet of diverse composers and their scores. The spreadsheet was created from music vendor Theodore Front's lists of music by Asian and Asian American composers,

Black composers, Latin and Latin American composers, and women composers. According to Steadman, using these freely available lists provided them with composers' identities without requiring them to determine or assume the identities.

Still, there were obstacles to discovery. The spreadsheet was not publicly available, and users were unable to search on their own by a composer's identity within the library service platform. Furthermore, there was no way to browse the collections digitally. The collections were not shelved by identity, preventing users from physically browsing by identity.

To address these issues, Matsuoka and Steadman partnered with the Metadata and Resource Description unit within Technical Services to transform their spreadsheets into user-friendly, browsable collections using the Alma/Primo browsable collections tool. This tool was already implemented by the Music Library for genre-based browsing of music resources. Users could browse by genre, viewing items' thumbnail image and metadata. Inspired by this, Matsuoka and Steadman and their partners created the CADIVO collection with identity-based subcollections within the Music Library's browsable collections. Through this development, users could now browse the collections and search by title, creator, instrument, and other categories.

CHALLENGES

Once CADIVO was established, Matsuoka and Steadman faced the challenge of incorporating new acquisitions into the collections. Upon arrival, scores were reviewed and sorted into CADIVO subcollections by Matsuoka, who describes the process as rewarding. She says, "The process is ongoing and labor intensive, but it aligns with the library's [EDI] goals." Matsuoka explains that reviewing and sorting scores is a learning process that prepares her to provide reference assistance and promote the collection.

Throughout the project, Matsuoka and Steadman faced ethical and metadata challenges. These challenges began with naming the collection. Steadman says, "We wanted a punchy name that did not use buzzwords or problematic terms." Reflecting on her own identities and experiences, Matsuoka elaborates, "I am Asian and wanted to be more sensitive to people like me who are underrepresented. Certain terms and buzzwords are not always popular for these communities and are often created by outsiders." While they considered incorporating the phrase "diversity, equity, and inclusion" into the collection name, they decided to coin a more creative name that celebrates the works of the composers.

The next challenge was deciding to incorporate identity-specific metadata in catalog records. They chose to add the identity-based collection names into records' local fields. This enabled users to search for CADIVO items in the catalog in addition to the browsable collection interface. Since local notes are repeatable, they were able to include multiple subcollection tags for composers with intersectional identities. For example, a score's record could contain a note for the Black Composers collection in addition to the Women Composers collection. Thanks to the local fields, users could search by subcollection names and other criteria from the main search page. Due to the mindful naming of the subcollections and the ability to search, the inclusion of the collection names has been well-received by library users.

Photo by Jeff Watts



Nobue Matsuoka



Amanda Steadman

CADIVO IN USE

As a result of the browsable collections, Matsuoka and Steadman have seen an increase in collection awareness and use. Chamber ensembles browse CADIVO for pieces to perform. Composition faculty members incorporate CADIVO into assignments, encouraging students to explore this unique, diverse collection. Instrumental instructors encourage students to select scores from CADIVO as well.

Both Matsuoka and Steadman attribute the increase in use and discoverability to the browsable CADIVO collections. “We were finally able to highlight materials we collected for years, but had no way of promoting,” Steadman notes. The Music Library raises awareness of CADIVO in a variety of ways. The most common method has been through reference interactions and peer-to-peer recommendations. Matsuoka promotes the collection to music department faculty members and students through emails and announcements every semester.

Matsuoka and Steadman agree that CADIVO is a work in progress. As they acquire and add more materials to the collection, they continue to evaluate their approach to metadata and collection organization. They also stay up-to-date on EDI trends and talk with their users to ensure they are choosing respectful, current terminology. While there are currently no plans to add other identity-based collection categories, Matsuoka and Steadman are open to the idea.

CADIVO has amplified the work of diverse composers throughout American University. It has been an exercise in applying EDI values in metadata, systems, reference, and marketing. Ultimately, CADIVO is a reminder that libraries need to acquire and promote diverse materials.

Dom Bortruex is the manager of the Monographic FastCat Unit at Yale University. He leads workshops on cataloging, metadata, and automation. Bortruex participates in DiversAbility at Yale, the LGBTQ+ Affinity Group, and ALA. Send your comments about this column to itletters@infotoday.com or tweet us (@ITINewsBreaks).

NewsBytes

■ **Springer Nature became the first publisher to join the Generation Valuable mentoring program** created by the Valuable 500, which pairs mentors and mentees to develop the next generation of leaders with disabilities. The first mentor will be Carolyn Honour, Springer Nature’s chief commercial officer, and the first mentee will be Jude Robinson, Springer Nature’s global head of front end development. Source: group.springernature.com/gp/group/media/press-releases/generation-valuable-springer-nature/23777658

■ **OCLC made its new Choreo Insights library analytics solution available to early adopters** in North America. Using WorldCat holdings data to help libraries with collection development, its analysis compares local collections’ detailed subject breakdowns with overlap and gap analysis of any other library or group in WorldCat. Source: oclc.org/en/news/releases/2022/20221117-choreo-insights-early-adopter.html

■ **Springshare is introducing a LibCal Museum Passes and eTickets functionality**, which will provide a ticket-management solution for libraries that offer museum passes and access to other cultural institutions. It will be part of the Spaces and Equipment Booking module of the LibCal platform and work alongside existing functionality. Source: blog.springshare.com/2022/11/16/springshare-announces-new-museum-passes-etickets

■ **EBSCO Information Services launched Pathways to Research**, a product suite of research summaries designed to help students build college-level research skills. Each product focuses on 100 or more topics in a specific field and has exclusive, peer-reviewed summaries that link to citations and related articles. The summaries also feature illustrations, photos, and charts. Source: ebSCO.com/news-center/press-releases/ebSCO-information-services-introduces-pathways-research-help-students

OA NEWS

■ **PLOS signed a 1-year agreement with the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)** to allow UNAM researchers to publish in *PLOS ONE* and other PLOS journals without incurring article-processing charges. Source: scienmag.com/plos-announces-publishing-agreement-with-the-largest-research-institution-in-mexico

■ **SAGE has entered into a new OA agreement with Bibliosan**, an Italian consortium of biomedical research libraries. The deal allows Bibliosan’s network of institutions to publish research OA in hybrid journals and get a discount on article-processing charges for gold OA journals. Source: group.sagepub.com/press-releases/sage-publishing-and-bibliosan-sign-new-open-access-agreement

■ **The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) is planning to make all 44 of its fully owned journals OA** within 5 years. It will be the first chemistry publisher to do so. Source: rsc.org/news-events/articles/2022/oct/rsc-oa-commitment