

ARSC Newsletter

Association For Recorded Sound Collections

Number 143 • Spring 2017

A Peek at ARSC's Texas Conference

May 10-13, 2017

San Antonio, Texas

ARSC returns to the Lone Star State for its 51st annual conference, this time in San Antonio. As such, this year's conference program aims to highlight recorded sound past and present in Texas. And, for the first time this year, the program committee is exciting to include a poster session as a part of this year's conference.

Thursday and Friday morning plenary sessions cover two very distinctly Texas scenes: Houston rap and Mexican-American music, respectively. The Houston rap session includes a panel of three distinguished speakers: Maco L. Faniel, author of *Hip-Hop in Houston: the Origin and the Legacy*, will begin the session with an overview of recordings and the surrounding culture in his paper "Houston...On the Borderline of Hard Times." Lance Scott Walker, author of *Houston Rap and Houston Rap Tapes* digs deeper into one of Houston's most influential figures with his paper "The Engineering and Economics of DJ Screw." Concluding Thursday's plenary, Julie Grob, founder of the Houston Hip Hop Collection at the University of Houston, will dissect one of the genre's most well-loved recordings in "Layers of Meaning and Loss in UGK's 'One Day'."

Friday's plenary session explores the many Mexican-American music traditions in Texas, including San Antonio's Chicano soul scene. Ruben Molina, author of *Chicano Soul: Recordings and History of an American Culture* will present on the topic alongside Rae Cabello, collector and head researcher for The Royal Jesters' English Oldies reissue on Numero Group. Benny Bustillos will discuss his current documentary project, *El Pasoul*, and the El Paso music scene, and album cover artist Ruben Cutillos will discuss an evolution of not only different music, but graphic styles in delivering an album cover for Grammy Award-winners to down and dirty jackets.

Saturday's afternoon plenary session addresses the gender divide among practitioners in the wide-ranging field of recorded sound collections. Moderated by Rebecca Chandler (AVPreserve), *Changing the Tune: Women, Leadership, and Recorded Sound* will give ARSC members the opportunity to identify the problems women face--especially in



Events

May 10-13, 2017. ARSC 51st Annual Conference. San Antonio, Texas

May 27 -30, 2017. EYE International Conference 2017 presents *The Reel Thing*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands

June 4th, 2017. Canadian Antique Phonograph Society regular meeting, Toronto, Ontario

August 12-13, 2017. Antique Phonograph Society Annual Banquet, Show & Sale. UFCW Union Hall, Buena Park, California

September 17-22, 2017. International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) annual conference. Berlin, Germany

November 29 - December 2, 2017. Association of American Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) annual conference. New Orleans, Louisiana

Contents

2017 Conference	pages 1, 3-5
President's Message	page 2
Grant News & Reports	page 5-11
ARSC NY News	page 12
Other News	pages 12
New Members	pages 13-15

continued on page 3

President's Message

As I write this, preparations for the 51st Annual ARSC Conference, held this year in San Antonio, Texas, are in high gear. This is not our first visit to Texas, but it will be our first time in fabulous San Antonio, an historic city with a unique place in both our national history and in the history of recorded sound.

San Antonio's location and varied music scene made it a natural destination for the field recording units of the 78 rpm era, and artists such as Milton Brown, Lydia Mendoza Robert Johnson all left their mark on wax, as did later luminaries such as Doug Sahm, Flaco Jimenez and Selena.

For those of us on the awards committee, this is reading season, as we make our way through the many books on recorded sound topic published year: the good, the bad and the how-on-earth-did-this-get-published?

There are always some unexpected gems, but even more unexpected were these words English discographer Mark Jones in the foreword to his latest effort, a study of the Charisma label.

"... whilst this current book was in preparation, one of the earlier books in the Great British Record Label series was nominated for an international academic award... it happened just at the point that I was about to give up because of lack of support in terms of adequate sales... This almost didn't make it to publication. I thank the award nomination for this book becoming a reality.

"The book was *The B&C Discography: 1968 to 1975* and the nomination was for the Association for Recorded Sound Collections Award for Excellence in Historical Recorded Sound Research. I didn't win, but just being nominated was a surprise."

Thank you Mark! It's an equally welcome surprise to ARSC to know that our efforts to further the work of recorded sound research, preservation and appreciation have helped you. It's a good reminder that while we are a small organization, we have a long reach, and that our interests, however specialized, are shared around the world.

As I write this, I've just gotten back from this year's meeting in Paris, France of the Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Association, or CCAAA, of which ARSC is a member. The other members are the American Moving Image Association (AMIA), the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA), the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the Federation of Commercial Audiovisual Libraries (FOCAL, 2011), the International Association of Sound Archivists (IASA) International Council on Archives (ICA), and the Southeast Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA). And if you think the logistics of getting to an ARSC conference can be rough, think of the archivist from the island nation of Tuvalu, who will have to make connections in Fiji and New Zealand to get to this year's SEAPAVAA conference in Manila, Philippines!

At the Paris meeting it was reported that last year's Joint Technical

ARSC Newsletter

Issue 143

Spring 2017

The ARSC Newsletter is published three times a year, in February, July, and November. Submissions should be addressed to the editor. Submissions by email are encouraged.

Editor

Franz Kunst

2442 24th St.

San Francisco, CA 94110

fkunst@gmail.com

Michael Gray, copy editor

Board of Directors

President: Matthew Barton

Second Vice-President/Program Chair:

Will Chase

Immediate Past-President: Patrick Feaster

Secretary: Danielle Cordovez

Treasurer: Steven I. Ramm

Members-at-large:

Jenny Doctor

Martin Fisher

**Executive Director: Nathan Georgitis
(University of Oregon)**

Claims or other notifications of issues not received must be sent to:

Nathan Georgitis

Knight Library

1299 University of Oregon

Eugene, OR 97403-1299

execdir@arsc-audio.org

The opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the view of The Association for Recorded Sound Collections.

Symposium held in Singapore and attended by my predecessor Patrick Feaster, was a ringing success. Rachel Stoeltje, of FIAF, whom many of you met at last year's conference in her role as Director of the Indiana University Libraries Moving Image Archive announced that the proceedings are to be published by the IU press in August.

Ilse Assman of IASA enthusiastically endorsed the collaboration of ARSC with IASA's Discography Committee. In a discussion of World Audiovisual Heritage Day, it was noted how few recordings are on UNESCO's "Memory of the World," a situation that ARSC has sought to redress, most recently with the addition to the Registry of the phonotograms of Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville.

While in Paris, I was also able to visit the incredible Phonomuseum, located not far from Moulin Rouge. I'm far from the first ARSC member to visit there, but the descriptions of others could only hint at the wonders to be found in this labor of love. Disc and cylinder players of every description fill the museum. Best of all, everything is in working order and your hosts are only too happy to demonstrate such wonders as the two-horned, two-armed Fontanophone, or the warm sounds that emanate from the circular, pleated paper diaphragm invented by Auguste Lumière.

I was also excited to hear of the interest among CAAA members and others in a European ARSC conference in 2019 or later. Stay tuned!

Matthew Barton



continued from page 1

terms of under-representation--and to explore possible solutions. Panelists include Danielle Cordovez (NY Public Library), Maddie Dietrich (Old Dominion University), Caitlin Hunter (Library of Congress), Brenda Nelson-Strauss (Indiana University), and Sandy Rodriguez (University of Missouri - Kansas City).

Radio is a big part of Texas recorded sound history, and is well-represented in this year's program. Gene Fowler and Bill Crawford, authors of "Border Radio: Quacks, Yodelers, Pitchmen, Psychics, and Other Amazing Broadcasters of the American Airwaves," share a plethora of recordings from high-powered American "outlaw" stations that operated south of the border.

From Texas A&M University, John H. Bondurant and Greg Bailey share a history of the diverse programming found on the Texas A&M Forest Service Radio Broadcasts Collection from 1947-1959. Lastly, a panel of participants from partner institutions in the Library of Congress Radio Preservation Task Force discuss the many ongoing challenges of keeping these recordings accessible for the long-term.

Other Texas-related highlights include presentations on Baylor University's Black Gospel Restoration Project, piano virtuoso Olga Samaroff (Lucy Hickenlooper), Pulitzer Prize-winning author Katherine Anne Porter, Starday Records, San Antonio's own Charles Kama, Denton's live music scene, and record pressing plants in Paris.

Of course, the program extends well beyond just Texas fare to include papers on the Internet Archive's efforts in mass-digitization of 78's, audio preservation workflow and engineering challenges, collection surveys from around the globe, copyright challenges philosophical examinations of sound recordings, and in-depth research on record labels and individual biographies. Evening activities include screenings of Sir Doug & The Genuine Cosmic Groove followed by Q & A with director Joe Nick Patoski as well as rarities from the Celluloid Improvisations Music Film Archive. The usual happy hour and awards banquet close the conference on Saturday.

2017 Conference Details

Please join us for the 51st annual ARSC conference, May 10-13, 2017, at the Menger Hotel, in San Antonio, Texas. The hotel is situated next to the Alamo Mission, better known as the site of the 1836 Battle of the Alamo. Founded in 1859, the Menger is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Besides the Alamo, other sights include the Battle for Texas: The Experience, the Spanish Governor's Palace, and El Mercado. For a change of pace, try a San Antonio river cruise or a bike tour of the city. Be sure to explore some of the local record shops!

Two Pre-Conference Workshops, the "All Hands on Deck!: Analog Tape Playback Workshop" and the "Digital Audio Restoration Workshop," will be held on May 10.

A block of rooms has been reserved at special rates for ARSC conference attendees. ARSC's contracted dates extend from Tuesday, May 9 through Saturday, May 13, with Sunday departure. The group rate is honored three days before and three days after the conference, pending availability. If you wish to reserve rooms outside of the Tuesday - Saturday room block, you will need to make your reservation by telephone. The deadline to make reservations at the ARSC group rate is April 17. Reservations made after this date, or after our room block is filled, will be on a space available basis at the prevailing rate.

For more information about the hotel, room rates, and reservations:

http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference/hotel_2017.html

Register early and save! In order to receive the early registration discount, you must register for the conference by April 17. Registration options are available for members and non-members. Online registration is now available at:

<http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference/register/>

For further details about the conference, including a mail-in registration form:

<http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference.html>

For general information about the conference, contact Brenda Nelson-Strauss, Conference Manager: bnelsons@indiana.edu

To discuss or arrange sponsorship, exhibits, or advertising, contact Curtis Peoples, Assistant Conference Manager: curtis.peoples@ttu.edu

Pre-Conference Workshops

This year, there will be two workshops on May 10, at the Menger Hotel.

The "Analog Tape Playback Workshop," sponsored by the ARSC Technical Committee, is designed to familiarize attendees with best practices regarding audiotape handling, identification, and playback. The workshop will be held from 9 a.m. to noon, and is limited to 20 attendees (pre-registration required).

The "Digital Audio Restoration Workshop," sponsored by the ARSC Education & Training Committee, will focus on the basics of audio restoration and repair using Izotope RX. The workshop will be divided into two parts. The first hour will cover basic theory, concepts, and tools used for audio restoration. The remaining 90 minutes will focus on practical application of audio restoration and repair. This workshop will be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., and is limited to 50 attendees. On-site registration is allowed, space permitting.

For more information:

http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference/pdf/pre-conf_workshop_2017.pdf

or contact: Marcos Sueiro, msueiro@nypublicradio.org

Pre-Conference "Robert Johnson In San Antonio 1936" Walking Tour

Sign-up separately for a Wednesday early evening walking tour of Robert Johnson sites with music journalist and founder of the South Texas Museum of Popular Culture Margaret Moser. The tour is limited to 20 participants and leaves the Menger Hotel at 5 pm.

For more information:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VPFCWTL>

Mentoring Program And Newcomer Orientation

First-time conference attendees and conference veterans are invited to participate in the Conference Mentoring Program and attend the Newcomer Orientation. The program pairs ARSC newcomers with long-time members based on their shared interests. Mentors provide mentees with an orientation to the conference, the association, and its participants in informal meetings over the course of the conference.

For more information:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L5CS6DC>

Awards Banquet

The conference will conclude on Saturday evening with the annual Awards Banquet, preceded by a Happy Hour. Winners of the 2016 Awards for Excellence and 2017 Lifetime Achievement and Distinguished Service Awards will be honored. Finalists for the 2017 Awards for Excellence will be announced. This year's banquet will conclude with a special "concert performance" by legendary singer-songwriter Bob Livingston. A founding member of The Lost Gonzo Band, Livingston was a key figure instigating the cosmic cowboy, progressive country and outlaw country music movements that distinguished the Austin, Texas music scene in the 1970s. He is one of the most experienced and recorded musicians in all of Texas music. He has performed with Willie Nelson and co-written and performed with Michael Martin Murphy and Jerry Jeff Walker. A song he wrote with Gary P. Nunn for Walker is titled "Public Domain" that certainly has a connection with ARSC members. With nine CDs of his own and a new one coming this spring, Livingston has lots of songs to sing and stories to tell and has received accolades on his live performances. We're lucky to have him for an hour of songs and tales to close the banquet. This is something special you certainly won't want to miss!



ARSC Blog

Have you been keeping up with ARSC's blog? Go to <http://arsc-audio.org/blog> to see some of the latest posts, including "The 'Big Tent' of the Antique Phonograph Society" by George Paul, Antique Phonograph Society President and co-author of "The Talking Machine: An Illustrated Compendium."

<http://arsc-audio.org/blog/>

ARSClist

The Online Discussion Group of ARSC

Since 1999, the Association for Recorded Sound Collections has sponsored an unmoderated mail reflector to facilitate the exchange of information on sound archives and promote communication among those interested in preserving, documenting, and making accessible the history of recorded sound. The list is sponsored by ARSC as a service to its members and the archival community at large.

Subscribing

To subscribe to the list, send an email message to:

listserv@listserv.loc.gov

Leave the "Subject" blank. In the first line of the body of the message, type "subscribe arsclist [your name]" and send the message normally.

To post to the list, send an email to:

ARSCLIST@loc.gov

Only subscribers can post to the list.

You may also subscribe to the list via the Library of Congress website at <http://listserv.loc.gov/listarch/arsclist.html>

ARSClist Archives

Current archives are maintained by the Library of Congress on the above website. ARSClist archives through June 2009 are kept on the Conservation OnLine (CoOL) site at <http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/arsclist/> Once archived, messages become part of the historical record of discourse in this field and will not be removed from the archives.

ARSC Preservation Grant Awards for 2017

The Preservation Grants Committee of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections has made the following grants for the 2017 award year:

A grant of \$10,000 to NoMus, a music research center in Milan, Italy devoted to study and preservation of 20th century music. The grant will provide for the digital preservation of audio recordings on circa 1500 audiocassettes of the *Festivale Autunno Musicale* at Como, Italy, containing performances and lectures from the festival from 1967-2010. During its existence the festival covered everything from Baroque music to the contemporary relationships between traditional and classical music. A catalog of the recordings will be available at <http://www.nomusassociazione.org/fondi> along with selected musical examples.

A grant of \$9900 to the University of Southern California Libraries for digital copying and preservation of 120 glass-core radio transcription recordings recorded for broadcast at USC between 1937-1949. Included are works by important American composers, including William Grant Still and Florence Price, and emigré composers Ernst Toch and Ingolf Dahl. The recordings will be cataloged and stored at the USC Digital Library and will be available on the website of the Digital Public Library of America to the extent that the copyright law allows.

The ARSC preservation grants are intended to encourage and support the preservation of historically significant sound recordings of Western Art Music by individuals and organizations. For further information see the ARSC website at www.arsc-audio.org/committees/grant-programs.html



ARSC Preservation Grant Report: Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) received a grant of \$10,000 from the Association for Recorded Sound Collections in 2014 to preserve historical recordings of the ASO with Maestro Robert Shaw as Music Director, from the period 1975 – 1986. The recordings, originally in a reel-to-reel format, were endangered and on unstable media. It was imperative that they be migrated to a digital medium for preservation. This project, generously funded by a grant from ARSC, has allowed them to be heard by researchers and the public for the first time in years.

The initial growth and recognition of the ASO can be directly traced to the Robert Shaw years. Robert Lawson Shaw, a nationally known conductor, philosopher, innovator, and educator, was appointed Music Director and Conductor of the ASO in February of 1966. Shaw came to Atlanta partly to bring the ASO broader recognition nationally and internationally. In a career that spanned over 60 years, he conducted some of the most remarkable music performed in the 20th century. His choruses, often composed of amateur singers, had a unique sound – vibrant, nuanced and transcendent. He sold millions of recordings and received 15 Grammy® Awards, a Peabody Award, a Guggenheim fellowship and a National Medal of the Arts. He single-handedly elevated the art form of choral music to new heights and the impact of his methods and techniques are still evidenced today. At the end of the Robert Shaw era in 1988, the ASO had grown to 93 musicians and more than 200 volunteer choristers with a following of 11,000 subscribers and annual attendance of over half a million. The orchestra's tours under Shaw covered the continental United States, Mexico and Europe.

Some of the more notable and unique recordings preserved for this project feature the premieres of commissions requested by Shaw, performances with Shaw as conductor and some of the most outstanding artists of the time period (some of whom are now deceased). Some of the recordings migrated include:

- The world premiere of Donald Erb's Concerto for Orchestra (an ASO commission) in September 1985
- The world premiere of Jon Harbison's *Remembering Gatsby* (an ASO commission) in September 1986
- Leonard Slatkin conducting the ASO's performance of Ligeti's *Lontano* in November 1975
- Florence Kopleff in performances of Bach's B Minor Mass in March 1981



- Maureen Forrester in a performance of Britten's Spring Symphony in May, 1984
- Peter Serkin in a performance of Bartok's Piano Concerto No. 1 in March 1988.

ASO Chief Archives Manager Robert Scarr collected the identified 32 reel-to-reel tapes (under the advisement of Tommy Joe Anderson), and shipped them to Bob Woods, President of Sonarc Music, at his offices in Cleveland, OH. The required migration work was performed by Mr. Woods, who cleaned all tape heads and contact parts of the tape path prior to each transfer; conducted a visual, physical and aural inspection and evaluation of each recording (including the possible need to "bake" tapes with "sticky shed"); and added plastic leader to the heads and tails of open reel tapes. As needed, audio recordings in reel-to-reel or DAT format were baked. Special treatment was given to tape that was moldy and/or crystallized.

The files were saved to a digital hard drive which is stored offsite (i.e. not at the Symphony Hall in the Woodruff Arts Center); a set of gold CDs for archival purposes, and silver CDs as a back-up.

When the transfer was completed, metadata was entered into a BWA file. The ASO received an archival grade gold CD-R and two silver CD-Rs with each of the migrated recordings and when the work was completed, the original reel-to-reel tapes were returned to the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Currently, the recordings are available to listeners by appointment with Archivist Robert Scarr (robert.scarr@atlantasymphony.org). Audio clips of recordings will be online in the future via a portal on the ASO Archives webpage. The ASO Archives collection will also be available to researchers and the public through CollectiveAccess.

ARSC 2016 Research Report: Oral Histories in Kenya

With the support of an ARSC Research Grant, I traveled to Kenya in December 2016 for oral history research on the Kenyan recording industry. I conducted interviews with musicians, record producers, and recording engineers who had pivotal roles in the development and production of Kenyan popular music during the period of 1960 to 1990. This project complements my earlier work on Kenyan benga, a vernacular guitar-band style. During my three weeks in Kenya, I recorded and filmed sixteen interviews documenting life histories and discussing processes of song composition, studio production, marketing, and promotion.

From 1960 to 1990, Kenyan record production was wide-ranging and prolific. With the only major pressing plant in East Africa, the capital city Nairobi was host to a variety of recording labels, including branches of multinational companies Phonogram, EMI, and CBS; local labels run by Kenyan musicians and music store owners of African and Indian backgrounds; and operations run by British expatriates. In conjunction with their distribution of international pop music catalogs, these labels recorded the contemporary guitar band music of Kenya's rural communities and visiting Tanzanian, Ugandan, and Congolese artists.

I conducted several interviews with Kenyan singer/guitarists who, as young men in the 1960s, were highly active in Kenya's growing recording industry. These musicians included Gabriel Omolo, Jose Kokeyo, John Nzenze, and David Amunga. During the 1960s, labels often promoted talented musicians while retaining their services as in-house studio session players. Omolo and Amunga worked with Equator Records, run by British producer Charles Worrod, while Kokeyo and Nzenze worked with Indian-Kenyan run music store labels (Capital Music Stores and African Gramophone Stores). Gabriel Omolo went on to record with great success for Phonogram in the early 1970s, while David Amunga was the first African-Kenyan to establish an independent label, Mwangaza Music Stores in 1965, followed by the seminal label Kasanga Stars Productions. Under Amunga's direction, Kasanga Stars was instrumental in establishing musicians who would gain popularity in Kenya during the 1970s, including D.O. Misiani, Daniel Kamau, and George Ramogi.

Another subject of my research, British-born producer Mike Andrews, played a primary role in developing the Kenyan recording industry. Mike headed his family-owned company, Andrews International and Teal (AIT), which had acquired the East African Records pressing plant in

1962 and updated the equipment to produce 45rpm records (78rpm records had continued to be manufactured in Kenya up until the mid 1960s). Working with a burgeoning music scene that included both Swahili language bands from Tanzania and Kenya, as well as Kenyan groups performing in ethnic languages, AIT produced thousands of recordings of East African contemporary music during the 1970s. Much of this output was sustained through word-of-mouth promotion by music fans in rural communities using battery-powered phonographs. I also met with George Fombe, the engineer for Hi-Fidelity Studio. This small mono recording studio, initially set up to produce radio advertisements in the early 1960s, was the platform for the majority of Kenyan pop music produced during the 1970s and 80s, and imparted Kenyan records with a signature sound remembered for its straightforward, dynamic clarity.

The benga band Victoria Kings Jazz, led by Collela Mazee, recorded with AIT and EMI, and was a fixture of activity at Hi-Fidelity Studio in Nairobi. In discussions with four original members of this group, I learned about the composition methods the band used in preparing their songs for release, as well as studio arrangement techniques. After branching off to form their own production labels in the 1980s, these musicians and others helped establish a self-sustaining local recording industry after the foreign investment that had buoyed Kenyan music in years past had gone into steady decline.

My intention is to incorporate the research from this project and the valuable time spent with musicians and producers into various works in progress, including articles and a manuscript that will cover the history of benga music and the Kenyan recording industry. I am grateful to ARSC for providing their generous support.

Ian Eagleson



Hearing Heritage: Music, Mediation, and Inter-American Cultural Policy, 1920-1970

Report on ARSC grant

What do field recordings of Mexican and Mexican American music from the 1940s reveal about notions of U.S. heritage? This is the central question I recently explored at the Library of Congress, with ARSC support, as part of my current book project, tentatively titled *Hearing Heritage: Music, Mediation, and Inter-American Cultural Policy, 1920-1970*. Particularly in the 1930s and 40s, countries across the Americas were engaged in cultural projects of nation-building, using music recording and broadcasting to convey particular sonic imaginings of collective identity and its relationship to the past—the construction of heritage.

I take mediation in a broad sense to encompass the cultural practices of communication that constitute social life in a particular time and place, yet also create material artifacts that move across time and place, enabling new constellations of subjectivity and social formation. These mediations include discourses about music that were intertwined with life and politics; the negotiation of tensions across hierarchical institutions, interpersonal relationships, and governments; and the technologies of inscription, recording, and reproduction that were central objects of exchange in mid-century inter-American cultural policy.

One part of my research focuses on the field recordings made by Henrietta Yurchenco in Mexico from 1942 to 1946, under the auspices of the Inter-American Indian Institute in Mexico City, in collaboration with the Pan American Union and the U.S. Library of Congress. In a number of collaborative projects at the time, the Library of Congress provided equipment and blank acetate discs in exchange for copies of the recordings in order to expand the collections of the American Archive of Folk Song.

During my recent trip to the Library of Congress, thanks to the diligence of Todd Harvey in the American Folklife Center, I was excited to find some additional documentation of Yurchenco's recording expeditions which I had not encountered in my previous trip to the Library of Congress, or in my trip to the CENART Archive in Mexico City where most of Yurchenco's papers are held. Yurchenco's work in Mexico, in partnership with Mexican colleagues, was the first large-scale effort to document Mexican music

using recording technology. For U.S. intellectuals and listeners, Yurchenco's recordings of Mexican indigenous music represented a human heritage, and specifically a heritage of the Americas, that was considered to have more purity and vitality than Native American music in the U.S. This was one of the first instances of listening across borders and across cultures to explore nostalgic desires for a pre-modern past, paving the way for many other cross-cultural listening expeditions.

Before this research trip, I had only heard commercially released remastered recordings from this time period. I wanted to get a better idea of how field recordings on acetate disc sounded. I got to see a Presto acetate disc recorder in the American Folklife Center, and then listened to unedited copies of acetate disc recordings on reel-to-reel tape and on CD. Acetate discs, of course, wear down with repeated listening, so this was the most feasible way to get a sense of the sound quality from this time period. So what did these recordings sound like? There was the expected static, crackling, and popping, and the ghostly sounds of faint music from the other side of the reel-to-reel tapes (an artifact of the copying, rather than the original acetate disc). At times I also heard a fairly regular whirring sound and wondered if this was related to the spinning of the disc during the original recording.

In spite of the mediating noise of this technology, the voices and languages, sung and spoken, were still audible and intelligible on these copies of 1940s field recordings. These voices included the performers, the field recordists, and the Library of Congress recording engineers who stated the catalog numbers of the original recordings as they copied many recordings to a single reel of tape. As a recently converted archival researcher with a background in ethnographic fieldwork, I tried to listen deeply across voices, music, sound, and noise, in an aural excavation of layers of time and technology. It was such pleasure being transported to another time and place through large headphones, yet still surrounded by the cozy environment of the American Folklife Center's rows of books and records, as I sat at the large wooden research table with winter sun beaming through the windows.

In my conception of "inter-American," I am considering not only the relationship between U.S. and Latin American nation-states, but also the intimate interactions between Latino and Anglo musical cultures in the U.S., and how these were represented through documentary recording. The Lomax family recordings in Texas are a prime example of this. Texas was, of course, Spanish and Mexican territory before it became a U.S. state, and many people of Spanish and Mexican heritage continued to reside in Texas after



statehood. John Lomax recorded some Spanish-language music in Texas, which interested him as an example of U.S. musical heritage that was not traced to the British Isles, although he did not delve deeply into the cultural context of the people he recorded (see Alberto Rodriguez and Rene Torres' recent article in Vol. 16 of the *Journal of Texas Music History*—with thanks to Todd Harvey for showing it to me). Alan Lomax spent some time in Mexico in 1941, but struggled with learning Spanish and did not get any large-scale recording projects off the ground. He ultimately focused on southern African American and, to a slightly lesser degree, Anglo American rural music in his construction of U.S. heritage through recording, thereby obscuring the deep history of Latino sounds in American musical cultures.

In the American Folklife Center I listened to some songs in Spanish recorded by John Lomax and Ruby Terrill Lomax in Kingsville, Texas, in September, 1940. These recordings were originally made on acetate disc but I listened to unedited copies on reel-to-reel tape and CD. In some of these recordings, a woman's voice (perhaps that of Ruby) between songs announced the place of recording and the singer, along with the statement that the recordings were "made for the Folk Song Archive at the Library of Congress." The performers included a woman singing traditional children's songs a capella, and a traditional Mexican guitar trio; both of these performances seemed to be by Spanish speakers who did not speak into the recording aside from their vocal performance.

I was especially interested in the recordings made on King Ranch, between Corpus Christi and Brownsville. Soon after Richard King purchased this vast tract of land in 1853, he was traveling through Tamaulipas in northern Mexico and came upon a drought-stricken village whose inhabitants sold him all their cattle in order to avoid starva-

tion. He invited the villagers to come work on his ranch on the other side of the border, and those who did became known as “Los Kineños,” valued for their skill with cattle and horses in a rugged terrain.

What was interesting to me listening to the songs from King Ranch is that the song texts were in Spanish, but the singer himself introduced the songs in English, giving their titles and the name of the person from whom he learned the song—usually someone from another ranch. His English speech seemed indistinguishable from Anglo Texans, and his pronunciation of Spanish in the songs seemed more influenced by English phonology of the region. This recording is evidence of the hybrid cultural practices of this region, involving both cultural maintenance and transformation. Rodriguez and Torres write that in another community near Brownsville, songs in Spanish were permitted in local schools, while spoken Spanish was forbidden; thus song was a central conduit for the preservation of cultural heritage in the midst of assimilationist policies.

As always, the staff at the Library of Congress Music Division and the American Folklife Center were extremely helpful. During this trip, the archivist Todd Harvey, who has been instrumental in processing and cataloging the Lomax collections, pointed me toward a chronological guide to the Lomax family field trips and recordings held by the American Folklife Center, which is essential for identifying catalog numbers to access recordings. The Finding Aid for the John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax Papers that Todd Harvey prepared is also invaluable. I was pleased to finally meet the archivist Peter Bartis, whose dissertation, “A History of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress: the First Fifty Years” (1982, University of Pennsylvania) provides essential background for understanding music collecting as cultural policy in the United States.

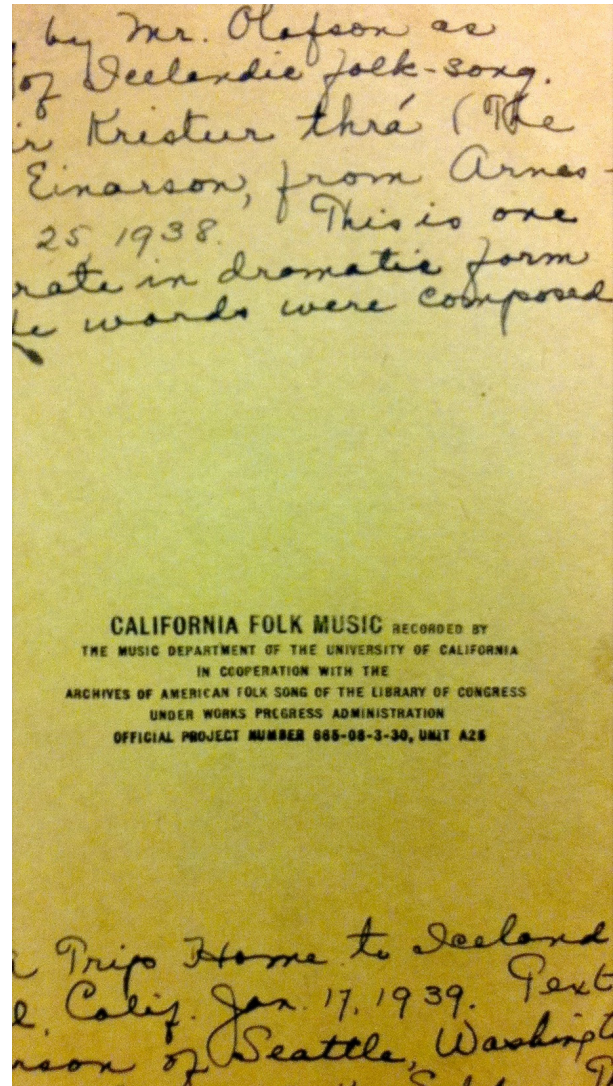
In the Performing Arts Reading Room of the Music Division, where I was using the Sidney Robertson Cowell collection, I had the surprise of meeting the Reference Librarian James Wintle, discovered that we attended the same elementary school in a tiny town in Oklahoma, and had a stimulating talk about relations between urban intellectuals and rural “folk”—relations that fueled folk song collecting in the early 20th century and now have come to the foreground of national politics once again with very different ramifications today.

As an ethnomusicologist and linguistic anthropologist, my initial entry point for this project was the examination of intercultural social relations, gradually moving into the field of sound recording technology as one of the mediating tools of those relations. I welcome comments from ARSC members, especially those who have specialized in sound

recording from the 1940s, to contribute to my understanding and analysis of this technology.

Amanda Minks

*Associate Professor, Honors College, University of Oklahoma
amandaminks@ou.edu*



ARSC Newsletter Submission Deadlines

No. 144, Summer 2017 – June 10, 2017

No. 145, Fall/Winter 2017 – November 10, 2017

No. 146, Spring 2018 – February 10, 2018

ARSC Grant Report: Sun Ra Research

Brian Lefresne, a graduate student at the University of Guelph, received a 2015 ARSC research grant in support of his doctoral dissertation, which centers on the convergence of theatricality, performance, and politics in the life and works of jazz musician and poet Sun Ra (1914-1993). His report follows:

This fall I used an Association for Recorded Sound Collections Research Grant to conduct research in the Sun Ra/El Saturn Collection in Chicago, Illinois. Held in the Creative Audio Archive which is physically stored at Experimental Sound Studios (ESS), the Sun Ra/El Saturn Collection represents the largest trove of unreleased sound and speech recordings pertaining to Sun Ra open to the general public. Consisting of approximately 600 tape and reel recordings, the holdings of this collection include recording sessions and outtakes, interviews, readings of poetry, and live concert recordings. Many of these recordings have not circulated amongst the public and countless items are exclusive to this collection.

Rescued from a dumpster by music critic and art curator John Corbett and visual artist, performer, and writer Terri Kapsalis, the tapes were once owned by Sun Ra's longtime business manager and friend Alton Abraham and constituted a major portion of a larger collection of printed material and ephemera relating to Sun Ra and the Arkestra and El Saturn Records. In 2007, ESS accepted the tapes to conserve them and to make them available to the public. Work with this collection contributes to my doctoral dissertation, "The Ark of Saturn: The Improvised Performances, Politics, and Archives of Sun Ra," which is a multi-thematic study of how the ideas of improvisation and archives can animate new conversations not only about the life and legacy of Sun Ra, but also his relationship with and to Black aesthetics and performance more generally.

During this trip, I primarily focused on listening to interviews and rehearsal tapes. The interviews, mostly from the early 1970s, provide material that helps one gain a greater insight to Ra's aesthetics and ideology. Over the course of the interviews, Ra touches upon a range of topics that include how the arrest and imprisonment of Angela Davis demonstrated the irrationality of Earth-based man, to how the Soviet Union's 1971 launch of the space station Salyut offered hope for the potential of space travel and exploration. Discussion of how early Black musical performers like Ida Cox and Bessie Smith embodied a notion of Black beauty that had been lost and relegated to the dust bins of history. These interviews demonstrate a greater awareness of the politics and rhetoric of the 1970s than previously



recognized and puts Ra's knowledge of the history of black musical performance traditions on display. Another tape of interest was an illicit recording of one of the lectures Ra delivered at the University of California in 1972. This recording provides the listener with the rare opportunity to listen to Ra work out word formulations and present his worldview to a captive audience.

Through listening to the concert tapes, I gained a better sense of how concerts of Ra and the Arkestra had a different tone and shape from performance to performance. In some cases, the concert recordings held in this collection, in terms of musical content and emotional depth, surpass previously released concert recordings. Likewise, the rehearsal tapes reveal how Ra strictly enforced his idea concerning musical discipline during rehearsals. Several tapes provide audible evidence of Ra practicing specific rhythmic patterns and phrases with the Arkestra. Anything short of exact perfection was unacceptable. One recording worthy of mention is a tape of a children's group rehearsing Ra's song "Interplanetary Music." Undated, the labelling suggests that this rehearsal was in preparation for a children's exhibition in Chicago and provides an unparalleled example of Ra and the Arkestra engaging with area youth.

The tapes of the Sun Ra/El Saturn Collection provide an untold wealth of information and evidence for my dissertation and present an example of one of the many forms of archives one must engage when discussing the life and legacy of Sun Ra. In the future, I will present segments of these recordings in conference presentations and collaborate with the various stakeholders involved with this collection to release portions of this collection to the public. Without the generous support of the ARSC I would not have been able to work with this collection and I extend thanks and gratitude to the organization for awarding me this grant.

Brian Lefresne

ARSC New York Chapter

March 2017 Meeting

Joseph Patrych and Jon Samuels present

“In Memoriam: Max Wilcox (1928-2017)”

7:00 P. M. Thursday, 3/23/2017

At the CUNY Sonic Arts Center

Max George Wilcox died on January 20 of this year at the age of 88. He won five Grammy Awards, and the pianist Arthur Rubinstein called him his musical collaborator. (“Arthur Rubinstein never chose a take in his life without me,” Wilcox told an interviewer in 2007.) For 17 years, until Rubinstein’s retirement in 1976, Mr. Wilcox produced some sixty of his recordings for RCA Victor Red Seal. He counted Rubinstein’s Chopin recordings among his favorite productions, which also included recordings of Beethoven by the pianist Richard Goode and the Emerson String Quartet. He joined RCA Victor as a sound editor in 1958, later advancing to engineer and then producer. In addition to Rubinstein, he worked with both established and emerging Red Seal artists, including Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra; Itzhak Perlman; Van Cliburn; Gregor Piatigorsky; Peter Serkin; Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony; and the Guarneri and Cleveland Quartets.

In 1974, after leaving RCA, he became an independent producer, recording Dawn Upshaw, Richard Stoltzman, Zubin Mehta, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Tokyo Quartet, the Beaux-Arts Trio, and Deborah Voigt, among others.

Joseph Patrych is a recording producer and the owner of Patrych Sound Studios in New York City. He has produced and/or engineered over 350 CDs for various commercial labels including Albany, Arbiter, BIS, BMG, Bridge, Centaur, Classico, Diva Productions, Koch, Music & Arts, Nonesuch, New York Philharmonic Special Editions, Pearl, Pierian, and Warner Classics, and thousands of private clients. He has been an ARSC member for over twenty-five years.

Jon M. Samuels, a Reissue Producer and Engineer of classical, jazz and Broadway recordings for over twenty-five years, has been a member of ARSC since 1978. He was associated for thirteen years with BMG/RCA, where he produced many outstanding releases, including significant retrospectives of William Kapell, Pierre Monteux, Leon-tyne Price and Leopold Stokowski. He has also compiled

discographies of Leo Blech, Piero Coppola, Emanuel Feuermann, the Flonzaley Quartet, Leopold Godowsky, and Vladimir Horowitz.

Our next meeting will be on April 20, 2017.

“Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee.” Moderated by Dennis Rooney and Tom Fine.

All ARSC NY Chapter meetings are free and open to the public. Voluntary contributions to help defray our expenses are welcome!

IASA 2017 in Berlin

The International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) announces that its 2017 annual conference will be hosted 17 through 22 September by the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, Germany.

IASA invites everyone engaged in or curious about the discovery, care, preservation, and dissemination of our sound and audiovisual heritage, to join us in Germany’s vibrant capital city, Berlin, to explore the intersection of workflows and archival formats as manifest in new ways of thinking about, new ways of preserving and new ways of presenting our objects in the digital era.

This year’s conference theme, Integration and Innovation: Bringing workflows and formats together in the digital era, will touch upon and delve deeply into the following sub-themes:

- Managing sound and audiovisual collections in an integrated manner
- New workflows for arranging and describing collections
- Intellectual property and rights management challenges & opportunities
- Selection and appraisal – strategies for acquiring digital content
- How are sound and audiovisual archives innovating in the digital era?

Programme to include papers, tutorials, and practical workshops. Come, network, learn and explore Berlin, this centre of culture, politics, media and science.

Please make a note of the conference dates in your calendar! Visit the IASA conference website for details as they develop at:

<http://2017.iasa-web.org/>

--Ilse Assmann, IASA president

New and Returning Members

Names and addresses of new ARSC members are not available in the on-line version of the newsletter.



PHONOGRAPH FIEND

That phonograph of yours, gee whiz,
It makes the neighbors sour;
We'd like to hear it now and then,
But not most every hour.

ARSO

Association for Recorded Sound Collections

c/o Nathan Georgitis

Knight Library

1299 University of Oregon

Eugene, OR 97403-1299

Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed

Address Service Requested



“UNIS PAR LE MALHEUR!”
postcard with photograph of two
disabled French Marines and Pathe
phonograph, circa 1914-18