



PERFORMING ARTS REMOTE RESEARCH GUIDE

Overview

Until further notice, all Library of Congress research centers will be closed to the public (including researchers and others with reader identification cards) to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 coronavirus. Online resources and reference services will continue to be available at this time. For more information see: www.loc.gov/coronavirus.

In this guide researchers will find a summary of online performing arts resources that can be used at home. We welcome your reference questions at [Ask a Librarian](#). Please keep in mind that Library staff members also do not have physical access to our collections, and this may affect our ability to fully answer your query. Any reference questions that cannot be answered until consulting the collections in person will be responded to as soon as we are able upon the re-opening of the Library. Duplication Services is unable to process orders for Music Division material at this time; please [visit their page](#) for more information.

[Online Catalog](#)

[Searching Music, Dance, and Theater](#)

The Music Division has been acquiring materials since 1898 and has used a wide variety of bibliographic controls on these materials. However, not all of the collections are represented by bibliographic records in the Library of Congress Online Catalog.

The cataloged and classified collections of the Music Division are arranged utilizing the Class M classification tables. Class M has three subdivisions:

- **M** Music: printed music and scores
- **ML** Music Literature: primarily books on music
- **MT** Music Teaching and Instruction: can include both books and printed music

Please visit [this page](#) for more information about sheet music at the Library.

Helpful Hints

Choosing the **Advanced Search** and then **Add Limits** option will greatly increase your searching success.



Limit the **Location at the Library** to *Performing Arts* in order to search the paper-based collections available in the Performing Arts Reading Room. Select *Recorded Sound* if you wish to search for sound recordings held in the Recorded Sound Research Center. Dance and theater materials can be found across various divisions in the Library and their locations may not be limited to *Performing Arts*.

Year Published/Created

Year From To

Location in the Library

Near East Reference Collection
Newspaper & Current Periodical
Newspaper & Current Periodical Reference Collection
Performing Arts
Performing Arts Reference Collection
Prints & Photographs

Place of Publication

All Places
Afghanistan
Alabama
Alaska
Albania
Alberta

Type of Material

All Types
All Text (Books, Periodicals, etc.)
Archival Manuscript/Mixed Formats
Book

There are numerous other options available in the **Advanced Search**. You could limit your keyword search to an *Author*, a *Title*, or *Subject* keyword, limit the publication date to a certain time period, or even to a particular language.

Search the [Online Catalog](#) now. If you cannot find what you are looking for, [Ask a Librarian](#).

Digital Collections

The Library is involved in an ongoing effort to digitize materials and make items accessible online via a [Digital Collections](#) portal. From this page, researchers can browse featured collections, view an alphabetized list of collection summaries, or search for keywords in all digital collections.

Browse digital collections from the [Music Division](#) or explore [performing arts subjects](#) across divisions. Use the facets on the left side to further refine your results.

Refine your results

Subject

- Performing Arts **x**
- Local History & Folklife 21
- Correspondence 14
- Photographs 11
- Photographic Prints 10
- Interviews 9
- Clippings (Information Artifacts) 8
- Field Recordings 8
- Oral Histories 8
- Manuscripts 8
- More Subjects »

Part of

- Digital Collections **x**
- Music Division 57
- American Folklife Center 22
- Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division 8

Digital Collections

View Sort By

COLLECTION
10th-16th Century Liturgical Chants
Collection Items: View 55 Items

COLLECTION
Aaron Copland Collection
The Aaron Copland collection consists of published and unpublished music by Copland and other composers, correspondence, writings, biographical material, datebooks, journals, professional papers,

COLLECTION
African-American Band Music & Recordings, 1883-1923
Collection Items: View 365 Items

COLLECTION
Alan Lomax Collection
Collection comprises manuscripts, sound recordings, photographs, film, and videorecordings created and collected by Alan Lomax in his work documenting song, music, dance, and body movement from many cultures. Includes field recordings and...

In April 2020, the Library of Congress launched a mobile app for its digital collections. To find out more click [here](#).

Special Collections and Finding Aids

The Music Division holds more than five hundred named special collections in music, theater, and dance, varying in size from fewer than a dozen items to more than half a million. Many of these collections are processed and have finding aids online. Others are in varying stages of processing and may have guides, inventories, or print finding aids available on-site. Collections with no finding aids or other guides are described by catalog records in the [online catalog](#). Links are provided in this list of special collections to both finding aids and catalog records.

Visit [Special Collections and Finding Aid](#)

Databases

Many databases available in the reading room through the Library's network are available offsite. Performing arts databases are located in the Library of Congress' [Eresources Online Catalog](#). Those marked **FREE ACCESS** can be used offsite.

The Performing Arts Reading Room's catalogs, bibliography, guides, and databases [page](#) contains resources curated specific to the Music Division's holdings. In addition to downloadable PDFs this page contains a link to the Music Division's [Performing Arts Databases](#).

Streaming Audio and Visual

Researchers are encouraged to search audio and video available on the library's website and the Library of Congress' YouTube page. While some content overlaps, there are some files available on one platform but not the other. Audio and video related to the performing arts include concerts, lectures, and special collection items.

Event videos

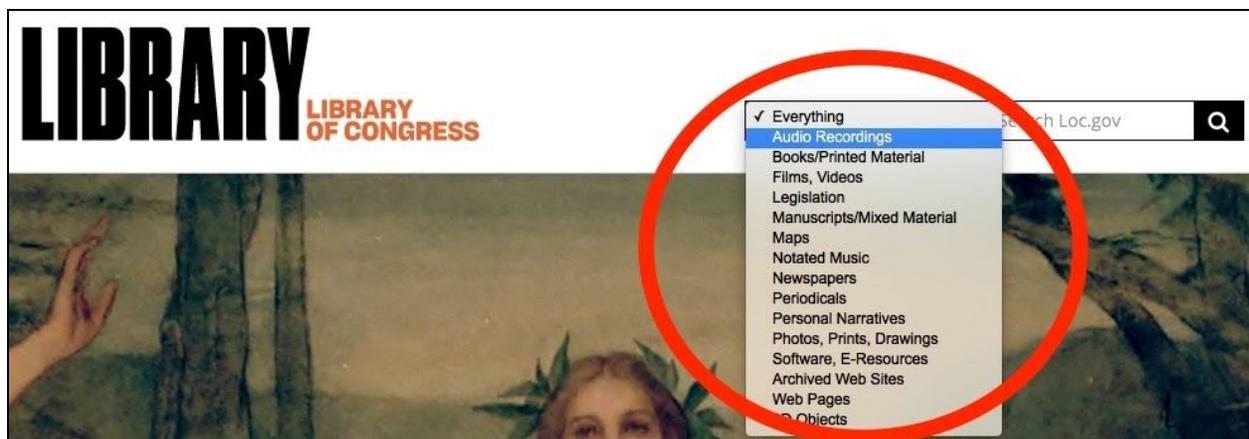
Library of Congress events, including concerts, pre-concert talks, and lectures, can be found in the Event Videos digital collection. To narrow the results, use the search bar at the top of the screen and the filters on the left of the collection items.

Visit the [Event videos digital collection](#).

There are also several ways to search for audio/video.

[From the library homepage:](#)

1. To search for a topic within the library's webcasts, go to loc.gov and type the subject into the search bar at the top of the screen. In the pulldown menu, select **Films, Videos** or **Audio Recordings**



2. In the results page, use the filters on the left to narrow your search results.

Refine your results	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Available Online	8,634
<input type="radio"/> All Items	390,908
Original Format 	
Film, Video	x
Photo, Print, Drawing	760
Web Page	25
Audio Recording	9
Manuscript/Mixed Material	6
Notated Music	5
Book/Printed Material	1
Online Format 	
Video	7,393
Online Text	4,574
Image	3,437
PDF	191
Audio	35
Web Page	27
Date 	
2000 to 2099	6,415
1900 to 1999	1,684
1800 to 1899	258

3. To browse videos within specific collections, click on the **Collections with Films, Videos** option at the top of the results page.



LIBRARY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Films, Videos

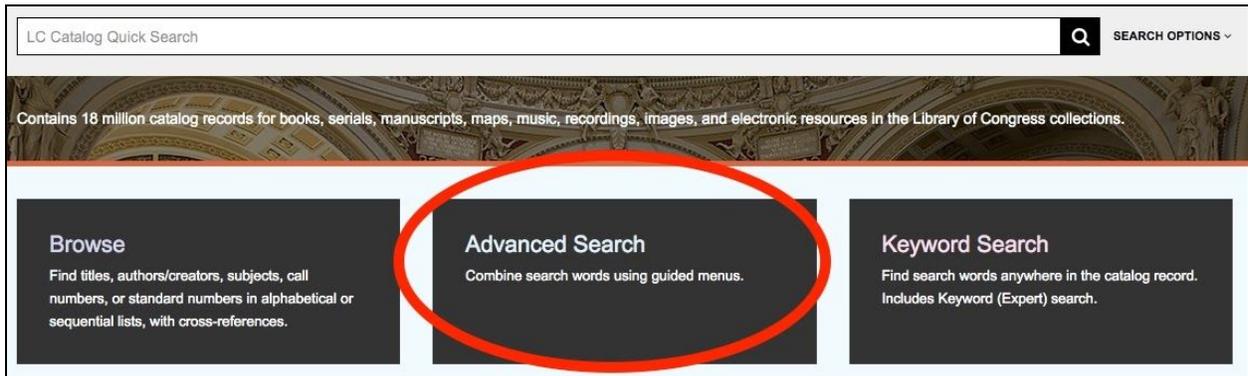
Library of Congress » Films, Videos » Collections with Films, Videos

FORMAT
Film, Video

Search Films, Videos **Collections with Films, Videos**

Through the library catalog:

1. From the [Online Catalog](#) click on **Advanced Search**. Type keywords in the search bars and add search parameters if needed



2. Scroll down and click on **Add limits**



3. Select the appropriate material from the **Type of material** menu : Film or video, Music recording, Nonmusic recording and click Search

YouTube

The Library of Congress' [YouTube page](#) contains [curated playlists](#) organized by topic or event. Playlists relevant to the performing arts include:

- "Music and concerts" - concerts and oral histories presented by the Music Division and the American Folklife Center. This playlist is also linked on the [Performing Arts Reading Room webpage](#). Look for the YouTube icon with the link [LC Music and Concerts on YouTube](#)
- "Talking about music" - pre-concert talks, oral histories, and music lectures, including the #Declassified series
- "Music and the Brain" – series presented in 2009-2010 in collaboration with the Business, Science, and Technology Division

- “Webcasts from the Library of Congress” – emphasis on history and literature with some musicology lectures

National Jukebox

The Library of Congress Packard Campus for Audio Visual Conservation presents the National Jukebox, which makes historical sound recordings available to the public free of charge. The Jukebox includes more than 10,000 recordings made by the Victrola Talking Machine Company between 1901-1925, and allows users the ability to browse, search, and make a playlist of these recordings.

Visit the [National Jukebox](#) to start listening now.

Research Guides

Research guides, or LibGuides, point to resources on specific subjects. Some substantive performing arts guides and bibliographies specific to Music Division collections can be found [here](#). Researchers can also look through guides from the [Music Division](#) or browse [performing arts subjects](#) across divisions.

Additionally, a [K-12 Music Education Resource Guide](#) has been made specifically to assist educators now teaching in an online environment.

Related Materials

While the Music Division collects exclusively on performing arts subjects, researchers can find additional performing arts-related resources in several Library divisions.

[American Folklife Center](#) hosts one of the largest archives of ethnographic materials from the United States and around the world. These collections offer researchers access to the songs, stories, and other creative expressions of people from diverse communities.

The [Manuscript Reading Room](#) holds collections on American theatrical performers, playwrights, and directors, as well as early scholarship and anthropological data on dance.

Videos and recordings of performance are accessible through the [Moving Image Research Center](#) and [Recorded Sound Research Center](#).

The [Newspaper & Current Periodical Reading Room](#) provides researchers resources to investigate past performances as well as current periodicals on performing arts scholarship.

For posters advertising performance events and photographs of composers, dancers, musicians, and performers, look to the collections in the [Prints & Photographs Reading Room](#).

Early editions of plays, theatrical broadsides, and materials on magic are found in the [Rare Book & Special Collections Reading Room](#).

Performing arts materials are also discoverable in the Library's International Collections: [African & Middle Eastern](#), [Asian](#), [European](#), and [Hispanic](#).

Copyright Registrations

Printed music received in the Music Division through the copyright registration process is either cataloged on-site, or filed under the copyright registration number and housed off-site. These off-site scores may be found and requested using the item's copyright registration number. Requests for materials may be made by contacting us through our [Ask a Librarian](#) service, and will be addressed once the Library re-opens.

Items registered for copyright *after* 1978 may be found in the Copyright Online Catalog.

- [Search the Online Copyright Catalog](#)

Records for items registered for copyright *before* 1978 may be found through several methods:

- [Catalog of Copyright Entries](#)
Digitized and available through the Haithi Trust. Also available from [Google Books](#)
- [Copyright registration card catalog](#)
Available in the Copyright Records Reading Room (U.S. Copyright Office).
- [Virtual Copyright Catalog](#)
Available from the U.S. Copyright Office, this catalog covers copyright registration cards for the years 1955-1977.

To request an item for retrieval, you need the following information:

- Title of item
- Copyright registration number
- Year submitted for copyright
- Author / creator / claimant name

Social Media

Researchers looking for the latest news and activities of Music Division can explore the following resources:

[In the Muse](#), a performing arts blog, highlights newly available materials and showcases treasures from the collections from the perspectives of Music Division staff.

The Performing Arts Reading Room [Facebook](#) page regularly posts news about the Music Division including updates on new content, blog posts, upcoming concerts and Library events, and significant musical anniversaries.

For additional alerts, subscribe to the Music Division's [e-mail newsletter](#).

Ask a Librarian!

Specialists are available to help with research inquiries to the extent they are able while teleworking. For more information, please see the Overview section. The best way to contact the reading room for help is through [the inquiry form](#) on the Performing Arts Reading Room webpage. Once received, your question will be routed to the appropriate specialist.

FAQ?

When will the Library of Congress reopen?

No date is set for reopening. Please consult the Library's [public page](#) on pandemic information for updates.

Is phone reference available?

Phone reference is not available while the Library is closed.

Can I get a collection item scanned and sent to me through email?

Music Division reference staff and [Duplication Services](#) staff do not have physical access to collections and will likely not be able to fulfill requests for materials to be scanned at this time. We encourage you to send any [reference questions and requests](#) in and we will fulfill them as soon as we are able.

What is happening with the rest of the concert series?

As of the publication of this guide, all Library of Congress events have been canceled or [postponed](#) until July 1, including the remaining events in the 2019-2020 concert series. For more information about specific events, visit the [Concerts webpage](#) or click [here](#) to subscribe to the Performing Arts Blog for email updates.