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### On Tap

View upcoming virtual lectures, concerts, classes and other events at the Library of Congress.

**[WWW.LOC.GOV/EVENTS](http://WWW.LOC.GOV/EVENTS)**



Music Division

Oliver Lake (clockwise from left), Kandace Springs and Marouan Benabdallah are among the artists to be featured.

## Music Division Announces Spring Concerts

The critically acclaimed 2020-21 concert season continues with an all-virtual lineup.

**BY ANNE MCLEAN**

Performances by the New World Symphony, jazz and soul singer Kandace Springs, pianist Steven Osborne and MET Orchestra Musicians are highlights of just-announced spring programming of Concerts from the Library of Congress. It continues a successful virtual series launched last fall that has attracted a rapidly growing global audience.

To compete with a rich array of top-quality virtual programs now available to music lovers, the Concert Office team has developed out-of-the-ordinary offerings

for the 2020-21 season, including artists who have created programs exclusively for the Library and unique collaborations that bring to life treasures from the Music Division's collections. These offerings have drawn praise from the New York Times, the Washington Post and Gramophone magazine, which has cited them as "imaginative and resourceful."

To date, more than 55,000 viewers have sampled the Concert Office's virtual events. "It's exciting to see thousands of new patrons discovering our series for the first time,"

**CONCERTS, CONTINUED ON 6**

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## DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Lisa Davis at lidav@loc.gov.

Muriel Bellamy  
William Mahannah

Paul Sayers  
Eric Wolfson

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## COVID-19 UPDATE

The Health Services Division (HSD) continues to monitor national, state and local data related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past several weeks, cases, hospitalizations and deaths from the virus have declined significantly.

However, public health officials warn of the possibility of another surge in COVID-19 cases as variants become more predominant across the country. For that reason, HSD encourages Library staff to remain focused on steps to reduce COVID-19 transmission, including maintaining physical distance between people of six feet or more, wearing masks properly, washing hands and avoiding crowds.

HSD continues as well to monitor Library staff members with symptoms, clinical diagnoses or positive test results associated with COVID-19. On Feb. 25, HSD announced that it had received eight new reports of symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since its previous COVID-19 announcement on Feb. 18. Most employees reporting symptoms are not diagnosed with COVID-19, but, out of caution, the Library is monitoring all reports of symptoms.

HSD is communicating with all staff members who become ill. In cases in which ill individuals were present in Library buildings, HSD is also notifying their close work contacts and cleaning and disinfecting the areas affected.

More information on the Library's pandemic response: <https://go.usa.gov/xdtV5> (intranet) or <https://go.usa.gov/xdtVQ> (public-facing staff webpage)

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## UPDATED EMERGENCY GUIDANCE

With enhanced security measures continuing to remain in place on Capitol Hill, the Security and Emergency Preparedness Directorate last week made available phase 2.2 of its protective action guidance for responding to building emergencies (<https://go.usa.gov/xs9d3>). The updated measures include detailed information about social distancing during emergencies, evacuation assembly areas and best ways to contact emergency services.

Staff are encouraged to download the Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS) on their personal devices to receive alerts. For instructions and more information, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mR>.

Learn more about the Library's emergency guidance: <https://go.usa.gov/xs5mQ>.

Questions? Call (202) 707-8708 or send an email message to [epp@loc.gov](mailto:epp@loc.gov).

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## ACCOMMODATING NATIONAL GUARD SHIFT CHANGES

The National Guard continues to use rooms in the Madison and Jefferson buildings for briefings, rest areas and equipment storage associated with its security mission at the Library.

Guard personnel operate on 12-hour shifts, and shift turnovers occur at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. in the Madison Building. During the morning shift change, staff should expect additional Guard at the Independence Avenue entrance and heavy use of the bronze core elevators between the first and second floors, since Guard members meet in room LM 201. Library employees are therefore encouraged to use the building's other elevator banks between about 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

Staff arriving through the Madison garage can access the green and blue core elevators by going through security, then following the exit signs in the hallway that runs alongside the garage.

[loc.gov/staff/gazette](http://loc.gov/staff/gazette)

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### MISSION OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

### ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at [loc.gov/staff/gazette](http://loc.gov/staff/gazette).

### GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

### Library of Congress Gazette

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### GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the March 19 Gazette is Wednesday, March 10.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to [mhartsell@loc.gov](mailto:mhartsell@loc.gov) and [wmal@loc.gov](mailto:wmal@loc.gov).

To promote events through the Library's online calendar ([www.loc.gov/loc/events](http://www.loc.gov/loc/events)) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to [calendar@loc.gov](mailto:calendar@loc.gov) by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to [mhartsell@loc.gov](mailto:mhartsell@loc.gov) and [wmal@loc.gov](mailto:wmal@loc.gov).

# Private Library of Notable Rare Books Donated

Art by Goya and Picasso and literary works by Joyce and Woolf are included.

The Library last month announced the acquisition of the Aramont Library, a collection of rare books from some of the most prolific artists and authors of the 19th and 20th centuries – Francisco Goya, Pablo Picasso, Aubrey Beardsley, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Albert Camus, Willa Cather and Ernest Hemingway, to name a few.

Along with the gift, the donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, gave the Library a \$1 million endowment to fund related virtual public programming.

In private hands for over 40 years, the Aramont Library contains 1,700 volumes, comprising literary first editions, illustrated books and a notable collection of livres d'artiste (books by artists). Many of the books in the collection are enclosed in fine bindings that are themselves works of art.

“The Aramont Library is a monument to Western creativity in art and literature over the last two centuries. Every book in the collection strikes a perfect balance between book design, illustration and binding,” said Stephanie Stillo of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, curator of the Aramont Library. “It is an exciting and welcome addition to the division, and we look forward to introducing the collection to the public over the next few years.”

Beginning this year, Library curators will present virtual events to highlight and discuss the significance of publications in the Aramont Library on the history of the book and modern book production. A symposium on the collection is planned for the end of 2021.

The library began in the early 1980s with modernist literature volumes and grew to include signed and inscribed first editions.



Art by Beardsley (top) and Goya are among the highlights of the Aramont Library.

Treasures include three variant first editions of James Joyce’s “Ulysses,” which include signed letters by Joyce and a rare copy of Joyce’s 1920 schema for his “damned monster novel,” as well as first editions of Dr. Seuss’ “Cat in

the Hat,” L. Frank Baum’s “Wizard of Oz” and W.E.B. Du Bois’ “Souls of Black Folk.”

The modern illustrated books in the Aramont Library are equal parts art and literature, and include works by artists central to the avant-garde book arts movement, including Raoul Dufy and Picasso. The library’s assemblage of livres d’artiste includes work by artists that span from the 18th to 20th centuries, ranging from the Baroque period’s Goya to the geometric Cubism of George Braque.

The January–February issue of the LCM (<https://go.usa.gov/xs9Xf>) includes a feature by Stillo on the Aramont Library that features some of the most distinctive examples from the library’s volumes.

The donation of the Aramont Library ensures its preservation in a public institution and reinforces the Library’s role as an international leader in the study of literature and the history of the book. ■

## STAFF FELLOWSHIPS

The John W. Kluge Center staff fellowship annually provides up to two highly qualified Library staff members the chance to conduct independent research using the Library’s resources and collections. Fellows join influential senior scholars and promising national and international postdoctoral researchers in residency at the center. The application deadline is April 1.

For more information and to apply, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xs9Xf>.

Questions? Contact Michael Stratmoen at [mist@loc.gov](mailto:mist@loc.gov).

## HAVING TECHNICAL ISSUES?

The Office of the Chief Information Officer’s service desk is staffed around the clock with technicians ready to help. Contact [ocioser-vicedesk@loc.gov](mailto:ocioser-vicedesk@loc.gov) or (202) 707-7727.

Rare Book and Special Collections Division

# LC Labs Charts Path Toward New Technologies

BY SAHAR KAZMI

A browser extension that shares free-use images, an application that allows people to create music from sound clips in the Library's collections and a tool that enables searching of more than 1.5 million images from historical American newspapers: Each of these efforts started as an experiment in LC Labs, and each is helping the Library imagine a more digitally enabled future for both its staff and its users.

Since its 2017 launch, the LC Labs team in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has been conducting digital experiments to find innovative ways to allow the Library to connect more deeply with its audiences, invest in the future and make its collections available to the world.

As part of OCIO's Digital Strategy Directorate, LC Labs' team of innovation specialists investigates and applies cutting-edge technologies to bring the Library's digital strategy (<https://go.usa.gov/xsnpw>) to life. Its program of experimentation navigates technical, ethical and policy frameworks that demonstrate new possibilities for sharing the Library's knowledge.

One of Labs' earliest experiments, the crowdsourcing pilot Beyond Words, paved the way for the creation of the user-centered By the People transcription application, which became a permanent Library program in 2020.

Experimentation offers LC Labs the chance to explore such technologies in controlled, low-risk environments, allowing the team to evaluate their feasibility for the Library and carefully consider the operational and societal impacts of larger-scale implementation.

"As the cultural heritage community shifts toward digital approaches to maximizing accessibility and discoverability of its collections, the Library as a trusted institution has a responsibility to



Senior innovation specialists Jaime Mears (from left), Abbey Potter and Meghan Ferriter with Kate Zwaard, the Library's digital strategy director.

LC Labs

model ethical ideals for adopting new technology," Abbey Potter, a senior innovation specialist, said.

LC Labs sets distinct goals for all its experiments, rigorously documenting their progress (<https://go.usa.gov/xAfQF>) and focusing on how the Library can learn from and improve on their results. These approaches guard against launching new technological programs without establishing thoughtful guidelines for their use.

"We take great care to be transparent about our processes and regularly communicate and discuss our results and conclusions with staff throughout the Library," Potter said.

While this methodology means technology adoption at the Library happens more slowly than in the commercial sector, it allows LC Labs to test new ideas responsibly and prevent expensive and potentially harmful mistakes.

The growth of machine learning tools serves as an example. Over the last two years, LC Labs has explored the possibilities of machine learning – the science of training computers to "learn" from data – testing new strategies to

improve browsing, computational analysis and searchability among the Library's collections.

These experiments have exposed challenges the Library must consider before machine learning can be widely implemented.

"Although machine learning programs offer transformative ways to predict and discover patterns in massive datasets like the Library's, we've learned that many commercially available machine learning tools keep access to their underlying algorithms confidential," Meghan Ferriter, another senior innovation specialist, said. "This not only prevents the Library from increasing our institutional knowledge about the technology we use, but it also limits our ethical inquiry into the effects of these algorithms on our collections and users."

Understanding limitations like these allows LC Labs to use small-scale experiments as a cost-effective way to learn how the Library can be more impactful and inclusive in its digital innovations.

Staff can help test select experiments by emailing [LC-Labs@loc.gov](mailto:LC-Labs@loc.gov). ■

## QUESTION & ANSWER



Matthew Young

### Matthew Young

*Matthew Young is a reference librarian in the European Division.*

#### **Tell us a little about your background.**

I am an Army brat, so my family moved about every two years when I was growing up. I had the opportunity to live in different regions of the country – Georgia, Kansas, California – and I also lived in a few places abroad like Japan.

I'm not sure why, but I remember setting the goal to learn Russian when I was 12 or so. Little did I know that the language would become my life. I studied Russian at Brigham Young University, and I served as a representative for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Siberia for two years. I went on to do graduate work in library science at Simmons College, and I then entered a Ph.D. program in Russian literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I still hope to finish my dissertation, but I realize those are famous last words. My dissertation focuses on the Russian émigré writer Gaito Gazdanov, who left Russia shortly after the 1917 Revolution and eventually settled in Paris.

#### **What brought you to the Library, and what do you do?**

I first came to the Library as a junior fellow in 2015. I worked in the European Division doing minimal-level cataloging for a collection of Russian books. They were from the 19th and early 20th centuries, and I loved being able to take a peek into the past and learn what was being published in Russia at that time.

I then returned to the Library in May 2019 after I successfully competed for a reference librarian position in the European Division. My areas of responsibility are Russia and Belarus. This means that I provide reference services for the public related to those countries and to the Library's collections in Russian and Belarusian. I also select Russian- and Belarusian-language materials to be added to the Library's collections. This mainly includes print materials, such as books, newspapers and journals, but I also collaborate with other divisions to recommend films, posters, maps and other special collection items. In addition, I'm responsible for interpreting and publicizing Russian-language collections. I do so by preparing research guides, conference presentations, articles, blog posts and Facebook posts.

Before the pandemic, I would work with patrons in the European Reading Room. I mainly helped people find relevant resources at the Library that were useful for their research projects. Since the pandemic, I have responded to reference requests either by email or phone. Most of the requests are asking for help finding a specific journal article or book or inquiring

what resources the Library has about a particular topic. I frequently have the opportunity to use my language skills, as it is not uncommon for me to receive reference requests in Russian.

#### **What are some of your standout projects so far?**

I am currently working on two research guides focusing on the Library's collection of pre-Revolutionary (pre-1917) Russian periodicals. The breadth of the Library's holdings is amazing, and I am excited to share that with the public. I also recently had the chance to select two fascinating items to be added to the Library's collections – a 17th-century Bible published in Moscow and a "Star Wars" poster created in the Soviet Union. What a beautiful range of materials to work with!

#### **What do you enjoy doing outside work?**

I am a board game fanatic. I also enjoy hiking, baking and, of course, reading. I am currently reading "The Name of the Rose" by Umberto Eco. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that there are librarians in the story. Otherwise, I love spending time with my family – my wife, Beka, and our two-year old son, Soren, included in the photo at left. We are excited for another baby to join us in April!

#### **What is something your co-workers may not know about you?**

I am a reserved person by nature, but I participated in my high school's drama program. I wanted to challenge myself to be more outgoing, and it was a lot of fun trying to adopt a character's perspective that might be totally different than my own. ■

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### SELECT YOUR ZOOM BACKGROUND

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) last month launched the Zoom for Government application. Now, OCIO has released background images, including the Jefferson Building, the Copyright Office and the Packard Campus theater, for staff to use. To change your Zoom background, click "settings" in your Zoom profile and select a photo from the "backgrounds and filters" menu.

More information: <https://go.usa.gov/xs4tb>

Questions? Contact the OCIO service desk at (202) 707-7727 or [ocioservicedesk@loc.gov](mailto:ocioservicedesk@loc.gov).

## CONCERTS, CONTINUED FROM 1

said the Music Division's chief, Susan Vita.

Miami-based New World Symphony will open the spring season on March 12. Conductor Michael Tilson Thomas founded the symphony to bridge the gap for young musicians between academic study and professional career. The program will feature Béla Bartók's Sonata for two pianos and percussion, a horn trio by Charles Wuorinen and "be still and know" by Carlos Simon, winner of the prestigious Sphinx Medal for Excellence.

The New World Symphony concert will be followed by performances from Scottish pianist Steven Osborne on March 19 and the Dudok Quartet Amsterdam on March 26.

Dates for subsequent events of the season will be announced on the 15th of each month on [www.loc.gov/concerts](http://www.loc.gov/concerts).

Two of the spring concerts will feature superb players from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, considered one of the world's finest. In response to being without salaries from the nation's largest performing arts organization since March 2020, the Met's orchestra formed a nonprofit organization to develop performance opportunities.

For its first Library performance, the MET Orchestra Musicians will present an intimate "Quartet at the Opera" concert that includes Giuseppe Verdi's String Quartet in E minor. Met colleague mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford will join the group in Samuel Barber's "Dover Beach." The second concert will feature a performance of Mozart's "Gran Partita," a 50-minute serenade for wind instruments and string bass. The composer's manuscript will be posted online in a package of Library resources designed to entice viewers.

Drummer, bandleader and composer Terri Lyne Carrington is the 2021 Library of Congress Jazz Scholar, engaged for a virtual mini-residency during Jazz Month in April. She is also a National

Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master this year. She will perform with two other high-profile colleagues, pianist Kris Davis and bassist Linda May Han Oh.

In addition, in an interview with concert producer Claudia Morales, Carrington will discuss her performing career and her work as founder of the Berklee School of Music's Institute for Jazz and Gender Studies. For Library audiences of all ages, she will also record a special set of five-minute educational videos. The Tambuco Percussion Ensemble created an enjoyable quintet of similar educational videos (<https://go.usa.gov/xskgB>) for the concert series last fall.

With his March 19 concert, brilliant Scottish pianist Osborne launches a notable sequence of four solo recitals, including his own. His program will feature an evocation of moonlight in pieces by Debussy and Rachmaninoff, highlighting the Library's Sergei Rachmaninoff Collection.

Moroccan pianist Marouan Benabdallah will introduce four works by contemporary composers from the Middle East as part of his "Arabesque" project. Accordionist Ksenija Sidorova, a star performer who appears with major orchestras, will play tangos by Astor Piazzolla to mark the composer's centennial and technically dazzling pieces by Sergey Voytenko, Alexey Arkhipovsky and Alfred Schnittke that illustrate the Russian fascination for her instrument. And from his London studio, harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani will record music by J.S. Bach, Louis Andriessen and Bohuslav Martinů.

The Music Division will partner with the Louvre Museum to present a performance by 17 players and singers from the excellent period instrument group Ensemble Correspondances. Recorded in the Louvre concert hall, "Plaisirs du Louvre" will re-create a musical salon evening at the court of Louis XIII.

Vocalist and pianist Springs and her trio will bring music from her

project, "The Women Who Raised Me," a tribute to great jazz and soul singers.

Lectures and book talks during the spring will include presentations by three scholars from the American Musicological Society – Marta Robertson, Candace Bailey and Mackenzie Pierce – and two events showcasing the Library's extensive dance collections. Dance curator Libby Smigel will introduce talks by acclaimed photographer Dave Fullard, who will share an online gallery show of his work, and Victoria Phillips, author of "Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy."

The season ends with a look forward at an opera-in-progress, "Castor and Patience," slated to premiere at the Cincinnati Opera in 2022. Former poet laureate Tracy K. Smith will talk about the libretto she wrote for the opera with her artistic partner, composer Gregory Spears. Set during the mortgage crisis of 2008, the opera tells the story of African American cousins who find themselves at odds over the fate of land their ancestors have owned since Reconstruction.

All performances and events will be made available at 8 p.m. on the scheduled premiere date on [www.loc.gov/concerts](http://www.loc.gov/concerts), the Library's YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/37xS4hM>) and the Performing Arts at the Library of Congress Facebook page (<http://bit.ly/2P9h3mB>). ■

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## LC LABS SEEKS RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The LC Labs team in the Office of the Chief Information Office (OCIO) seeks participants for a user research initiative to help shape future experiments and explore new ways to make the Library's collections and resources more useful. K-12 teachers, community leaders, data journalists and creatives of all disciplines who use the Library's digital resources in their work are encouraged to share their insights with the team. Friends and family of staff members are also welcome to participate. Apply at <http://bit.ly/39zLVET> or send an email to [LC-Labs@loc.gov](mailto:LC-Labs@loc.gov).