Envelopes

Envelopes are used for a variety of problems we encounter that prevent us from sewing a work into a binder. Most times the choice is clear that an envelope must be used, but sometimes you must use your judgment to determine if an envelope is the best choice to preserve a work. Below I will give examples of all the scenarios I have encountered, from most to least common, but always ask if in doubt.

Single works with atypical binding:
Some works are just one piece of music, but are published in such a way that they cannot be sewn into a binder. Most common examples:

a) Spiral Bindings: One of the most common bindings that need envelopes, publishers spiral bind because it guarantees the music will lay flat when open for the performer.

b) Accordion Bindings: This is when books are printed on one continuous sheet of paper and folded (like an accordion) instead of cut and sewn into signatures. This happens often with music because it is better than having to turn pages when playing an instrument.
c) Loose pages: Some music isn’t bound, but just sold as loose pages. Some music may be just one page front and back, and cannot be sewn.

d) *Stab Bindings*: Traditional Japanese bindings, they are loose pages sewn together on a margin, so there is no way to sew through a folded signature to attach it to a binder.

e) *Brittle Works*: Works that are too brittle to fix and sew but are too thin to be placed in a box are generally put in a binder with an envelope. Some works are so brittle that if we try to fix them with filmoplast, the paper will just break along the edge of the tape because the paper is too weak to support its strength. Damaged works that are about ½” or smaller fix as best we can without damaging it more and put in envelopes, while works that are bigger are placed aside to be measured for boxes.
Basic Instructions

1. Check to make sure the pages aren’t damaged on the edges, especially if the work is unbound. If it is damaged and the margins are wide enough, trim off the worn edges. If the work is thin and only a few pages, use the blue cutter to trim. If it is thicker, ask the Preservation Technician to trim it on the guillotine.

2. Locate an envelope that is the appropriate size for the work. It should be a little loose so the work can easily be taken out.

3. Locate a binder that is a suitable size for the envelope. Clear front preferable, no pockets. Cut binder to size if needed. Ideal size is about 1/2 inch on the side and bottom, with about 1-1 ½ inch clearance on top for the barcode.

4. Put the work in the envelope and flip it over so the back is facing you. Place double-sided tape along the perimeter of the envelope on all four sides, following the bump of the work in the envelope, not the edges of the envelope itself. This prevents it from being too tight. Then place 1-3 strips of double-sided tape (depending on the envelope size), inside the tape perimeter of the envelope for added stability.
5. If the binder does not have a spinal flap, place a security strip next to the double-sided tape (inside the rectangle) and press down with the Teflon folder.

6. Position work in the middle of the binder, evenly spaced except for the 1-1 ½ inch space on the top margin for the barcode. Peel of the paper on the double-sided tape and press envelope firmly into place. Pull out the work and place to the side. Press down the envelope with the Teflon folder to fully bond the envelope to the binder.

7. Make a 75 % reduced size copy of the front of the work, color or black and white depending on the cover of the work. Cut the copy out along the sides, and apply double-sided tape along the back edges. Round the edges with the ¼ inch corner rounder, then center the copy on the front of the envelope. Remove the double-sided tape and press the copy down with a bone folder.
8. Cut a small piece of Velcro and place under the point of the envelope flap. Close the envelope and press down to seal the Velcro’s adhesive to keep the envelope closed.

9. If there is a spinal flap, place the security strip under the spine and press down the spinal flap with the Teflon folder.

10. Put the work back in the binder and close the envelope. The work is done.