



# National Music Museum Expansion Update

Fall 2019

## On the move!

On Thursday, September 5, the NMM staff moved the last musical instrument out of the museum's Carnegie building. Consider the staff's feat since doors closed in October last year: Roughly 4,500 NMM musical instruments were assessed, bar-coded, specially packaged, cased or crated, and moved by hand, by team, by dolly, gondola, and trucks. Instrument-making exhibits (with hundreds of artifacts), empty display cases, concert-hall chairs, worktables, power tools, and conservation lab equipment all had to be transported (and sometimes disassembled). Some 6,000 volumes of the NMM's library were unshelved and then reshelved, in

addition to 25,000 periodical volumes. Seventy-five document-heavy file cabinets were wheeled out of the lower level of the NMM. Boxes of special archival materials (photos, ephemera, accessories) had to be relocated and tracked. Concert grand pianos, giant reed organs, Indonesian drums, and a myriad of other large instruments had to fit through varying exit routes and then be transported to their designated spot in the NMM's new Preservation and Research Center.

As each instrument was transferred to the NMM's new off-site preservation center, its barcode was scanned, updating the locations of all the objects in the museum's database without the need for keying in any information. Where's NMM 8293, the Trumpet Call harmonica, now? The NMM's database identifies the room, aisle, shelf, and box in which the object now lives!

Rodger Kelly, Deputy Director of Operations, masterminded the move. How? "Planning, planning, and then more planning is the key," says Kelly. "But it's tricky, since some aspects just cannot be pre-determined—such as the weather and the time it will take to load moving trucks. We were fortunate that the weather cooperated, and with a great team and a lot of communication, things went very smoothly."

Three NMM teams were implemented to maximize efficiency—the Carnegie Team, the Transfer Team, and

*Rodger Kelly, Steve Misener, and Parker Transport lower the massive Mason & Hamlin organ down the Carnegie stairs.*



*NMM staff and Parker Transport with the NMM's half-ton Thai drum.*

the Preservation Center Team. NMM staff were the boots on the ground throughout the entire move — Becky McLaughlin, Byron Pillow, Debbie Reeves, Carol Robertson, Arian Sheets, Ana Silva, Michael Suing, Patricia Bornhofen, and even NMM Director Matt Collinsworth.

Gratitude must go out too for indispensable moving help from the University of South Dakota Facilities crew. Dedicated NMM volunteers were also critical, especially with the packing of these objects. Vermillion City Hall was also part of the giant slide puzzle, as NMM display cubes were moved to basement storage there.



# Letter from the Director



## Museum metamorphosis underway!

Thanks to our partners at the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company (VCDC), the National Music Museum received keys to the new Center for Preservation and Research in early August, and our staff began moving instruments and other materials from the historic Carnegie Building almost immediately. After months of preparation, the move went smoothly, finishing more than a week ahead of schedule. The entire process was a testament to good teamwork and professionalism, which we hope characterize everything that we do at NMM. During the summer, building continued on the new addition at Carnegie as the team assembled by Journey Construction poured footers and walls and began to raise steel I-beams into place. With the building emptied, renovations in the historic structure have also begun.

We were grateful for so many people during this phase of the NMM's metamorphosis: to Parker Transport of Sioux Falls for their work on moving our largest objects; to the John Nordlie Company of Sioux Falls, hired to disassemble and prepare several of the NMM's pipe organs. (Nordlie built custom storage crates for organ components to ensure that moving and reassembling would go smoothly. Thank you also to the Mary Chilton Chapter of the Sioux Falls DAR for granting the funds for Nordlie's critical services.) Vermillion's Lane Schulz crafted custom crates for the secure and efficient transport of our priceless harpsichords (among them, the earliest playable harpsichord, the NMM's Neapolitan, circa-1530). Keyboard expert and volunteer Steve Misener gave us his strategic assistance in the moving of historic NMM organs and pianos. One phase of the NMM's metamorphosis is now complete.

Thank you for your support,

Matt Collinworth  
National Music Museum Director



Matt Collinworth  
NMM Director



Billygoat bagpipe (dudy/bock), maker unknown,  
Bohemia, ca. 1850. NMM 01270

## Beautiful on the inside too: Re-imagining NMM's exhibits and galleries

The National Music Museum's acclaimed collections have grown over time, but the manner in which things were displayed has remained largely the same. So, as important as more physical space is for the future NMM, our being able to offer a new, improved visitor experience is equally pressing.

Museum artifacts do not become "treasures" until their stories are told well, until their value is made memorable and humanly relevant. The challenge for any museum is to capture your attention and make a difference by mattering. With the opportunity offered by the expansion, the NMM will also be reimagining the way people experience the collection.

By enlisting the expertise of museum-exhibit consultants, the NMM is embarking on a redesign of the museum's interior environment, one which engages the senses (particularly, sound, of course), allows visitors more participation, and meets 21st-century expectations. New museum cases and displays, new graphics and signage, new interactivity and museum technologies—a museum 'makeover' takes time, minds, and funding.

### You can help!

Your gift to the National Music Museum will help ensure our future!

**Give online today at [nmmusd.org](http://nmmusd.org)**

## The NMM Center for Preservation and Research



### The NMM's new off-site facility: Preservation and much more!

The National Music Museum's new off-site Preservation and Research Center in Vermillion is finished and is now housing the collections that had been in the NMM (Carnegie building). More than four thousand musical instruments and thousands of related artifacts, archives, books, and documents have been transferred there for the duration of the expansion work on the NMM.

When the NMM's construction is done, the instruments to be publicly displayed will be moved back, but the Preservation Center will retain the collateral materials. Also, NMM holdings stored in other locations will eventually be consolidated at the Center, which will be much more than a secure, climate-controlled storage site. NMM curators, visiting scholars, and authorized students will have a dedicated, dynamic space for research and discovery—studying instruments and accessing archives preserved only by the NMM. The Center will also contain a photography lab for the ongoing visual recording (and sharing) of the NMM's collections.





**National Music Museum**  
**University of South Dakota**  
**414 E. Clark St**  
**Vermillion, South Dakota 57069-2390**

**Support the NMM's expansion and renovation!**  
**Give online at [nmmusd.org](http://nmmusd.org)**

**Thank you for your support!**

Return to: National Music Museum, 414 E. Clark Street, Vermillion, SD 57069-2390

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