

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

April 14, 1972

Date

MEMORANDUM

From: Bruno Nettl

To: Herbert Kellman

Thank you for distributing the proposal for the creation of a Music and Performing Arts Library. As you know, I have been somewhat disturbed by this project since hearing of it for the first time more than a year ago, particularly by the way in which the music faculty at large appears to have been circumvented in the considerations. At this point, I should like to register as strongly as possible my reservations about this proposal.

I can understand perfectly the desire to have the departmental libraries of the Performing Arts administered jointly. And I have no objection whatsoever to the notion that the three collections should be united in some way, and that Bill McClellan might be the logical person to administer them. Indeed, I think such a sub-division of the University Library system is quite logical, and, knowing Bill well for some years, I would heartily support him for the headship of such a unit.

What I am concerned about, however, is the proposed use of space hitherto planned for Music Library use by the Departments of Theater and Dance. We have had an incredibly crowded condition for many years, and it is my understanding that the Library administration regarded space now given to library operations in the new music building as adequate but hardly luxurious. Indeed, when I was on the building committee, it was suggested that some of the space programmed for the Library could be given over to office and practice room use. The building committee, which consisted of a cross section of music faculty, vigorously opposed this, feeling that nothing should stand in the way of the development of an adequate Library facility. At that time, there seemed to be a shortage of office and practice room space, but the committee was willing to countenance this shortage in order to have an adequate Library. If I remember correctly, Bill McClellan also voiced his strenuous objections to any encroachment on the Library facility, and maintained that all space programmed for the Library was needed for the Music collection and its servicing. It seems curious to me that the Library administration is now willing to add the Theater and Dance collections and their readership to the burdens of the Music Library.

The objections to the proposal are set forth therein. I am not too impressed by the rejoinders given, and feel that if the proposal is to be approved, two things should be done: 1. the entire music faculty should approve the plan, since they have been led to believe for years now that they would have the benefit of a good, exclusive facility. 2. Even if approved, the plan should be delayed, until the Music Library is in the new building. Then we will be able to see whether additions to the collection and the readership can be tolerated.

cc: Dean Jack McKenzie, Professor Thomas Fredrickson, Professor William McClellan