

END OF FUNDING PERIOD REPORT

LAUC Statewide Grants, Research & Professional Development Committee

Primary Applicant(s): David Gilbert

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TITLE OF PROJECT: Reconstructing *In the Land of the Head Hunters*: A critical edition and essay.

Time Period of Grant: 2010-11

Amount of Award Received: \$4185.00

Original Abstract as Submitted:

What is probably the earliest surviving complete orchestral score for a silent film was recently found in the Edward S. Curtis Collection at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. The score was composed by John J. Braham to accompany Edward S. Curtis's 1914 feature length documentary drama *In the Land of the Head Hunters*. Curtis shot the film on Victoria Island off the Canadian Coast using an entirely native cast of Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) actors. The film premiered at the Casino Theatre, New York, in December 1914 accompanied by Braham's score. The film was recently reconstructed and preserved by the UCLA Film and Television Archive; I reconstructed the music from the materials at the Getty Research Institute for performance with the film (see: www.curtisfilm.rutgers.edu). I am currently editing a scholarly edition of the music score for publication in the series *Music of the United States of America* (MUSA), published by AR Editions. This research grant will support my work on that scholarly edition as well as a research paper on the first performance of the film. I expect to uncover information on John J. Braham, the orchestra and performers involved in the premiere, the Casino Theatre, and perhaps existing musical material not contained in the Getty collection (a conductor's score or other manuscript material or sketches by Braham). Since the film itself as it exists today is incomplete, it cannot be used as a primary source for reconstructing the music; but the reconstructed music resulting from this project might be used in the future to reconstruct the film should further material come to light.

I. ACCOMPLISHMENTS and EVALUATION

Thanks to this grant I was able to make a research trip to New York and Boston in February 2010. With residual funds I was able to add the Library of Congress while at ALA in Washington in June 2010. In New York I worked in the Shubert Theater Archive, the New York Public Library, the

New York Historical Society, and the Brooklyn Public Library. In Boston I used the Harvard Theater Collection, the Boston Historical Society, and the Boston Public Library. At the Library of Congress the film collection was most useful. In almost all of these repositories I discovered useful documents related to the life of John J. Braham and in New York material about the film and its music which is the subject of my research. For example, in the Harvard Theater Collection I found letters and some musical notation of John J. Braham while he was musical director at the Boston Athanaeum Theater. This allowed me to verify that the musical score for the film was an autograph, and not a copy or later derivation. At the Library of Congress I was able to view a 1912 film, *Hiawatha*, an “Indian” film for which John J. Braham also wrote music for which the score exists. I also discovered stills from *In the Land of the Head Hunters* that were deposited for copyright purposes. Every researcher hopes for the missing link or a major undiscovered source for their project and in this, like almost all researchers, I was also disappointed. However, this work was essential in the completion of my publication proposal, my essay to be published in the book about the film, and the issue of the DVD of the film.

II. IS YOUR PROJECT COMPLETED? Yes__ No__

Yes and No.

My proposal to publish a critical edition of the score was not accepted by the publisher I targeted. I have shopped the project elsewhere but have not so far been able achieve its publication. The number of respected academic publisher willing to issue music is shrinking due to the perceived limited audience and challenges to academic publishing itself.

However, the collection of essays and the DVD of the film will be issued in 2014 for the 100th anniversary of the premier of the film. The research funded by this grant has been essential for both of these publications.

III. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Please explain how the funds received were spent. Attach your original budget and indicate how well your estimates matched with actual expenditures. Receipts are not necessary.

Budget Summary

Total amount requested from LAUC statewide research funds: \$4185.00

Total amount requested from LAUC divisional research funds:

Other funding obtained or expected (amount and source):

Fiscal Year of Application (fiscal year that funding begins): 2009-10

New Project (Yes/No): Yes

Supplemental Funding (Yes/No): No

Salaries:

Total Salaries:

Supplies: \$200 (photocopies)

Total Supplies: \$200
Travel: \$719
Total Travel:
Other Expenses: \$3266 (food and lodging)
Total Other Expenses:
Total State-Wide Research Funds Requested: \$4185.00

New York and Boston are expensive, among the most expensive, travel markets, but I made my trip in February which kept expenses lower. At the end of this phase I had about \$500 left which covered time in Washington DC for work at the Library of Congress. I believe I had about \$100 or so left unspent at the end of the FY.

IV. SHARING YOUR PRODUCT/RESULTS

What are your plans for disseminating the results of your work? If it will be a web page or product, or published article or book, when will it be available to the public? Include citations/URLs if known.

See above under, Is Your Project Completed?

V. NOTE

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