



What is MOLA?

A Guide to the Major Orchestra Librarians' Association

Prepared by the Publications Committee

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The Major Orchestra Librarians' Association

Introduction

MOLA: An Association of Music Performance Librarians was founded in 1983 as the Major Orchestra Librarians' Association. This organization was created as a way for performance librarians to communicate, collaborate, and share resources with one another. In 2020 we adopted a new tagline to be more inclusive of non-orchestral organizations. Currently more than 350 performing ensembles throughout the world are dues-paying members.

The primary objective of MOLA is to educate and assist performance librarians so they may better serve their institutions. Conferences, a newsletter, and the website facilitate communication and resource sharing among member organizations. Through this communication MOLA presents a unified voice to music publishers surrounding matters of mutual interest.

Annual Conference

The MOLA conference is hosted by a different member organization each year. Many conferences are held in North America and conferences have been held in London, Helsinki, Berlin and Zürich in recent years. In 2026 Sydney, Australia was the first city in Oceania to host a MOLA conference.

Conference hosts work with the MOLA board to craft a compelling agenda of roundtable discussions, skills workshops, and sessions which include guests such as computer engraving experts, publishers, and database developers, among others. Social activities, such as welcome receptions and the closing banquet, facilitate networking and friendship among attendees. When members can place a face with a name, communication becomes much easier. The conference is an excellent way to establish those connections.

Regional Workshops

Regional workshops are offered in various locations throughout the year for MOLA members and non-members and are often focused on educating newer librarians. Experienced librarians from MOLA organizations serve as teachers, helping to fulfill the educational mission of the organization.

Marcato

The official quarterly newsletter Marcato is published by MOLA and includes feature stories, committee updates, conference agendas, job changes, and industry news.

Website

MOLA maintains a comprehensive public website with additional password protected areas for the membership such as a discussion forum, MOLA publications, Marcato, resource sharing, an errata database, and much more.

www.mola-inc.org

Communication with Publishers

Working with music publishers is an important part of MOLA's mission. MOLA invites representatives from music publishers to conferences in order to address the condition of printed orchestral materials, in addition to exploring the changing landscape of music publishing, rights, and distribution. This collaborative effort has led to the formation of the MOLA/Publisher Joint Committees, which meet periodically. MOLA has also published a brochure entitled ***MOLA Guidelines for Music Preparation*** which is an excellent resource to offer externally to composers, music preparation professionals, and students.

Other Areas of Interest

Many additional topics are relevant to MOLA librarians, including copyright law, performing rights issues, public domain use, edition selection, music preservation, touring, materials for conductors and soloists, budgeting, and specialized library equipment and technologies such as photocopiers, printers, binding machines, engraving and editing software, databases, paper, and more.

Becoming a Performance Librarian

There are currently no degree programs for performance librarians, however the vast majority of performance librarians have degrees in music. There are many apprenticeship, fellowship and internship programs available for aspiring performance librarians. For a listing of career opportunities please visit mola-inc.org under careers.

The MOLA publication entitled ***The Performance Librarian: A Career Introduction*** discusses this topic fully.

Association with Music Service Organizations

MOLA is represented on the MLA (Music Library Association) / MPA (Music Publishers' Association)/ MOLA Joint Committee. In addition, MOLA has cultivated relationships with other music service organizations. These include the International Association of Music Librarians, the American Federation of Musicians, the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, the Regional Orchestra Players' Association, The League of American Orchestras, and the Nordic Orchestra Library Association.

MOLA Publications

- ***What is MOLA?*** defines the organization and its goals.
- ***The Performance Librarian: A Career Introduction*** outlines a variety of duties and skills needed as an Orchestra Librarian throughout different disciplines.
- ***MOLA Guidelines for Music Preparation*** discusses the preparation of music scores and parts and the layout of performance material in our libraries.
- ***The Music We Perform*** gives an overview of royalties, rentals and rights with current emphasis in the United States.
- ***Opera: Friend or Foe?*** is a guide to aid in the preparation of Opera repertoire.
- ***Rights and Responsibilities concerning Rental Music in North America*** is a set of guidelines designed to achieve good communication and efficient service between performance libraries and rental publishers.
- ***Ballet Music: A Survival Guide*** is intended to serve as a basic map of the wilds of the dance world and to suggest strategies for finding those mysterious lost treasures of 19th century ballet repertoire.

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1993 edition

Clinton F. Nieweg · Philadelphia Orchestra

David Bartolotta · San Francisco Ballet

Peter Conover · Houston Symphony

Gary Corrin · Toronto Symphony

Marcia Farabee · National Symphony

John Grande · Metropolitan Opera

Robert M. Grossman · Philadelphia Orchestra

Paul Gunther · Minnesota Orchestra

James Kortz · St. Paul Chamber Orchestra

Mary C. Plaine · Baltimore Symphony

Rosemary Summers · Metropolitan Opera

Lawrence Tarlow · New York Philharmonic

John Van Winkle · San Francisco Symphony

Revised in 2001

John Campbell · San Francisco Symphony

Russ Girsberger · New England Conservatory

Margo Hodgson · National Arts Centre Orchestra

Carol Lasley · Florida Philharmonic

Cathy Miller · The U.S. Army Field Band

Patrick Zwick · Utah Symphony

Revised in 2016

Sarah Anderson · Annapolis Symphony

Paul Beck · The Juilliard School

Robert Greer · Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra

Travis Hendra · Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

Melissa Robason · The Metropolitan Opera

Updated 2026

Laura Conrad · Santa Fe Opera

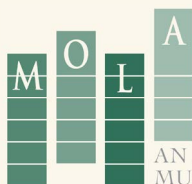
Katie Klich · University of Michigan

Emily (& Aaron) Marsh · Charlotte Symphony

Benjimen Neal · Jacksonville Symphony

*For Further Information about MOLA
visit our website at:*

www.mola-inc.org



AN ASSOCIATION OF
MUSIC PERFORMANCE LIBRARIANS