Tiny Shelves Final Report

By Julie Elliott & Craig Finlay

We received a $1,000 grant to host an acoustic concert series in the 5th floor atrium in the Franklin D. Schurz Library. Our project was inspired by the popular NPR Tiny Desk Concerts, in which unique musicians and bands play brief, 15-minute concerts in the NPR offices and are recorded for distribution on the internet.

By partnering with the Office of Student Life to book musical acts and Instructional Media Services to provide high quality video, we sought to both provide an entertaining addition to campus culture that will appeal to students and create high-quality video content to raise Indiana University South Bend’s profile on social media sites such as Youtube, Facebook, and Twitter.

Concerts were recorded and posted on library's youtube site: youtube.com/SchurzLibrary. The series was listed by student newspaper The Preface as #3 on "Top Ten Best of IU South Bend in 2014." Quote from story: "The mix of music and the campus library created the perfect temporary getaway from a hectic class schedule for many students."

One issue we struggled with was the booking of the musical acts, as sometimes we did not receive final confirmation and/or promotional photos from an act in a timely manner, making it difficult to do as much wide scale promotion (lobby poster with full semester line-up, for example). The payment process for performers was also problematic, as rules regarding the payments to students are more complicated than we had envisioned when we created the proposal. For our final event in 2016, we did not pay the student performers (this change was approved in our grant renewal proposal in year two, as we discovered in year one that the students were more interested in the chance to perform than in the honorarium).

Faced with difficulties booking performers in year two, we tried to branch out to showing films from our Kanopy database, but ran into two problems—1. Library monitor died, meaning we would have to show film outside library and 2. Efforts to secure audience and space (showing a film at housing), failed. Furthermore, showing films instead of focusing on student performances would take away from the original purpose of the grant.

After some discussion, we thought about additional types of student performance, and our evaluations from previous concerts noted that students were interested in creative writing readings. Taking this feedback, we finished up our Tiny Shelves series with a spoken word performance from students who were published in the student journal The Analecta. The event featured performances by 12 students. We would like to make this spoken word event an annual program at the library if there is interest from Student Publications.

One unexpected outcome from the series was that other groups on campus began hosting concerts featuring student performers. A concert sponsored by The Preface featured two of the bands who first performed for Tiny Shelves (Half Fiction and The Tides) and the SGA began a “Titan Tunes” series. While Tiny Shelves has ended, it is good to see the tradition of concerts by student bands continuing.
Tiny Shelves Concerts & Highlights:

- September 2014 – Von Strantz, 12 attendees & 172 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
- October 2014 – The Tides, 16 attendees & 102 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
- November 2014—Half Fiction, rescheduled due to weather, 9 attendees & 78 views on Schurz Library Youtube page
- December 2014 —The Gidens, 18 attendees & 59 views on Youtube
- February 2015 —IU South Bend Jazz Ensemble, 228 views on Youtube
- March 2015—The British Ciggs, 26 views on Youtube
- April 2015 —Bailey Williams, 21 views on Youtube
- April 2016—Spoken word presentations by students published in The Analecta. 26 attendees

We did not spend our full $1,000. The remaining funds ($570.82) were rolled back into the main Vision 20/20 account in the spring of 2016. We had a catering and a poster printed for the final event in April 2016, and those charges were billed to the main Vision 20/20 account.