

# **Juan B. Rael Collection**

**AFC 1940/002**

**Prepared by Robin Fanslow**



**American Folklife Center, Library of Congress**

**Washington, D.C.**

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## Collection Summary

**Call No.:** AFC 1940/002

**Creator:** Rael, Juan Bautista, 1900-1993

**Title:** Juan B. Rael Collection

**Span Dates:** 1940

**Contents:** 3 boxes containing manuscripts, sound recordings, graphic materials, published materials, and electronic media.

**Repository:** Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** This collection documents the musical heritage and cultural traditions of the Hispano residents of the portion of the Northern Rio Grande region spanning Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. This material was compiled by Juan B. Rael in 1940.

**Languages:** Collection material in English, and Spanish

## Collection Concordance by Format

Quantity	Physical Description/Version	Location/I.D. Numbers
<b>Manuscript Materials</b>		
21	folders	
<b>Sound Recordings</b>		
36	12-inch acetate-on-aluminum discs	AFS 3905-3940 (original field recordings)
5	10-inch DT reels	LWO 4872: reels 255-259 (preservation copies)
4	DAT Tapes	Made in the digital conversion process
<b>Graphic Images</b>		
1	black-and-white photoprint	AFC 1940/002:P1
1	copy negative	AFC 1940/002:P1-p1
<b>Electronic Media</b>		
6	3.5-inch computer diskettes	Documents generated during collection processing as well as documents/files used to build the online presentation plus backup copies
1	CD-ROM	Scanned images of manuscript items used in the online presentation

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The Juan B. Rael Collection was given to the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center) by Rael in 1940. During the digital conversion process in 1998 and 1999, additional materials, including reprint journal articles, transcriptions/translations, and contextual essays by Enrique R. Lamadrid, added to the collection.

### Processing History

Robin Fanslow accessioned, arranged, and processed this collection. She curated the online presentation and prepared the pre-EAD collection guide for all original and additional materials in June 1999. Nora Yeh encoded this finding aid under the guidance of Mary Lacy.

### Location

Although AFC is the custodial division of this collection, the original 36 12-inch acetate-on-aluminum discs (AFS 3905-3940) and the 5 10-inch preservation reel-to-reel tape copies (LWO 4872: reels 255-259) are stored in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress. Reference copies of audio materials and all other collection materials are housed in the AFC.

## Access

Listening and viewing access to the collection is unrestricted. Listening copies of the recordings are available at the Folklife Reading Room as well as online.

## Restrictions

Restrictions may apply concerning the use, duplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a reference librarian in the Folklife Reading Room for specific information about this collection.

## Electronic Format:

See "Hispano Music and Culture of the Northern Rio Grande: The Juan B. Rael Collection" at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rghhtml/rghome.html> which includes information about ordering audio and photographic reproductions.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: The Juan B. Rael Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

## The Collector

Linguist and folklorist Juan Bautista Rael, highly regarded for his pioneering work in collecting and documenting the Hispano folk stories, plays, and religious traditions of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, was born on August 14, 1900, in Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico. His bachelor's degree, from St. Mary's College in Oakland in 1923, led to a master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1927. After deciding on a university career of teaching and research, Rael relinquished his family inheritance in land, cattle, and sheep to his three brothers and his sister. He had realized that the wealth in northern New Mexico that most interested him was the vast repertory of folk narrative, song, and custom that had scarcely been documented.

While teaching at the University of Oregon, Rael returned to Arroyo Hondo in the summer of 1930 to begin compiling his famous collection of over five hundred New Mexican folk tales. By then his work had attracted the attention of pioneer Hispano folklorist and mentor Aurelio Espinosa, who invited Rael to Stanford in 1933. Rael completed his doctoral studies in 1937 with a dissertation on the phonology and morphology of New Mexico Spanish that amplified the dialectological work of Espinosa with the huge corpus of folk tales, later published as *Cuentos Españoles de Colorado y Nuevo Mexico: Spanish Folk Tales of Colorado and New Mexico*.

Well-versed in the historic-geographic theory of transmission and diffusion of motifs, tale types, and genres, Rael set out on the formidable, almost quixotic task of gathering all the possible versions and texts of the tales, hymns, and plays he was studying. The vast majority of tales are of European provenance, with only minimal local references. He meticulously traced the shepherds' plays to several root sources in Mexico, and his study *The Sources and Diffusion of the Mexican Shepherds' Plays* is a standard reference on the subject. His ground-breaking study of the alabado hymn, *The New Mexican Alabado*, is also a prime resource. Inevitably the text-centered historic-geographic approach led more to collection building than to analysis. It has been left to later generations of scholars to develop performance-centered studies, but the collections of Juan B. Rael continue to be an indispensable landmark in the field.

Note: This biography was excerpted from an essay by Enrique R. Lamadrid. For further information on the collector and the collection, see the framing essays written by Lamadrid to accompany the online presentation *Hispano Music and Culture of the Northern Rio Grande: The Juan B. Rael Collection*. See Folder #16 below.

## Key Subjects

### Groups

Chicano  
Hispanic  
Hispano  
Latino

Mexican-American  
Mexicano  
New Mexican  
Nuevo Mexicano  
Spanish-American

**Genres**

Nativity plays  
Las Posadas  
Los Pastores  
Pastorelas  
Shepherds' plays  
Alabados (hymns)  
Coplas (couplets)  
Corridos  
Dance music  
Décimas (10-line stanza)  
Despedimientos (farewells)  
Entregas de novios (presentation of the newlyweds)  
Fiddle tunes  
Humorous songs  
Hymns  
Inditas  
Love songs  
Marchas (marches)  
New Year songs  
Schottisches  
Valses de cadena (chain waltzes)  
Valses (waltzes)  
Varsovianas  
Wedding songs  
Humorous recitations  
Religious recitations

Note: Refer to the Glossary from the online presentation for further explanation of these terms.

**Instruments**

Fiddle (violin)  
Guitar  
Harmonica

**Topics**

Catholicism  
Christmas traditions (see folk drama list)  
Hermandad Piadosa de Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno  
Pious Brotherhood of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene  
Hermanos Penitentes  
Lenten traditions  
Penitentes  
Religion

**Locations**

Colorado  
New Mexico  
Rio Grande Valley

## Scope and Content Note

The Juan B. Rael Collection comprises multi-format ethnographic field documentation of religious and secular music of Spanish-speaking residents of rural Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. It contains correspondence, administrative materials, recording logs, song transcriptions and translations, and materials generated in the process of creating the online presentation.

In 1940, Juan Bautista Rael of Stanford University, a native of Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico, used disc recording equipment supplied by the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center) to document alabados (hymns), folk drama, wedding songs, and dance tunes in Alamosa, Manassa, and Antonito, Colorado, and in Cerro and Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico. These efforts resulted in approximately 650 pages of print material including correspondence, recording logs, song text transcriptions, excerpts from publications, and 8 hours of audio recordings on 36 12-inch acetate-on-aluminum recording discs. A later effort added one graphic image: Rael interviewing Manuela "Mela" Martínez of Taos, New Mexico, circa 1930, and a corresponding negative. In the process of digitizing the collection for online presentation, materials including six computer diskettes containing digitized LP liner notes, book excerpts, journal articles, as well as digitized framing text, and one CD-ROM with digitized images were generated.

# Description of Series

*Container*

*Series*

**SERIES I: MANUSCRIPT MATERIALS**

**Administrative Materials:**

**Song Transcriptions and Texts:**

**Rael's works resulting from the field project:**

**Library of Congress publications:**

**Online presentation of the collection *Hispano Music and Culture of the Northern Rio Grande: the Juan B. Rael Collection*:**

**Related collections at other institutions:**

**SERIES II: GRAPHIC IMAGES**

**SERIES III: SOUND RECORDINGS**

**SERIES IV: ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

# Collection Inventory

## Container

## Contents

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### SERIES I: MANUSCRIPT MATERIALS

#### Administrative Materials:

- FOLDER 1 Collection guide
- FOLDER 2 Correspondence. Between Rael and library officials (particularly Alan Lomax and Harold Spivacke) about the collection, written from November 27, 1939, through December 1, 1941
- FOLDER 3 Recording log for AFS 3905-3940
- FOLDER 4 Log of recordings made in Antonito, Colorado, with equipment borrowed from Adams State Teachers College, Alamosa, Colorado

#### Song Transcriptions and Texts:

- FOLDER 5 Song transcriptions/translations by Enrique R. Lamadrid for the online presentation. In numerical order by AFS number
- FOLDER 6 Alabado texts from *The New Mexican Alabado*, by Juan B. Rael, published by Stanford University Press, 1951. In alphabetical order by title

#### Rael's works resulting from the field project:

- FOLDER 7 "New Mexican Wedding Songs," by Juan B. Rael, originally published in *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 2, June 1940.
- FOLDER 8 "New Mexican Spanish Feasts," by Juan B. Rael, originally published in the *California Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1942.
- FOLDER 9 Introduction to *The New Mexican Alabado*, by Juan B. Rael, published by Stanford University Press, 1951. (Includes map of the region)

#### Library of Congress publications:

- FOLDER 10 Excerpts from Lomax, Alan, ed. Liner notes to *Ethnic Music of French Louisiana, the Spanish Southwest, and the Bahamas from the Archive of Folk Song*. From the series "Folk Music of the United States." Library of Congress Recording Laboratory AFS L5 (Contains excerpts pertaining to songs in the Juan B. Rael Collection only.)
- FOLDER 11 "Juan Bautista Rael, 1900-1993: Pioneer Hispano Folklorist" and "Nuevo Mexicanos of the Upper Rio Grande: Culture, History, and Society," by Enrique R. Lamadrid, *Folklife Center News*, Winter 1999, Volume XXI, Number 1.

#### Online presentation of the collection *Hispano Music and Culture of the Northern Rio Grande: the Juan B. Rael Collection*:

- FOLDER 12 Consultant: Enrique R. Lamadrid curriculum vitae; correspondence; audiography
- FOLDER 13 Copyright/permissions Information. Letters of permission to reproduce materials online; consultant's opinion regarding material; memo from National Digital Library Program legal advisor regarding online dissemination.
- FOLDER 14 Documents pertaining to work done by Systems Integration Group, Inc. Correspondence regarding scanning and SGML conversion of collection manuscripts; file directories; parser report.
- FOLDER 15 Publicity/press releases. Official LC press release; *The Library of Congress Information Bulletin*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (February 1998).

## SERIES I: MANUSCRIPT MATERIALS

### *Container*

### *Contents*

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- FOLDER 16** Biographical information provided by Rael Family for online framing text:
- Correspondence with Enrique R. Lamadrid regarding biographical details of Juan B. Rael
  - Stanford University resolution on the occasion of Rael's death
  - "Literary Life of Juan B. Rael," unpublished paper written by Althea N. Oakeley, the great granddaughter of Rael's eldest brother for a college course
- FOLDER 17** Framing text documents:
- Homepage Text
  - About the Collection Text
  - Essays in English:
    - Juan Bautista Rael, 1900-1993: Pioneer Hispano Folklorist
    - Nuevo Mexicanos of the Upper Rio Grande: Culture, History, and Society
    - La Música Nuevo Mexicana: Religious and Secular Music from the Juan B. Rael Collection
    - Hispano Folk Theater in New Mexico
  - Essays in Spanish:
    - Juan Bautista Rael, 1900-1993: Folklorista Hispano
    - Los Nuevo Mexicanos del Río Grande del Norte: Cultura, Historia y Sociedad
    - La Música Nuevo Mexicana: Tradiciones Religiosas y Seculares de la Colección de Juan B. Rael
    - El Teatro Popular Hispano de Nuevo México
  - Glossary
  - Bibliography
  - Acknowledgments
  - How to order audio and photographic reproductions
  - Copyright and other restrictions
- FOLDER 18** Manuscript material database report, hard copy
- FOLDER 19** Audio database report, hard copy

### **Related collections at other institutions:**

- FOLDER 20** Collection guide for Rael manuscript materials at Stanford  
Bibliographic records for Rael material at New Mexico State Library

## **SERIES II: GRAPHIC IMAGES**

- FOLDER 21** One b/w photographic print and one negative made from the print (AFC 1940/002:P1 and AFC 1940/002:P1-p1). Image depicts Rael interviewing Manuela "Mela" Martínez, Taos, New Mexico, circa 1930.

## **SERIES III: SOUND RECORDINGS**

- BOX 3** Four DAT tapes created in the digital conversion process
- Note: Original acetate disc recordings, AFS 3905-3940, are housed in MBRS, as are the 10-inch preservation reels; reel-to-reel listening copies of the field recordings are available through the Folklife Reading Room.

## **SERIES IV: ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

- BOX 3** Six computer diskettes: Contain documents generated during collection processing as well as documents/files used to build the online presentation (plus backup copies)
- Note: Disk directories can be found in Folder #1 with the Collection Guide.
- One CD-ROM: Contains scanned images of manuscript items used in the online presentation.