SUMMARY OF REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

CUBAN THEATER DIGITAL ARCHIVE GRANTS
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
(Scholarly Communications Program)

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CUBAN THEATER DIGITAL ARCHIVE

VERSION 0.2 JANUARY 2022

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Miami received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation two grants for the development of the Cuban Theater Digital Archive. Phase I, "Building Infrastructure" (2010-2012), was geared towards the establishment of the technical, organizational, and intellectual property management infrastructure necessary for the long-term growth and sustainability of the Cuban Theater Digital Archive (CTDA). Phase II, "Enhancements" (2012-2014) sought to enrich the digital scholarly publication features of the UM Libraries-developed open source "Romeu" content management system for theater documentation. This document summarizes the outcomes and deliverables of these two grants. It details Dr. Lillian Manzor's involvement and Digital Humanities work during the two phases of CTDA's development. It also explains the work involved in the filming of theatrical productions for documentary purposes.

As a follow-up to a 2009 planning grant, in 2010, Lillian Manzor received a "Cuban Theater Digital Archive Grant: Building Infrastructure" from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Kyle Rimkus co-P.I.). It included matching grants from the University of Miami Libraries and the College of Arts and Sciences. In this grant, "Cuban Theater Digital Archive Phase I: Building Infrastructure," objectives centered on developing the data model, software tools, hardware expertise, and best practices to support future phases of intensive multimedia content collection and collaborative content authorship with partners in the United States and Cuba. Grant staff completed the following deliverables by the project end date of December 31, 2011:

- hired a programmer for the CTDA;
- Manzor worked with the programmer to create a new data model for the CTDA as the basis for a new content management framework. Work included developing categories and trees for a semantic web design (namely, a design that allows the computer to interpret the metadata of both the data and the published information). Manzor also worked with the programmer in the development of the relational databases which are one of the the CTDA's main building blocks;
- developed an open-source content management system called "Romeu" (named after a Cuban musician "Armando Romeu" as the system extends an open-source system Django, named after "Django Reinhardt"). It was designed specifically for the scholarly documentation of theater performance, with capabilities for the submission of multimedia content from geographically dispersed contributors;
- Manzor worked with grant staff in the design of the front-end, the one that users access;

- Manzor worked with student videographers, community videographers, and library staff to develop best practices for digitizing theater materials and for filming theater for documentation purposes;
- Manzor co-authored authored local guidelines for filming and editing theater performances in consultation with expert video consultants;
- Manzor developed workflows and best practices for digital conversion, ingest of video, and ingest of visual theater ephemera in consultation with expert video consultants and library staff;
- established the technical, organizational, and intellectual property management infrastructure necessary for the long-term growth and sustainability of the CTDA:
    - Manzor established a functioning Steering Committee, Advisory Board, and Editorial Board;
    - Manzor finalized a Creative Commons-based intellectual property policy approved by University of Miami general counsel;
- Manzor directed the filming and editing of over 50 theater productions in South Florida and in Cuba;
- digitized over 40 legacy video tapes of theater productions;
- added over 500 new digital images;
- created over 500 new database entries documenting theater in Miami, Havana and Santa Clara, Cuba.
- Manzor supervised undergraduate and graduate student researchers who authored these entries, and Manzor also authored some of the entries.

PHASE II

In 2013, Manzor helped co-author the application to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for phase two of the project. Since this phase focused on the development of back-end technology for scholarly workflows and preservation processes, Dr. Mitsunori Ogihara from Computer Science became the PI. The Mellon-funded Programmer employed during Phase I resigned in April 2012 and was replaced by members of the Software Engineering team for the Center for Computational Sciences (CCS) at the University of Miami. The transition was particularly difficult due to the lack of technical and operational documentation. Additionally, the transition of knowledge delayed plans to debug and enhance functionality, as well as the publication of digital media projects.

The CCS developed a phased planned approach to address issues, while implementing new functionality outlined by this project, including, performance enhancements features which were not included in the original plans. The team, which consisted of the PIs, a programmer, and project manager, integrated best practices for digital preservation into the content stewardship workflows. The CTDA programmers with Manzor's guidance enhanced Romeu's bibliographic management features using the BibTeX standard, allowing for the easy and efficient building of scholarly primary and secondary bibliographies of authors and productions stored in the CTDA. Also, the technical staff developed and shared comprehensive documentation for system users, administrators, and developers. This included documentation for the underlying code (*Romeu System Manual*). The Romeu content management system was extended as a digital preservation and scholarly publishing platform to support:

- metadata search functionality with content tags and keywords;
- streamlined digital content submission and peer review workflows;
- simplified menus for content contribution from expert and non-expert partners;

- import and export of BibTeX-compliant bibliographies;
- full integration with open-source micro-services for extracting digital preservation metadata, generating archival checksum values for ingested files, and deriving new files according to archival and access standards into content management system;
- integration of SCALAR. Scalar is an open source, semantic web authoring and publishing tool that allows authors to assemble media from multiple sources and juxtapose them with their own writing. It is a project of the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture (ANVC) in association with Vectors, IML, and CTS with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities. API was written for SCALAR. With Scalar, the CTDA website gained a platform that supports collaborative authoring and publishing. Additionally, CTDA became one of the affiliated archives in Scalar. Therefore, users of Scalars can have easy access to CTDA materials;
- integration of Disqus and commenting technology. Disqus is a networked community platform used by hundreds of thousands of sites all over the web. With Disqus, the CTDA website gained a feature-rich comment system complete with social network integration, advanced administration and moderation options, and other extensive community functions;
- integration of TWITTER social networking technology;
- integration of Solr search platform, a popular open-source enterprise search engine.

During phase II, Manzor continued working as CTDA Director on developing peer-reviewed content and collaborating with the technical team on the scholarly and artistic needs of the technical development. This research involved the following activities:

- Manzor worked with the CTDA Programmer to facilitate the repurposing of content for digital scholarly publication, and to enhance the peer-review component for new scholarly media projects published within the CTDA;
- Manzor helped design workflows for the vetting of content from external authors, improve the system's ability to manage bibliographic citations, and allow site members to interact with site content using social media technology;
- Manzor supervised the integration of content search with tags and keywords. Tags and keywords are non-hierarchical terms assigned to a piece of information. This kind of metadata helps describe an item and allows it to be found again by browsing or searching. CTDA is following the HIDVL vocabulary. With tags and keywords, the CTDA website gained knowledge management capabilities by categorizing content;
- Manzor reviewed the Rosetta Stone interface and edited it edit to include new features in Spanish;
- Manzor supervised the migration of legacy CTDA website and content to new platform;
- Manzor worked with the programmer finalizing CTDA content management system;
- Manzor supervised the creation of users' guide in Spanish and English, in Scalar, CTDA User Manual. This Guide is especially useful for community users who do not have direct and constant access to the CTDA's director or to the graduate student editor;
- Manzor conduct tests with scholars of the CTDA platform and user friendliness of CTDA User Manual;
- Manzor conducted tests with theater artists of the CTDA platform and user friendliness of CTDA User Manual;
- Manzor oversaw the completion of 100 site entries focusing on Cuban Theater from the 1950s to the present;
- • Manzor directed, co-edited, and published online the filming of 30 theatrical performances and rehearsals both in Cuba and in the United States;

- Manzor developed the PUBLICATION section of CTDA to include:

  - CTDA On Stage / En Escena
  - CTDA New Media Projects / Working Papers
  - CTDA Working Papers - Scholars
  - Biblioteca de la Dramaturgia de la Gran Cuba
  - *DE - Revista Cubana de Diseño Escénico*
  - *Dramaturgos*
  - *El comején*
  - *El timonel: Noticias Titiriteras*
  - *Entretelones*
  - *La Má Teodora*
  - *Tablas* (we have complete pdfs from 1980 till 2012)
  - *Pelusín el mensajero* (children's theater magazine)
  - *Perro Huevero*
  - Sualos

FILMING THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

An important aspect of CTDA is the filming of theatrical productions in the US and Cuba, for research and documentary purposes. During the Mellon-funded years, we filmed over 200 theatrical productions (several were Equity), interviews, and book presentations. About half of the recordings were embedded in the CTDA platform. (For more information, see *CTDA Guide to Filming Theater.*)

Since 2016, workflows in the library and videostreaming platforms changed. Additionally, during the pandemic, the library closed. Thus, we decided to open a Vimeo channel for CTDA so we can make the videos accessible. During this period, Manzor edited theatrical productions filmed between 2013 and 2019 with a community videographer. We still have a backlog of about 200 filmed productions that need to be edited. The filming and editing work entail the following:

- Manzor contacts director of production and theater management team to schedule filming.
- Manzor attends rehearsal to ascertain filming needs and camera placement.
- Manzor communicates information to videographer and a filming plan is drafted.
- Manzor distributes and collects copyright forms.
- Manzor and videographer film production.
- Videographer ingests the footage in Adobe Premier.
- Videographer and Manzor as content editor examine the footage to determine what sound and light editing needs to be done while preserving the aesthetic integrity of the theatrical production.
- Videographer edits the footage following editing guidelines established by CTDA.
- Manzor as content editor creates all the titles. Community videographer adds them to the filmed production.

- Manzor as content editor checks the complete, edited archival version for final approval before the derivatives are created. In the case of productions filmed with two cameras, special attention needs to be paid to the cuts and transitions.
- Videographer creates three derivatives: archival edited version, mp4 version for Kaltura, and mp4 version for Vimeo.
- Manzor as content editor creates archival metadata for raw footage and the derivatives, transfers the material to a hard drive, and uploads to the CTDA Vimeo channel.