

Theatre and Music Department



The Theatre and Music Department was created in summer 2020 by merging the [Theatre History Collection](#) [1] and the [Music Collection](#) [2].

The Theatre History Collection is the national reference library for theatre studies and the largest collection of Hungarian theatre literature in Hungary. It collects all library documents related to theatre in Hungary and theatre history documents of Hungarian relevance from abroad. It contains, in particular, the basic sources of Hungarian theatre history, works of art and paper documents that record, perpetuate and recall the ephemeral theatre performances.

The scope and structure of the Theatre History Collection, according to the different types of sources, are as follows:

- the manuscript, reproduced or printed plays, scripts and copies preserving traces of theatrical use made in Hungary or abroad but concerning Hungarian theatre performance form the Script Library
- playbills, posters, programmes and other printed material for prose, musical and dance theatre, as well as theatre's related genres (cabaret, orpheum, circus, stuntmen, spectacles, etc.), form the Playbills and Small Print Collection
- visual documents related to the theatre: original and reproduced graphic sheets, set and costume designs, theatre photographs are held in the Graphics and Set Design Collection and the Photo Collection
- handwritten documents and bequests, limited edition copies or typewritten documents, which are important source documents for theatre history research, can be found in the Theatre Manuscript and Archive Collection

In addition to these, the collection also contains a specialised library of theatre history with around 8,000 volumes and theatre journals from the NSZL General Collection.

The Theatre History Collection of the National Széchényi Library is documented in a representative album published by Osiris Publishing House: Színháztörténeti képeskönyv. Szerk. Belitska-Scholtz Hedvig, Rajnai Edit, Somorjai Olga. Budapest, 2005. 389 p. [Illustrated Book of Theatre History. Eds. Hedvig Belitska-Scholtz, Edit Rajnai, Olga Somorjai. Budapest, 2005, p. 389]

The core holdings of the Music Collection consist of printed and manuscript sheet music and audio documents. The collection also includes music-related photographs, text manuscripts and many composers' bequests. It does not include music manuscripts dating from before the 16th century or music printed before the 18th century, which are held in the Manuscript Collection and the Early Printed Book Collection.

The collection includes several internationally outstanding sub-collections. For example, the former music library of the Basilica of St. Aegidius (Giles) in the town of Bártfa (today Bardejov, Slovakia), the Esterházy Collection, including the bequests of Joseph and Michael Haydn, Gregor Joseph Werner and Johann Georg Albrechtsberger as well as archival material. In addition to the rich collection of

manuscripts of Ferenc Liszt and the legacy of composer Ferenc Erkel, the Hungarian music history of the 19th and 20th centuries is represented by numerous manuscript and printed music sources. Our collection of theatre music offers a rich source material for the researcher interested in the formation, development and repertoire of Hungarian musical theatre. The growing collection of sound recordings currently contains around 100,000 items ranging from phonograph cylinders, shellac discs, LPs and cassettes to the latest CDs.

Users of our collection are assisted by a library of thousands of volumes of reference material and a wide range of specialized periodicals. Our audio service is available by appointment in the reading room of the Theatre History and Music Collection. Our [Hangtár](#) [3] (Sound Library) service currently offers online access to around 2,600 digitised archive recordings.

2022/04/28 - 16:23

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Links:

[1] http://www.oszk.hu/en/documents_on_theater_history

[2] http://www.oszk.hu/en/music_collection

[3] <http://hangtar.oszk.hu/>