Greetings from the Development Office

Working as the development officer for AAAMC from 1997 to 1998 has offered some wonderful opportunities, as well as some interesting challenges. We work hard to identify new foundations, corporations, and individuals that share our commitment to preserve African American music and culture.

Currently, we are seeking funding to host our first annual coming-of-age camp for minority youth and a teacher’s workshop. A worthwhile, if ambitious goal, this innovative program will bring minority students from throughout the state to the Bloomington campus for a two-week session of music instruction, workshops, and performances. Total funding needs for the camps stand at $375,000 for 25 students and 10 teachers over a three-year period. In addition, the AAAMC has other projects planned and we are working hard to match the interests of potential donors and sponsors with our wide variety of funding needs including developing educational programs and materials, presenting exhibitions, building our collection and holdings, and general operations.

The AAAMC also created a “Circle of Friends” network to offer individuals and the business community an opportunity to become members of the AAAMC. Member benefits include invitations to special events, advance screenings of exhibitions, a free subscription to the bimonthly newsletter, Liner Notes, and discounts on some of the services provided at the AAAMC.

If you haven’t become a member of the AAAMC and haven’t joined our “Circle of Friends” network, we encourage you to do so today. A membership form is included with this issue and can be faxed (for all credit card payments) or mailed with your check or money order. Don’t miss out on the exciting programs and exhibitions coming this year!

The AAAMC would like to thank each of our donors for their continued support and generous donations of recordings, videos, photographs, and advertising. Our success and growth as the industry leader in the preservation of African American music and culture would not be possible without you.

—Michelle T. Boone

Portia K. Maultsby
Director
In the Stacks

While conducting research on African American popular music in Los Angeles in 1984, I listened to the radio weekly broadcast of The Johnny Otis Show. I was intrigued, especially by Johnny’s discussions with his guests, who were renowned rhythm and blues (R&B) artists. They talked about the music, the good times, and the struggles of black musicians during the era of segregation. I knew I had to meet this legend. I called Johnny and told him how much I enjoyed his show and its value to my research. I requested an interview, to which he agreed. He invited me as a guest on the show and for performances of his band, the Johnny Otis Show. These encounters mark the beginning of a 15-year relationship I have had with Johnny and his family. After spending many hours at his house listening to earlier broadcasts of The Johnny Otis Show and his extensive rhythm and blues record collection, looking at hundreds of photographs, and examining articles and publicity materials, etc., I knew that Johnny’s vast and diverse resources needed to be preserved and made accessible to researchers and the general public.

After returning to Indiana University in 1985, I remained in close contact with Johnny and continued to stress the importance of his materials for studies on African American popular music. Johnny later offered to donate his radio programs to Indiana University. The materials arrived in 1990. After spending months sorting the radio programs and establishing a processing procedure, work began on the Johnny Otis Collection. It’s been a long and tedious process. I am pleased to announce that most of the collection has been processed and is now available for public use. This huge undertaking could not have been done without the ongoing commitment of four very special people. I am especially grateful to Marilyn Graft, archivist for the Archives of Traditional Music, who assisted in establishing processing and cataloging procedures. I am indebted to the work of Andrew Funk and Peter Knapczyk, who processed 90 percent of the collection during the last three years. I want to acknowledge the creative work of Maria Richardson, archivist for the AAAMC, and Andrew Funk, who developed an index to the Johnny Otis Collection.

—Portia K. Maultsby

The Johnny Otis Collection

The Johnny Otis Collection consists of radio programs on African American popular music that span the R&B era defined by diverse urban styles of musical expression created during and the two decades that followed World War II. The war years stimulated growth in the American economy, which resulted in the migration of almost two million African Americans from southern rural areas to urban centers throughout the United States. In the cities, they found higher-paying jobs, opportunities for a better life, and a lively club and bar scene. These venues featured blues, jazz, and popular music, with bands of various sizes, the activities of which are featured in the collection.

The Johnny Otis Collection, held jointly by the Archives of African American Music and Culture and the Archives of Traditional Music, consists of approximately 800 reel-to-reel and cassette audiotapes of The Johnny Otis Show. This radio program broadcast in California from the 1970s to the present in its current format, includes R&B, blues, and jazz recordings, interspersed with live “on-the-air” interviews and performances by major figures of African American music and those influenced by this tradition. Musicians such as Joe Liggins, Albert Collins, Eddie Beale, Johnny Shines, Pee Wee Crayton, Ruth Brown, Hank Ballard, Felix King, Buddy Guy, Barbara Morrison, and Frank Zappa talk freely about their lives, their music, their experiences on the road, and their work with other musicians, among others. This personal relationship with the artists and his easy-going manner inspire cauldrel and relaxed conversations. The live improvised performances are a unique feature of the show. They allow artists the freedom to create without the restrictions of a back-up band and formal arrangements. Those informal “jam sessions,” which often include Otis’ sons, Shuggie and Nicky, with legendary musicians such as Pee Wee Crayton, Lowell Fulson, Joe Liggins, Phillip Walker, Freddie King, and Frank Zappa, provide valuable insights into individual musical styles, music interactions, and the creative process.

Throughout each show, Otis provides listeners with insightful commentary, anecdotes, and personal recollections about his music and his career as a successful talent scout, songwriter, producer, and performer of jazz, blues, and R&B. He also invites his listeners to participate in his show through the use of “call-ins” for live calls on current events such as political issues and civil rights issues and the state of affairs concerning black music. The Johnny Otis Show is a milestone in African American musical history. The public has the rare opportunity to learn about African American music and culture through the accounts of the musicians.

The Johnny Otis Collection is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in African American music and culture. Otis’ wealth of knowledge on this topic combined with the biographical and historical information given by his guests and the live musical performances, provides first-hand accounts of an era of musical activity that has redefined the post-World War II American musical landscape. This collection also provides rare insight into the fascinating and multi-dimensional life and career of Johnny Otis.

—Andrew Funk & Peter Knapczyk

AAAMC Collection Highlights

In each issue of Liner Notes, we will provide brief descriptions of selected existing and new collections.

SPECIAL EDITION COLLECTION: Over 200 radio programs on black popular music from the 1950s and 1960s produced by Inner Circle Productions for Westwood One. The programs include interviews, articles, and recordings by artists such as the O’Jays, Tina Turner, Bobby Bland, Carole Mayfield, Natalie Cole, B.B. King, Little Richard, Brenda Russell, Steve Wonder, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Earth, Wind & Fire, Kool & the Gang, War, Patti Labelle, the Staple Singers, the Spinners, Isaac Hayes, Diana Ross, the Jacksons, and Stevie Wonder, the Commodores, Ashford & Simpson, Larry Graham, Isley Brothers, Barry White, George Benson, Aretha Franklin, the Pointer Sisters, Patrice Rushen, the Dells, Al Green, the Chi-Lites, Parliament Funkadelic, Deniece Williams, the Ohio Players, Berry Rogers, Johnnie Taylor, the Four Tops, Teddi Pendigrass, Herbie Hancock, Bootsy Collins, and the MG’s. Transcripts are available for some interviews and programs. This collection is jointly held with the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University.

LEE BAILEY COLLECTION: Over 700 one-hour weekly radio news programs broadcast on WDCR and WOGL in Philadelphia from the 1950s and 1960s produced by Lee Bailey Productions. Artists include Carole Kaye, Teddy Riley, Barry White, Funkadelic, Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Quincy Jones, Lionel Jordan, En Vogue, TLC, Queen Latifah, Arrested Development, De La Soul, Public Enemy, D’Angelo, Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, MC Lyte, Yo Yo, Dr. Dre, and LL Cool J.

Past Events

ARCHIVIST PRESENTATION AT INSBA MEETING

On September 25, 1997, the Indiana Special Libraries Association (INSLA) conducted their monthly meeting at the Archives of African American Music and Culture. The meeting was well attended by members of the association who drove in from various regions of Indiana. Macie Richardson, archivist and head of public and technical services for the AAAMC, made a presentation to the group on the mission, goals, and holdings of the archives, after which she conducted a tour of the facilities.

EXTENSIONS OF THE TRADITION 1998

As part of the Black History Month celebration, the Archives of African American Music and Culture annually collaborates with the African American Arts Institute and the Indiana University School of Music to produce a program titled, "Extensions of the Tradition," founded by Dr. William Bunfield, the program includes a live concert and an exhibit of original scores by African American composers housed in the archives' Undine Smith Moore Collection.
The sixth annual Extensions concert—held March 8, 1998, at the School of Music—featured four works by composer, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson. The pieces were premiered by a chamber orchestra assembled by the Indiana University School of Music and guest pianist Karen Walwyn. The chamber orchestra performed "Vesuvius Sonata No. 1 For Strings" and "Graze—Poem for Harp, Strings and Percussion." Karen Walwyn, a faculty member at the University of Michigan, was featured on "Staatlieder, Sonata No. 2 For Piano."

Visiting Scholars

During the 1997-98 academic year, four international scholars visited the archives. Their profiles follow.

BACK TO THE ROOTS ‘97

Eleven visitors from Germany visited the archives for two weeks in September 1997 as part of their "Back to the Roots ‘97" study tour of African American music. They were staff members of Youth Ministries, whose goal is to use black popular styles, gospel, and rock music to diversify the church’s classical music repertoire. Sponsored by the Music Department of the University of Göttingen, the tour included travel to several cities including Atlanta, Memphis, Montgomery, Tuskegee, Birmingham, New York, and Bloomington, where they studied the history of black music and observed performances in black communities. In Bloomington, the group attended workshops on popular music conducted by the director of the archives, Pamela K. Mundby. Afterward, they broke into smaller units to pursue individual interests by listening to recordings and viewing video from the AAMC archives. Upon returning to Germany, they plan to develop a video documentation project using photographs, recordings, and diaries, which they will present at universities, churches, schools, and to church leaders, according to group leader Iren Brestel. Their goal is to ensure that African American music is better understood and performed, due to its growing popularity in Germany.

GONNY PASARIBU

Gonny Pasaribu of the Netherlands visited the archives in March 1998 to use its materials on jazz music. Originally, Pasaribu discovered the archives on the Internet and was given information about it by the director of the Dutch Popular Music Archives. Majoring in English and literature at the University of Utrecht, Pasaribu also specializes in African American Studies, with a concentration in music. Pasaribu's main musical interests began with jazz and blues but she was drawn to the rap lyrics of Arrested Development in 1992. By this time, rap as a musical genre had become popular particularly among people of West Indian origin in the Netherlands. She came to the U.S. as an exchange student at Washington University from the University of Utrecht (the Netherlands) to conduct research for her master's project, which examines rap as a political tool among African Americans, Latinos, and French rappers. As the archives, Pasaribu videorecorded and listened to compact discs of various rap groups.

BRIAN WARD

Brian Ward, a reader at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, visited the archives in April 1998 to conduct research on black radio. A British historian specializing in African American history with a specific focus on the Civil Rights Period, Ward wrote "Just My Soul Responding," a book that examines the civil rights movement through the music of that era. He also co-edited The Making of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement. Ward's present project is a book on black radio, scheduled for publication sometime in 1999. For this study, Ward made extensive use of radio Smithsonian and Jack Gibson's black radio directories held at AAMC as well as AAMC's popular music materials, especially the Johnny Otis Collection.

PHILIP HERBERT

Philip Herbert visited the archives in April 1998. A member of the staff of Leicester University in the United Kingdom, Herbert is currently working on an innovative music program that is being developed for the disabled. Herbert was particularly interested in the Umdel Smith Moore Collection, which features original classical music scores by African American composers. During his visit, Herbert interviewed Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, a renowned composer who was visiting lecturer in the African American Arts Institute and a visiting research associate in the archives for the 1997-98 academic year. He also met with Michael Woods, an accomplished jazz, classical, and R&B composer who has donated several of his works to the archives.

People

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE HIGHLIGHT—COLERIDGE-TAYLOR PERSKINSON

As part of its organizational structure, the Archives of African American Music and Culture maintains a group of resident research associates who act as resource consultants to the staff and the patrons of the archives. In 1997-98, internationally renowned composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson served as acting director of the Indiana University School Reula and visiting lecturer in the Department of Music at American University. He was also a research associate in AAMC. In this capacity, he organized the Extinctions of Tradition Concert and worked with the University School Moore Collection, a role particularly suited to Perkinson, given his experience as a composer in the classical tradition.

Born in New York on June 14, 1932, Perkinson was aptly named after the legendary black British composer, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. He became immersed in music as a child and remained deeply entwined. While other children were strumming to the sports fields, Perkinson picked up drums to music. He attended music and dance workshops, hosted by his mother, a proficient pianist in her own right. In his early teenage years, Perkinson sang in the choir of the Church of the Master in New York City. There, both James Robinson, the dynamic minister, and Clarence Whitman, the vibrant young choir director, had a major influence on him.

When Perkinson was 13 years old, he was accepted to the High School of Music and Arts in New York where he gained a solid foundation in music theory. He later went on to the Manhattan School of Music where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in music composition. Over the years, he attended a number of conducting courses in venues around the world, including the Berkshire Music Center, The Seabury-Monterey, and the Netherlands Radio Unions in Hilversum. Later, Perkinson studied with a number of exceptional musicians, including Vincent Giammanca, Hugh Ross, Dean Bower, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and others. The unique and cultural experiences of African American composers inspired his creative expressions. For Perkinson, the range of these experiences is signified in the uniqueness of his compositions. In David Baker's book, The Black Composer Speaks, Perkinson describes his development as a composer to a number of factors, among which, his trip to Europe, the March on Washington in 1963, the death of Martin Luther King Jr., and his poetry.

"I'm very glad that I learned things from DuBose and James Weldon Johnson and so forth but it was a difficult situation in that there I was going to school and being taught 'correct' English, and then having dialectic poetry presented as the only example I got of black literature."
Jack "The Rapper" Gibson, 1973

Rapper" Gibson was born in Chicago where he began his professional career in radio while attending Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri. He started in 1943 as WJJD as an on-air announcer and continued for many years. Gibson moved to Atlanta in 1949 and participated in the establishment of WERD, the nation's first black-owned radio station. He also worked at WLOU (Louisville), WMBM (Miami Beach), WCVN (Cincinnati), and WABQ (Cleveland). While at WABQ, he charged the traditional radio control room concept and encouraged disc jockeys to stand while performing, a technique that greatly enhanced their vocal production.

In 1955, Gibson founded the National Association of Radio Announcers (NARA), an association for black radio personnel. Then when Berry Gordy asked Jack Gibson to join Motown as the first national director of promotions and public relations in 1962, Gibson made his transition from radio to the record industry. Gibson later worked with DECCA records and also with Stan Records.

In 1976, he launched his Jack the Rapper magazine, later called Jack the Rapper's Melody's Yells, which became the first black trade publication aimed at black radio and the music industry in general. By the 1970s, Gibson had established himself as an influential force, both nationally and internationally, so in 1977, when he called together black radio and music personalities to his Jack the Rapper's Family Affair Convention, the turnout was impressive.

Over the years, Jack Gibson successfully led national and international campaigns to promote black music and culture. For instance, he worked toward establishing June as Black Music Month and campaigning to remove the ban on Stevie Wonder's music in South Africa. For his numerous and diverse contributions, Gibson has received several awards and honors. In 1980, he was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame and the following year, he was inducted into the Black Radio Hall of Fame. Gibson has also been honored for his contributions by Indiana University, Lincoln University, Upscale magazine, the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB), the Motown Historical Museum, and the Smithsonian Institution, among others. "Jockey Jack" Gibson is indeed both an innovative pioneer and an accomplished veteran of black radio in America. We are proud to have him on our National Advisory Board.

—Stephanie Stoneham

Meet the Staff

Director:
Porcia K. Maudsley, Ph.D., has been the director of the archive since its inception in 1991. She is a professor of Ethnomusicology and Afro-American Studies and an adjunct professor in the School of Music. Specializing in African American music, she is often described by scholars as a "pioneer" in the area of research and writing on African American popular music. Professor Maudsley combines her research, teaching, and administrative duties in Indiana University’s Department of Afro-American Studies and the AAAMC.

Acting Director:
Charles Sykes, Ph.D., serves as acting director of the AAAMC in Dr. Maudsley's absence. He is also the director of the American American Arts Institute.

Archivist and Head of Public and Technical Services:
P. Macie Richardson, M.L.S., has been the archivist and head of Public and Technical Services since 1996.

Charles Sykes, Ph.D. (Music Education; Columbia University)

Graduate Assistant (1997–1998):
Michelle Boone, M.F.A. (School of Public and Environmental Affairs); Susan Jett, Ph.D. candidate (Ethnomusicology; Andrew Furst, M.S. (School of Library and Information Science); Stephanie Stoneham, doctoral student (Ethnomusicology).

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