

Musikwissenschaft:
Theorie und Praxis, Ost und West
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Introduction



RISM (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales) is one of the [four major music bibliography projects](#) sponsored jointly by the [International Musicological Society](#) (IMS) and the [International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres](#) (IAML). RISM focuses on documenting musical sources and the other "R" projects (RILM, RiDIM, and RIPM) concentrate on music literature, iconography, and periodicals, respectively. While IAML hosts meetings annually, the IMS meets as one body only once every five years. (Regional IMS conferences take place in the intervening years.) IMS congresses are therefore rare occurrences that are important for RISM as well as all the R projects.

To this end, the [IMS congress in Tokyo](#) from 19-23 March 2017 was a welcome opportunity to see musicologists, who we consider to be among our main users, and share developments in our project. The congress took place at the Tokyo University of the Arts. The full program is [available online](#). The congress can be described as gigantic in scope: there were over 600 participants; a choice of keynote lectures, roundtables, study sessions, and papers; and at times 10 or more sessions at once. It was impossible to see everything.

My participation in the congress involved supporting the joint R session, speaking at the separate RISM session, and participating in a meeting of the RILM Commission Internationale Mixte. I also arranged a meeting with our RISM Japan colleagues. Outside of the congress, I visited four libraries and archives in Tokyo.

The Congress

The joint R session allowed each of the R projects to present new developments. The RISM presentation was given by RISM director Klaus Keil and showed some features of Muscat, RISM's new cataloging program. Directly after the session, I met the president of IAML Japan and was approached by a musicologist who wanted more information about Muscat.

In the main RISM session, called "Research Tool(s) for Source Studies," I co-presented (with Klaus Keil) a talk called "The RISM Online Catalog and Beyond: Using, Reusing, and Contributing RISM Data in Musicological Projects." In my part of the paper, I focused on how RISM and musicologists can work together: first, by making sure musicologists understand how to best use the RISM database (in which I gave the audience some search tips), and second by using RISM's software to directly contribute to the database. Muscat especially made a big impact on the audience and it sounds like musicologists are open to the idea of working with this program. One example was a musicologist who created a database but is concerned about the longevity of the data; would this data be something RISM could use? RISM hopes to be a continuing part of the dialog among musicologists.

Besides the RISM sessions, my second main reason for attending the IMS congress was to participate in the Commission Internationale Mixte meeting of RILM (a closed meeting), a body that governs and advises RILM. I am one of four IAML representatives to the Commission and this was my first meeting as a new member. The Commission only meets once a year.

On one of the congress days I arranged a meeting with the president of IAML Japan, Tsuneko Arakawa, in order to discuss the future work of RISM Japan. The coordinator of RISM Japan, Yumiko Hasegawa, had retired a few years previously and we were unsure how to proceed. I was happy to see Ms. Hasegawa at the meeting and she agreed to remain RISM Japan's main contact person. Both Ms. Arakawa and Ms. Hasegawa agreed that the best way for Japanese libraries to contribute to RISM would be by means of transferring data from library catalogs in Japan to RISM's database. Our Japanese colleagues gave us the names of a handful of libraries with relevant music materials and described the collections for us. They said they would contact these libraries on our behalf to discuss whether a partnership would be feasible.



Left to right: Jennifer Ward, Yumiko Hasegawa, Tsuneko Arakawa, Klaus Keil

Visits of Libraries and Archives

During the congress, the university's [Archive Center](#) hosted an exhibit of materials related to Yamada Kosaku (1886 –1965). Documents, photographs, and manuscript scores of the composer and conductor were on display. These are gradually being digitized and made available online. Other materials held by the Archive Center focus on the history of the Tokyo University of the Arts and consist of materials donated by former students and graduates.



Manuscript music by Yamada Kosaku on display at the Archive Center

On my own, I visited the [university library](#) of our host institution, the Tokyo University of the Arts. The library supports the mission of the university and with around 490,000 volumes it is



University Library

at the same time one of the foremost arts libraries in Japan. The music section was easily spotted and I was glad to see the display of foreign journals that featured the familiar publications of IAML and the MLA (the United States branch of IAML). Within the music reference section I easily found an entire run of printed RISM books, including the very newest one from 2016.

Highlights from the library's special collections (which were not on display but a description can be found on their website) include music books from the Edo period, books containing music for *koto* (a type of harp), and some rare printed music by European composers. It appears that some of these materials are [digitized and available online](#). Based on some brochures available at the library (in Japanese only), it looks like manuscripts by Kazuo Yamada and Kiyoshi Nobutoki are also preserved there. The library also holds the Christopher N. Nozawa 78-rpm-Records Collection and during the congress week, a selection of sound recordings from the collection was played in a concert.



Familiar foreign journals

Outside of the scope of the congress, I arranged a tour of the National Diet Library and the Tokyo Metropolitan Library.

The [National Diet Library](#) (NDL), as its name implies, serves as a reference library for members of the Diet (parliament), but it is the de facto national library of Japan. The tour began with an introductory video of the NDL and then we were taken on a tour through the public areas and the storage facilities.



National Diet Library

The NDL was formally established in 1948 but two nineteenth-century governmental institutions serve as its predecessors. The main purpose of the NDL is to assist the Diet in its information needs related to lawmaking but it also considers its tasks to include the development of information resources for Japan as well as to guarantee access to these information resources.

The NDL collects, preserves, restores, and makes available all publications issued in Japan, including material published electronically. The public has access to these materials through the main library, the International Library of Children's Literature (also in Tokyo), and a library designed for remote storage with some other research functions called the Kansai-kan in Kyoto prefecture. Some digitized materials are only available at the main NDL facility while others can be accessed worldwide through the NDL's online collections.

My tour guide was Yuko Kumakura. She took us through the public areas and into several reading rooms (including humanities and the listening center), followed by a trip to the stacks. She gave us a demonstration of the [OPAC](#), which is available with an English interface, and showed us how we can target music materials by doing a search by classification number

using the code YM*. Our guide also showed us a separate system that is used for in-depth searching of the contents of music scores; this search was a bit more complicated if you don't know Japanese. Because we're librarians, we also learned about the [NDL's authority files](#), classification scheme, and the structure of the OPAC records.



Left to right: Jennifer Ward, Klaus Keil, Natalia Keil-Senserowa, Yuko Kumakura

The library has some special collections related to music. A collection of 600 music manuscripts owned by composer Hikaru Hayashi (1931–2012) has recently been made available to researchers by the NDL. (See [this link](#) for some pictures from the public presentation of this collection in 2016.) Some manuscripts have been digitized but they can only be viewed on site due to copyright restrictions. Another collection is the [Historical Recordings Collection](#), which is the result of a partnership between the NDL and several other institutions (including the Japanisches Kulturinstitut in Cologne) to preserve over 50,000 early Japanese sound recordings. The NDL hosts this service while the recordings themselves are still owned by the respective institutions.

After visiting the public areas, our tour guide took us to view the book storage facilities, which stretch for eight floors below ground. Ms. Kumakura mentioned that the underground storage keeps the books on the shelves during earthquakes.

The tour guide's extra efforts to integrate music into the tour were very much appreciated. Ms. Kumakura always used music examples when demonstrating aspects of the OPAC, and when we visited the reading room for music, she took us to where the library's copies of the RISM publications were kept! The day after the tour, Ms. Kumakura sent me links to the NDL's music collections and more information about searching.



The music section of the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library

The final library I visited on this trip was the [Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library](#). There were no formal tours available, but I was allowed to look around on my own after receiving a reader's card from the reception counter. This is a non-circulating public library that is one of the largest in Japan. The library acts as a research library for Tokyo residents and offers about 1,000 seats for people to study. The library's collection contains two million items with a special emphasis on information about cities around the world, census reports, and cultural assets. A few shelves containing books about music and music history are in the Humanities Room. A Special Collections department preserves over 243,000 items related to the early history of Tokyo. The Tokyo Metropolitan Central Library has a significant collection of materials in foreign languages (10% of the collection).

I noticed that privacy was carefully guarded throughout my visits to the NDL and the Metropolitan Library. I was not allowed to take any photographs in any of the public areas of the NDL, and when I took a picture of the NDL courtyard, the tour guide made sure that my camera was aimed away from where users were working (although individuals would not have been recognizable on the photograph). Later, at the Metropolitan Library, I had to fill out a permission form prior to photographing and I had to promise not to photograph users or anything that they were researching. A librarian there accompanied me to the music section and watched me take a picture of the collection, telling me I could only use it for this report.

Japanese Traditional Music

While in Tokyo, I took advantage of opportunities to hear traditional music. The IMS congress hosted an opening concert of Japanese imperial court music and dances, performed by the eminent ensemble [Tokyo Gakuso](#). *Gagaku* music would originally have been played in the court, but in the concert hall it was presented as art music. The musicians in Tokyo Gakuso are still close to the court: many are current and former members of the Imperial House's Music Department, an organization that dates back to the eighth century. I was impressed by the highly ritualized aspects of the performance, which included precise movements marking the players' entrances and exists, as well as the start and end of a piece.

In my traditional *ryokan* hotel, a *koto* (Japanese harp) soloist performed during breakfast one morning. Elsewhere in my neighborhood, I found a small restaurant that featured live traditional music. The musicians were welcoming to me, the only foreigner there. In addition to playing their instruments, the performers took turns either singing or dancing (as well as cooking and serving) and at the end told me a little about each instrument.



Musicians perform traditional music in Asakusa

Conclusion

The congress was the first IMS congress to take place in Asia. It was an excellent opportunity to see our Japanese colleagues, whom we only rarely see face to face, and to connect with musicologists from around the world. I would like to thank BI-International for the funding to support my participation in this congress. I would also like to thank the organizers of the IMS congress for their hospitality. I hope to see everyone again at the 2022 meeting in Athens.



Cherry blossoms in Toyko

*All photographs by Jennifer Ward
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