



A Historical Perspective of Institutional Recordings: Looking Back and Into the Future

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Introduction

- Working on a book about institutional recording collections
- Found that there was no published history on institutional recording collections
- We were looking for several things:
 - *How and when collections were started*
 - *Different formats used in collections*
 - *How access was/is provided*
 - *How collections were/are used*





Curtis Institute of Music



Eastman School of Music



Indiana University




University of Wisconsin—Madison



University of North Texas

Choosing Historical Collections



Historical audio and video formats questions

- Oldest recording format?
- How did formats change?
- When did they change?

Audio Formats

- 78s
- 16" transcription discs
- Glass transcription discs
- Aluminum transcription discs
- Open reel tapes
- LPs
- Audio cassette tapes

Format History: Laminated discs

- All of the institutions except UNT used instantaneous (transcription) discs as their first recording format.
- Laminated discs were common between the 1920s-1970s (primarily 1930s-1960s). The laminated discs substrate could be made out of aluminum, glass, steel or cardboard with the coating being made of shellac or in later days, cellulose nitrate lacquer.
- Most were 16", but they also came in smaller sizes.
- Very fragile, a preservation risk.

Format History: 16" transcription discs



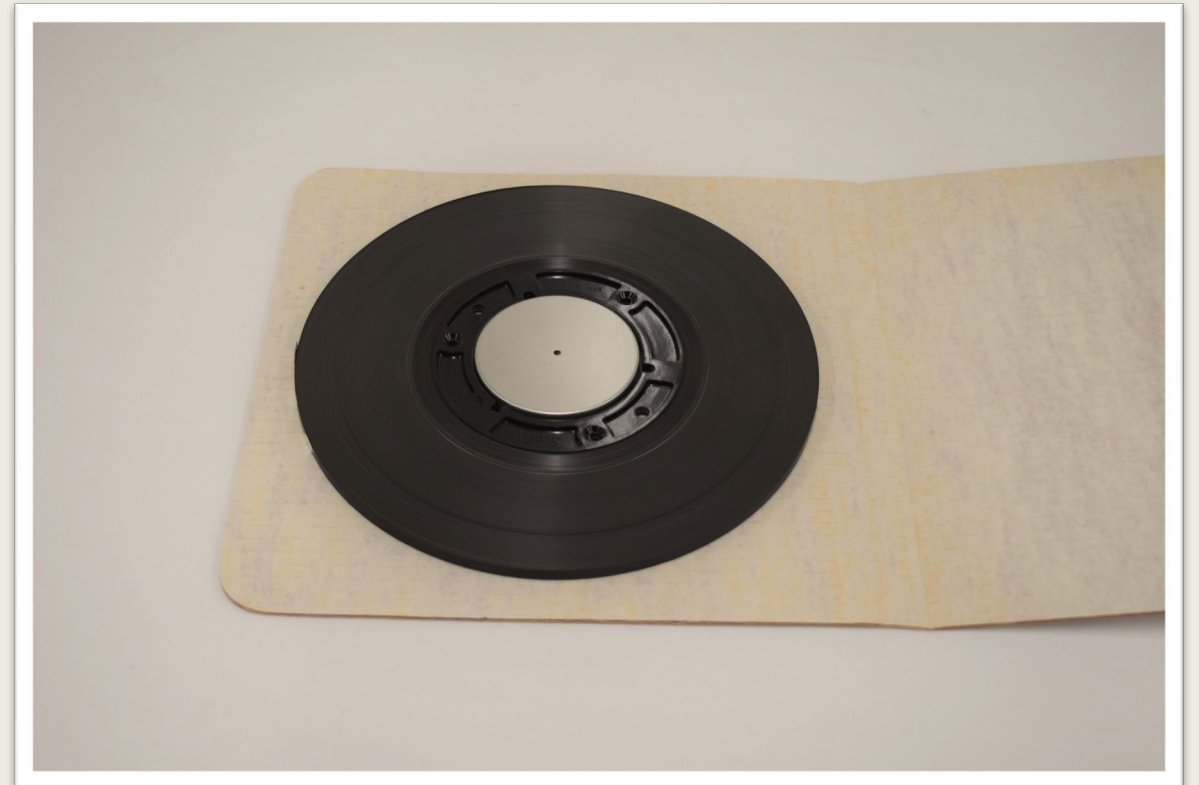
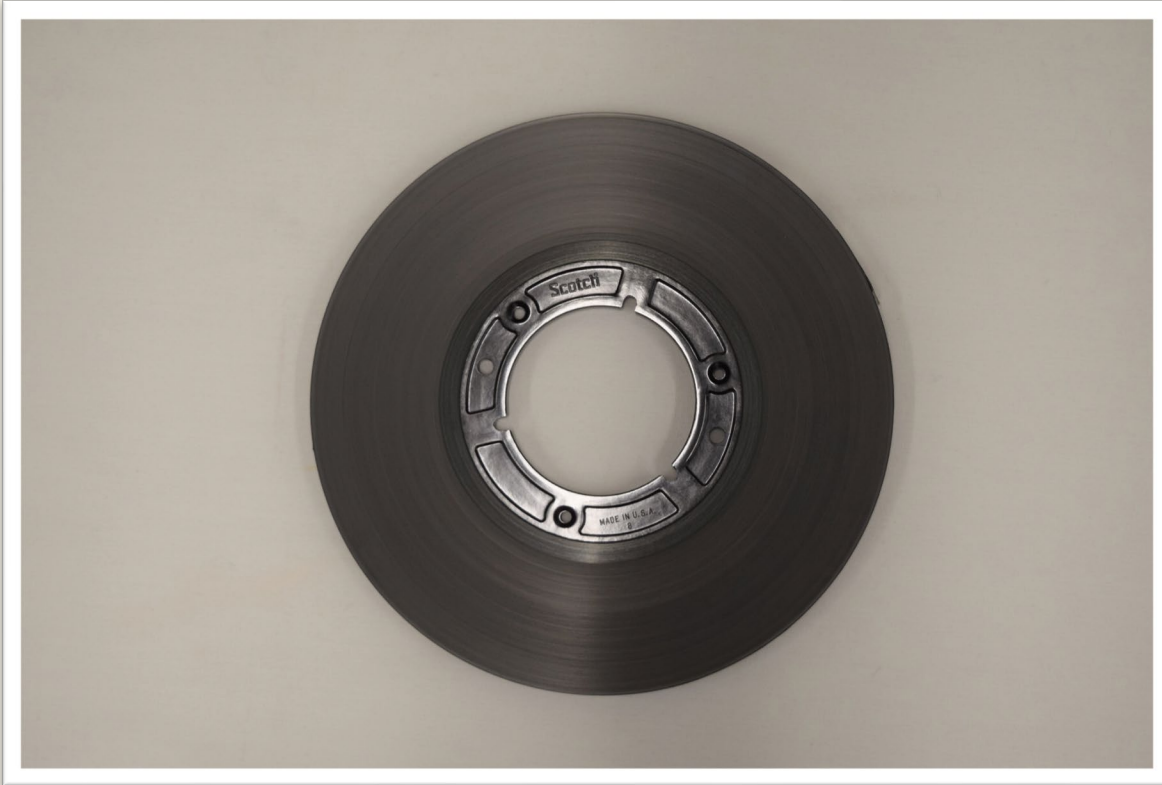
Format History: 16" transcription discs



Format History: open reel (magnetic tape)

- All of the institutions recorded on open reel tape at some point, but it was the first format used in University of North Texas's collection
- Open reel tapes were commonly used from 1950s-1990s
- "Physically, the tape is a ribbon of paper or plastic, coated with ferric oxide (essentially a highly refined form of rust) wound onto a plastic spool housed in a small cardboard box. The most common width of magnetic tape used for audio was 1/4" and it was supplied in reels of 3", 5", 7" and 10.5" diameters, with 7" being the most common."¹

Format History: open reel tapes



Audio Formats

- DAT
- Digital open reel tapes
- CD-Rs
- Magnetic discs
- PCM F1
- Born Digital
- Cloud based



Sony PCM-F1

SONY

DIGITAL AUDIO PROCESSOR PCM-F1

DIGITAL

Video Formats

- Sony pre-beta videos
- VHS
- Beta video
- 8mm video (hi-8)
- DVD-Rs



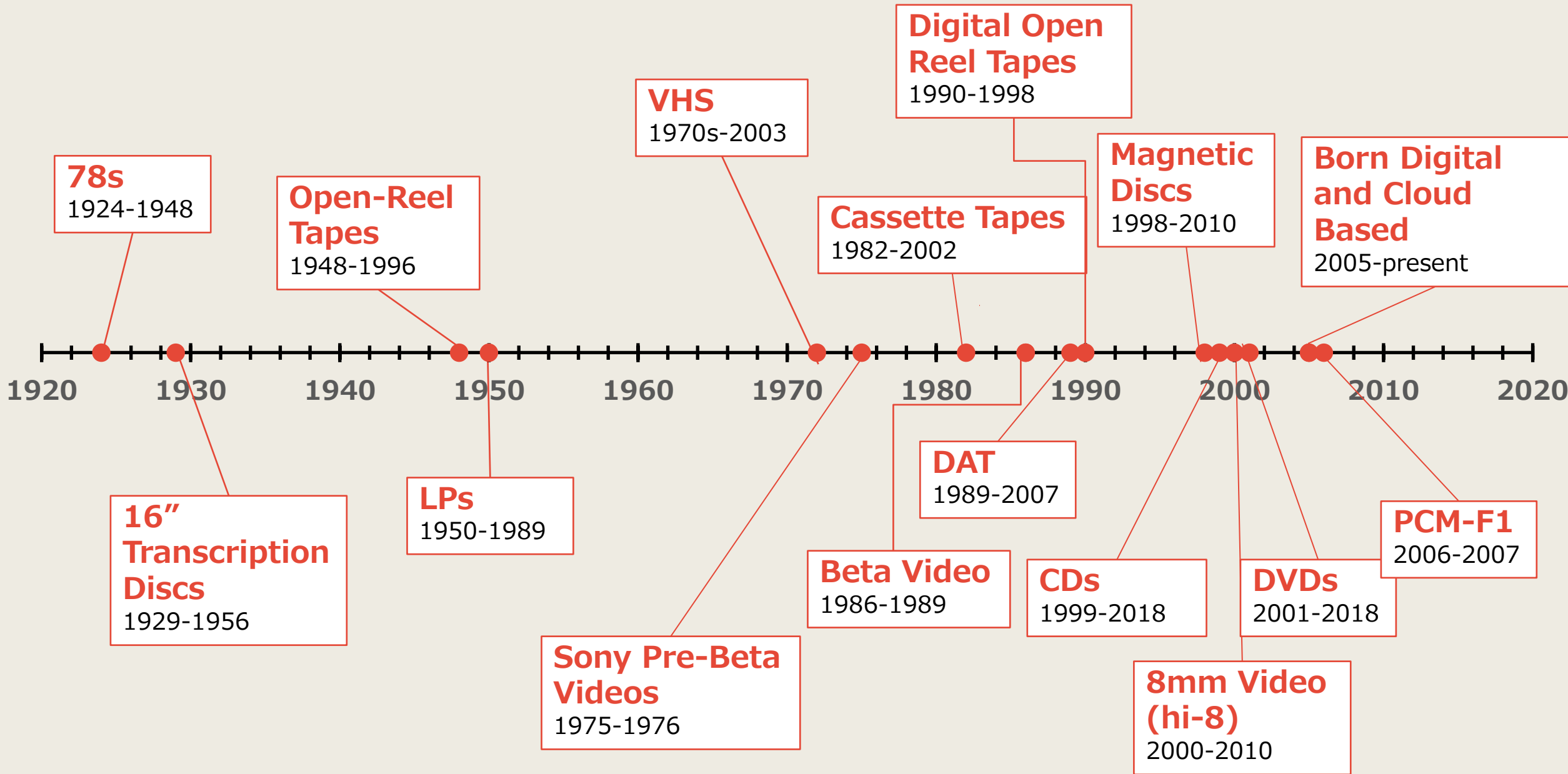
& REC · Easy Graphic MENU · VIDEO DOCTOR

▼ PROG. ▲



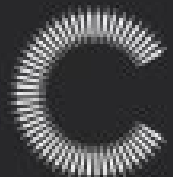
● REC/ITR





Historical information on institutional repository collections

- Interviewed librarians at five institutions with robust, long-term collections
 - Curtis Institute of Music: Emily Waters and Pete Williams
 - Eastman School of Music: Jim Farrington
 - Indiana University: Michelle Hahn
 - University of North Texas: Maristella Feustle and Susannah Cleveland
 - University of Wisconsin-Madison: Jeanette Casey



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INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

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Curtis Institute of Music

Curtis Institute of Music

- 1924—earliest recording; 16" transcription disc
- In-house recordings of Curtis performances began in the 1930s for radio programs broadcast to local radio stations
- No librarian during the war, the library was run by the audio engineer
- Large gap in recordings—1950s
- 1969—Began recording all recitals given by students and faculty



Igor Stravinsky conducting on Eastman Theatre Stage, Eastman School Photo Archive

Eastman School of Music

Eastman School of Music

- 1933—Earliest recording: transcription discs
- Over 6,600 transcription discs over a 20-year period in the collection (1930s-1950s)
- First recordings were of only large ensembles
- Individual recitals began to be recorded in the 1950s
- Not everything is cataloged, card file for recordings from 1933-1990s in Special Collections



The Beaux Arts Trio, c.1962, *Blogging Hoosier History*,
<https://blogs.libraries.indiana.edu/iubarchives/the-beaux-arts-trio/>

Indiana University

Indiana University

- Earliest recording—Dec. 4th, 1938—Sunday Afternoon Music Hour, orchestra concert: 16" lacquer transcription disc
- Traditionally recorded ensembles, faculty recitals, chamber recitals, doctoral recitals
- *Since the pandemic, recording some junior, senior, and artist diploma recitals*
- About 600,000 recordings—70% not in catalog



University of
Wisconsin-
Madison

Pro Arte Quartet playing, photograph, August 1967; (<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/GL7IO2TFKQAPG8Y>: accessed October 13, 2021), University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Archives.

University of Wisconsin—Madison

- Earliest recording: December 8, 1938 – University of Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra performing Sibelius Symphony no.1: 16” glass transcription disc
- November 3, 1940: One of their next earliest recordings. Pro Arte Quartet. 16” glass transcription disc.
- The UWM archives has thousands of live public radio shows recordings on transcription discs that date back to the 1940s
- School of music ensemble performances were inconsistently recorded. They do not record student recitals.
- They have all sizes of reel-to-reel tapes from the 1950s-1980s



University of
North Texas

[One O'clock Lab Band and conductor Leon Breeden], photograph, [1967]; (<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc945462/m1/1/?q=one%20oclock%20jazz>: accessed October 13, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, UNT Digital Library, <https://digital.library.unt.edu>; crediting UNT Libraries Special Collections.

University of North Texas

- 1950s - First recordings were on magnetic tape
- Besides recording ensemble concerts, master's, doctoral and faculty recitals, their Jazz Lecture Series is recorded
- Faculty recitals and Laboratory Dance Band recordings go back to the 1960s
- Recordings on tapes were reused/recycled in mass around the early 1970s

Accessing institutional repository digital recordings

- Digitized recordings
- Restricted collections: current institutional community only
- Open collections: public domain/open access
- Linked printed programs to digital recordings
- Contact librarian for file
- Discovery can be difficult



About this Collection

Overview

At a Glance

Latest Additions

Cite This Collection

Explore Holdings

Contact Us

Items

Titles

Dates

Locations

Statistics

API

College of Music Recordings



About This Collection

The College of Music Recordings include doctoral, ensemble, faculty, guest, and senior recitals from the UNT College of Music. **Access to these recordings is restricted to the UNT community.**

About the UNT College of Music

One of the nation's largest music schools, the [UNT College of Music](#) provides a dynamic learning environment for both future professionals and the broader university community. The College of Music offers instruction in the areas of composition studies; conducting and ensembles; instrumental studies; jazz studies; keyboard studies; music education; music history, theory, and ethnomusicology; and vocal studies. With more than fifty performing ensemble groups, a full schedule of student recitals, and frequent visits by guest artists, the college brings music lovers nearly a thousand concert events each year.



Faculty recital

00:00 23:11

Share

Sections

Expand All

1. Tape 1 (23:10)

1. Track 1. [ambience] (01:00)

2. Track 2. Ludwig van Beethoven, Twelve Variations on a Theme from Judas Maccabæus (Handel) (15:19)

Johannes Brahms, Sonata in F major, Op. 99

3. Track 3. I. Allegro vivace (06:51)

2. Tape 2 (31:13)

3. Tape 3 (23:13)

Details

Date

1959

Main contributor

Starker, Janos.

Contributor

Pressler, Menahem.

Subjects

Variations (Cello and piano); Sonatas (Cello and piano)

Collection

Cook Music Library, Jacobs School of Music Performances

Unit

Music Library

Language

No linguistic content

Physical Description

3 sound tape reels : analog, 7 1/2 ips ; 7 in.

Access Restrictions:

This item is accessible by: the public.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
Forty-Second Season—Seventy-Third Program
1959-60

FACULTY RECITAL

Janos Starker

Cello

Menahem Pressler

Piano

Twelve Variations on a Theme from
Judas Maccabaeus (Handel) - - - - - Beethoven
Sonata in F Major, Op. 99 - - - - - Brahms
Allegro vivace
Adagio affettuoso
Allegro passionato
Allegro molto

INTERMISSION

Sonata - - - - - Debussy
Prologue
Sérénade et Finale
Sonata, Op. 5, No. 1 - - - - - Beethoven
Adagio sostenuto - Allegro
Allegro vivace

Recital Hall
Tuesday Evening
October Thirteenth
Eight-Thirty O'Clock

OCT - 8 1959

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
Forty-Second Season 1959-60 Program

FACULTY RECITAL

JANOS STARKER

Cello

MENAHEM PRESSLER

Piano

1571
#1
Twelve Variations on a Theme from
Judas Maccabaeus (Handel) Beethoven
Sonata in F Major Op. 99 Brahms
Allegro vivace
Adagio affettuoso
Allegro passionato
Allegro molto

#2
Intermission
Sonata Debussy
Prologue
Serenade et Finale

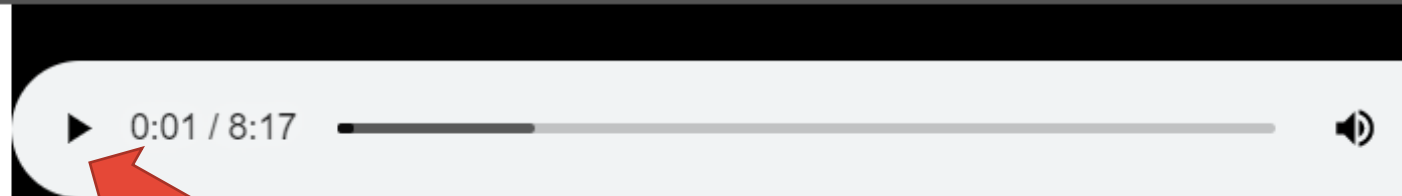
#3
Sonata, Op. 5, No. 1 Beethoven
Adagio sostenuto - Allegro
Allegro vivace

Recital Hall
Tuesday Evening
October Thirteenth
Eight-Thirty O'Clock

RH 500
600

A copy of this program has been sent to the printer.
Please bring any additions or corrections to Room 118,
School of Music.

IU
Related
Item:
Program



1 of 4

Object Description

Title	Radio programme
Composers	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. Cassadó, Gaspar, 1897-1966.
Works	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. Concertos, pianos (2) Cassadó, Gaspar, 1897-1966. Requiebros, arranged.
Performers	Elkanova, Annette. Bernstein, Leonard, 1918-1990.
Event date	1941-02-01
Event time	17:30
Event venue	Casimir Hall

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Thank you!

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