

Abstract

Musical Instruments, Provenance Evidence, and Public Access

The recent appearance at auction of a business ledger from the Rudolph Wurlitzer firm covering the years 1931-1950 raises important issues regarding acquisition, collection, preservation, and access to information for over 1,000 stringed instrument bows. Such records provide unique and essential evidence of authenticity and provenance. They also reflect cultural, social, political, historical, geographic, and economic information. To meet due diligence standards proactive acquisition of such records by public institutions is essential for provenance research.