

## DIGITAL RESOURCE REVIEW

### Opera & Ballet Primary Sources

Opera & Ballet Primary Sources (OBPS) is one of the most recent and ambitious endeavours to make sources related to opera, ballet and other genres of music theatre easily accessible to scholars. The project focuses in particular on performance materials: libretti, ballet scenarios, scores in various formats, *mise-en-scène* documents, and programme announcements. It started in 2012 and is spearheaded by David A. Day, the curator of the special music collections at the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, which also hosts the website (<https://sites.lib.byu.edu/obps/>). Day's work has concentrated on two kinds of activities.<sup>1</sup> First, he joined forces with the Internet Archive to digitize existing collections of music theatre sources at various institutions.<sup>2</sup> They started with digitizing BYU's own special collections, and then expanded to libraries and archives in Belgium.<sup>3</sup> Second, he is also in charge of creating two databases: the Index to Opera and Ballet Primary Sources Online (<https://atom.lib.byu.edu/obps/>), and the Name Authority Files (<https://atom.lib.byu.edu/obpsna/>). The former is a searchable online database that brings together the sources from the BYU–Belgian collaboration with an ever-growing number of digitized collections with related contents from other institutions. The latter is a complimentary biographical database with information about the persons involved in creating the works included in the Index.

These databases are the most visible and impressive part of this project. The Name Authority File contains 58,927 entries bringing together biographical data from about 90 scholarly works including various dictionaries, lexicons, encyclopaedias, and online catalogues and databases. The Index is continuously expanding and at the moment brings together documents from over 40 institutions in Europe, the United States and Canada (see Appendix).<sup>4</sup> It includes smaller

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<sup>1</sup> The initial stages of this project are described in David A. Day, 'Digital Opera and Ballet: A Case Study of International Collaboration', *Fontes Artis Musicae* 61/2 (2014): 99–106.

<sup>2</sup> The Internet Archive is a non-profit library of cultural artefacts including books, audio, video, images, software and websites that are made freely available to the public. It was founded in 1996 in San Francisco and works together with numerous libraries and institutions around the world to digitize existing collections of historical materials. See 'About the Internet Archive', <https://archive.org/about/> (last accessed 1 December 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Reports on the progress of the digitization project appear occasionally on the special collections blog of the BYU Harold B. Lee Library. See for instance, David Day, 'BYU Students Complete Another Summer of Scanning in Belgium', *Special Collections Blog* (20 September 2013), <https://sites.lib.byu.edu/special-collections/2013/09/20/byu-students-complete-another-successful-summer-of-scanning-in-belgium/> (last accessed 1 December 2017).

<sup>4</sup> The Index is continuously expanding. The home page of the OPBS consists of a blog that details which collections were added for the period between April 2013 and October 2015. Even though the blog has no later posts, entries are regularly being added to the database. When starting the research for this review in November 2017 the database contained 45,958 items, but when I checked again on 14 January 2018 the number had increased, with close to 1,600 new entries from the Schatz libretto collection from the Library of Congress.

collections (such as selected libretti from the Ricordi Archives and the Jean Baptiste Lully Collection from the University of North Texas) as well as large pools of documents from national libraries (such as the Biblioteca Digital Hispánica, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and the Russian State Library). The Index is well on its way to becoming an unmatched repository of works documenting the complex and rich history of Western (and mostly European) music theatre. At present, it gives the researcher access to 47,557 digitally available sources spanning from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries.<sup>5</sup>

### Digitization Project

As already mentioned, the OPBS project started in 2012 with the digitization of opera and ballet related sources housed at the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU. These sources include several interesting collections from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as autograph scores of Giovanni Paisiello, and the French composers Charles Simon Catel, Victor Massé and Alexandre Luigini.<sup>6</sup> It also features materials from the *copisteria* of Luigi Marescalchi, an important music publisher active in late eighteenth-century Venice and Naples. In addition, the Harold B. Lee Library encompasses a large libretto collection, which holds over 200 ballet scenarios and several piano scores for ballets.

The selection of nineteenth-century French repertoire was further enriched when expanding the project to other archives and libraries in the summer of 2012, as they started digitizing the performance materials from the Théâtre de la Monnaie, housed at the City Archives of Brussels (CAB). La Monnaie is Brussels' foremost opera house, and its nineteenth-century repertory consisted primarily of pieces that had premiered in Paris.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the Parisian theatres, though, La Monnaie was not bound to only performing opera and ballet, rather its stage was also a frequent host to more popular genres of music theatre such as *vaudevilles*, *féeries* and *mélodrames*. As a consequence, the archives contain a wide variety of materials that, according to Day, 'represent more than six-hundred opera, about one hundred and sixty ballets, and an excess of sixteen-hundred vaudevilles'.<sup>8</sup> As these sources are being digitized, the OPBS project not only grows in size but also provides access to theatrical genres that have not traditionally been the focus of musicological investigation. This commitment to generic variety is also

<sup>5</sup> The only entries that do not immediately lead to a digitized version of the document are items from the Library of Congress, some of which are not digitally available and need to be consulted in the Library of Congress's reading rooms. In addition, the collection of 66 scores from the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar are also no longer accessible, because they belonged to the project *Die Oper in Italien und Deutschland zwischen 1770 und 1830*. This University of Cologne project was concluded in 2001 and its accompanying internet page has since been taken offline. While this project shows the vulnerability of online databases, which can disappear when funding runs out, it also is a testimony to the importance of the OPBS Index as a compiler of sources, for the other materials that were accessible through the internet page of Cologne *Opern* project are included in the Index and have thus remained available and searchable for the researcher.

<sup>6</sup> Day, 'Digital Opera and Ballet', 100.

<sup>7</sup> For an institutional history of La Monnaie, see Roland Van der Hoeven, *Le théâtre de la Monnaie au XIXe siècle: contraintes d'exploitation d'un théâtre lyrique 1830–1914* (Brussels: Cahiers du Gram, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> Day, 'Digital Opera and Ballet', 101.

noticeable in the further expansion of the project to the Royal Conservatories of Brussels and Antwerp and the Royal Library of Brussels, which resulted in an addition of hundreds of scores from operas, ballets, comedies and other works.

This BYU–Belgian collaboration is of great interest to music scholars because it has made sources available from smaller institutions whose collections are not widely known or are difficult to access and thus would not be the first point of recourse for researchers. Although the CAB house a rich collection of performance materials, the existence of these sources is not immediately apparent from the archives' homepage. This homepage provides but a brief, general description of the holdings as 'about 25,000 volumes, mainly historic, urban and Brussels interest'.<sup>9</sup> The specific contents of these archives are searchable only by keyword or author through a catalogue of digitized index cards and a separate catalogue for the materials acquired after 2004. While the CAB are open during business days, documents are only conveyed to researchers a few times per day. Moreover, research at these archives is made more difficult by their closure during the winter break and for a month during the summer – times when it is easier for scholars to undertake archival research trips. Extended trips seem warranted not only because the index cards do not always provide sufficient information about the contents of a source, but also because it is impossible to order documents in advance. The situation is better at the libraries of the Royal Conservatories of Brussels and Antwerp; they provide better catalogues with more advanced search options and easier access to the documents.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, adding these sources to the Internet Archive gives these collections and archives a much greater visibility and expedites comparative studies between documents from these collections and other online materials. Perhaps most important, it facilitates the expansion of musicological research beyond the traditional generic and geographical boundaries by including performance materials for theatres outside of the European capitals and for genres other than opera.

### The Sources in the Index

Searching the Internet Archive for the materials digitized through the BYU–Belgium collaboration is like looking for a needle in a haystack. Therefore, the Index is a very useful tool for the researcher; it not only compiles all these materials but complements them with 'related primary sources published online by a variety of independent institutions'.<sup>11</sup> While the Index includes repertoire from the sixteenth through the twentieth centuries, its particular strength still lies in its coverage of sources from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries (1780–1850), which represents close to half of the documents.<sup>12</sup> As expected, works of well-known composers are present in abundance: a search for Gaetano Donizetti yields no less than 1,250 hits. This list comprises 85 libretti and scores for his famous *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), but also libretti for some of his less familiar early works

<sup>9</sup> *Libraries of the Archives of the City of Brussels*, [www.brussels.be/libraries-archives-city-brussels](http://www.brussels.be/libraries-archives-city-brussels) (last accessed 1 December 2017).

<sup>10</sup> *Catalogue of the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp*, [www.libraryconservatoryantwerp.be](http://www.libraryconservatoryantwerp.be) (last accessed 1 December 2017), and *Catalogue of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels*, <http://catalog.b-bc.org/> (last accessed 1 December 2017). The Antwerp library is even open during the weekend and you can pre-order documents online.

<sup>11</sup> Day 'Digital Opera and Ballet', 104.

<sup>12</sup> A search limited to this period yields 22,082 items.

such as *Enrico di Borgogna* (1818) and *Il falegname di Livonia, o Pietro il grande, czar delle Russie* (1819).<sup>13</sup> Since many of the scores and libretti were produced in different years, for different theatres or publishers, and in several languages, the Index is a valuable tool for researchers who want to trace the dissemination of particular works or perform a comparative analysis of different versions.

Yet perhaps most valuable is the cornucopia of works from the revolutionary and Napoleonic era (1789–1815) – a period that has recently started to gain more widespread interest in musicology and theatre studies.<sup>14</sup> The collection of works by Paisiello, an Italian opera composer active in Italy, France and Russia, is particularly rich: it features 644 items including 270 manuscript scores and three autographs.<sup>15</sup> The oeuvre of several *opéra comique* composers from this period is also well represented: 317 entries appear under the name of André Gretry, who was one of the most successful and widely published opera composers in France at the turn of the eighteenth century. Yet even a search for the now lesser known François-Adrien Boieldieu finds 165 documents, with 32 full scores (for 17 of his operas), 17 piano-vocal scores, 6 piano scores, and a handful of orchestral and vocal parts. In this case, the Index even exceeds the number of scores for Boieldieu found at the Petrucci Music Library ([imslp.org](http://imslp.org)) – one of the few other online sources that easily provides scholars with an overview of digitally available scores. In the Petrucci Music Library, scores for only 13 operas by Boieldieu are found, and full scores are available for only seven of these works.<sup>16</sup> Given that many of these scores and libretti are not readily available in research libraries, the database provides a unique opportunity for scholars of this repertoire to quickly find available digitized copies.

The database also provides significant coverage of ‘popular’ music theatre genres that are not opera, in particular *vaudevilles*, *mélodrames*, *féeries* and *pantomimes*. A general keyword search for *vaudeville* results in a list of 2,396 items largely dating from the first half of the nineteenth century. The extensive presence of these genres in the Index is in part a result of the efforts to start scanning the 16,000 *vaudeville*-related sources of La Monnaie, of which 364 libretti and seven sets of orchestral parts

<sup>13</sup> The database includes the original printed libretto for *Enrico di Borgogna* and the libretto for the original 1819 version of *Il falegname di Livonia*, as well as for that of its 1827 revival, which features significantly different scene indications.

<sup>14</sup> For this period, 8,588 items are included in the database. Until a decade ago, music theatre from this period performed outside of Vienna and Mozart’s circle was studied by only a handful of scholars, most prominently British musicologist David Charlton, a specialist of *opéra comique*, and French musicologist Jean Mongrédien, the author of the seminal *French Music from Enlightenment to Romanticism, 1789–1830*, transl. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1996). The last decade, however, has seen a marked rise in attention to a variety of repertoires performed around 1800. Besides my own dissertation, ‘Modernizing Spectacle: The Opéra in Napoleon’s Paris (1799–1815)’, which investigates operatic culture in France during the Napoleonic era, French revolutionary and Napoleonic opera has been examined by Sarah Hibberd, Mark Darlow and Michael Fend, among others. Katherine Hambridge has investigated various kinds of early nineteenth-century ‘popular’ music theatre in Berlin and Paris, while Barbara Babic is working on a dissertation on Parisian and Viennese Biblical *mélodrame* from this era. In the summer of 2017, Katherine Astbury concluded a four-year research project on *French Theatre of the Napoleonic Era* that resulted in several conferences, exhibitions and a forthcoming collected volume on *Aestheticizing Cultural Policy in France, 1789–1830*. See <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/research/french/current/projects/napoleonictheatre/> (last accessed 1 December 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Of these documents, 193 are from the special collections of BYU.

<sup>16</sup> See [http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Boieldieu,\\_Francois\\_Adrien](http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Boieldieu,_Francois_Adrien) (last accessed 1 December 2017).

have been digitized to date.<sup>17</sup> In the Index, these sources are supplemented with, among others, the rich Marandet libretti collection from the University of Warwick, which adds 938 French works in various genres from the revolutionary period through the Restoration (1789–1830), among which 337 *vaudevilles*.<sup>18</sup>

These ‘popular’ genres are only starting to receive sustained scholarly attention – such attention is long overdue, because these genres constituted some of the most performed early nineteenth-century repertoires and their study is essential to acquiring a more comprehensive perspective on Europe’s music theatrical landscape. Moreover, the comedic and parodic elements of these works, with several of them satirizing contemporary operatic and ballet trends, can provide alternative and additional perspectives to those gleaned from newspaper reviews and other critical writings. Previously, finding single pieces from these repertoires – let alone multiple works of one author or one theatre – often required sustained research trips to mine multiple catalogues, collections, and archives that were at times hard to navigate. The gathering of these sources into one database has considerably eased the task of the researcher. It allows for a straightforward way of accessing single pieces as well as a (limited) overview of groups of pieces performed and printed during a particular period or in a specific place. While libretti are more plentiful among these entries, the database also includes a handful of scores and libretti with inserted musical excerpts for *vaudeville* and other ‘popular’ genres. Thus, the Index provides a window – even if still a rather small one – onto the music of these repertoires. This may prove of great value to musicologists, as much of this music has either been lost or was long thought to have been lost. Recently, some of these materials have surfaced in archives, but many are still in the process of being catalogued.<sup>19</sup>

### Searching the Index

The search engine for the Index is designed ‘to facilitate more convenient searching with the specialist scholar in mind’.<sup>20</sup> The Index is indeed relatively straightforward and easy to navigate. It provides a browsing option and both a simple and an advanced search option. The browsing option leads to a list of all entries providing the following information: title, composer, genre (as recorded on the source), format and date (of publication). This list can be organized in ascending or descending order by clicking on the category (see Fig. 1).<sup>21</sup> There are three issues that render this

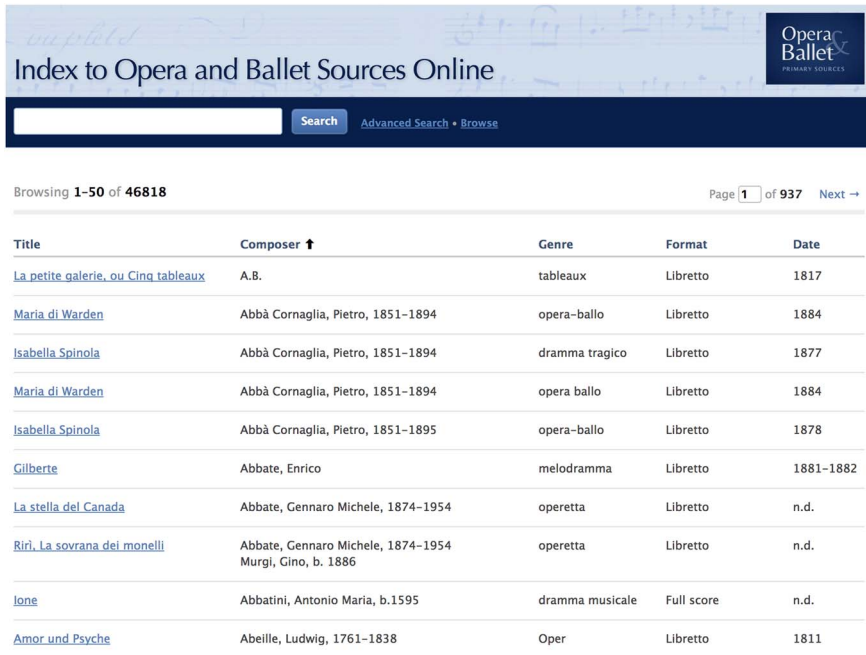
<sup>17</sup> To date, a total of 1,023 documents from the CAB are scanned and included in the Index. These documents encompass such extraordinary sources as the scores of the concert master and orchestral parts for several ballets as well as calendars with programme announcements for La Monnaie.

<sup>18</sup> This collection was at the centre of Katherine Astbury’s research project *French Theatre of the Napoleonic Era* (2013–2017).

<sup>19</sup> For example, the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* houses several collections with administrative and archival materials of the secondary theatres, such as the ‘Fonds Théâtre des Variétés’ (COL 106) and the Rondel Collection. While the former collection is now available online and is fully searchable (<http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc998849>), the cataloguing process of the latter is still incomplete (<http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc874524>). In any case, neither of these collections is digitized and studying them requires research trips to Paris.

<sup>20</sup> Day, ‘Digital Opera and Ballet’, 104.

<sup>21</sup> All figures in this document are screenshots taken on 6 December 2017. The number of entries available in the index was 46,818 at that moment, but the contents have expanded since. See Note 4, above.



Index to Opera and Ballet Sources Online

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Title	Composer ↑	Genre	Format	Date
<a href="#">La petite galerie, ou Cinq tableaux</a>	A.B.	tableaux	Libretto	1817
<a href="#">Maria di Warden</a>	Abbà Cornaglia, Pietro, 1851–1894	opera–ballo	Libretto	1884
<a href="#">Isabella Spinola</a>	Abbà Cornaglia, Pietro, 1851–1894	dramma tragico	Libretto	1877
<a href="#">Maria di Warden</a>	Abbà Cornaglia, Pietro, 1851–1894	opera ballo	Libretto	1884
<a href="#">Isabella Spinola</a>	Abbà Cornaglia, Pietro, 1851–1895	opera–ballo	Libretto	1878
<a href="#">Gilberte</a>	Abbate, Enrico	melodramma	Libretto	1881–1882
<a href="#">La stella del Canada</a>	Abbate, Gennaro Michele, 1874–1954	operetta	Libretto	n.d.
<a href="#">Riri, La sovrana dei monelli</a>	Abbate, Gennaro Michele, 1874–1954 Murgi, Gino, b. 1886	operetta	Libretto	n.d.
<a href="#">Ione</a>	Abbatini, Antonio Maria, b.1595	dramma musicale	Full score	n.d.
<a href="#">Amor und Psyche</a>	Abeille, Ludwig, 1761–1838	Oper	Libretto	1811

**Fig. 1** Index to Opera and Ballet Primary Sources Online, browsing first page ordered according to ‘composer’

browsing option the less preferable one. First, the full list is very long, consisting of all 47,557 entries, so that often much time is required to successfully navigate the results unless you are looking for documents that are located at the beginning of a sorted list. Second, the list only provides a selected number of categories that can be used for ordering, and you can only order one category at a time. Finally, the actual information recorded in the categories can make browsing difficult. For instance, since the date category records the date of publication rather than the date of the premiere or of composition, multiple sources of one specific work can be scattered throughout the list. While a simple ordering by title could help in such cases, titles are not always recorded in the language of the premiere, but sometimes in the language of the translation. For example, the two entries for Alexander Borodin’s *Prince Igor* are found under the French title *Prince Igor* and the Cyrillic *Князь Игорь*.

The search options are largely preferable and faster than browsing. The simple search automatically looks by keyword, while the advanced search offers the following additional categories for a more focused result: person (with a choice of composer, librettist, choreographer, and set designer), title, genre, publisher, RISM number and RISM sigla (see Fig. 2). You can also limit the time period and give further specifications by selecting from seven drop-down menus: specific genre (as recorded on the source), internet project (describing the online repository of the digitized collection),<sup>22</sup> format, print/manuscript, language, main genre, and whether or not the source is an autograph.

<sup>22</sup> Several of these collections are subsumed in the same online repository. For example, four of the ‘internet projects’ are found on Internet Culturale: Gaspare Spontini nella

Index to Opera and Ballet Sources Online

Opera Ballet PRIMARY SOURCES

Search Advanced Search • Browse

### Advanced Search

Keyword

AND  Person

AND  Composer

AND  Librettist

AND  Choreographer

AND  Scene Designer

From Year

To Year

Record ID

Specific Genre

Internet Project

Format

Print/Manuscript

Language

Main Genre

If Autograph

Limit to Excerpts

Limit to Published Manuscripts

Limit to Annotated Sources

Limit if Copyists Identified

Search

Fig. 2 Index to Opera and Ballet Primary Sources Online, Advanced Search page with drop down menu for search categories

One of the great advantages of this database is that it allows the scholar to search multiple collections of sources at once through the Index's standardized metadata files. The standardization has been most conspicuous with regard to names, titles, and main genre. Names generally seem to follow the spelling found in *Oxford Music Online*, which has the greatest impact on names in Cyrillic script such as Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky.<sup>23</sup> While the database does not record any variants for names, titles are entered in three different formats: 'first, an abbreviated title page transcription; second, a short title in the language of its premiere; and third, variant titles that appear in the scanned source'.<sup>24</sup> Finally, the category of 'main genre' represents an attempt to subdivide the multitude of different sources included in the database according to simple and straightforward generic labels: ballet, opera, opera-ballet, vaudeville, documents and programmes.

While it is indeed relatively easy to search the Index's standardized files, the advanced scholar may be more successful at navigating its content than someone who is just starting out. First, it is necessary to be familiar with the standardized name versions, because different spellings will not yield any results. While this is less of a

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Biblioteca comunale Planettiana di Jesi; Gioachino Rossini e il suo tempo; Internet Culturale; and Raccolta drammatica. The Internet Archive also is the source of 11 of the 'internet projects' (see Appendix).

<sup>23</sup> See Roland John Wiley, 'Tchaikovsky, Piotr Il'yich' in *GroveMusicOnline.com* (last accessed 28 November 2017).

<sup>24</sup> Day, 'Digital Opera and Ballet', 104.

problem when these standardized versions are widespread and familiar to most scholars, it becomes a challenge for lesser-known persons whose names are often spelled in a variety of ways on the sources themselves. One example is the early nineteenth-century French composer Jean-François Le Sueur, whose name is often spelled 'Lesueur' in primary sources as well as the secondary literature.<sup>25</sup> Yet, a search for 'Lesueur' leads to three entries for works by a different individual: the librettist J.L. Lesueur. Perhaps it would be more useful if the name category, like the title category, also included variants such as those recorded on the original documents.

The most confusing – and perhaps superfluous – category in the search engine is that of 'main genre' with its four simple generic labels of opera, ballet, opera-ballet and vaudeville. As the drop-down menu for 'specific genre' demonstrates, hundreds of different genre designations were used in the actual sources throughout the history of music theatre. Such designations would vary depending on the theatre, language, kind of document, and so on. For example, browsing the sources of Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix* (1842), one encounters such various generic descriptions as *opera*, *melodramma*, *große Oper*, and *opéra italien*. A manuscript full score in Spanish translation describes the work on the title page as a *zarzuela* and an 1845 Hungarian libretto of this opera calls it *nagy opera* – Hungarian for 'grand opera'. These genre designations do not complicate a division in the 'main genre' labels, because they all fall under the general overarching category of 'opera'.

The problem of generic pigeonholing becomes evident, however, when considering popular kinds of theatre. In the Index, early nineteenth-century *mélodrame* and *féerie* are generally categorized as 'opera', even though music plays a different role in these genres. *Mélodrame* is generally spoken theatre interrupted by instrumental sections of various length, and sometimes it features musical accompaniment for spoken scenes, but it hardly ever includes vocal music. *Féeries*, on the other hand, are generally much closer in structure to *vaudevilles*: spoken dialogues alternate with songs, ensembles, choruses and instrumental interludes. Thus, by simplifying the generic labels and having to categorize vastly different kinds of music theatre under the same label, the helpfulness of the 'main genre' category to the researcher becomes very limited. At the same time, the drop-down menu for 'specific genre' is an unwieldy list of over 200 alphabetically organized names. Perhaps a middle way can be found in having a tiered list of genres or one organized according to language. Another helpful addition would be the possibility of selecting more than one generic name in the drop-down menus. Selecting multiple options in the drop-down menus would also be useful for some of the other categories in the advanced search database, for example, when you want to search a few collections among the 'internet projects' rather than just one or all.

### The Name Authority File

The Name Authority File provides biographical information about persons mentioned in the Index. In its search engine, you can select the person according to their artistic involvement: arranger, choreographer, composer, copyist, editor, librettist, scene designer, singer, translator, institution, or author of the literary source a plot is based on (see Fig. 3). It compiles information from a wide variety of documents both primary and secondary, indicated as 'authority sources'.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, David Charlton, 'Ossian, Lesueur and Opera', *Studies in Music* 11 (1977), 37–48.



OBPS Name Authority File

Opera Ballet  
PRIMARY SOURCES

Search Advanced Search Browse

Advanced Search

Name

AND Name

AND Name

Authority Source

Role

Search

Boolean operators (AND)

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- ✓ Any
- Arranger
- Arranger/Librettist
- Choreographer
- Choreographer/Composer
- Choreographer/Copyist
- Choreographer/Librettist
- Composer
- Composer/Librettist
- Composer/Arranger
- Composer/Choreographer
- Composer/Librettist
- Composer/Librettist/Translator
- Composer/Translator
- Copyist
- Editor
- Institution
- Librettist
- Librettist/Choreographer
- Librettist/Composer
- Librettist/Translator
- Librettist
- Piet Source
- Scene Designer
- Singer
- Translator
- Translator

Fig. 3 Name Authority File, Advanced Search page with drop down menu for role

These sources include the materials collected in the Index as well as various Oxford Companions, national and international encyclopaedias and dictionaries (such as *Oxford Music Online*), online catalogues (such as *Gallica* and *Worldcat*) and online databases (such as the *Stanford Opening Night* and *Virtual International Authority File*). They include not only recent publications, but also standard reference works like Claudio Sartori's *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini fino al 1800* (1990–94) and historical ones, for instance, François-Joseph Fétis's *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (1866–68). This database provides basic information such as birth and death year, creative role, a summary of some biographical information or the title of the work the person was involved in and links to the 'authoritative source'.

The Name Authority File is a useful complement to the Index. It provides an overview of places where one can find biographical information or works by particular people. However, in contrast to the Index, where all links direct to materials that are available to the general public and free of charge, some of the 'authority sources' require institutional access, such as the links to *Oxford Music Online*. Moreover, for biographical information on lesser-known figures, the *World Biographical Information System Online* (<https://wbis.degruyter.com/index>) may be more useful to the researcher with access to this reference database, because it provides a wider range of results. The Italian composer Bernardo Porta, who spent much of his career in Paris and was a good friend of the painter Jacques-Louis David, when looked up in the Name Authority File, only results in one biographical article, that in the *Oxford Music Online* – the entry on this composer in

Fétis's *Biographie universelle* seems to be missing in this case.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, the WBIS provides full text access to six dictionary entries: by Fétis (1866–68), Leo Benvenuti (1890), Robert Eitner (1900–04), Carlo Schmidl (1937–38), Ugo Imperatori (1956) and in *La musica, Dizionario* (1968–71). Nevertheless, the Name Authority File is a good first point of reference because it quickly and easily searches multiple 'authority sources' and because several of the links in the files direct to freely accessible biographical information.

### Closing Thoughts

The accomplishments of the OPBS project are impressive, and the project has the capability to become of significant influence in the further development of scholarship on European music theatre in its broadest sense. Day has expressed hopes that it will become a model that showcases 'the advantages of independent or informal collaborations among related institutions and collections' in particular because 'no single institution can provide all the potentially requisite resources'.<sup>27</sup> The project indeed demonstrates some of the benefits reaped when the individual efforts of independent institutions are pooled together. Collaborations between international institutions and a focus on smaller projects has resulted in an online resource that has broad research potential.

One of the outstanding qualities of this project is the enormous diversity of collections that it brings together, not only with regard to generic variety, but also concerning the geographical and temporal provenance of the sources. As a result, the Index and Name Authority File are both productive points of recourse for various kinds of research projects: those focusing on the dissemination of one work, on one genre or on one institution; those investigating musical and theatrical culture in a specific locale or from a particular time period; or comparative studies between various European places. The OPBS homepage could benefit from more conspicuous and regular announcements about the additions to source collections, for example through the blog that is featured on this page, and there remains room for improvement with regard to the search modalities and options for the databases. Nevertheless, the Index and Name Authority File are valuable tools for both the beginning student and the specialist researcher. What is more, by bringing together a database project with a digitization venture, the OPBS is not only noteworthy for compiling such a diverse collection of materials but also for actively pursuing diversification by seeking out interesting collections that could further enrich the database and research on the history of music theatre in Europe.

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<sup>26</sup> The only other link leads to the online libretto *Les deux statues* (1807), a one act *opéra comique* with music by Bernardo Porta.

<sup>27</sup> Day, 'Digital Opera and Ballet', 105.

## Appendix: Internet Sources included in the Index

Internet Project	Website	# of sources in Index
Archives of the Monnaie	<a href="http://archive.org/details/byubrusselesoperaballet">http://archive.org/details/byubrusselesoperaballet</a>	205
Archivio storico Ricordi ( <i>Historical Archives of the Italian Publisher Ricordi</i> )	<a href="http://www.internetculturale.it">www.internetculturale.it</a>	125
BAnQ ( <i>National Library and Archives of Québec</i> )	<a href="http://numerique.banq.qc.ca">http://numerique.banq.qc.ca</a>	119
Bayerische Staatsoper ( <i>Bavarian State Opera</i> )	<a href="http://www.digitale-sammlungen.de">www.digitale-sammlungen.de</a>	121
Beethoven Haus Bonn ( <i>Beethoven House Bonn</i> )	<a href="http://www.beethoven.de/page/Erfahren#digitales_archiv">www.beethoven.de/page/Erfahren#digitales_archiv</a>	1
Biblioteca Digital Hispánica ( <i>Digital Library of the National Library of Spain</i> )	<a href="http://www.bne.es/en/Catalogos/BibliotecaDigitalHispanica/Inicio/">www.bne.es/en/Catalogos/BibliotecaDigitalHispanica/Inicio/</a>	1,074
Biblioteca estense universitaria ( <i>Library of the Dukes d'Este in Modena</i> )	<a href="http://bibliotecaestense.beniculturali.it/info/img/avvert.html">http://bibliotecaestense.beniculturali.it/info/img/avvert.html</a>	361
Boston Public Library	<a href="https://archive.org/details/bostonpubliclibrary">https://archive.org/details/bostonpubliclibrary</a>	250
Brigham Young University	<a href="https://archive.org/details/brigham_young_university">https://archive.org/details/brigham_young_university</a>	3,180
Brussels City Archives	<a href="https://archive.org/details/byubrusselesoperaballet">https://archive.org/details/byubrusselesoperaballet</a>	1,023
BSB Libretti ( <i>Libretti Collection of Bavarian State Library</i> )	<a href="http://www.digitale-sammlungen.de">www.digitale-sammlungen.de</a>	5,025
California Digital Library	<a href="https://archive.org/details/cdl">https://archive.org/details/cdl</a>	112
Danish National Library	<a href="https://rex.kb.dk/">https://rex.kb.dk/</a>	45
Deutsche Historisches Instituts Rom ( <i>Historical German Institute in Rome</i> )	<a href="http://www.digitale-sammlungen.de">www.digitale-sammlungen.de</a>	1,161
Deutsches National Theater Weimar ( <i>German National Theater in Weimar</i> )	<a href="http://www.oper-um-1800.uni-koeln.de">www.oper-um-1800.uni-koeln.de</a> ( <i>site and documents no longer accessible</i> )	66
Dresden Oper	<a href="http://digital.slub-dresden.de/kollektionen/">http://digital.slub-dresden.de/kollektionen/</a>	1,043
Gallica ( <i>Digital Library of the National Library of France</i> )	<a href="http://gallica.bnf.fr">http://gallica.bnf.fr</a>	2,146
Gaspare Spontini nella Biblioteca comunale Planettiana di Jesi ( <i>Communal Library of Jesi</i> )	<a href="http://www.internetculturale.it">www.internetculturale.it</a>	5
	<a href="http://www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/scripts/gaspari/">www.bibliotecamusica.it/cmbm/scripts/gaspari/</a>	3,494

**Appendix (Continued)**

Internet Project	Website	# of sources in Index
Gaspari Online ( <i>Digital Library of the International Museum and Library of Music of Bologna</i> )		
Gaylord WUSTL ( <i>Gaylord Library from Washington University in Saint Louis</i> )	<a href="https://archive.org/details/wustl">https://archive.org/details/wustl</a>	35
Gioachino Rossini e il suo tempo	<a href="http://www.internetculturale.it">www.internetculturale.it</a>	1
Goethe-Universität Edocs Libretti ( <i>Libretti from the Goethe University</i> )	<a href="http://publikationen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/home">http://publikationen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/home</a>	327
Hamburg Libretti ( <i>Libretti from the Hamburg University</i> )	<a href="http://digitalisate.sub.uni-hamburg.de/startseite.html">http://digitalisate.sub.uni-hamburg.de/startseite.html</a>	94
Harvard University	<a href="http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/loebmusic/collections/digital.cfm">http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/loebmusic/collections/digital.cfm</a>	229
Internet Culturale ( <i>Catalogues and Collections from Italian Libraries</i> )	<a href="http://www.internetculturale.it">www.internetculturale.it</a>	1,011
Juilliard School	<a href="http://library.juilliard.edu">http://library.juilliard.edu</a>	7
KBR ( <i>Royal Library of Belgium</i> )	<a href="http://uurl.kbr.be/">http://uurl.kbr.be/</a>	40
Library of Congress	<a href="https://catalog.loc.gov/">https://catalog.loc.gov/</a> ( <i>document not digitally available</i> )	1
Marandet Libretti ( <i>Library of Warwick University</i> )	<a href="https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/marandet/">https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/marandet/</a>	938
Morgan Library & Museum	<a href="http://corsair.morganlibrary.org">http://corsair.morganlibrary.org</a>	55
New York Public Library	<a href="https://archive.org/details/newyorkpubliclibrary">https://archive.org/details/newyorkpubliclibrary</a>	29
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek ( <i>Austrian National Library</i> )	<a href="https://search.onb.ac.at">https://search.onb.ac.at</a>	2,518
Princeton University	<a href="http://pudl.princeton.edu/collections/pudl0102">http://pudl.princeton.edu/collections/pudl0102</a>	8

Raccolta drammatica ( <i>Libretto Collection</i> )	<a href="http://www.internetculturale.it">www.internetculturale.it</a>	5,407
Royal Conservatory Antwerp	<a href="http://archive.org/details/byubrusselsoperaballet">http://archive.org/details/byubrusselsoperaballet</a>	93
Royal Conservatory Brussels	<a href="http://archive.org/details/byubrusselsoperaballet">http://archive.org/details/byubrusselsoperaballet</a>	88
Russian State Library	<a href="https://search.rsl.ru/en#ff=11/05/2017&amp;s=fdatedesc">https://search.rsl.ru/en#ff=11/05/2017&amp;s=fdatedesc</a>	449
Schatz Libretto Collection ( <i>from the Library of Congress</i> )	<a href="https://www.loc.gov/collections/albert-schatz">https://www.loc.gov/collections/albert-schatz</a>	9,457
Sibley Music Library ( <i>University of Rochester</i> )	<a href="https://www.esm.rochester.edu/sibley/">https://www.esm.rochester.edu/sibley/</a>	1,199
UNC Chapel Hill	<a href="https://archive.org/details/uncmus">https://archive.org/details/uncmus</a>	1,449
Universitätsbibliothek Basel	<a href="http://www.e-rara.ch/bau_1/music/">www.e-rara.ch/bau_1/music/</a>	7
University of North Texas Lully Collection	<a href="http://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/JBLC/">http://digital.library.unt.edu/explore/collections/JBLC/</a>	26
University of Toronto	<a href="https://archive.org/details/facultyofmusic">https://archive.org/details/facultyofmusic</a>	4,507
University of Washington	<a href="http://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu">http://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu</a>	22
Yale University	<a href="http://digital.library.yale.edu">http://digital.library.yale.edu</a>	3