

# Les convergences entre passé et futur dans les collections des arts du spectacle

Société internationale  
des bibliothèques et musées  
des arts du spectacle  
(28<sup>e</sup> Congrès : Munich, 26-30 juillet 2010)

# Connecting Points: Performing Arts Collections Uniting Past and Future

International Association  
of Libraries and Museums  
of the Performing Arts  
(28th Congress: Munich, 26-30 July 2010)



*Actes édités par / Proceedings edited by*  
Helen Baer, Claudia Blank, Kristy Davis,  
Andrea Hauer & Nicole Leclercq

*sous la direction de / directed by*  
Nicole Leclercq

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# The Don Juan Archiv Wien

## A Private Research Institute for Opera and Theatre History<sup>1</sup>

Matthias J. PERNERSTORFER

*Don Juan Archiv (Vienna – Austria)*

Don Juan is an important figure in cultural and theatre history, which since its origins in Spain in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century has become increasingly widespread in Europe and since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century also continues to be disseminated overseas. The traces of this theatrical triumphal procession are numerous and are being systematically catalogued and documented by the Don Juan Archiv Wien<sup>2</sup>. A particular focus is Da Ponte and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (world premiere in Prague, 1787): its genesis, premiere, performances involving its authors, and its reception.

Hans Ernst Weidinger, who since the 1970s has dedicated himself to the history of Don Juan materials from its origins until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, founded the archive in the Don Juan anniversary year 1987 and presented a part of his research in 2002 in the form of a sixteen-volume dissertation titled *Il Dissoluto Punito. Untersuchungen zur äußeren und inneren Entstehungsgeschichte von Lorenzo da Pontes und Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Don Giovanni*<sup>3</sup>.

In order to make the fruits of these collecting and research activities accessible to other researchers, the until then private archive was opened to the public in 2007 as a research centre for theatre and cultural history with an archive and research library under the name *Don Juan Archiv Wien*. The

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to take the opportunity here to thank the editor of this volume for giving me the opportunity to publish a revised article on the same topic as that presented at the SIBMAS conference in Munich, as it would no longer make sense to report about the “current” state of projects at the Don Juan Archiv in 2010. Furthermore, in the past couple of years the focus has shifted in some respects and several projects have since been completed.

<sup>2</sup> See <[www.donjuanarchiv.at](http://www.donjuanarchiv.at)>.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Ernst Weidinger, *Il Dissoluto Punito. Untersuchungen zur äußeren und inneren Entstehungsgeschichte von Lorenzo da Pontes und Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Don Giovanni*, 16 Vols., dissertation, University of Vienna, 2002.



archive was first situated in the first municipal district (Goethegasse 1) and since May 2012 has been officially housed in new premises – including a new centre for digitisation – in the eighth district (Trautsongasse 6/6).

At present, the continuously growing collection comprises ca. 20,000 libretti and printed dramas as well as approximately 10,000 playbills and programmes: original, microfilm and digitised copies. In addition, it contains around 30,000 volumes of editions and secondary literature. Of particular interest is an individual collection of almost 3,000 printed theatre texts, ranging in date from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 1930s (known as the Komplex Mauerbach, acquired in 1996), which will be discussed in more detail below.

The Don Juan Archiv is a member of several international organisations, such as SIBMAS and IAML<sup>4</sup>, and collaborates with archives, libraries, museums, research institutions and businesses – particularly in Vienna, Salzburg, Prague, Florence and Rome – both generally and on specific projects. The archive fosters academic and artistic exchanges on both a regional and international level through numerous events – Don Juan Days, conferences, workshops, dialogue meetings and notably the series of symposia *Ottoman Empire and European Theatre*, which has been held since 2008. In addition, the Don Juan Archiv has presented its research in the consolidated form of publications, which are generally brought out by the in-house publisher HOLLITZER Wissenschaftsverlag<sup>5</sup>.

Three specific fields of activity at the Don Juan Archiv will be presented below in order to highlight the spectrum of its projects: firstly, the cataloguing, digitisation and research into the collection of plays in the Komplex Mauerbach; secondly, a discussion of possibilities to evaluate the large bibliographic works by Claudio Sartori and Reinhart Meyer; lastly, I will conclude with research into repertoire and the “playbill initiative” that stemmed from this.

## **1. The So-called Komplex Mauerbach: A Collection of Plays**

On 29 and 30 October 1996 the so-called Mauerbach Benefit Sale was held at Christie’s auction house. Objects that had been stored for decades in the Carthusian monastery at Mauerbach and deemed impossible to retribute – including a collection of almost 3,000 volumes of theatre literature, prints and (a mere few) manuscripts dating from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 1930s whose provenance was unknown – were brought to auction.

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<sup>4</sup> The International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres, <[www.iaml.info](http://www.iaml.info)>.

<sup>5</sup> See <[www.hollitzer.at](http://www.hollitzer.at)>.

H. E. Weidinger acquired the Komplex Mauerbach (the name given to the collection by him) and donated it to the Don Juan Archiv for cataloguing and research purposes after its foundation in the year 2007. As Brigitte Dalinger's research project has shown, the collection of plays was once in the possession of the actor and theatre historian Otto Rub. It was purchased in 1943 by National Socialist authorities for the planned Führerbibliothek in Linz and was shortly afterwards stored in the salt mine Altaussee in order to protect it from air raids. From there, it passed through various stations under the supervision of American authorities until it arrived in the Carthusian monastery at Mauerbach in 1969. As it was legally acquired from Otto Rub, it is now also clear why there was no claim for a restitution of the whole collection – why several volumes, however, were restituted raises new questions.

Alongside research conducted by the Don Juan Archiv into the provenance of the collection, a priority was to catalogue and appropriately store the books. Our first step was to check and expand the auction inventory and in 2008 digitisation of the front matter, necessary for bibliographic identification, was begun<sup>6</sup>. During this time, the books were stored in new acid-free boxes in order to meet the necessary requirements for preserving a historical collection of this kind.

In order to make the Komplex Mauerbach accessible online, we developed parallel to this process a digital library which should be more than simply a bibliographic reference system: rather it should offer the possibility of viewing the digital copies. It was important to us not only to make the searching and reading of individual plays possible online, but also to allow one to form an impression of the collection as a whole. The visualisation allows for a quantitative analysis of the entire collection and enables one to compare the covers (of volumes and title pages) in order to show which items belong together, and should therefore not be restricted to providing a good viewer. The software *NAINUWA* developed by Treventus Mechatronics, even in its earliest stages of development, showed potential for such a visualisation of data and convenient access to the scans (fast and progressive zooming, etc.). Therefore, a presentation of the Komplex Mauerbach was developed in conjunction with Treventus between August 2009 and November 2012.

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<sup>6</sup> Various colleagues, who I would like to thank here, worked on the project Komplex Mauerbach: Gabriele C. Pfeiffer (project management, 2007-2008), Matthias J. Pernerstorfer (project management, since 2008), Christoph Taumberger and Jennifer Plank (digitisation, 2008-2010), Brigitte Dalinger (historical research, since 2009), Margot J. Pernerstorfer (inventory and digital library, 2008-2011), Nora Gumpenberger (inventory and digital library, since 2011), Alison J. Dunlop (digital library and research – and translation of this paper, since 2011), Andreas Hanzl (relational database, since 2012), and Andrea Gruber (library system, since 2013).

In order to meet the abovementioned requirements, the digital library for the Komplex Mauerbach offers two viewing modes:

- According to individual works: <<http://www.nainuwa.com/at-djarch-kmb/>>
- According to volumes: <<http://www.nainuwa.com/at-djarch-kmb/volumes/>>

The viewing of individual works is suited to bibliographic interest as it is possible to identify individual titles and to examine the front matter. Additionally, it is possible to conduct quantitative analysis, for example, according to year and place of publication.

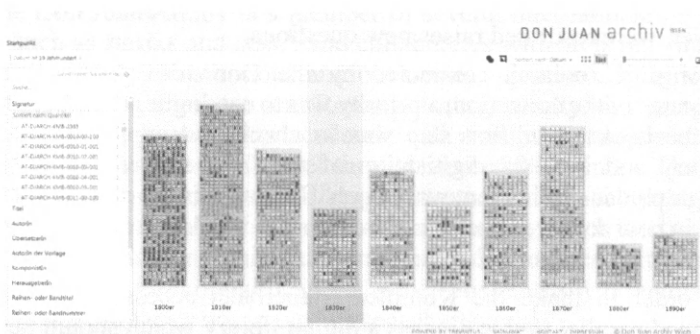


Figure 1. Dated Plays in the Komplex Mauerbach from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

If one's priority is to research the history of the collection, the viewing of volumes is recommended as, for example, it enables a comparison of bindings. In many cases, one can find older shelf marks or ex libris marks, which are of interest for historical research and will be listed in their entirety in the printed catalogue (currently under preparation).

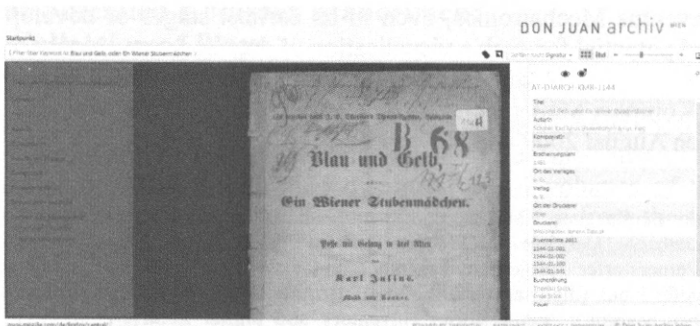


Figure 2. kmb 1144, Karl Julius: *Blau und Gelb, oder: Ein Wiener Stubenmädchen* (Wien, 1861), annotated print with various signatures.

## 2. Bibliographic Cataloguing of Historical Theatre Materials

Not least, the digital library of Komplex Mauerbach should improve the ability to find it online; in the future it will also be integrated into Europeana<sup>7</sup>, the virtual library of the European Union for cultural heritage. The request to have the plays found in the collection included in Reinhart Meyer's *Bibliographia Dramatica et Dramaticorum*<sup>8</sup> has already been accepted. There has been cooperation between the bibliographer and the archive since a project on the Pálffy theatre library, which is housed at the Institut für Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft at the University of Vienna, was conducted in 2007<sup>9</sup>, and last year it led to the publication of his *Schriften zur Theater- und Kulturgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*<sup>10</sup>. This 900-page book also contains a review of Claudio Sartori's standard work, *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800*<sup>11</sup>, published in the 1990s, in which Meyer underlines the cultural and historical significance of this great biographical achievement. Bibliographies are considerably more than mere reference system: depending on the conception, they can broaden or disguise our view of historical reality. In this context reading of the article "Wie hinderlich Wissen sein kann, oder: Über die Dialektik von Irrtum und fortschreitender Erkenntnis. Überlegungen zu den Arbeiten an der *Bibliographia Dramatica et Dramaticorum*"<sup>12</sup> is recommended.

And bibliographies want to be read. In 1996, H. E. Weidinger acquired the publishing rights to develop Sartori's *Catalogo Analitico* into a database<sup>13</sup>, and in his abovementioned dissertation on *Don Giovanni*, he

<sup>7</sup> See <[www.europeana.eu](http://www.europeana.eu)>.

<sup>8</sup> Reinhart Meyer, *Bibliographia Dramatica et Dramaticorum. Kommentierte Bibliographie der im ehemaligen deutschen Reichsgebiet gedruckten und gespielten Dramen des 18. Jahrhunderts nebst deren Übersetzungen und Bearbeitungen und ihrer Rezeption bis in die Gegenwart*, 1. Abteilung: *Werkausgaben, Sammlungen, Reihen*, Vols. 1-3, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1986; 2. Abteilung: *Einzelausgaben*. Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1993f.

<sup>9</sup> Matthias J. Pernerstorfer, «Die Theater-Bibliothek Pálffy», in Birgit Peter and Martina Payr (eds.), «*Wissenschaft nach der Mode*»? *Die Gründung des Zentralinstituts für Theaterwissenschaft an der Universität Wien 1943*, Vienna, Lit Verlag, 2008, p. 124-134.

<sup>10</sup> Reinhart Meyer, *Schriften zur Theater- und Kulturgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Matthias J. Pernerstorfer (ed.), Vienna, Hollitzer Wissenschaftsverlag, 2012 (Summa Summarum 1).

<sup>11</sup> Claudio Sartori, *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800. Catalogo analitico con 16 indici*, 7 Vols., Cuneo, Bertola & Locatelli Editori, 1990-1994.

<sup>12</sup> Reinhart Meyer, *Schriften* (No. 2), p. 485-506.

<sup>13</sup> This database is housed at the Don Juan Archiv.

analysed it in exemplary fashion in two different respects. On the one hand, the mentioning of biographies or singers (for example, those who participated in the Prague premiere of *Don Giovanni*) in libretti allow one to reconstruct various aspects of performances – the same is true for librettists, composers, choreographers and all others who took part in performances of operas and ballets and are named in Sartori's *Catalogo Analitico*. On the other hand, repertoire of Italian operas, as well as Latin and Italian oratorios, can be reconstructed for various places (towns, castles, monasteries and churches). Although such detailed analyses depend on the reliability and completeness of Sartori's data, this does not change the fact that this is the only means of obtaining a broader overview.

### 3. Research on Repertoire and the Playbill Initiative

Neither Sartori's *Catalogo Analitico* nor Meyer's *Bibliographia Dramatica* (which is currently being digitised by the Don Juan Archiv) contain information about all known performances: although they serve as a starting point for research on repertoire, it is imperative to incorporate other primary sources and secondary literature.

A systematic compilation of research on opera and theatre repertoire has not yet been undertaken. For example, concerning Viennese repertoire in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although there is a series of works about opera at the imperial court and individual theatres, and another series about sources that are important for research on the repertoire, it is not possible at present to call up the daily programme, say for 29 October 1787, at the touch of a button. In order to change this situation, the Don Juan Archiv is dedicated to collecting, digitising, verifying, and where possible elaborating on already published programmes and creating a means of presenting the material online.

In order to link research data with digitised sources, the Don Juan Archiv relies on cooperation with other archives, libraries and museums. In 2010, to make a virtue of necessity, a "playbill initiative" involving several Viennese institutes, in particular the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus and the Österreichisches Theatermuseum, was established. Various meetings (Forschungsgespräche) have taken place, as well as an international conference on this subject on 28 and 29 June 2011, at which employees of archives, libraries, museums, and universities as well as students presented their findings<sup>14</sup>. In October 2012, the expanded conference proceedings for this event were published under the title *Theater – Zettel – Sammlungen*.

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<sup>14</sup> A report about the conference by Jana-Katharina Mende appeared in *Nestroyana* 31 (2011), No. 3-4, p. 200-203, and in *AKMB-News* 17 (2011), p. 50-53.

*Erschließung, Digitalisierung, Forschung*<sup>15</sup>. Because of the positive response to this, we decided to continue this work and publish a second volume dedicated to this topic.

The activities of the Don Juan Archiv are, as can be seen in this brief overview, diverse – this diversity is determined by the figure of Don Juan and its history, which forces one to think outside the box, as well as by the historical genesis of the archive itself. In conjunction with research on Don Juan, individual collections such as Komplex Mauerbach, or specific themes such as *Ottoman Empire and European Theatre*, we undertake large-scale projects. In other areas, the Don Juan Archiv serves as a kind of initiator and is always open to interesting collaborations.

## Abstract

Don Juan est une figure phare de l'histoire de la culture et du théâtre. Depuis ses origines, en Espagne au xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle, son mythe n'a cessé de s'étendre à travers toute l'Europe et, depuis la fin du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle, à travers le monde. Les traces de cette triomphale procession théâtrale sont nombreuses et sont systématiquement cataloguées et documentés par la Don Juan Archiv Wien.

Hans Ernst Weidinger, qui, depuis les années 1970, a consacré sa vie à la recherche sur l'histoire de Don Juan, de ses origines jusqu'à la fin du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle, a fondé les archives en 1987, date anniversaire de la création de l'opéra de Mozart à Prague (1787).

Hans Ernst Weidinger a par ailleurs présenté une partie de son travail en 2002, sous la forme d'un essai comportant seize volumes. Actuellement, la collection, en constante expansion, comprend environ 20 000 livrets et pièces écrites ainsi qu'approximativement 10 000 affiches et programmes : des originaux, des microfilms et des copies numérisées. De plus, elle contient 30 000 volumes d'éditions et notamment de littérature secondaire. La collection de près de 3 000 textes théâtraux en version papier, s'étendant du milieu du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle jusqu'aux années 1930, connue sous le nom de *Komplex Mauerbach*, acquise en 1996, est d'un grand intérêt.

Afin d'étendre cette collection et de rendre les recherches accessibles aux autres chercheurs, les archives, qui étaient encore privées il y a peu, ont été ouvertes au public en 2007 en tant que centre de recherche dans le domaine de l'histoire de la culture et du théâtre. La bibliothèque, qui rassemble ces archives et ces recherches, porte le nom de Don Juan Archiv Wien.

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<sup>15</sup> Matthias J. Pernerstorfer (ed.), *Theater – Zettel – Sammlungen. Erschließung, Digitalisierung, Forschung*, Vienna, Hollitzer Wissenschaftsverlag, 2012 (Bibliographica 1).

Trois domaines spécifiques d'activités de la Don Juan Archiv sont présentés dans ce papier, dans le but de mettre en exergue l'étendue du projet : tout d'abord, dans la collection de pièces au sein du Komplex Mauerbach, le catalogage, la numérisation et la recherche ; ensuite, la discussion des nombreuses possibilités d'évaluation des importants travaux bibliographiques réalisés par Claudio Sartori et Reinhart Meyer ; enfin, des recherches dans le répertoire et la collection d'affiches qui en découle.