

**The Tellez Institute: An Archive of the Future**

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## **The Tellez Institute: An Archive of the Future**

### Who We Are

#### **Mission Statement**

The Tellez Institute is an archive dedicated to the collection, preservation, and public education of music and musicians who are historically underrepresented in the field of Classical Music.

We Promise:

- To promote understanding of the diversity of classical music by making records of BIPOC, Queer, Women and Disabled musicians publicly available.
- To collect primary source documents and preserve them for researchers to produce original research.
- To provide digital transcriptions for every public domain piece of music that passes through our archive.
- To serve as a resource to our parent institution, University of Nowhere, and to all students and educators in their pursuit of a more complete picture of music history.
- To use donor funds and grants to bring these works to the biggest and best opera houses and orchestras in America.
- To Provide microgrants for students to be able to put on these works in their recitals and performances.

#### **Access**

We strive to make our archives as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. To fully accomplish that goal, we realize that some documents in our care are fragile and need careful handling to last for future generations. Anyone or group is welcome to visit our facility provided that they send an email to this address ([lauren.lundy@du.edu](mailto:lauren.lundy@du.edu)) with key information, such as 1)

Name and contact information 2) Research area or documents you'd like to be pulled for you 3) How many people you are planning on bringing to the archives and 4) Any other information pertinent to your visit. You can expect a confirmation with 24 hours of your email. Please note that some documents or artifacts housed within our collection require special equipment to handle. Refusal to follow handling protocols will result in being removed from the premises.

### Collecting Policies

#### **Scores**

The Jewel of the archives is our score collection. We accept everything from the smallest musical fragments to complete orchestral scores and everything in between. When possible, retention of the work is done only with the artist's consent. One of our core duties is ethically providing modern transcriptions of these scores free of charge and for public use. The vast majority of our score manuscripts originated in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century and fall under fair use.

Documents from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century are still available for study in our physical location but will not be posted on the website until 70 years after the death of the composer in accordance with US Copyright Law. Foreign pieces will be analyzed by our legal team to determine how long the copyright stands on those documents.

#### **Video and Sound Recordings**

We maintain a large physical and digital repository of video and audio recording spanning from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. These artifacts are accepted in the following mediums: vinyl, CD, VHS, film negative, DVD and digital copy. Other mediums may be accepted in a case-by-case basis. We are especially careful to collect consent from any living musicians or contributors who can be identified in a video or sound recording. We are selective in which recordings are

posted to our website as we consider copyright as well as our digital and environmental footprint in accordance with our Code of Ethics.

### **Other materials**

Materials not belonging to the category of recording, or score do have a place in our collection, and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. As we strive to get these works performed, we recognize the importance in telling all parts of that story, from conception art to costumes to personal inspirations of the composer. Some of the documents currently in our possession are librettos, blueprints, costumes, photographs, and journals. As many of these documents are rarer and more personal in nature, we do not put these objects on our website except in special occasion. The artist and their estate maintain all intellectual property rights to these items.

### **Materials and Subject Areas Not Collected**

There are two litmus tests to determine whether a document belongs in our archive.

#### **1. Does it pertain to classical music?**

We use this term in the colloquial sense, meaning a genre of art music influenced by western music history and spanning from our earliest collected Gregorian chants to the present day. We intentionally do not put qualifiers on the musicians or their works. There is no education level expected, no country of origin, and no hard time periods.

Furthermore, we do not see it as our place to evaluate the quality of the music. Anything that is deemed as being music of the classical genre by our board of trustees will be elected to our collection, provided that it passes litmus test number two.

2. Is the composer or artist a person belonging to one or more marginalized identities?

The main purpose of our board is to evaluate the intersectional levels of oppression that have worked to erase so much of music history and to bring some of that back through our work. We recognize some groups as automatically being qualified: BIPOCs (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), LGBTQIA2S+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic/Agender, 2-spirit, and more) Women, and the disabled. We recognize that other oppressions have occurred throughout history, and some that have truly dealt with erasure and marginalization may not fit into any of these categories. Our board is welcome to fully evaluate the merits of any piece of music or document brought to our attention. There is a policy set in place for one appeal and one appeal only, should a patron feel that a document in their possession was falsely denied admission.

We are grateful to have generous donors that have given us a vast repository and allow us to be inclusive in our collecting. We are also committed to regular deaccessioning protocols to ensure our space is well-used.

## **Other Policies**

### **Responsible Collecting**

The Tellez Institute takes the trust of our donors and patrons very seriously. To honor the relationships we build and the mission we set out for ourselves, we rely on the SAA Code of Ethics to guide complex decision-making. Those are 1) To collaborate and cooperate professionally, 2) To use ethical, professional judgement 3) To use appraisal and provenance to provide information about authenticity 4) To secure and Protect documents in our care 5) To

promote public access and use of documents, 6) To censor documents that might compromise the privacy of a donor, individual, or organization, and 7) To acknowledge that archivists are entrusted with privileged information and must act with the respect that deserves. We the founding board members of the Tellez institute believe all of these are vital to an ethical collecting policy. Considering recent issues, we have added an eighth value of environmentalism. Our building is designed in a way that is eco-efficient and carbon neutral. Furthermore, we recognize the environmental impact of large amounts of computer processing power and are constantly evaluating our online footprint to weigh public accessibility against environmentalism.

### **Use and Citation**

Citation is the most important skill we have for getting our message and materials out to the wider music world. We are proud to provide readymade citations in the most recent editions of MLA, APA, and Chicago on all our finding aids. This is provided for ease of use for our researchers, but also in hopes of other being made aware of our works and mission. You are welcome to write your own citation provided that it includes the following information:

- Collection Title
- Physical location (box and location numbers)
- For digital records, the link
- Name and location of our facility

In cases where full citation is not possible, such as social media, we kindly ask that you tag us with any of our social info. @Tellezinstitute for Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok and *The Tellez Institute* on Facebook.

## **Deaccessioning**

Deaccessioning is the process by which any document within our collection is removed. Its purpose is to strengthen the quality of our Archives and maintain legal, ethical, and moral standards. Any member of staff working at the level of Junior Archivist, Archivist, or Senior Archivist can put in a deaccessioning claim for any object at any time. The Criteria for deaccessioning is as follows:

- whether the document fits our mission statement and/or code of ethics
- whether the document is useful or beneficial to our Institute and University
- whether the document exists in duplicate in similar institutions
- whether the institute is able to properly care for the document
- whether the Institute has legal rights to hold the document
- whether the object is subject to restrictions, such as legal copyright or donor agreements
- whether deaccessioning is likely to affect public access

After the archivist claims that an object is right for deaccessioning based on any of the above criteria, the board will evaluate. Simple majority must be reached by the board and the deaccession must be signed off by the President of the Institute before a document can be deaccessioned. This process will remain in the institute records in perpetuity whether the deaccession claim was successful or not.

## References

- Archives and Special Collections Policies*. University of Nebraska Omaha. (2022, October 6). Retrieved November 20, 2022, from <https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/about-us/library-policies/archives-policies.php#asccollecting>
- Deaccession Policy*. Deaccession Policy | Policies. (2011, September 1). Retrieved November 20, 2022, from <https://www.bu.edu/policies/deaccession-policy/>
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