



> University of Music ... > Research > Current research pro...

RESEARCH PROJECT 'THE EISENACH WAGNER-COLLECTION'

In cooperation with the Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek in Jena and with the city of Eisenach

Representative: Kulturstiftung der Länder, Thüringer Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft und digitale Gesellschaft, Kreativfonds der HfM Weimar, VW Stiftung

Duration: 2012-2015

Principal investigator

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Project description

With over 20,000 objects, among them 200 manuscripts and original letters by Wagner, 300 manuscripts from Wagner's direct personal environment, 700 theatre programmes and posters, 3,000 pictures—high-quality photographs, graphics, stage designs, figurines—as well as over 15,000 newspaper cuttings, the Wagner-collection housed at the Fritz-Reuter and Richard-Wagner-Museum in Eisenach is the world's

second largest and most important Wagner-collection, second only to Bayreuth. At the heart of the archive is the Wagner library with over 5,500 books, encompassing not only all of the composer's works but also an almost complete collection of nineteenth-century secondary literature on Wagner. Despite the collection's exceptional quality and its value to research and education, there is currently an extraordinary discrepancy between the outstanding value of the archival materials and their actual usage. The present project consequently seeks to ameliorate the bizarrely skewed relation between the archive's research value and its limited study. The digital revolution and global connectivity offer new possibilities of opening up and making available archival materials, leading to new research methods. The project centres its attention on these methodological developments in particular. It aims to demonstrate the innovative approach of combining digitalisation, virtual dissemination, and hands-on research in the case of Eisenach's Wagner-collection. At the same time, the project serves the development and training of young researchers.