

**Guide to the Aston Magna Foundation for Music Records, 1972-1979**

**JPB 06-17**

**Music Division**

**The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts  
New York, New York**

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## Descriptive Summary

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Aston Magna Foundation for Music Records</b>
<b>Collection ID:</b>	<b>JPB 06-17</b>
<b>Creator:</b>	<b>Aston Magna Foundation for Music</b>
<b>Extent:</b>	<b>2. 17 linear feet (2 boxes)</b>
<b>Repository:</b>	<b>Music Division. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts</b>

**Abstract:** The Aston Magna Foundation for Music Records consist of office files that document the first years of the Foundation, a pioneering American organization for the study and promotion of early music. Established in 1972 by Albert Fuller and Lee Elman, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, the Foundation was created to serve as a center for the study and performance of seventeenth and eighteenth century music, and continues today to build upon its original mission.

## Administrative Information

### Access

Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

### Publication Rights

For permission to publish, contact the Chief, Music Division.

### Preferred Citation

Aston Magna Foundation for Music Records, JPB 06-17, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

### Processing Information

The collection was processed and cataloged in May 2007.

## Historical Sketch

Established in 1972 by Albert Fuller and Lee Elman, the Aston Magna Foundation for Music was created to serve as a center for the study and performance of seventeenth and eighteenth century music. The original site of the Foundation in Great Barrington, Massachusetts was the former summer home of the violinist Albert Spalding. Although the Foundation faced some initial problems with the local community over turning the property, which was located in a primarily residential area, into an educational and performance facility, the group eventually prevailed in its plans and soon would expand its offerings to additional venues in Great Barrington and elsewhere in the region.

Primary summer activities of the Foundation include educational programs (called the Academy after 1978) that brought together scholars, artists, and students to study the music of the period using a cross-disciplinary approach. Inspired by the model of Renaissance and Baroque academies, these Academy programs, under the direction of Raymond Erickson, concentrate on a different theme each year. Subjects covered by past Academies have included *Music and Its Relationships to the Other Arts in the Rome of Queen Christina of Sweden and Pietro Cardinal Ottobonni* (1978), *Music, Art, Theater and Dance in the Age of Louis XIV* (1982) and *From Handel to Hogarth: The Culture of Early Georgian England, 1714-1760* (1997).

The other main component of the summer program is the annual Aston Magna Festival. This series of concerts features public performances of music of the period by specialists and program participants using original or authentic replica instruments in a historically accurate manner. For example, for its Fifth Anniversary Festival in 1977, Aston Magna presented the first contemporary public performance of Johann Sebastian Bach's complete Brandenburg cycle on original instruments. Recordings of several Festival concerts have been released commercially, including *The Six Brandenburg Concerti* (1978), *Live from Aston Magna* (1990) and *Schubert, F. Octet in F, D.803* (1992).

Now known officially as the Aston Magna Foundation for Music and the Humanities, the Foundation continues to build upon its original mission as it engages with a wider public through enhanced educational programs, as well as additional performances offered throughout the year.

## Scope and Content Note

The Aston Magna Foundation for Music Records consist of office files and other materials that document the first years of this pioneering American organization for the study and promotion of early music. The bulk of these files were called board meeting files and primarily contain various types of meeting announcements, agendas, and minutes, as well as related correspondence and background reports, filed chronologically. These administrative and financial records mainly reflect the fundraising, legal, and structural challenges faced by the Foundation from its inception. Neither educational nor artistic concerns are covered in any great detail. The collection, however, does include some material (such as oversized display panels) relating to the exhibition that was held at the Berkshire Community College in conjunction with the 1978 Academy, *Music and Art in the Rome of Queen Christina of Sweden and Cardinal Ottoboni*.

## Organization

The collection is organized into 2 series. They are:

Series I: Office Files, 1972-1979 and undated

Series II: Oversized Materials, 1976-1978 and undated

## Series Descriptions

### **Series I: Office Files, 1972-1979 and undated**

**1 box**

The Office Files series mainly contains board meeting files for the years 1973-1979; the years 1976-1978 are the most comprehensively covered. Also included are a few sample promotional materials, such as brochures, clippings, fliers, and press releases. There is one folder containing reproductions of graphic materials probably used in the 1978 Academy exhibit; the actual display panels are found in the Oversized Materials series.

### **Series II: Oversized Materials, 1976-1978 and undated**

**1 box**

The Oversized Materials series includes several large display panels, some of which most likely were used in the exhibit, *Music and Art in the Rome of Queen Christina of Sweden and Cardinal Ottoboni*. Also included is an album sleeve for the first commercial recording released by the Foundation, a 1976 live performance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Quartet for Flute, Violin, Viola, and 'Cello in D*, Georg Philipp Telemann's *Concerto in A minor for Recorder, Viola da Gamba, Strings and Continuo*, and the *Concertino for 4 Violins, Viola, 'Cello, and Bass*, erroneously attributed to Giovanni Battista Pergolesi.

**Box/Folder      Description**

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**Series I. Office Files, 1972-1979 and undated****Box 1**

- F. 1                    Academy exhibit, 1977-1979 and undated  
Board meetings
- F. 2                    1973 Feb. 16 – Sept. 27
- F. 3                    1974 Feb. 7- 1975 Oct. 27
- F. 4                    1976 Jan. 13- 1977 June 7
- F. 5                    1977 July 1 – Dec 8  
1978
- F. 6                    Jan. 4 – June 6
- F. 7                    July 13 – Dec. 26
- F. 8                    1979 Feb. 21 – Sept. 12
- F. 9                    Clippings, 1973-1976
- F. 10                  Finances, 1974-1976 (Includes audit reports.)
- F. 11                  Fundraising, 1975-1976
- F. 12                  Press releases, 1975-1976
- F. 13                  Programs, 1972-1976
- F. 14                  Promotional materials, 1974-1979 and undated
- F. 15                  Reproductions, undated (8 x 10 photographic prints of graphic materials most likely used in 1978 exhibit; see also Oversized Materials series.)

**Series II: Oversized Materials, 1976-1978 and undated****Box 2**

- F. 1                    Academies panel, undated
- F. 2                    Albert Fuller panel, undated
- F. 3                    Album sleeve, 1976 (For Cambridge Records release of first recording of an Aston Magna Foundation summer concert series program.)
- F. 4                    Exhibit illustrations, undated
- F. 5                    Festival panel, 1978 (Lists concerts and dates.)