

Moreover, the “Women’s Suffrage in Sheet Music” collection provides a much-needed resource in terms of its platform’s accessibility and searchability. Other digital sheet music collections like the Lester Levy Collection at Johns Hopkins offer the option to search by topic as well, but their results are potentially less helpful in this area. For example, a search for “suffrage” in the Levy Collection yields only seventeen results because the term would not necessarily appear in all suffrage-related songs. And while Crew’s 2002 catalog is a valuable asset for scholars, it catalogs only lyrics and not scores.

The “Women’s Suffrage in Sheet Music” collection holds value for music scholars and historians interested in this topic. Given the centrality of song to everyday family life as well as to political events, rallies, and parades prior to the mid-twentieth century, music provides an invaluable lens to understanding political and social movements in the United States. With women at the center of both song performance and the women’s suffrage movement, too, music proved a particularly important vehicle for both suffrage and anti-suffrage rhetoric. Not solely aimed at scholars, this collection’s accessibility, usability, and breadth of textual, visual, and musical content make it an excellent resource for middle school, high school, and college US history and music teachers. The digitization of suffrage music by the LOC Music Division will undoubtedly enable further scholarly insights into the textual, visual, and musical materials that impacted women’s rights at a crucial moment in US history.

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“Aaron Copland Collection,” Digital Collections, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/aaron-copland/>

Aaron Copland (1900–1990) remains one of the most prominent and impactful voices in US American music, and the Library of Congress has done a great service by making high-quality scans of a number of fascinating documents available in a digital collection, benefitting scholars of all backgrounds. The ready accessibility of the Aaron Copland Collection (henceforth ACC) is especially helpful as a pedagogical tool, given that most university students and courses are not able to make trips to the Washington, DC archives. At its core, the online collection is an exhibit with an “Articles and Essays” section that provides useful information regarding Copland’s life and career; a multi-part “brief introduction” to his music; a timeline; a tribute from Leonard Bernstein for Copland’s seventieth birthday; a series of essays for his seventy-fifth birthday; and a listing of works that includes pertinent data (e.g., dates of composition, first performance, and first publisher). The best aspect of the works list is that the entries feature “related digital items,” including

both manuscripts of the compositions and letters that mention them. This feature will save researchers countless hours of wading through archival documents.

Under “About this Collection” on the main page, we learn that the ACC is “[t]he first release of the online collection [and that it] contains approximately 1,000 items that yield a total of about 5,000 images,” dating from 1899 to 1981, “with most from the 1920s through the 1980s.” Scrolling down the page, one may find more exact figures: there are 934 items available online. The majority of these items are manuscripts/mixed material, but there are also photographs, drawings, books, and other printed material and notated music. The exhibit represents only a fragment of the physical Copland collection, which in its totality comprises “approximately 400,000 items documenting the multifaceted life” of the composer. These items include “manuscript and printed music, personal and business correspondence, diaries, writings, scrapbooks, programs, newspaper and magazine clippings, photographs, awards, books, sound recordings, and motion pictures.” It is not clear from the digital archives how many more installments are forthcoming or how much of the physical collection the Library of Congress ultimately hopes to make available online (certainly digitizing a collection of that size is no easy task). Strangely, the present digital collection is said to range from 1899 to 1981, which falls outside the stated range of the full collection (1910 to 1990).

Of potential use to scholars researching the national and international relationships among twentieth-century musical figures, the online selection includes personal correspondence spanning over half a century. One may find letters from Copland to his family and to a number of distinguished figures, including Benjamin Britten, Nadia Boulanger, Paul Bowles, Carlos Chávez, Israel Citkowitz, Jacobo Ficher, Irving Fine, Serge Koussevitzky, Minna Lederman, Olga Naoumoff, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, Nicolas Slonimsky, Harold Spivacke, and William Strickland. Copland’s musical manuscripts are sure to hold much interest and utility for researchers and casual aficionados alike, while other items of interest include photographs and drafts of essays. As to the latter, the range of subjects encompasses his own work, his colleagues and mentors, music in various parts of the world, essays such as “The Composer as Conductor” and “Music and the Movies” (published in the *New York Times* in 1949), and his Harvard lecture “Jazz and Folk Influences.”

The musical manuscripts appear in draft form and are designated “pencil draft,” “first sketches,” “sketches,” “rough sketch,” and more. There are several options for viewing them. The “slideshow” function may be the most convenient for going through each page methodically. The “single image” view is also amenable to clicking through each page, while “gallery” and “grid” make it easier to get an overview of the manuscript by displaying thumbnail images. (“Gallery” view has labels of the page numbers immediately viewable below each thumbnail, while for “grid,” these numbers appear over each thumbnail only when one hovers one’s cursor over the thumbnail.) The scores included here represent thirty-one works that cover half a century of Copland’s career, from 1924 to 1967. Highlights include the *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* (1924), *Four Piano Blues* (1926–48), *Billy the Kid* (1938–39), *Of Mice and Men* (1939), *Quiet City* (1940), *Rodeo* (1942), *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), *Appalachian Spring* (1943–44),

Third Symphony (1944–46), Clarinet Concerto (1947–48), Piano Fantasy (1952–57), and *Inscape* (1967).

The metadata for the digital archive is generally thorough, with the strange omission of dates for musical manuscripts; one must access the aforementioned works list (or to an external source) for that particular information. There is a field for “extent,” which gives both the number of the pages and the dimensions of the paper, as well as “shelf location,” which will be helpful to anyone who wants to request the physical item on location. In certain cases, providing more information for the researcher may be useful, such as the final publication status of articles that the archive possesses in draft form, only some of which are specified. A potentially useful feature, especially for students, is the “Cite This Item” tab, which generates a bibliographical entry in three citation styles (Chicago, APA, and MLA), with a disclaimer that bibliography instructors are sure to appreciate: “Citations are generated automatically from bibliographic data as a convenience, and may not be complete or accurate.”

One of the most useful fields in the metadata is “access condition.” Many scholars are acutely aware that rights can be notoriously difficult to navigate when studying materials from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While libraries and archives are not always in a position to clear up these issues for patrons, the Library of Congress, due to the extent of its resources, is in a better position than many other institutions to do so. It has done an admirable job in helping researchers navigate the issue, even linking to two other pages of general guidelines (“Legal Notices” and “Privacy and Publicity Rights”).

In a similar vein, the bottom of the metadata section for each item has a “Rights & Access” tab, which begins with the same general notice that the collection is made available “for educational and research purposes” and that “written permission of the copyright owners and/or other rights (such as publicity and/or privacy rights) is required for distribution, reproduction, or other use of protected items beyond that allowed by fair use or other statutory exemptions.” The tab also includes a complete list of credits for individual photographs and articles throughout the collection. On the one hand, some users may prefer that credits only appear with their relevant items, but on the other, seeing the full list all at once helps one to get a better sense of the collection.

Unfortunately, archival materials often present a variety of mysteries, given that they arrive incomplete or poorly preserved and that people do not write down all identifying information in anticipation of researchers’ needs decades hence. The note on access condition contains a disclaimer that some items “created by persons outside the Copland family may in some cases be subject to copyright” and that the rights-holders were not able to be identified in “many of these cases.” (In the case of the drafts for *Of Mice and Men*, in fact, the metadata includes a note that reads: “Question: do we need MGM’s permission for these?”) In a victory for open access, the Library of Congress has decided to make the items available online “as an exercise of fair use for strictly non-commercial educational uses,” inviting users to contact them with any information they may have for “items indicated as unidentified.” It is often the case that researchers may bring their specialized knowledge to a collection and help piece together clues unavailable to those who processed it.

In general, the website is configured in a user-friendly format. The search bar on the main page automatically defers to “This Collection,” which helps users to avoid weeding through results that are only tangentially related. (One may, however, adjust the scope of the search as needed.) Some of the collection’s entries include related items at the bottom of the record, under the heading “You might also like”—a more upbeat framing than, say, “also relevant.” Although various essays and the “About this Collection” section feature a “Listen to this page” option for screen readers, this is not the case for all of the individual items; here, the website’s accessibility could be improved. A large number of documents are handwritten—potentially both a blessing and a curse for researchers—which would require extensive transcription. That important concern aside, the Aaron Copland Collection is a significant digital resource, and one hopes that similar digital archive projects will steadily increase in number, not only at the Library of Congress but at other institutions as well.

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