Mentoring Novice Music Editors, or, How I Spent My Summer with Old Manuscripts and New Software

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George Mason University

Joint Fall Conference

Atlantic and Greater New York Chapters, Music Library Association

October 13, 2017 - Rutgers University

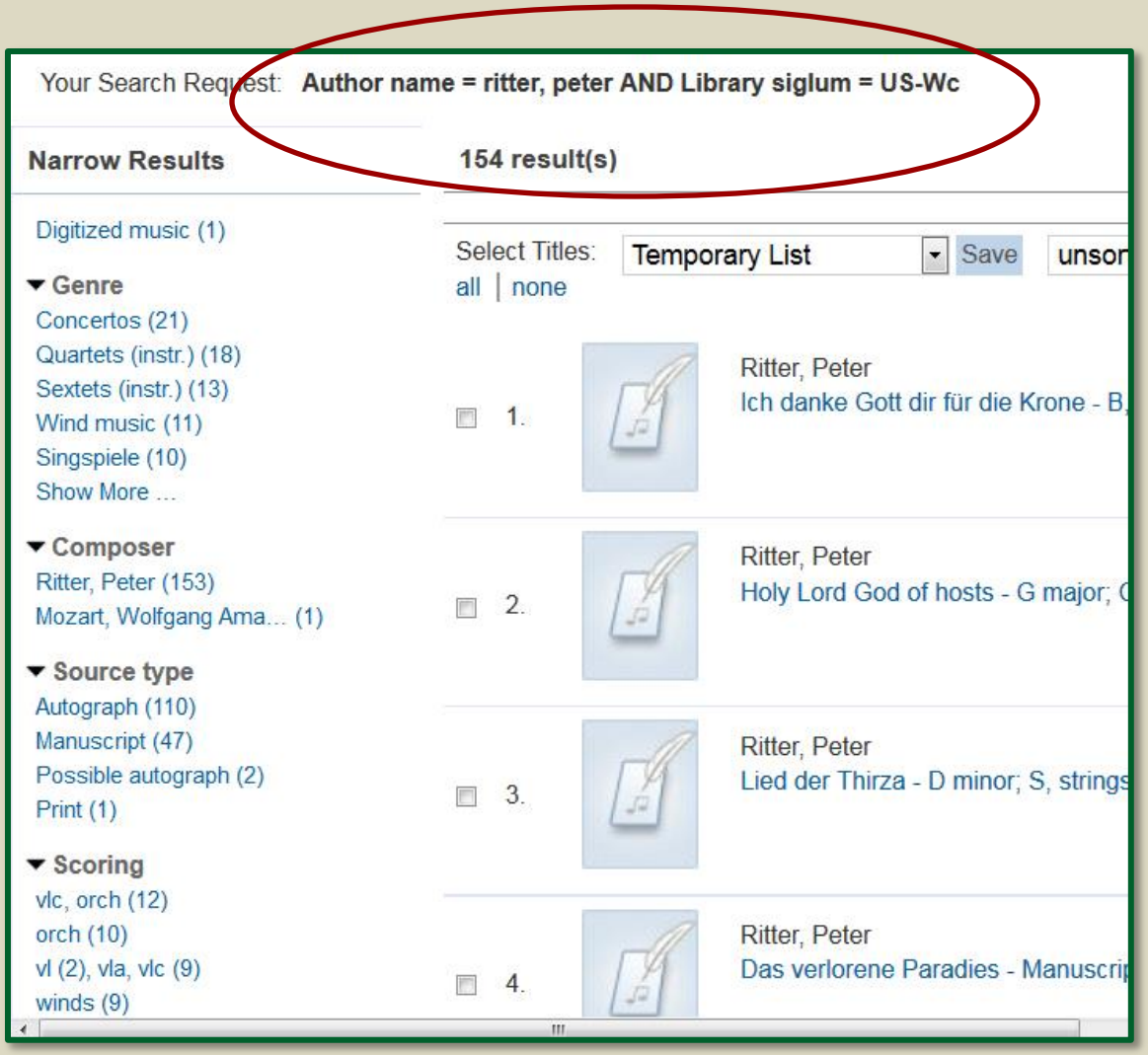
Genesis of an "OSCAR" Project

- OSCAR bestows grants in support of individual undergraduate research – pays them to work!
- OSCAR solicited faculty proposals for special TEAM research projects to be conducted in Summer, 2017
- After conferring with composer and music technologist Dr. Jesse Guessford, we submitted a proposal and WON!

Peter Ritter Chamber Music Performing Edition:
Editing an 18th/19th-Century Composer's Music Manuscripts for Contemporary Performance and Open-Access Dissemination

Finding PETER RITTER Mss. at LOC

- Searching RISM for manuscripts held at US-Wc showed over 100 autograph by a certain Peter Ritter
- No other library has so many in one place
- Most were acquired in a single lot from a dealer in Germany in 1911
- Earlier provenance is unknown
- Some are in poor condition
- Most have been microfilmed



Peter Ritter, 1763-1846

- Cellist, composer, and conductor in Mannheim
- Associated with Mannheim National Theater as cellist, concertmaster, comic opera conductor, and finally artistic director
- Composed works ranging from early sinfonias, chamber music, and Lieder to operas, Singspiel, and choral works
- Musical form and style illustrates transition from classical to early Romantic

Christoph Heckel, lithograph portrait of Peter Ritter, n.d. Source: Mannheim, Germany; Reiss-Engelhorn-Museums; Inv. Nr. G Ed 121,k.; photoreproduction by Jean Christen.

Our "Advertisement" –14 Students Applied

Summer 2017 Music Research Jobs for Mason Undergraduates

Great pay! Undergraduate students collaborate on an OSCAR-funded project with faculty mentors: edit selected music holograph manuscripts from the Library of Congress for online publication.

Peter Ritter Chamber Music Performing Edition: Editing an 18th/19th-Composer's Music Manuscripts for Contemporary Performance and Open-Access Dissemination

We'll inspect and scan original manuscripts, spend several weeks transcribing and editing them with notation software, conduct related musicological research, and upload the resulting scores and parts to IMSLP (International Music Score Library Project). Stipend: $4,000 for the summer.

Required Qualifications

1 - Ability to read and write music notation.
2 - Familiarity with basic music theory (scales, keys, chords, cadences).
3 - Interest in western classical music history.
4 - Ability to devote 30-35 hours a week, May 29-Aug 4, to the project.

Desirable Qualifications

1 - Completion of second-year (intermediate) music theory courses, or equivalent knowledge.
2 - Completion of one upper-division music history course, or equivalent knowledge.

(PS- We'll teach you to use Sibelius® or Finale® software.)

Only four student collaborators can be hired!

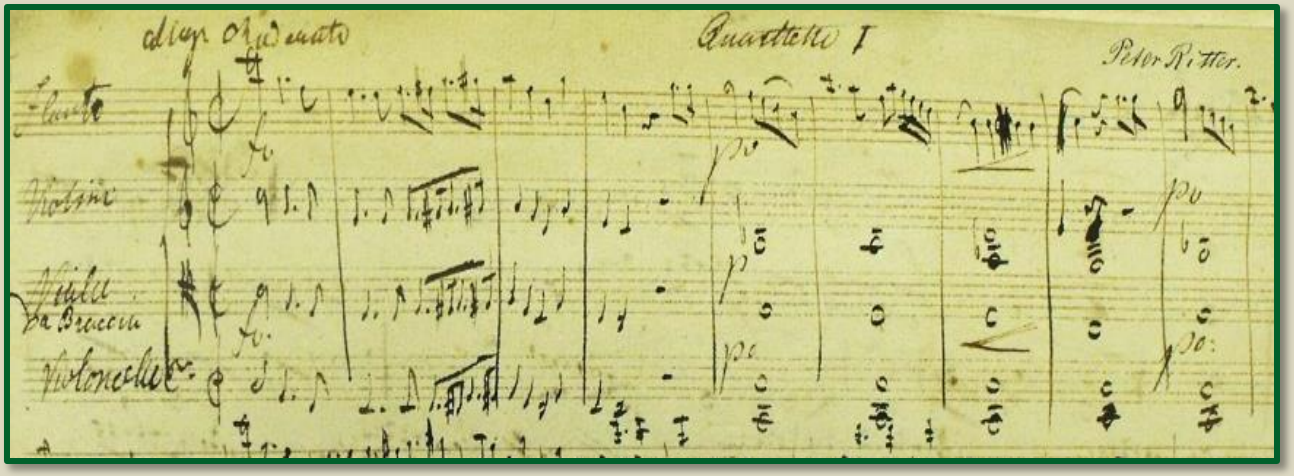
TO APPLY: submit materials ASAP at HIREMASON (job ID # 139255). https://gmu-csm.symplicity.com/ .
Questions? Contact mentors Dr. Jesse Guessford, jguessfo@gmu.edu,
or Prof. Steven Gerber, sgerber@gmu.edu before DEADLINE of March 15, 2017.

“Boot Camp” Week and Beyond

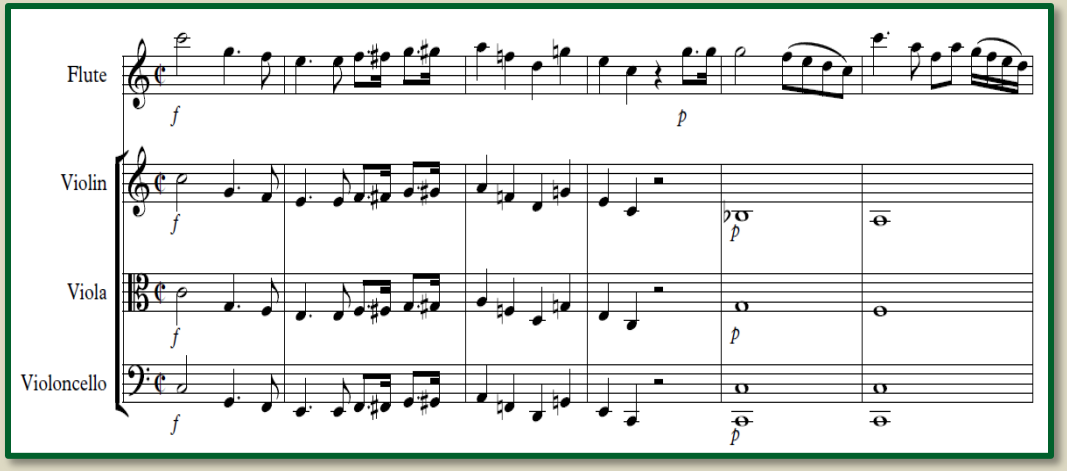
All research team projects began on May 30th with a more-or-less intensive four-day introduction to the work ahead: in our case, the composer, RISM, the Albrecht *Census* of mss, inspecting/describing a manuscript, Sibelius notation software, critical vs. performing editions, IMSLP, as well as a “big picture” of how a composer’s complete-works set comes about. The climax of the week was a site visit to LOC for source inspection and photography.

Later weeks were spent in transcription, encountering/ resolving editorial problems, moving from transcription to performing edition, repeat visits to LOC, extracting parts & creating PDFs for IMSLP, digging for biographical data, and the planning/production of a short concert of Ritter's music.

Students collaborated on research posters and contributed to OSCAR's blog.



The team had a small work space in the music library and often worked together there. Dr. Guessford and I had a hard time keeping up.



Last Day!

"Summer Celebration of Student Scholarship" included a 25-minute recital of student-edited works by Peter Ritter as well as research posters.

Selections from the Music of Peter Ritter (1763-1846)

August 4, 2017 – Fenwick MIX at George Mason University – 2:00 pm

Edited and arranged from unpublished manuscripts at the Library of Congress
(An OSCAR-Funded Team Research Project – Summer 2017)

From **String Quartet in D Major** (edited by Adam Schuman):

I. *Allegro moderato*

Deborah Smith and Puri Babb, violins
John Ryan, viola
Paul Rodriguez, cello

From **Zwölf Stücke** (edited and arranged by Karen Smith):

No. 10, *Andante*

Vannesa Nates, flute
Nicholas Lee, guitar

From **String Quartet in G Major** (edited by Nathan Graham)

I. *Allegro moderato*

Deborah Smith and Puri Babb, violins
John Ryan, viola
Paul Rodriguez, cello

From Singspiel ***Feodora*** (edited by Dylan Van Vierssen):

Aria, "In des Irtisch weisse Fluten"

Karen Smith, soprano
Nicholas Lee, guitar

From **Harmonien** (edited and arranged by Simone Hawkins)

No. 8, Tanz in D Major

Vannesa Nates and Lilit Vanetsyan, flutes
Wendy Chinn, French horn
John Ryan, viola
Paul Rodriguez, cello
Nathan Graham, double bass

Each student uploaded at least one score-and-parts set to IMSLP. Other sets might yet be forthcoming—but the paid gig (external incentive) is over!

Compositions (9) | Collections (2)

IMSLP Petrucci Music Library

Compositions by: Ritter, Peter

The following 9 pages are in this category, out of 9 total.

F
- Flute Quartet No.1

G
- Gesellschaftslied
- Großer Gott, wir loben dich

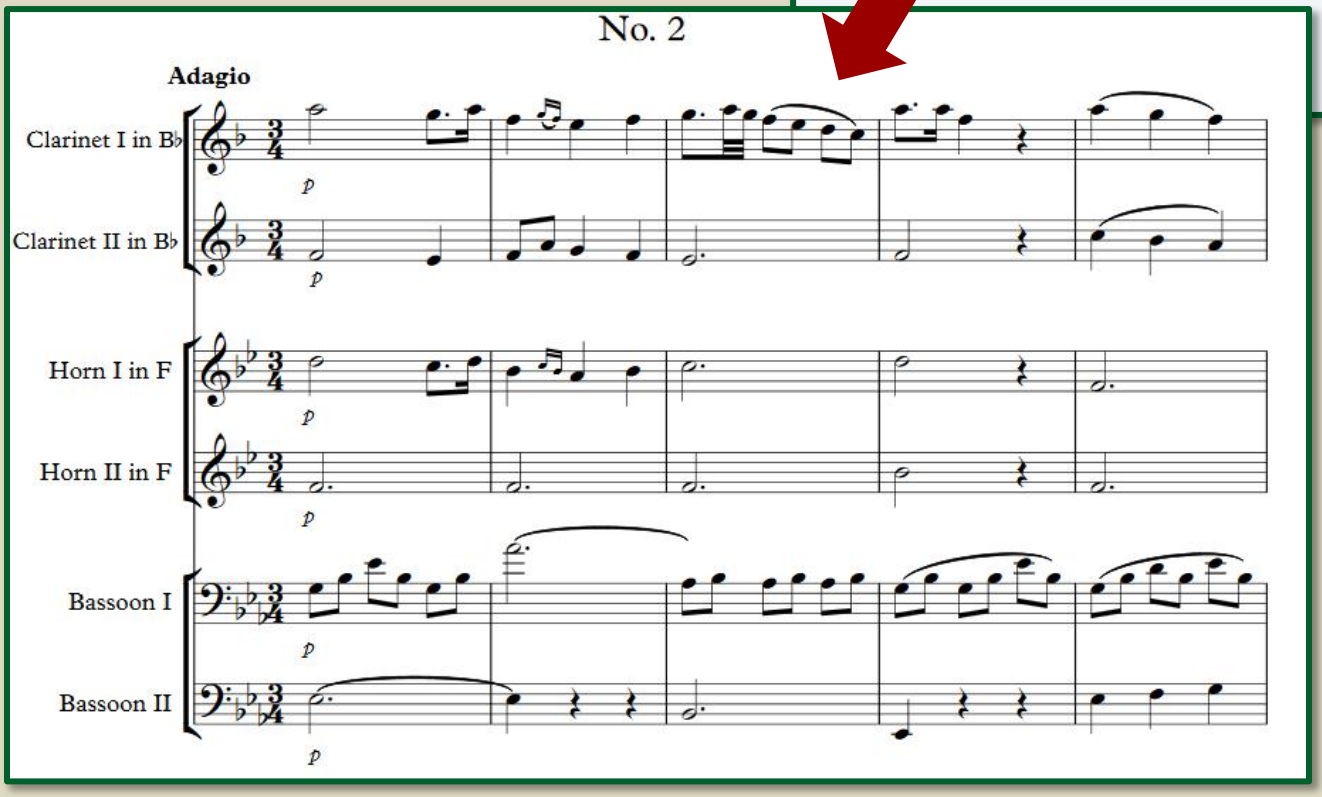
H
- Harmonien

M
- Der Mandarin

N
- Nocturne for Flute, Viola and Guitar

S
- Sextet in E-flat major
- String Quartet in G major

Z
- Zwölf Kleine Stücke



(Actually, our two string players continue to work on two of the many CONCERTOS by Peter Ritter, and may seek individual OSCAR grants to complete them.)

Whether our novice editors continue along this path or not, they certainly developed an appreciation for the work of critical editors —and, with genuine enthusiasm, they enabled the music of a forgotten composer to sound again.