

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

In order to acquire the complete Denis Condon Reproducing Pianos and Rolls Collection we will need to raise substantial funds not ordinarily available from the University.

We are calling on our many friends, alumni and supporters to secure this unique opportunity and collection.

It will provide a new focus for education and research at the ANU School of Music.

If you would like to make a gift to the School of Music to assist in obtaining this nationally significant collection please complete this donation form or contact the Head of School, Professor Adrian Walter AM to discuss your gift. Any assistance you may be able to give us will be greatly appreciated and we would be pleased to discuss a range of options with you.

Professor Adrian Walter AM
Head of School
School of Music
College of Arts and Social Sciences
The Australian National University
Phone: (02) 61255732
Email: head.music@anu.edu.au

Name

Address

Tel

Fax

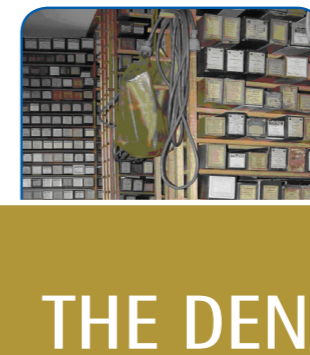
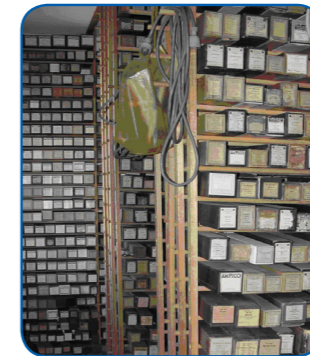
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I wish to make a donation of: \$A

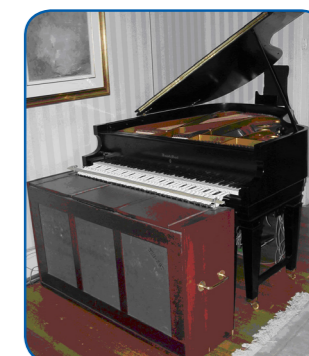
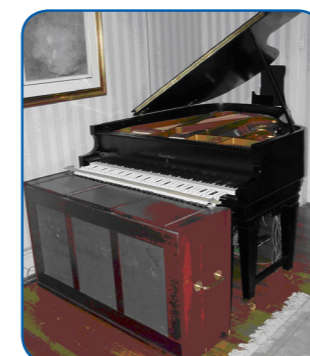


THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC



THE DENIS CONDON REPRODUCING PIANOS & ROLLS COLLECTION



March 2010



THE DENIS CONDON REPRODUCING PIANOS & ROLLS COLLECTION

An opportunity has arisen to provide a long-term home at The Australian National University (ANU) for the Denis Condon Collection. The collection is of staggering proportions and culturally of inestimable value. It comprises 9000 piano rolls and the pianos and equipment essential to play them.



▲ A rare Steinway 'Red' Welte Mignon keyboardless upright (1913)

WHAT ARE REPRODUCING PIANO ROLLS?

Reproducing piano rolls are an early form of recording. They can be easily confused with the domestic pianola roll, as they look similar. Unlike the pianola roll however, every subtlety and nuance of the recorded performance is captured on the reproducing piano roll.

WHAT DOES THE CONDON COLLECTION CONSIST OF?

The **Condon Collection** is of world heritage significance. It is a unique assemblage of:

- + Nine thousand reproducing piano rolls.
- + Six reproducing pianos for which the rolls were recorded. These complex instruments are:
 - A rare Steinway Red Welte Mignon keyboardless upright (1913);
 - Steinway 'Red' Welte Mignon upright (1922);
 - Marshall and Wendell Ampico 'A' 5'6" grand (1928);
 - Chickering Ampico 'B' 5'6" grand (1930);
 - Rönisch Triphonola upright (1925);
 - Behning Art-Echo upright (1920).
- + Four 'mechanical finger' mechanisms (Vorsetzer). These are:
 - 'Red' Welte (1906)
 - 'Green' Welte (1922)
 - Duo-Art
 - Ampico 'A'
- + Original and recently published roll catalogues.
- + Original service manuals, advertising and promotional literature.
- + A library of piano-related publications.
- + Fifty years of technical and artistic correspondence with international collectors.
- + Tools unique to reproducing piano repair.

The Collection is the fruit of half a century of searching and acquired restoration knowledge, and comprises an eclectic range of styles. Apart from classical music there is also ragtime, early jazz, popular and salon.

HOW CAN THE ROLLS BE PLAYED?

Reproducing pianos have a unique pneumatic mechanism, specific only for playing reproducing piano rolls. Such instruments were rare even in their heyday (1905-ca.1935). The instruments were produced only by a handful of piano manufacturers. These manufacturers built pianos that could only play rolls exclusively designed for their instruments.

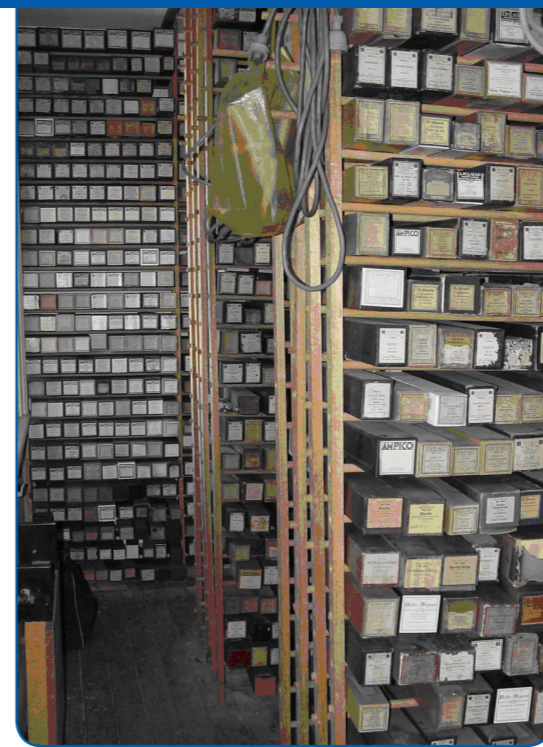
WHY IS THIS COLLECTION UNIQUE & IMPORTANT?

The world's greatest pianists and composers recorded reproducing piano rolls. Most of these musicians were trained during the 19th century. Reproducing piano rolls not only provide a window into the minds of these great performers and composers, but also reveal thinking of the musical past.

The influence of teachers such as Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt can be heard in piano roll interpretations recorded by musicians such as Rachmaninov, Gershwin, Grieg, Mahler, Debussy, Stravinsky, Ravel and Prokofiev. The Condon Collection contains rolls recorded by all of these musicians and many many more.



▲ Duo-Art vorsetzer and 1928 Model A Ampico



▲ 9000 reproducing piano rolls

- + Reproducing piano rolls are not just a recording. A piano is used to 'play' the rolls. This creates a 'live' performance. These live performances have an immediacy and intensity that cannot be equalled.
- + The six reproducing pianos and four 'mechanical finger' mechanisms in the collection are, uniquely, in perfect working order.
- + The rarity of much of this collection makes it one of the most important of its kind.
- + The Denis Condon Reproducing Pianos and Rolls Collection is unique to Australia.

Acquisition of the Collection by ANU will immediately enhance the School of Music's international reputation.

HOW IS THIS COLLECTION GOING TO BE USED?

It will be used within two broad contexts, public and academic.

Public context

Concerts will be given on the pianos in the Collection featuring 'performances' of the reproducing piano rolls. The uniqueness of the concert experience will provide a distinct focal point for music making at ANU.

Academic context

The Collection is a treasure trove of recordings through which late-19th and early-20th century performance can be researched. As such, a wide cross section of the academic and musical community will have access to the largest and most prestigious collection of its type in the world. Research outcomes will comprise traditional academic publications, performance editions, and recordings. The Collection will also be a valuable resource to students in the School of Music's undergraduate programs, enriching the resources available to them in their performance and historical studies.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC



PAYMENT DETAILS

Cheque (payable to: The Australian National University)

Visa Mastercard

Card no

Expiry date

Name on card

Signature

ANU is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient by the Australia Taxation Office (DGR 9001 0639)

Please send me more information about:

- making a donation to The Australian National University
- establishing a fortnightly / monthly / quarterly / annual giving program to The Australian National University
- making a bequest to The Australian National University in support of this project

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Please mark this box if you would like your donation to remain anonymous.

If this project is unable to proceed I understand that my gift will be applied to the School of Music Endowment Fund to support education and research in Music.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

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