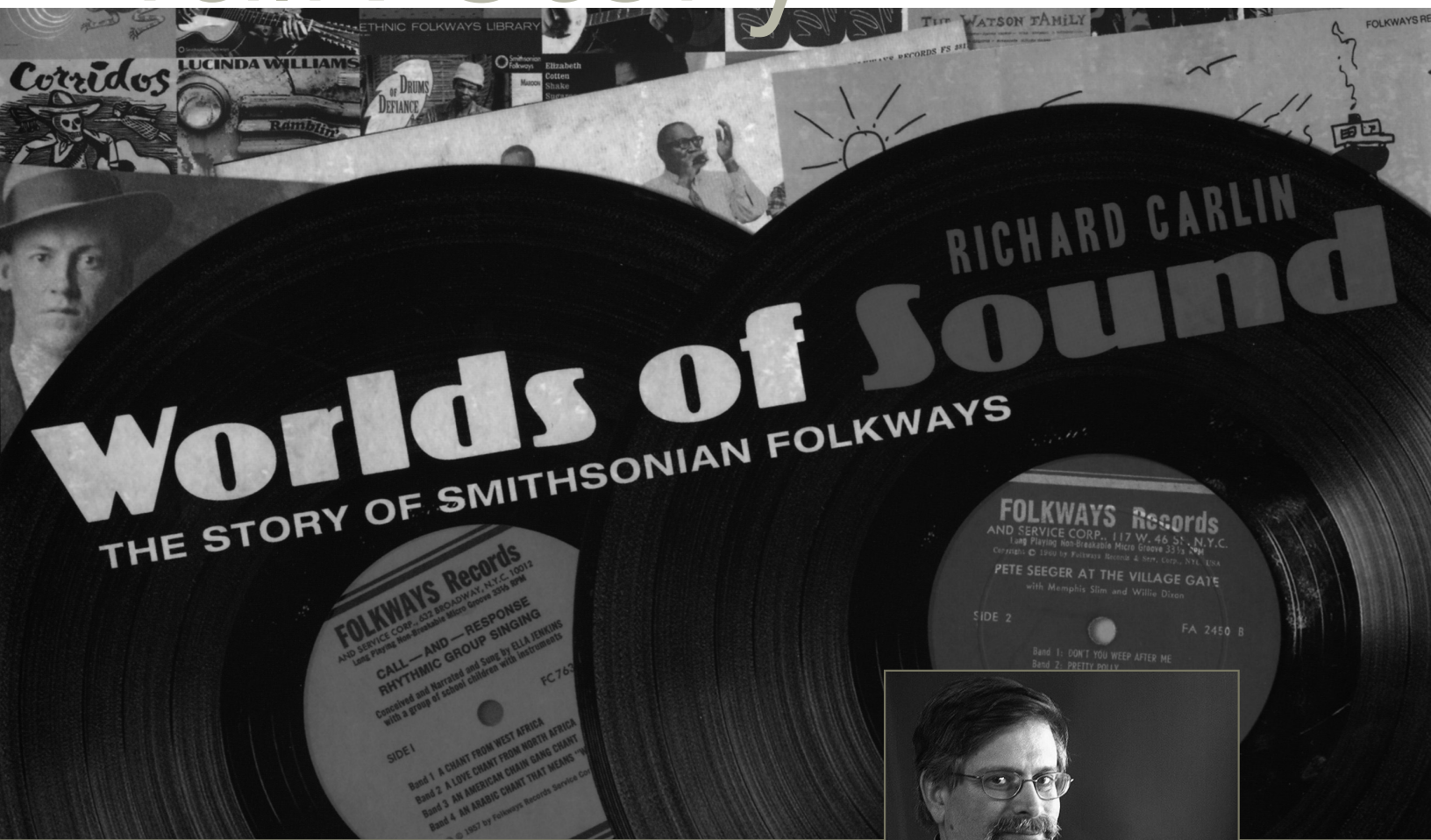


Talk Story

FALL 2008 NO. 34

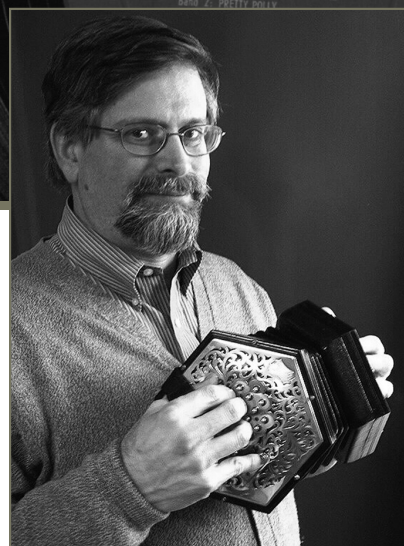


DIRECTOR'S TALK STORY

Richard Kennedy

The Center appreciates the important role program evaluation can play in gauging the success of its many projects. Sales of recordings are an obvious barometer of success or failure for Smithsonian Folkways. As in any business enterprise, sales mean the continuation of the company and the staff who run it. In the tumultuous music business, Folkways can proudly claim it is in the black. For our Web sites, we can monitor Web trends to see the number of hits. These numbers are increasing daily. And at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, we can take visitor surveys and get visitor counts. The 2008 Festival visitor survey indicated that the 1,022,049 people who came to the Mall this summer had an extremely positive experience.

But there are so many results of our work that are much more difficult to measure: What did the many buyers of our recordings take from the music? After coming upon the Center's sites what did the surfers on the Web finally understand about our work? *(continues on page 2)*



Worlds of Sound author Richard Carlin has written several books on folk, country, and traditional music. He worked for Folkways Records as an independent producer from 1975 to 1980, and is currently Executive Editor for Music at Pearson Prentice Hall. Photo by Perry Werner

Worlds of Sound, a book by Richard Carlin in association with Smithsonian Folkways, is available at www.folkways.si.edu.

2008 Smithsonian Folklife Festival	
Bhutan	3
NASA	5
Texas	7
Rinzler Concert	9
2009 Smithsonian Folklife Festival	11
The Festival Continues...	11
Smithsonian Folkways	13
New Releases	14
Cultural Heritage Policy	16
Newsmakers	17

Talk Story

"Talk story" is a Hawaiian expression, used as a noun or a verb, meaning "an informal chat" or "to chat informally."

Talk Story is published twice a year by the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 2001, Washington, D.C. 20024-2520, telephone 202.633.6440, fax 202.633.6474, www.folklife.si.edu, e-mail folklife-info@si.edu. Mary Sebold, editor. Large-print and audio versions of *Talk Story* are available upon request.

Each morning, the Festival's Bhutan program opened to visitors with a *chibdrel* (ceremonial procession) to the *lhakhang* (temple). The Bhutanese used the daily *chibdrel* to honor different groups of Americans, including Smithsonian staff, other Festival participants from Texas and NASA, and communities of individuals with disabilities. Photo by Neil Greentree

DIRECTOR'S TALK STORY *(continues from cover)*

What did the visitors to the 2008 Festival learn about Gross National Happiness policies in Bhutan, about workers at NASA, or about wine in Texas? Did some kind of exchange take place that enabled them to see the world, even very briefly, through the eyes of our participants? I think one of the strengths of all the Center's cultural products and public programs is its commitment to encouraging audiences and participants to look at the world through each other's eyes and hear the world through different ears. At their best, the Festival, Folkways recordings, and the Center's Web sites are cultural dialogues that spark between artists and audiences connections strong enough to broaden everyone's senses. The success of these connections is always difficult to quantify.

We can say, however, that the Web has introduced the work of the Center to thousands of new visitors with whom we hope eventually to be able to enter into a dialog on issues of importance to our work. In the last six months, more than 1 million visitors made 3.2 million visits to and 14 million page views of Center sites. In response to this explosion of interest, the Center is in the process of redesigning all of its Web sites with dozens of new features. Charlie Weber and his team produced twenty-four short, insightful pieces on selected topics from the 2008 Festival. Many Center staff members have continued to produce dozens of Smithsonian Global Sound features from

Smithsonian Folkways and Rinzler Archives material.

Herein, you can read reports on the success of each of the 2008 Festival programs in articles by program curators. We also appreciate seeing the Festival through others' eyes. We're pleased to note that BizBash, an events trade organization, has named the Festival one of the top 100 annual events in Washington, D.C. And we welcome the publication of *American Aloha: Cultural Tourism and the Negotiation of Tradition* by Heather Diamond. This cross-disciplinary, substantive volume takes a close look at the development and construction of the 1989 Festival program on Hawai'i.

In the following pages, you can also read Dan Sheehy's report on the phenomenal output from Smithsonian Folkways and Smithsonian Global Sound during the past months. I want to take this opportunity to thank Dan for accepting the additional responsibility of serving as acting director of the Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC) for the past seven months while the Institution searches for a new SLC director. We know these extra responsibilities have stretched Dan. His patient employees have stepped in to help in this time of Institutional transition. Our Center staff is always stretching itself in a variety of ways with the hope that audiences and artists will, in turn, stretch their views of the world. Changes are difficult to measure but, nevertheless, worth the effort. ■



BHUTAN AT THE 2008 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

Preston T. Scott, Curator

The Bhutan program at the 2008 Smithsonian Folklife Festival was the largest and most comprehensive celebration of Bhutanese life and culture ever presented outside of the kingdom. One hundred and fifty Bhutanese participants provided visitors an unparalleled opportunity to see, hear, touch, smell, and experience life in the “Land of the Thunder Dragon.” The Festival also benefited from the on-site participation of nearly every member of the program’s leadership committee, including Krista Amason, Bruce Bunting, Michael Doucet, Eva Haller, Steven Hoch, Yo-Yo Ma, Jane Morrison, Diana Natalicio, Ambassador Daw Penjo, Donald and Shelley Rubin, Victoria Sant, and Michael Tobias.

Initial planning for the 2008 Bhutan Festival exhibit commenced in 2004. The final Festival program showcased an ancient culture in complex transition: the one-hundredth anniversary of the Bhutanese monarchy, the coronation of Bhutan’s Fifth King, and the Bhutanese people’s free and peaceful transition to a constitutional democracy all took place in 2008.

More than a month before the Festival opened, a team of ten traditional Bhutanese carpenters arrived in Washington to build a *lhakhang* (Buddhist temple) at the center of the Festival site. For all but one of the Bhutanese craftsmen, it was their first trip outside of Bhutan—the first time they had ever been in a landscape

without mountains. They lived with four welcoming families in northwest Washington, and each day yielded surprising cultural exchanges, just as the Festival itself did later. The craftsmen used fieldstone and clay from Pennsylvania to build a traditional Bhutanese incense burner near the *lhakhang* site, and each morning they burned local herbs and evergreens in a traditional Bhutanese offering. Throughout the month of June, people’s early morning walks across the Mall were punctuated by the rising *lhakhang* and fragrant smoke. Images from the temple’s construction (and other highlights from the Bhutan program) can be seen on the Smithsonian’s Web site at <http://www.folklife.si.edu/festival/2008/index.html>. Thanks to the University of Texas at El Paso, the *lhakhang* will be reconstructed on the university campus sometime in 2009.

Back in Bhutan, a dedicated team representing all of Bhutan’s main cultural traditions coordinated Festival planning under the guidance of His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck. As part of their planning and preparation, the Bhutanese staged a dry run over several weeks that involved all of the Festival participants and presenters. The dry run’s first day was opened by Her Majesty Queen Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck, who chaired the Smithsonian Bhutan program’s leadership committee. (*continues on page 4*)

BHUTAN AT THE 2008 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL *(continues from page 3)*

The Bhutanese who were coming to Washington gathered at a site not far from the main *dzong* (historic fortress and monastic center) in Thimphu to set up and present their Festival activities. The Bhutanese dress rehearsal was an exemplary display of the type of cultural introspection that Festival planning sometimes generates.

The magic of the Bhutan program started each Festival morning with the traditional Bhutanese *chibdrel*, which is an elaborate ceremonial procession that honors important guests. Accompanied by blaring monastic trumpets and framed by the U.S. Capitol, Washington Monument, and dozens of fluttering colorful prayer flags, the Bhutanese participants proceeded to the *lhakhang*, where each day they recognized the chief guests. Visitors enjoyed Bhutanese music and dance, arts and crafts, spiritual and religious traditions, traditional medicine, food, storytelling, and recreational activities. Every day, live reports were sent to Bhutan to broadcast on Bhutan's national television station. After the Festival, at least two photographic exhibitions in Bhutan celebrated the spirit of the Festival. One took place at the Voluntary Artists' Studio, Thimphu (VAST) and the other, at the National Museum in Paro. Photos from VAST can be seen at www.vast-bhutan.org. Bhutan's first democratically elected prime minister also honored all of the Festival participants at a special ceremony at the National Assembly in Thimphu.

Bhutan's thirteen traditional arts (*zorig chusum*) were presented in a shaded area near the *lhakhang*, where visitors could mingle with some of the country's finest weavers, painters, sculptors, carvers, cooks, and other artists. One of Bhutan's most celebrated artists painted a mural that depicted beloved Bhutanese icons in a Washington, D.C., landscape. The painting was presented to the Smithsonian when the Festival ended and hangs at the Center.

Under the trees, visitors also encountered an ancient box of many doors representing the Buddha's understanding of the many paths to enlightenment and a chanter who called people to ponder the box's mysteries. Traditional yak herders from the highlands welcomed

guests into their yak-hair tent and entertained them with stories and lively antics. While the yak herders make their home in cool alpine areas, they managed without complaint to demonstrate their life in the hot and humid Washington summer. Perhaps because they make their home near the very top of the world, they were charmed by the appearance one day of a NASA lunar robot. The result? What else but a playful Bhutanese highland dance with the little robot!

Nearby, some of Bhutan's best cooks shared their stories about food in Bhutan around a traditional clay stove. Chilies and cheese, which are fundamental to Bhutanese cooking, provided an opportunity for some comparisons with cooking in Texas. Practitioners of Bhutanese traditional medicine also shared ancient Buddhist teachings and their knowledge of the many natural compounds found in "The Land of Medicinal Plants."

The Four Friends Stage, named after a Bhutanese tale that celebrates social and environmental harmony, was the gathering place for many lively discussions about traditions and contemporary issues, including Bhutan's voluntary transition from absolute monarchy to democracy, the meaning of "Gross National Happiness" (an official government policy articulated by Bhutan's Fourth King), and the importance of environmental and cultural resources. For the first time, a Bhutanese monastic astrologer and a NASA astronaut discussed the meaning of the heavens to life on Earth. They started with radically different views yet quickly found common ground. Other NASA officials presented to His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel a Bhutanese flag they flew aboard the Space Shuttle *Discovery* in anticipation of the Festival.

The Tsechu Stage was the venue for Bhutanese music and dance traditions. Musicians, singers, and dancers from Bhutan's Royal Academy of Performing Arts demonstrated many traditional Bhutanese folk dances, and Bhutanese monastic dancers performed sacred masked dances rarely seen outside of Bhutan. *(continues on page 19)*

His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel, who plays acoustic guitar, surprised visitors at the Texas stage by joining Texas Johnny Brown for a soulful performance of the Beatles' "Come Together."

NASA: FIFTY YEARS AND BEYOND

Jim Deutsch, Curator

Many of the conversations taking place on the NASA program's Exploration Stage were not what you might expect to hear at a Smithsonian Folklife Festival. One day, a metallurgist, mechanical engineer, and machinist might have discussed wind-tunnel testing; another day, an orbit determination analyst and an astrophysicist might have explained a scientific mission. And on two very special days, you could hear NASA astronauts talking with Bhutanese astrologers about the meaning of life.

NASA: Fifty Years and Beyond represented an unusual collaboration between the Center and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on the occasion of the agency's fiftieth anniversary in 2008. To be sure, several previous Folklife Festival programs had examined occupational traditions, such as *American Trial Lawyers* in 1986 and *Masters of the Building Arts* in 2001, and another federal agency had already been featured in 2005 in conjunction with the *Forest Service, Culture, and Community* program. But many of the NASA engineers, scientists, and administrators who participated in the 2008 Festival seemed initially resistant to the notion that the concepts of tradition, folklife, and cultural heritage might apply to them.

Nevertheless, by the end of the ten-day event, the NASA participants—and altogether there were more than 500 of them, coming from all ten NASA field centers across the country—seemed to understand, appreciate, and truly enjoy the interest taken in their occupational culture not only by the folklorists and anthropologists at the Center, but also by members of the general public. The Festival program could not have succeeded without the partnership of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration or without additional support from Jacobs Technology, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and United Space Alliance.

The tents on the Mall featured the following:

- Aeronautics—air traffic-control designers, flight photographers and videographers, model makers, flight-suit technicians, test pilots, and others conducting research on aviation and aircraft
- Earth science—archaeologists, atmospheric scientists, meteorologists, plant pathologists, satellite imagery analysts, and others who investigate the earth's surface, climate, and atmosphere
- Foodways—food scientists, nutrition experts,



Astronauts Sunita Williams and Loren Shriver share their views on the intersection of science and religion with Bhutanese astrologer Yangka on the Exploration Stage. Photo by Donald Hurlbert, Smithsonian Institution

- packaging engineers, and researchers who plan and develop the cuisine served onboard spacecraft
- Future missions—aerospace engineers, robotics engineers, solar scientists, program managers, and others helping to plan missions to the moon, Mars, and beyond
- Human space flight—astronauts, flight engineers, tile inspectors, microgravity experts, software engineers, solar array specialists, space suit technicians, and others who are involved with the Space Shuttle and International Space Station
- Propulsion—mechanical engineers, operations managers, test systems engineers, and others who design and build the engines that power NASA spacecraft
- Space art—artists who use canvas, paper, and recycled materials (such as Shuttle tires) to document NASA's work and missions
- Space science—astrobiologists, astromaterials curators, astronomers, astrophysicists, heliophysicists, planetary geologists, and others conducting research in the vast reaches of space (continues on page 6)

Noting how the scientific invention of aircraft has "done a lot of good for the world," the astrologer thought that this invention was "exactly what the Buddha would have intended."

NASA: FIFTY YEARS AND BEYOND (continues from page 5)



A young visitor and her mom put the finishing touches on their clay universe in the “Modeling the Planets” activity in the Kids’ Space tent. Photo by Laraine Weschler, Smithsonian Institution

In addition, one tent was devoted to collecting oral histories, not only from our NASA participants, but also from members of the general public—to record their memories of NASA’s past as well as their visions for NASA’s future. During the ten days of the Festival, roughly 300 recordings were logged and another 200 note cards were posted on our bulletin board. The memories were both poignant (especially when recalling the *Challenger* tragedy) and enlightening. For instance, one visitor, who was ten years old when the Soviet Sputnik was launched in 1957, recalled “the talk that U.S. students had to catch up academically” and that “the next day was the first time we ever had homework in school.” All the oral histories and note cards have been indexed and will reside in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives at the Center.

Another very successful initiative led to family-friendly activities throughout the site. Young visitors were encouraged to pick up the sixteen-page *Mission Guide* at the Kids’ Space tent and then stop at a number of different tents to meet the participants and learn more about NASA by completing a hands-on activity. For instance, inside the

Earth Science tent, visitors were tested on their ability to spot the differences between two satellite images. Likewise, outside the Space Science area, visitors tossed marbles onto a surface of cake mix and flour to learn how craters impact planetary surfaces. After completing each of these activities, visitors received a NASA mission-patch sticker; with four or more of these stickers, visitors could return to Kids’ Space to receive a NASA pin. More than 8,000 mission guides were distributed.

Sizeable crowds listened to wide-ranging conversations about NASA culture on the two narrative stages. On July 5, two astronauts, Sunita Williams and Loren Shriver, shared the stage with Yangka, an astrologer from the Paro District in Bhutan. Asked about the intersection of science and religion, Yangka replied that he personally regarded “science as a wonderful achievement” and said that scientists were “Buddhas and bodhisattvas in modern reincarnation.” Noting how the scientific invention of aircraft has “done a lot of good for the world,” the astrologer thought that this invention was “exactly what the Buddha would have intended.”

Yangka’s response inspired astronaut Sunita Williams, whose father is Hindu and whose mother is Catholic, to recall that when she went into space, she took with her not only a copy of the Bhagavad Gita and a Ganesha from her father, but also a cross from her grandmother. Religion and science “are pretty much intertwined,” Williams observed. Noting the importance of both Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Einstein in her life, Williams felt that the combination of the two disciplines might help explain “why we are here.”

The participants in other areas of the Festival—demonstrating and discussing such topics as astromaterials, rehydratable foods, spacecraft engines, robotics, and more—were not always so philosophical. But the NASA program provided a rare opportunity for the public to meet and observe the men and women whose skills, specialized knowledge, and codes of behavior mark them as a very distinctive example of occupational culture. ■

TEXAS: A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC, FOOD, AND WINE

Diana Parker, Director, Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Curator Pat Jasper and food and wine consultant Dawn Orsak used the lenses of music, food, and wine to give enthusiastic audiences large lessons about Texas and its vibrant culture.

Winemakers, sommeliers, viticulturists, and others gave visitors a look behind the scenes at the fascinating but largely unknown world of Texas wine. The vast state has been blessed with dozens of microclimates, many closely mimicking the more famous microclimates of France and Spain. While most people know that Texas is BIG, few understand the variety of climates the state has to offer. Because there was disappointment that wine could not be sampled on National Park Service grounds, a sensory station was set up to educate people on what they could learn from the scents wine produces. Many Texas wineries do not distribute outside of the state, so visitors were delighted to have the opportunity to purchase Texas wines in the Festival Marketplace and at the food concessions.

The food demonstration area served as a great illustrated lecture on the diversity of Texas cultures. Vietnamese, Polish, African American, Tex-Mex, cowboy, and Czech traditions were shared, along with barbecue, home canning, and more. But most interesting were the ways that traditions crossed cultural lines. Take chicken fried steak, for instance: early German and Austrian settlers brought recipes for Wiener Schnitzel and “texafied” it as they became more Texan. There are hundreds of examples of foods in Texas born of neighbors from



Cowboy cook Tom Nall prepares “explosive” cowboy kitchen style omelets with the assistance of a young Festival visitor.

Photo by Ken Rahaim, Smithsonian Institution

different cultures sharing and adapting traditions. This is still happening today and made for rich conversations in the Lone Star Kitchen.

The unique flavor of the Texas singer-songwriter tradition was on brilliant display. Texas icons were in abundance—Joe Ely, Joel Guzman, Guy Clark, Verlon Thompson, Terri Hendrix, Lloyd Maines, CJ Chenier, Little Joe y la Familia, Marcia Ball, Los Texmaniacs, and Asleep at the Wheel, just to name a few. They performed, delivered workshops, and spoke about their inspirations and what makes Texas the perfect environment for music making. Songs were sung in English, Spanish, Polish, Czech, and many a combination of the above. Sacred music is also an essential part of the Texas ethos. The Original Soul Invaders and the Jones Family Singers shared this moving tradition with appreciative audiences.

Dance was not forgotten; it was, after all, a program about Texas where mere listening is unacceptable. Texans get up and move when they hear music. *(continues on page 8)*



Fiddlin' Frenchie Burke gets an audience member to help him play the fiddle during the Sounds of San Antonio concert.

Photo by Jeff Tinsley, Smithsonian Institution

TEXAS: A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC, FOOD, AND WINE *(continues from page 7)*

Dancers Larry Vanston, Kristen Wicke, and Cory Lock gamely ignored the sweltering Washington heat to show us how to dance to zydeco, Cajun, mariachi, blues, western swing, conjunto, polka of all varieties, cowboy music, and more. Where did they find the energy? I asked. They said, "From the music." The music, in this case, was provided by great talents such as Charles Thibodeaux and the Austin Cajun Aces, the Quebe Sisters Band, Jody Nix and the Texas Cowboys, Les Amis Creole, Fiddlin' Frenchie Burke, the Gillette Brothers, Mark Halata and Texavia, James Hand, and Conjunto Los Angeles del Sur. No wonder no one could stay seated!

With some 120 of Texas's best musicians, dancers, singers, cooks, and winemakers in Washington for the 2008 Festival, we knew the program was going to be fascinating, but, as usual with the Festival, the best stuff was serendipitous. Who knew that His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck of Bhutan would be so moved by Houston Bluesman Texas Johnny Brown that he would ask to sit in on a performance? Watching them play together was truly a once in a lifetime experience. And a workshop on the role of boots with aficionados from Texas, boot makers from Bhutan, and designers of astronaut boots from NASA is not something you're likely to see again anytime soon. Perhaps the best surprise was that the University of Texas at El Paso has been greatly influenced

by Bhutanese architecture. The University purchased the beautiful temple built for the Festival and will insure that memories of these wonderful two weeks will have a permanent residence, deep in the heart of Texas.

The Festival always needs the support of folks who care about what it accomplishes. This great look at what Texas has contributed to the nation's culture could not have happened were it not for the support of the Texas Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism, and the Texas Commission on the Arts. We are also grateful to the Texas Department of Agriculture, the City of El Paso, Houston Endowment, Inc., the San Antonio Office of Cultural Affairs, the Music Performance Fund, and Southwest Airlines. Please remember our supporters; they remembered us. They were all great to work with.

Most of all, we are grateful to Pat Jasper and Dawn Orsak, who contributed above and beyond the call of duty (not to mention, the limits of their contracts) to make sure that Texas was presented in a real and respectful way. Thank you both for having the knowledge to make this a great program and the grace to make it a pleasure to produce.

If you had the misfortune to miss Texas on the Mall this summer, go to our Web site, www.folklife.si.edu, to see video clips, photographs, and program book articles from this extraordinary program. ■

BE A FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER!

To check the variety of opportunities available before and during the Festival, visit www.folklife.si.edu and click Opportunities.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

RALPH RINZLER MEMORIAL CONCERT HONORS RENÉ LÓPEZ: A SERIOUS BUT FUN AFFAIR

James Early, Curator

Searching around the world for musicians' social security numbers, bridging language barriers, and arranging transportation and care for octogenarian musicians and those with special needs were rewarding challenges for our staff. Their success was appreciated by the overflow crowd who came to the Ralph Rinzler Memorial Concert to honor René López and hear, shout out, and dance to the music of Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino. The Center's Rebecca Smerling-Marcus, with true folk wisdom, made it all happen, crossing new language and cultural terrains and surviving the Smithsonian's bureaucracy. She arrived intact at the concert to hear René's moving tribute to Ralph and to revel in the amazing improvisational and uplifting musical sounds of Grupo—including those of legendary timbale player Manny Orquendo, acclaimed bassist Andy Gonzalez, pianist Oscar Hernández, and flautist Eddy Zervigón.

The Rinzler Concert celebrates Ralph's mind and spirit, untiring and wide-ranging cultural work, all-encompassing humanity, commitment to traditional musicians and artisans, and never-ending will to increase and spread knowledge—the very principles of cultural democracy. New York's René López, a grassroots cultural activist, lay-scholar, educator, collector, and music producer, was among Ralph's special friends and colleagues in many groundbreaking field-research projects and musical endeavors. He exemplifies Ralph's and the Center's first principles of recognition and respect for the creative, expressive agency and profound knowledge of communities.

As an associate and advisor to Smithsonian Folklife and Folkways projects, René almost certainly has the longest relationship with the Institution when it comes to traditional Afro-Caribbean music. His closeness to Latino communities and musicians, especially those of New York City, and his exceptional connection to Cuban musicians and ethnomusicologists in Cuba were central to the evolution of Ralph's musical taste, international collegial relations, Festival productions, and Folkways recordings.

A large and diverse audience from the Washington metropolitan area and a small contingent from New York City were also honored with a lively concert performed by many of the stellar musicians—"mentees," dear friends, and colleagues—René organized thirty years ago into Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino. *(continues on page 10)*



Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino from the South Bronx performed in honor of René López at the annual Ralph Rinzler Memorial Concert. Photo by Joe Furgal, Smithsonian Institution

For five decades of excellence in the documentation of Afro-Caribbean and Latino musical and cultural life across the United States and around the world, for mentoring numerous musicians, for advocacy of the integrity and rights of musicians, and in association with the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, for educational contributions to the understanding and appreciation of community-based traditions through collections, exhibitions, publications, and recordings. Presented on the occasion of the annual Ralph Rinzler Memorial Concert at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall of the United States of America in Washington, D.C.

Certified on this 28th day of June 2008, and witnessed by those assembled.

Dr. Richard Kurin
Acting Undersecretary for History, Art, and Culture

Diana Parker
Director, Smithsonian Folklife Festival

IN RENÉ LÓPEZ'S WORDS

I met Ralph Rinzler in 1975. Francia Lubán, who was working on a project for the Center for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro) at CUNY, knew Ralph because she had introduced him to Arsenio Rodríguez. In 1975, the Centro was involved with local Puerto Rican youth in creating a percussion workshop, which became known as the Lexington Avenue Express at East 106th Street. That workshop became a seminal meeting place for esteemed Puerto Rican musicians, poets, and instrument makers to share their knowledge and talents in hopes of nurturing and passing this on to Manhattan Latino Barrio youth. The Centro was central to my political development. It was through Francia's efforts that Arsenio and his brother Kiki were documented by Ralph and subsequently invited to perform at the 1969 Festival of American Folklife with the Washington bassist Luis "El Bonco" Salomé González. Ralph made me copies of his field recordings of Arsenio Rodríguez and Yomo Toro (Puerto Rican *cuatro* player) as well as Arsenio's performances at the 1969 Festival. I consider these recordings as the best ever done of these important artists.

In the early spring of 1975, Francia Lubán and Pedro Pedraza arranged for members of the Centro, including myself, to visit Ralph in Washington, D.C. She felt strongly that Ralph needed to know what was happening at the grassroots level in the New York Latino community. The end result was that Ralph and the Festival of American Folklife invited the workshop members (Lexington Avenue Express) and the local groups closely associated with the Centro—Los Pleneros de 110th Street, Patato y sus Rumberos, and the Grupo Folklórico y Experimental Nuevayorquino—to participate at the 1975 Festival.

That visit to Ralph and Kate Rinzler's house changed my life. Ralph took a real interest in me and the groups that I was working with. Eventually I was invited to be a panelist at the National Endowment for the Arts. More important

was that visit and those to follow would eventually cement a wonderful relationship with Ralph, Kate, and their daughter Marni. This in turn led to other introductions and friendships with James Early, José Sueiro, Bernice Reagon, and Richard Kurin. These friendships continue to the present day. The Rinzlers' home was always open-door to musicians passing through D.C. and those that lived in the Washington area. Food, music, and ideas were exchanged in a wonderful ambiance of camaraderie.

I felt at home because my apartment in New York was always being visited by friends and musicians for rehearsals and music sharing (listening to recordings). Ralph, Kate, and James visited my home in the Bronx where they heard rehearsals of Grupo Folklórico and other groups in my small living room, or we'd dash off to see the Pleneros, Patato, and La Sonora Matancera at local festivities and clubs.

Over the years my relationship with the Festival resulted in opportunities to do the following fieldwork:

1975—Latino communities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico (which resulted in their participation at the 1976 Bicentennial Festival)

1988—Cuba and Puerto Rico (groups such as Grupo AfroCuba de Matanzas, Changüí de Guantánamo, and Cuarteto Patria y Compay Segundo from Cuba, as well as Marcial Reyes y Sus Pleneros de Bayamón and Cuerdas de Borinquen from Puerto Rico would participate in the 1989 Festival and be recorded for Smithsonian Folkways Recordings)

I'm deeply grateful for the support and friendship over the last thirty-eight years with the Rinzler family, my friends in Washington, and the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Each has afforded me special opportunities to be a part of my community's contribution to the celebration of our national cultural heritage.

RALPH RINZLER MEMORIAL CONCERT HONORS

RENÉ LÓPEZ: A SERIOUS BUT FUN AFFAIR (continues from page 9)

Performing for the second time in thirty years (the reunion concert was in Berlin, Germany, last fall), Grupo was joined by renowned Cuban drummer, community leader, and Afro-Cuban priest Orlando "Puntilla" Ríos, who died a few weeks later in New York on August 12. The concert was supported by a grant from the Smithsonian Latino Center and the publicity blitz of its director of exhibitions and public programs, Randal Woodaman; and by outreach from WPFW 89.3 FM, including a preconcert interview of René by *Latin Flavor* host, Nancy Alonso.

The historical friendship between René López and Ralph Rinzler continues to bear fruit. Most recently, René produced the 2007 Smithsonian Folkways recording *Tío Tom*, which features the singing and percussion of Conjunto Todo Rumbero, led by the late Orlando "Puntilla" Ríos (Smithsonian Folkways CD 40543). ■

NUESTRA MÚSICA: LATINO CHICAGO AT THE FOLK AND ROOTS FESTIVAL

Nashma Carrera Massari, Fieldworker and Presenter, Latino Chicago Program, 2006

This summer, the Chicago Folk and Roots Festival presented a sampler of Latino Chicago heritage based on the 2006 *Latino Chicago* Smithsonian Folklife Festival program. The Smithsonian and the Old Town School of Folk Music launched the *Latino Chicago* project with a community ethnography on Latino Chicago folklife in the spring of 2005. This project culminated in the 2006 Festival program, part of the *Nuestra Música* Festival series. In the fall of 2006, Festival participants, together with the Old Town School of Folk Music, organized a restaging in Chicago. The success of the Festival program and its restaging led to a second restaging at the eleventh annual Folk and Roots Festival.

Latino Chicago featured instrument-making demonstrations, performances, an interview, and a DJ crew. William Cumpiano, who plays the *tiple* (the smallest of Puerto Rican string instruments); Bolivian Huguito Gutiérrez, an Andean instruments artisan and musician; and Ricardo Salazar, a *jarana* (a Mexican small guitar) artisan, were the highlights of the program. *Radio Chamba*—a Sunday afternoon Spanish-language program of the Chicago Interfaith Workers' Center on WLUW 88.7 FM/ www.wluw.org—conducted the interview with participating artists and artisans. The dialogue between the artists themselves and with festival staff, volunteers, and the general public continued throughout the program. William Cumpiano said, "The crowd reactions were intense—curiosity, fascination, enchantment, puzzlement. Whenever I attempted to extract some simple tunes from a *tiple*, its sound never failed to draw people to the tent. So I did so, as often as I could. I felt like a

piped piper. Children were delighted, showing me their crinkled-up eyes after I'd let them paw at the strings."

In general, the *Latino Chicago* program offered the public and, most important, the Latino community the opportunity to expand culturally, artistically, and intellectually. Luis Gabriel Giraldo, director of Grupo Miel, said, "I was fascinated with the opportunity we had to show the audience and other Latino artists our sacrifice to keep this music ensemble alive. I would like to continue working with Old Town School of Folk Music in future events."

The program provided a unique opportunity for artists, who had not met previously, to perform together and learn more about each other. Tarima Son's director Roberto Ferreyra, who also participated in the 2006 Festival, observed, "It was an honor to share the stage with Polish, Swedish, and Irish folk musicians during the Fiddle Contest. It was even more exciting to win the contest. For our group, the contest was a great experience, and we would love to do another music collaboration at the Folk and Roots Festival." Venezuelan artist David Blasini, from Araguañey, added, "It was an honor to be part of the *Latino Chicago* sampler and a privilege to share the tent with some of the best Latin American folk artists of Chicago, such as Huguito Gutiérrez from Mayco Andes and Tito Rodríguez from AfriCaribe." Other groups that interacted with each other were Martin Olivares and the Mexican *norteño* music group Los Vencedores del Norte, Luis Giraldo and the Colombian *cumbia* orchestra Grupo Miel, and urban poet Michael Reyes on the main stage; (continues on page 12)

2009 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

Giving Voice: The Power of Words in African American Culture
Las Américas: Un Mundo Musical/The Americas: A Musical World
Wales at the Smithsonian

RECENT AGREEMENTS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS

2010 Mexico
2011 Colombia

Hard-working Center video producer Charlie Weber shoots some ambient landscape (or "B roll") in Lorient, France during a research trip to document Welsh performers at the 2008 Interceltique Festival. The country of Wales will be featured at the 2009 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Photo by Betty Belanus, Smithsonian Institution



NUESTRA MÚSICA: LATINO CHICAGO AT THE FOLK AND ROOTS FESTIVAL (continues from page 11)

the *bomba* and *plena* group AfriCaribe and Aztec ceremonial performer Miguel Gutiérrez in the dance tent; Dill Costa and her Samba party and Carlos Mejía and Teen Marimba Ensemble on the kids' stage; and *jarocho* music group Son del Viento in the Gazebo. To many of the artists, the Folk and Roots Festival meant collaboration and brotherhood among folk musicians. Martin Olivares said, "I was surprised to see the unity among the musicians. The love for music was shown in every musician's face, as well as a harmony inside and outside of the stage."

Latino Chicago at the Folk and Roots Festival was such a success that its organizers are considering a larger space next year. Catalina Maria Johnson, a reporter for Chicago Public Radio's morning news and the Spanish-language arts and culture monthly *Contratiempo*, commented, "Giving *Latino Chicago* its own separate and dedicated space at the city's premier Folk and Roots Festival marks the beginning of a new time for Latinos in Chicago, an era in which their cultural contribution will be more valued, and their music will become recognized as one of the folk music genres of the land."

As a researcher for the *Nuestra Música: Latino Chicago* project and organizer of the restaging at the Folk and Roots Festival, I conclude by saying that presenting the program



Latino Chicago program organizers Mateo Mulcahy and Nashma Carrera with African Community liaison Mwelwa Musambacine.

at the Folklife Festival was a great learning experience and an honor, but as a non-Chicago native, to organize and present it in Chicago at the Folk and Roots Festival was an even more rewarding challenge. This project taught me not only about oral history and community ethnographic work, but also about the artists—their dreams and struggles in this country. Their folk music and arts define their Latino identities in the United States, inspire nostalgia, and provide opportunities to educate new generations. ■

NAVIGATING THE MEKONG: OUR TRAVEL ADVENTURES ALONG THE MEKONG RIVER

Arlene Reiniger, Coordinator, Mekong River Program, 2007

The "Navigating the Mekong" educational Web site (www.folklife.si.edu/mekong) was inspired by the 2007 Smithsonian Folklife Festival program, *Mekong River: Connecting Cultures*, which brought together peoples who live along the Mekong River, from Yunnan Province, China, through Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The Web site serves as an introduction to this part of the world for teachers and students, grades 6 through 10.

The site features a school boat trip on the Mekong River, with stops at different ports along the way. Journal entries reflect the geography, culture, food, and music of each country. Craft activities and recipes, taken from participant demonstrations at the Festival, allow for hands-on experience, while music and video clips, borrowed from Smithsonian Folkways Recordings,

Global Sound, and Festival footage, further the cultural encounters. Younger students can download coloring pages about the Mekong and a PDF family guidebook, which has activities and information about the *Mekong River: Connecting Cultures* Festival program. To continue the journey, there are links to books, music, and Web sites, as well as suggestions for how to participate actively in cultural experiences.

Kim Stryker, who organized the family activities area of the Mekong program, coordinated the site, and Festival interns Nora Cary, Jennifer Kwong, Sarah Sajewski, and Elizabeth Tredeau researched and wrote the articles. We hope that this online exhibition will not only enrich curriculums, but will also provide an enhanced understanding of Mekong cultures outside the classroom. ■

FOLKWAYS IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT: FUTURING FOLKWAYS IN A DIGITAL AGE

Daniel Sheehy, Director and Curator, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

What do you get when you cross a record label with a museum? When Folkways Records came to the Smithsonian in 1987, one indie folk record label owner told me it was “like Mr. Peabody [the egghead dog of the Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoon] meeting Dr. Know-It-All,” referring to the convergence of Folkways and its famous liner notes with the Smithsonian’s mission of the increase and diffusion of knowledge. I sometimes cast Folkways as a traveling exhibition service that takes over 250,000 mini-exhibits each year into homes, automobiles, radio stations, and iPods, each exhibition complete with art objects (audio tracks) and interpretive signage (liner notes). One of the most enduring characterizations has been “a museum of sound.” But in a time when both museums and the world of recorded sound are in a state of flux, what does that mean? Or, proactively, what *might* it mean? Decades ago, in a beginning graduate seminar in ethnomusicology, each of us students was asked to define “ethnomusicology.” I was last, and all of the conventional definitions had been used up, so I said, “Ethnomusicology is what you make it.” At this juncture in time for Smithsonian Folkways, I feel that the answer is similar: “Crossing a record label with a museum is what you make it.”

The Smithsonian’s new secretary, Dr. G. Wayne Clough, started his job July 1 and lost no time in declaring that taking the Smithsonian’s collections out of the back rooms and beyond the walls of the museums was what the Smithsonian should do in the twenty-first century. He also declared that new approaches to generating revenue through the sale of value-added materials derived from our collections, particularly via the Internet, should be a priority. Sound familiar? As the Institution moves forward to craft a strategic plan, Folkways, with its Smithsonian Global Sound initiative, seems to find itself at the forefront.

At the same time, audio production and distribution are going digital. No news here; this has been on our agenda for over five years. The news is that we have digitized virtually our entire commercially available collection of 42,000 tracks of audio and nearly 2,800 albums with liner notes and cover art. We have “deep servers,” thanks to the Smithsonian IT infrastructure, which offer plentiful storage and delivery capacity for educational enhancements such as videos, podcasts, feature articles, and more. We have a small but talented

permanent technology staff (one person) and a team of fourteen others with talents in managing, producing, marketing, and selling recordings. We, the Smithsonian and Folkways, are all dressed up and ready to go to the dance. The question is, which dance do we go to; that is, what programmatic fruits should we produce with our institutional and human resources?

As we search for the answers to this question, the upcoming years promise to be a time of experimentation, of looking for new products, new formats, new ways to “let this little Folkways light of ours” shine, and new paths to being the “greenest” record label we can. In the meantime, we continue to produce compact disc recordings of American roots music, such as Michael Doucet’s creative Cajun *From Now On* (SFW CD 40177), the archival *Classic Piano Blues from Smithsonian Folkways* (SFW CD 40196), spoken word in *Nobel Voices for Disarmament: 1901–2001* (SFW CD 47005), and children’s music with the late Tom Glazer’s *Honk-Hiss-Tweet-GGGGGGGGGG and Other Children’s Favorites* (SFW CD 45068). Our various special series continue as well, with the African American Legacy release *Richmond Blues* (SFW CD 40179) by John Cephas and Phil Wiggins and three Latino recordings, *¡Ayombel!: The Heart of Colombia’s Música Vallenata* (SFW CD 40546), *Amor, Dolor y Lágrimas: Música Ranchera* by Nati Cano’s Mariachi Los Camperos (SFW CD 40518), and *¡Que Viva el Canto!: Songs of Chile* (SFW CD 40549) by Rafael Manríquez and friends.

We could not possibly be as productive as we are without the help of the many interns who sojourn here and contribute to the Folkways mission. Our heartfelt thanks go to interns Daniel Atkinson, Will Chase, Matthew Dayton, Eileen Dorfman, María Margarita López Forero, Kathryn Gilchrest, Jessica Keyes, Doug Peach, Corey Shinko, and Zorawar Shukla, who came aboard in Spring. They were joined by Gwendolyn Grootenboer, Zach Hall, Micah Hendler, Joselyn Jang, Ellen Lueck, Jing Li, Hayley McCamey, Francisco Orozco, Robert Rose, and Naomi Setchell in the summer. May the future bring you the best in your careers! As this issue goes to press, we are grateful to have Henry Appy, Orchid Burnside, Emily Hilliard, Nicole Martin, and Mary Settle onboard with Jessica Keyes and Jing Li. ■

CEPHAS & WIGGINS *Richmond Blues*

[SFW-CD-40179]

16 TRACKS, 65 MINUTES, 32-PAGE BOOKLET WITH EXTENSIVE NOTES AND PHOTOS

In *Richmond Blues*, guitarist-singer John Cephas and his harmonica-playing partner Phil Wiggins personify the century-old blues sound of the Piedmont—the Appalachian foothills running from Richmond to Atlanta. Drawing from ragtime, ballads, country, old-time string band, rhythm and blues, and more, *Richmond Blues* is a musical roadmap of the Virginia Piedmont. While Cephas calls it “part of my heritage, part of my soul,” the sound is distinctly modern, a kind of “urban acoustic blues.”

Nobel Voices for Disarmament: 1901–2001

[SFW-CD-47005]

39 TRACKS, 67 MINUTES, 28-PAGE BOOKLET

In the face of historically unparalleled violence during the twentieth century, voices of reason unceasingly advocated for peace by disarmament. Alfred Nobel created the Nobel Peace Prize in 1901 to honor such advocacy. In this collection of archival and new spoken-word recordings, Nobel laureates and others remind us of their profound efforts on behalf of peace. Their eloquence rings out achievements in disarmament and evokes the growing need for conflict resolution in today’s world. Michael Douglas, the United Nation’s Messenger of Peace, introduces and narrates the compilation. This CD was made possible by the generous support of the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, the Principality of Andorra, and the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation.

RAFAEL MANRÍQUEZ AND FRIENDS

¡Que Viva el Canto! Songs of Chile

[SFW-CD-40549]

25 TRACKS, 73 MINUTES, BILINGUAL 44-PAGE BOOKLET

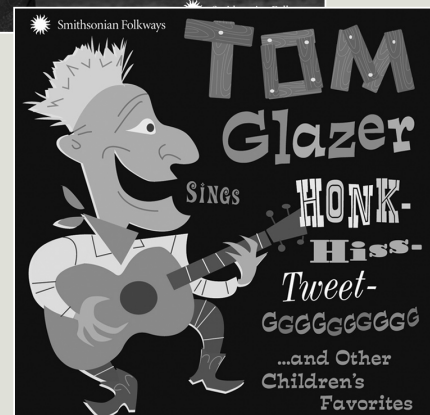
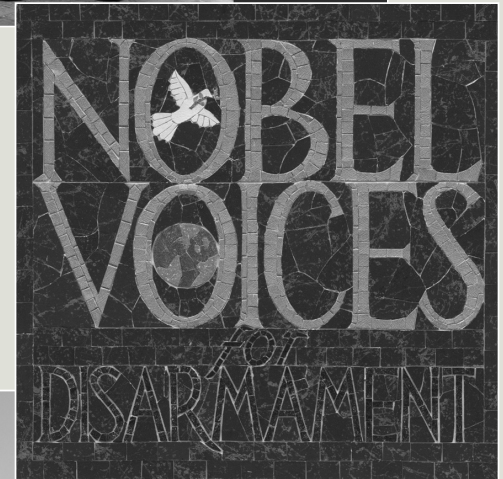
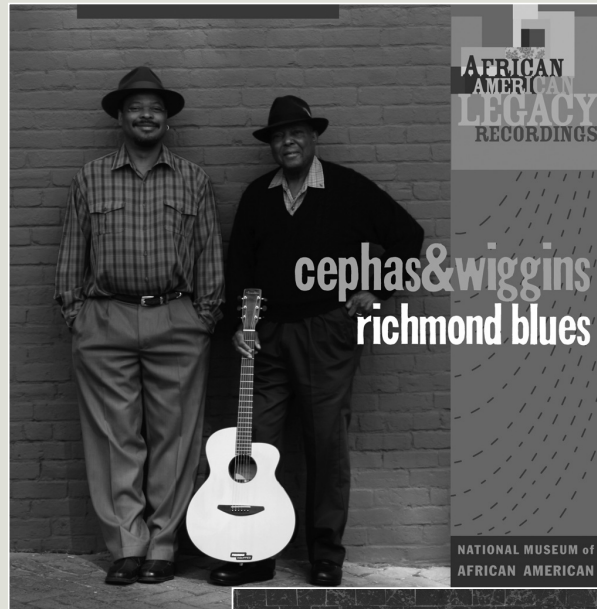
Over one hundred years and three regions of Chilean folk song styles are summed up in this contemporary musical tour de force led by singer, guitarist, and composer Rafael Manríquez and friends. Guitar and harp-driven country *tonadas*, Andean *cachimbos* with *charango* and *quena*, southern Chiloé island songs with accordion, political *nueva canción*, edgy urban *cuecas*, and more offer a glimpse of today’s Chilean folk music in its eclectic diversity. Guest artists include Eduardo Peralta, Héctor Pavez, Pedro Yáñez, and a dozen other mainstays of the Chilean folk song movement.

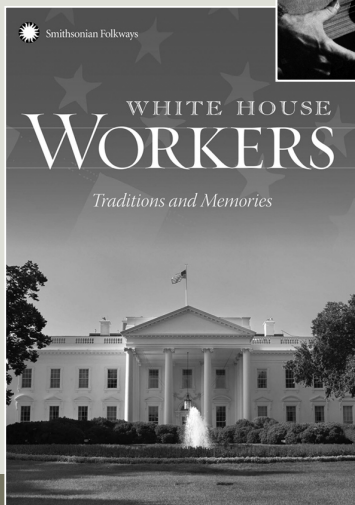
TOM GLAZER *Tom Glazer Sings Honk-Hiss-Tweet-GGGGGGGGGG ...and Other Children’s Favorites*

[SFW-CD-45068]

24 TRACKS, 63 MINUTES, 32-PAGE BOOKLET WITH LYRICS

Tom Glazer’s uncanny ability to “speak to children as saints speak to birds,” as touted by the *New York Times*, rings loud and clear in this signature collection of live performances by this legendary children’s artist. His own delightfully silly “On Top of Spaghetti” and “Honk-Hiss-Tweet-GGGGGGGGGG” stand as eternal favorites alongside “The Bus Song,” “This Old Man,” “Jimmy Crack Corn,” and many more of two dozen newly compiled and remastered classic tracks.





White House Workers: Traditions and Memories
[SFW-DV-48003]

DVD, 40-PAGE BOOKLET WITH EXTENSIVE NOTES AND PHOTOS

Butlers, chefs, housekeepers, electricians, ushers, curators, and many more—all members of the permanent White House staff—tell tales of triumph, tragedy, and deep devotion to the nation, the presidency, and the first families while working behind the scenes at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. *White House Workers: Traditions and Memories* explores the dedication, skills, and sacrifices of residence staff, whose extraordinary service has helped the White House fulfill its multiple roles as a family residence, seat of government, ceremonial center, historic building, and museum.

The DVD contains the following features:

- An introduction by former president Jimmy Carter, recalling the White House workers he knew
- *Workers at the White House*, a 32-minute documentary film featuring a broad range of workers who have served presidents from Herbert Hoover to George H.W. Bush
- *The Working White House: 200 Years of Traditions and Memories*, a 12-minute introduction to the Smithsonian Institution's new traveling exhibition
- Two hours of interviews conducted in 2007 with recently retired White House workers, recounting memories, describing traditions, and expressing the sense of community among staff and pride in their service to first families and the nation

JANUARY 2009

DAN MILNER *Irish Pirate Ballads & Other Songs of the Sea*
[SFW-CD-40553]

13 TRACKS, 59 MINUTES, 20+ PAGE BOOKLET

Pirates, slavers, shanghaiers, and smugglers are just some of the central characters in this album of lusty, authentic maritime songs; others are ardent patriots, hard-pressed immigrants, and weathered sailors sheltering in the taverns of the seven seas. All are midway between some dicey spot in life and an uncertain future. Their compelling stories of bold adventure are excitingly re-told here by an all-star crew of Irish singers and musicians.

MARCH 2009

NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS

50 Years: Where Do You Come From? Where Do You Go?
[SFW-CD-40180]

3-CD BOX SET, 81 TRACKS, 221 MINUTES, 50+ PAGE BOOKLET WITH EXTENSIVE NOTES AND PHOTOS

Collectively known as the Ramblers, Mike Seeger, John Cohen, and Tom Paley (later replaced by Tracy Schwarz) brought the sounds of genuine old-time string band and early bluegrass music to city and college audiences during the folk music revival of the late 1950s and 1960s. This CD celebrates the group's fiftieth anniversary, presenting classic Ramblers performances, along with their field recordings of the traditional musicians who inspired them, including Dock Boggs, Roscoe Holcomb, Tom Ashley, Maybelle Carter, Elizabeth Cotton, Eck Robertson, Cousin Emmy, Reverend Gary Davis, Kilby Snow, Dillard Chandler, Dellie Norton, and the Balfa Brothers.

APRIL 2009

PETE SEEGER *American Favorite Ballads, vols. 1–5*
[SFW-CD-40155]

5-CD BOX SET, 139 TRACKS, 355 MINUTES, 50+ PAGE BOOKLET WITH EXTENSIVE NOTES AND PHOTOS

Pete Seeger's life, music, and legacy encapsulate nearly a century of American history and culture. He has immersed himself in folk music and used it, as Johnny Appleseed did, to "plant the seeds of a better tomorrow in the homes across our land." The 139 songs in *American Favorite Ballads* narrate tales of ordinary people and their extraordinary deeds and show Pete at the crossroads of the past and the future, putting his own stamp on America's folk song heritage while bequeathing it to generations to come.

AFRICAN DIASPORA HERITAGE TRAIL: FROM WHICH PASTS TO WHICH FUTURES?

James Early, Director, Cultural Heritage Policy

For the past three years, James Early and Diana N'Diaye of the Center and John Franklin of the National Museum of African American History and Culture have been involved in the development of the African Diaspora Heritage Trail (ADHT) Conference, which is sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism of Bermuda, led by Bermuda's premier, and organized by Henderson Travels and Tours, the oldest African American tour agency in the United States. Heritage tourism's focus on African and Diaspora "routes" and "trails" is significantly informed by UNESCO's efforts to correct the record on historical and contemporary contributions of African peoples to human civilization. The work and notable African leadership of UNESCO's Doudou Diène, former director of the Division of Intercultural Projects, and Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, the sixth director-general, have inspired UNESCO research on the Slave and Silk routes. In recent years, their work has been advanced by UNESCO's permanent ambassador from Benin Olabiyi Babáola Joseph Yaï, chair of the UNESCO executive committee; Katerina Stenou, director of the Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue; Ali Moussa Iye, chief of the Intercultural Dialogue Section; and Edmond Moukala, special assistant to the chair.

ADHT entails research, commemoration, and public interpretation of African and African Diasporan peoples' cultural resistance and creative, transformative response to dreadful historical assaults on their humanity, including malicious attempts to eradicate their heritage. Therefore, scholars and public educators have refocused on the Arab-African slave trade, the European slave trade (commonly called the Atlantic slave trade, which is now recognized as a crime against humanity), European colonialism, resistance to slavery throughout the Americas, and the struggles against racism and for full equality of African and Diasporan peoples in Europe.

The late David H. Allen, minister of tourism on the island of Bermuda, launched the first African Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference in 2001. It followed his visit to South Africa, where he spoke about the importance of ADHT: "The aim of the African Diaspora Heritage Trail is to identify, conserve, and promote historic sites linked with the development and progress of people of African descent." The fact that an Anglo-Bermudian was moved to conceptualize and implement a project of such import

to his country, Africa, and its Diaspora is a testament to the power of cultural ways of knowing and doing to reach beyond the prejudice and violence against the "other" that have so characterized human history and much of today's intra- and intercultural encounters.

ADHT is preparing for its fifth international conference in Tanzania in October 2009. Two ADHT conferences were held in 2008, one in the Bahamas and one back in Bermuda (on which the Center's Diana N'Diaye curated a 2001 Festival program) to celebrate the country's emancipation from slavery. The success of the 2008 Bahamas conference prompted UNESCO's director-general for culture to say that ADHT had sparked a new and deep interest in recognizing, dedicating, and promoting sites, events, arts, and material and intangible cultural heritage that represent the tragic and heroic suffering and resistance of ordinary and extraordinary men and women in their country.

The long and trying roads to freedom and personal achievement across Africa and the Diaspora led in the 1960s to Diasporan students becoming friends at Howard University (which was established by the U.S. government to educate the descendants of enslaved Africans). Many years later, those friendships would have global resonance. One student would become premier of Bermuda, and his college friends, children of the Atlanta founders of the first African American tourism business, would join him and his compatriots to form the ADHT. The historic African Diaspora trail, intended to disperse and disconnect African peoples, is now being reconnected, just when ADHT, UNESCO, and the African Union are discussing collaboration and partnerships. Because of ADHT, major conceptual and methodological issues have arisen across Europe about how to effectively engage governments, tourists, the tourism industry, and citizens in historical research and interpretation of slavery, colonialism, liberation movements, resistance to racism, and national democratic transformations.

UNESCO's focus on commemorations of the abolition of the Atlantic/European slave trade and the lessons from that horrific crime may now prompt Arab and Middle Eastern countries to become more active in research, documentation, and public commemorations and programs about the history of African Diaspora trails within their borders. Scholar-filmmakers like Sheila

Walker and Georges Collinet in the United States, in conjunction with UNESCO and ADHT, are bringing to wider attention living African-derived cultural expressions in countries such as Iraq and India. The African Union's formal incorporation of the Diaspora into its multilateral statecraft has already contributed to positive acknowledgement of Diasporan cultures and tradition bearers and to specific cultural policy initiatives throughout Central and South America and western and northern Europe.

The conjuncture of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the African Union Diasporan outreach and partnerships in the Americas and Europe, increased European Union attention to Afro-descendant citizens and immigrants, and emergent signs of proactive policies about ADHT in the Arab world and the Middle East promises to deepen cultural democracy so that history will be more accurately and forthrightly researched, presented, and supported. Greater cultural, social, economic, and political equity and justice will result.

Still, far too many U.S. national and local arts and cultural institutions, professional cultural workers, academics, scholars, government agencies, and arts and cultural activists are unaware of and uninvolved in the work of UNESCO, ADHT, and the African Union. U.S. artists, cultural workers, and, particularly, African Diasporans need to give more attention to Diaspora trails and routes in the United States. And they need to engage the U.S. State Department, which has executed global cultural policy with much foot-dragging, little cultural diplomacy, some exploitation of artists, and has worked in direct opposition to UNESCO. Where are the U.S. folklorists and community-based cultural workers on African Diaspora Heritage trails and routes? Responses are welcome. ■

Marjorie Hunt gave a presentation entitled "The Smithsonian Institution Meets the National Cathedral's Stone Carvers" at the Laborlore Conversation V conference in San Francisco, California, on September 20, 2008.

The Stone Carvers, a thirty-minute documentary film about the master stone carvers of Washington National Cathedral, is now available on DVD. It was directed and produced by Marjorie Hunt and Paul Wagner in cooperation with the Center. Paul Wagner Productions (www.paulwagnerfilms.com) is the distributor.

Cindy Boucher's article, "Newly Imagined Audiences: Folkways' Gay and Lesbian Records" was published in the *Journal of Popular Music Studies* in August. The article explores the Folkways' collection in light of gay and lesbian minority identity, social consciousness, and politics during the era of homophile and gay liberation movements.

Dan Sheehy's article, "From Grants to Grammys: Leveraging Cultural Energy," was published in the *Mid Atlantic Forum* in September.

James Early received one of the Legends and Legacies awards from the King Arts Complex in Columbus, Ohio. Other honorees included Harry Belafonte and Danny Glover.

The University of Hawai'i Press published *American Aloha: Cultural Tourism and the Negotiation of Tradition*, **Heather A. Diamond's** book on the Hawai'i program at the Center's 1989 Festival.

Jim Deutsch's articles on Frederick Tyrone Power, Glenn Quinn, Ernest Shackleton, and Washington, D.C., were published in the encyclopedia, *Ireland and America: Culture, Politics, and History*, edited by James Byrne, Philip Coleman, and Jason King (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008). He also published book reviews in several journals, including *Journal of American Folklore*, *Western Folklore*, and *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*; and one film review in the *Journal of American History*. In September, he made presentations on NASA at Palacky University in the Czech Republic, on politics and film at the Austrian Film Museum and Amerika Haus in Vienna, and on Henwar Rodakiewicz at the University of Lodz in Poland.

TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING: FOLKDOCS FOCUS ON THE FESTIVAL

Shawna Pies, Cultural Research and Education Intern

We observed; we interviewed; we photographed. During the 2008 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, our team of seven interns, collectively nicknamed “Folkdocs,” spread out on the National Mall like ants at a picnic, taking our mental “magnifying glass” to the program, *Bhutan: Land of the Thunder Dragon*. Throughout the ten-day Festival, we examined and analyzed the smallest details of discussions, demonstrations, and infrastructure in order to think about the bigger picture—the Smithsonian Folklife Festival as a “learning laboratory” and a vehicle for cultural understanding. We asked ourselves, what are some ways that this progressive, culturally relevant event can become even more effective?

Our research formed an integral part of a Festival analysis project, which Marjorie Hunt, Betty Belanus, Diana N’Diaye, and Olivia Cadaval designed based on their online Harvard School of Education Teaching for Understanding course. The Teaching for Understanding framework defines understanding as “the ability to think and act flexibly with what one knows.” During our investigation into the Festival’s promotion of deep cultural understanding, we raised a few central queries. First, we asked, what are some important ways the Festival impacts visitors, sparks questions, and inspires curiosity? Second, our group explored the ability of the visitor to absorb knowledge gained from the Festival and tried to decipher which components of the Festival affected their views most. Finally, we inquired how certain approaches could be modified in order to maximize the experiences that visitors take away from the Festival.

While “in the field,” we moved thoughtfully with our notebooks through crowds of T-shirt-clad camp groups, vacationers, Bhutan enthusiasts, and local residents. We saw respectful, curious Festival visitors have “Ah-ha!” moments: A little boy crouched next to a flute-playing Himalayan yak herder to share a smile. Visitors participating in a lively discussion about Bhutanese table manners and family life set before a smoking, clay stove. Moments like these led the team to conclude that the Festival is tangibly successful in “teaching for cultural understanding.”

It was our mission to provide constructive feedback to Smithsonian staff and curators, so they could reach the public in meaningful ways during future Festival programs. The Folkdocs team developed several proposals:

- A new set of strategies for giving Festival participants a “voice”

- A plan for an expanded and enhanced children’s area
- An alternate approach to offering hands-on activities
- A presenter training program in partnership with local universities

Thanks go to the Folkdocs interns for their thoughtful proposals and hard work. Eleana Diaz, Cecily Hart, Vanessa Herrera, Gabriel Pérez, Sarah Searcy, Laura Service, and the author assisted the Center in reflecting upon its goals, accomplishments, and opportunities to ensure its role as an advocate for “cultural democracy.” Today, it plays a key role—to provide Americans the occasion to appreciate different perspectives through face-to-face interaction, promoting empathy, tolerance, and, most important, understanding. ■

PASSINGS

Aunty Nona Beamer 1923–2008
Hawai’i program fieldwork informant

Abe Brumberg 1926–2008
Collector Records recording artist

Erik Darling 1933–2008
Folkways recording artist

David Gahr 1922–2008
Folkways photographer

Sam Gesser 1930–2008, Canadian Folkways
distributor and producer, music impresario

Sir Edmund Hillary 1919–2008
Interviewed on Folkways

Ray Kāne 1925–2008
Hawai’i Festival participant

Marian Hope Lund 1924–2008
Festival employee

Moon Mullins 1936–2008
Festival participant

Utah Phillips 1935–2008
Festival participant and Folkways recording artist

Orlando “Puntilla” Rios 1947–2008
Festival participant and Folkways recording artist

LaVaughan Robinson 1927–2008
Festival participant

Tony Schwartz 1923–2008
Sound documentarian and Folkways recording artist

BHUTAN AT THE 2008 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL *(continues from page 4)*

Special lecture-demonstrations and Bhutanese films took place at the Freer Gallery of Art. Cinema arts, now very popular in Bhutan, have been described by one of Bhutan's most famous filmmakers as simply another form of *thangkha* (important Buddhist imagery) painting. An overflow crowd attended a final evening performance of Bhutanese music and dance at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage.

Because Bhutan is such a musical society, there was music throughout the site. Many of the Bhutanese artisans sang as they painted, weaved, carved, cooked, and built. His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel, who plays acoustic guitar, surprised visitors at the Texas stage by joining Texas Johnny Brown for a soulful performance of the Beatles' "Come Together."

Bhutanese hospitality was evident in the many activities designed for children and adults. With the help of Bhutanese children, families colored Bhutanese postage stamps and made prayer wheels, and visitors were able to sign a handmade-paper and leather-bound book surrounded by blue poppies—Bhutan's national flower. Later, the Smithsonian presented the book to His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. On opening day, Bhutan Post issued several sets of commemorative Festival postage stamps.

Archery, the country's national sport, was played daily. Bhutanese archers dazzled spectators by hitting a target the size of a breadbox nearly a football field away. When they hit the bull's eye or an opponent missed embarrassingly,

the archers performed humorous songs and dances. Other traditional Bhutanese games involved ground darts, bamboo javelins, and wrestling.

Based on the results of visitor surveys, the 2008 Festival went a long way toward introducing the public to the life and culture of Bhutan. While 74 percent of the visitors surveyed reported that they knew "little to nothing" about Bhutan before they came to the Festival, a whopping 80 percent responded that they had learned "some to a lot" about Bhutan at the Festival. Sixty-two percent said they definitely would like to visit Bhutan if given the chance. Significantly, many Bhutanese reported that they learned "something" about the United States and American culture during their stay in Washington, and they also learned a lot about themselves as a result of the Festival. Just over a year ago, Richard Kurin wrote in this publication that "[a] successful approach to cultural diplomacy in today's world must offer real two-way exchange [and] go well beyond the most elite of arts and culture to the grass roots in the United States and other nations."

It appears that the Bhutan program did just that. While Festival visitors typically remark that they "enjoyed" and "learned" from their Festival experience, this year many added that the Bhutan program somehow "touched" them. And the Bhutanese, too, reported experiencing the exhilaration you feel when sharing your life with so many (in this case nearly *twice* their own country's population!). This is the Festival's powerful gift to us all. ■

The archery contests at the Festival, like those in Bhutan, were colorful community events that featured highly skilled competitors, along with dancing and singing cheerleaders who poked merciless fun at the opposing team's performance.

Photo by Laraine Weschler,
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