



Collecting Policy – Music Collections

Overview and Scope of Collections

The Music collection began as the Johnny Mercer Collection and grew to include other musicians and artists; early country, bluegrass, and Southern gospel music; the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra archives; research papers of Wayne Daniel, promoter Alex Cooley, and Atlanta-based music publishers The Lowery Music Group. Additionally, the collection contains more than 14,000 pieces of published sheet music, Tune-Dex cards, and arrangements by American songwriters, as well as 50,000 recordings from a variety of genres.

Chronological Periods Collected

1900 to present

Geographical Areas Collected

Primarily the Southeastern United States, with a strong emphasis on Georgia and the Atlanta metro area

Research Strengths and Expanding Current Collecting Areas

Special Collections is the fortunate repository of many important collections, such as the Johnny Mercer papers and related collections, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra archives, Alex Cooley collection, and the Wayne Daniel collection. However, in some collecting areas we still endeavor to complete dense, meaningful networks of associated records. We are particularly eager to supplement existing collections around the following areas:

- Early 20th century and 21st century women music artists
- Jazz artists
- Music festivals, such as Music Midtown and Atlanta Jazz Festival
- Blues collections

Collection Priorities and New Collecting Areas

In the next five years, we plan to pursue collecting partnerships with individuals and organizations who have created documentation related to the following areas:

- Southern Hip Hop and its subgenres of Trap, Rap, Gangsta Rap and Crunk
- Southeastern based Pop and Top 40s music and artists of the 20th century
- Southeastern R & B collections
- Music venues, recording studios, music collectors, record store memorabilia

Highly Desired Documentation and Historical Materials

These examples are meant to provide guidance and are not exhaustive.

- **Personal reflections on life, work, or important events**
Diaries and journals, personal correspondence (paper and email), memoirs, scrapbooks and other memory books, blogs, recordings of conversations or events, websites
- **Documentation of an artist/musician's creative process**
Drafts of writing, lyrics, other preparatory work, statements, mixtapes
- **Direct evidence of significant events or work in the life of a person or organization**
Photographs, press releases, speeches and other prepared remarks, unique research materials
- **Evidence of the friendship, love, and family networks that influence an individual**
Correspondence, social media, documentation of family life, photographs
- Rare published materials related to our collecting areas (e.g., magazines, zines, and newspapers).
- Collected ephemera (e.g., buttons, signs, posters, bumper stickers)
- Sound and video recordings related to individual's work, the organization, and/or our collecting areas

Oral Histories

Special Collections and Archives actively collects oral histories related to its Music collections. For information about contributing an oral history, please contact the Music and Popular Culture archivist.

Formats

All information regardless of media that provides historical documentation of a person, place or event which falls within this collection scope, including, but not limited to, paper and electronic documents, and any and all other recordings such as audio cassette tapes, digital still images, digital or cassette videos, microfilm, fiche, emails, etc. that meet this definition will be considered. Historical documentation created, received, or maintained in a non-tangible,

electronic format that requires hardware and software to read may include, but is not limited to, documents, spreadsheets, databases, HTML documents, scanned or imaged documents, and any other type of file warehoused online (aka: cloud storage such as GoogleDocs or Microsoft OneDrive), on a mainframe, on a computer hard drive, or on any external storage medium, including disks and thumb drives, handheld computers (ex: Blackberry), and cell phones.

Donating Collections

Georgia State University is happy to accept donations that fall within its collection scope. Any collection accepted commits us to the task of organizing and preserving it, which involves hand labor and costs for archival supplies. Donors are encouraged to include a monetary donation to fund the cost of processing and preserving their materials.

Due to limited staffing, budget and space, all collection donations are subject to review by the Head of Special Collections and Archives or the Dean of Libraries and may be declined. Partial collections are discouraged, but may be reviewed at the discretion of the Archives. Certain objects (especially plaques and trophies), artwork and other museum-like materials may be refused due to lack of resources and minimal research value for our patrons.

When a donation is accepted, a deed of gift must be signed by the donor specifying the materials to be donated. This deed of gift will be negotiated between the donor and Georgia State University. Special conditions may be specified by the donor, but GSU Special Collections and Archives may refuse any donation in which it deems the conditions of use overly restrictive.

The GSU Special Collection and Archives discourages:

- Plaques, trophies, books, artwork, and objects
- Materials that are irreparably damaged or infested by insects or mold.
- Materials in which the donor's ownership is in question or disputed.
- Duplicate materials due to lack of space.
- Collections that contain materials that do not fit within the scope of our collection areas.
- Copies, digital or physical, of materials donated to another repository.
- Collections for which the Archives is unable to provide sufficient support to preserve and provide access to archival records.
- Collections for which the Archives is unable to provide suitable space, staffing, supplies, and equipment.
- Material placed on permanent loan, and will not assume liability for materials not owned by Georgia State University.

While any one of the above attributes does not constitute a compelling reason for refusing a collection, the acquisition of a collection with one or more of these deficiencies may be refused

or temporarily delayed. During periods of severe deficiency in resources, the GSU Special Collections and Archives will give priority to new accessions of University records whenever possible.

Donors may make arrangements to examine the material they have donated and can be given a copy of any inventories, finding aids, or other research materials produced by Special Collections and Archives about the donated material.

Georgia State University is a nonprofit organization and has been granted tax-exempt status by the IRS. Donations may qualify as tax-deductible. This, however, does not permit the archives staff to appraise gifts. Under IRS regulations, no library, archive, or museum can perform an appraisal. A list of qualified appraisers will be provided upon request.

Access and Use

All collections will be made accessible to researchers through finding aids, databases, digital collections, and our website as appropriate. Some collections may not be disseminated publicly via the web due to copyright restrictions. Those collections will only be accessible onsite during our regular reading room hours.

Some collections may be used for public exhibits on Georgia State University campuses, however, we will not commit to specific exhibition requests from donors. Exhibits will be created and disseminated at the discretion of the collection archivist.

Cooperative Agreements

Georgia State University Special Collections and Archives will not collect material that is related to a specific person or institution that is already comprehensively covered by another archival institution. Wherever possible, we will work cooperate and collaborate with institutions maintaining complementary collections.

Guidelines Review

This Collection Policy will be reviewed and evaluated every 5 years to ensure that the mission of the GSU Special Collections and Archives is being met.