

ISSUE 39 **playback** >  
Summer 2008

BRITISH  
LIBRARY

**SOUND  
ARCHIVE**

# playback >

PLAYBACK is the bulletin of the British Library Sound Archive. It is published free of charge twice a year, with information on the Sound Archive's current and future activities, and news from the world of sound archives and audio preservation. Comments are welcome and should be addressed to the editor.

We have a special mailing list for PLAYBACK. Please write, phone, fax or email us, or complete and send in the tear-off slip at the end of this issue (if you have not done so already) if you wish to receive future issues through the post.

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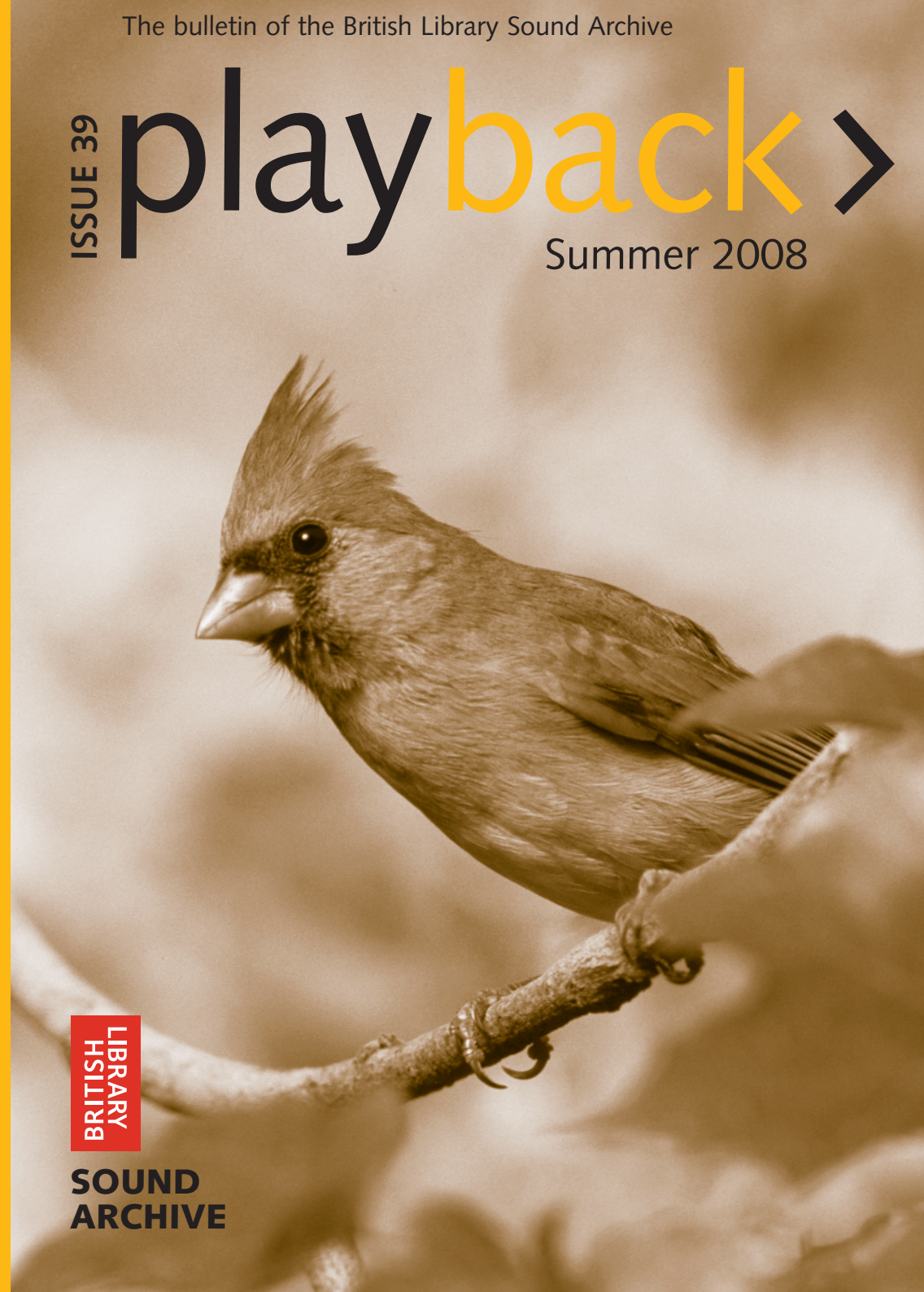


**Front cover photograph**

Northern Cardinal courtesy of S&D&K Maslowski/FLPA

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

■ Over the past year, Sound Archive staff have been piloting a new process for archiving digital field recordings. The recordings are ingested as electronic audio files as part of the British Library's Digital Library (DLP) Programme. The DLP vision is to store and preserve any type of British Library digital material in perpetuity and to provide access to this material to users with appropriate permissions. Each ingested file is time-stamped and automatically replicated across storage sites in London, Yorkshire and Wales. The system's sophisticated architecture self-checks the integrity of every file, and in the event of a fault at one site, the other sites can restore to the affected site automatically. So far 4,000 sound recordings have been preserved in the system, including our latest oral history interviews, recent WOMAD music festivals and theatre performances and wildlife location recordings. Ultimately a large proportion of the Sound Archive's recordings, whether 'born digital' or digitised from analogue, will be stored in this way. For more information, search for 'DOM' on the BL homepage [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

■ 'Unlocking Audio', a Sound Archive conference, was held on 26 and 27 October 2007 in the British Library's new Centre for Conservation. The conference was set up partly to celebrate the opening of the Centre for Conservation, the Sound Archive's new state-of-the-art technical facility and also to celebrate UNESCO World Day for Audiovisual Heritage which was on 27 October.

Delegates came from all over the world to listen to a range of eminent speakers including Kevin Bradley from the National Library of Australia, David Seubert from the University of California, Santa Barbara and Mike Casey from the University of Indiana. The aim of the conference was to explore the planning and strategies required for the successful execution of large-scale audio digitisation projects and the technical and practical issues involved.

Sixty delegates attended the event. Delegates were given the opportunity to tour the new technical facility



Kevin Bradley delivers the opening talk at 'Unlocking Audio'

Courtesy of Ike Egbetola

and the day ended with a conference dinner. On the second day, after the conference closed, delegates were given the option of excursions to either the BBC's Audio Preservation facility at Maida Vale or the EMI Archive at Hayes.

Further details about the conference and recordings of selected speeches and papers can be found on the Sound Archive's website.

[www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/unlockingaudio](http://www.bl.uk/collections/sound-archive/unlockingaudio)

■ In September 2007 the British Library launched 'Listen Up!', a workshop primarily for GCSE, A level and undergraduate groups that explores material from the Sound Archive and discusses the nature of sound. The workshop draws on a wide range of recordings from the Sound Archive and offers an interactive two hour session focussing on the auditory environment as we experience it both in everyday life and in music. The material is used to raise questions such as 'How accustomed are we to listening?', 'When does sound become speech or music?' and 'What characteristics do they share' and 'How can we describe sound?'. Students get the chance to create a graphic score which they can take away to record. They also hear about the range of services offered by the Sound Archive and have the opportunity to discuss how these might be useful to them either now or in the future.

[www.bl.uk/learning/](http://www.bl.uk/learning/)

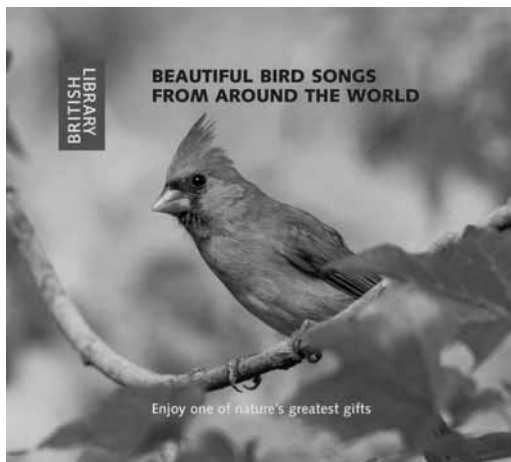
■ The wildlife section recently collaborated with children's publishers Usborne Publishing on a birdwatching book and CD set, part of the Usborne Naturetrail series entitled *Birdwatching*. Typical songs and calls of 40 of Britain's most common birds were chosen for inclusion on the CD. The publication will give children the opportunity to learn how to identify birds not just visually but acoustically as well making them more aware of the natural sounds around them. The publication was released in February.

■ A set of six acetate discs featuring a recording of Arthur Askey's BBC Radio programme 'How Do You Do!' made on location at the home of Mr and Mrs Vokes, in Lee, London, in February 1949, was donated by their daughter. Mr John Vokes, a policeman, was initially denied permission by the Commissioner of Police to speak on the programme. The ban was subsequently withdrawn, making him the first serving UK policeman to speak on a BBC Radio programme.

■ The first round of Sound Archive internships began in September 2007. Four interns have each completed a two month placement and two interns have begun their five month placements. Interns from as far away as New Zealand and South Africa have travelled to the UK in order to participate in the programme. The training covers sound archiving principles and practices with a particular emphasis on learning through hands-on experience. Dien Luu, Luton Voices Coordinator at Wardown Park Museum, Luton said: 'My two month internship at the British Library has been an invaluable experience. I was able to gain first hand experience on a variety of formats: shellac, vinyl, and even wax cylinders! The one-to-one support from the tutor was extremely helpful. Most impressive was how the internship was tailored to my individual needs.' The 2007/8 internships are funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the American Trust for the British Library, The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust and The Ernest Cook Trust.

## WINDING FORWARD

■ A 2 CD set entitled 'Beautiful Bird Songs from around the World' was released in May. The two discs celebrate the beauty of birdsong and showcase some of the most exquisite sounds that can be heard in the natural world. There are 40 species represented, including the rich, melodious songs of the Blackbird and Nightingale, the breathtaking compositions of Albert's Lyrebird and White-rumped Shama, the ethereal songs of the Kokako and Rufous-throated Solitaire and the haunting cries of the Black-throated Diver. The 2 CD set is for sale, priced £15.95, from the British Library Online Shop at [shop.bl.uk](http://shop.bl.uk)



■ Luke McKernan joined the Sound Archive as the British Library's first Curator of Moving Image in December. Although based in the Sound Archive, his brief is Library-wide. The Sound Archive has around 38,000 moving image items, forming the bulk of the Library's moving image collection, and his initial task has been to assess these holdings and their potential. Highlights include around 9,000 television programmes recorded 1986 – 1999 and over 14,000 music videos. He is also considering the various ways in which the British Library might engage with moving images in the future and how this best fits the UK's screen heritage strategy.

There comes a point in any institution's life when it might be said to come of age. In the case of the British Library Sound Archive there is a general perception that that point occurred somewhere in the past 15 years, while Crispin Jewitt was Head of the Sound Archive. His retirement last summer and the arrival of his successor, Richard Ranft, have provided a good opportunity to take stock.

Crispin started work with the British National Bibliography in 1969, moving with it into the British Library in 1974, from there to the Library's Department of Manuscripts and, in 1989, to the Sound Archive. The second issue of *Playback* in summer 1992 announced his appointment as acting director and it is salutary to recall the conditions that the Sound Archive faced at that time, occupying unsuitable accommodation far removed from the rest of the British Library and with limited public awareness of its role.

Fifteen years on the Sound Archive's standing has never looked higher, either here or abroad. As a prominent delegate of the International Association of Sound Archives (IASA), and President of IASA from 1999 to 2002, Crispin kept our profile high on the international agenda, notably when the British Library hosted the annual ARSC-IASA conference in 2001.

At home the Sound Archive was among the first sections of the British Library to move into the new building at St. Pancras in 1997; the catalogue has grown to include over three million recordings; moving image has become a growing area of interest; and the Sound Archive is prominent across all areas of the British Library's activities, especially exhibitions and its audio CD publications.

Perhaps the two biggest achievements date from the last couple of years. The

Archival Sound Recordings project, funded by JISC, has realised the long-desired dream of providing off-site access to the Sound Archive's holdings to higher and further educational users across the UK; and the opening of the Centre for Conservation in 2007 at last gave the Sound Archive state-of-the-art technical facilities of which it can be proud.

The new Head of the Sound Archive, Richard Ranft, is also an old friend. Having started as Curator of Wildlife Sounds in 1984 and moved on to be Head of Technical Services in 2003, Richard has had valuable experience of the Sound Archive's work from different standpoints. He takes over at a time of great change – technological advances are bringing a revolution in the way audio materials will be acquired, stored and accessed – but the Sound Archive has never looked better placed to prosper.

Crispin Jewitt (left) and Richard Ranft



Courtesy of Ike Egbetola

# LET'S HAVE A HEATED DEBATE!

## The Cambridge Union tapes by Steve Cleary



In the summer of 2007, following successful negotiations with the Cambridge Union Society, the collected recordings of more than 400 of the Society's weekly debates were transferred to the care of the British Library. The Society was concerned to find a new permanent home for the collection, lacking the facilities on their own premises for archival storage of the material or the provision of regular public or student access to it.

The period covered is 1963–1999. Although the bulk of the collection is made up of TDK D90 audio cassettes dating from 1983 onwards, there are also many open reel tapes dating from the earlier period.

The themes of the debates reflect contemporary UK and international political and societal concerns of their era, and have at times proved controversial. In the early 1980s a visit by the South African Ambassador prompted anti-apartheid protestors to throw bricks through the Union windows, and a debate on Palestinian nationalism necessitated the incognito attendance of Special Branch officers after the President of the Union received death threats.

The wide range of subjects discussed includes 'Christianity as an elaborate superstition', 'the Nuremberg trials as hypocrisy', 'the treatment of the homosexual minority in our society', 'censorship of video nasties',

'experimentation on animals' and the Society's traditional annual debate 'This House Has No Confidence in Her Majesty's Government'.

Less serious motions include 'This House Would Rather Walk on the Moon than Win the Pools', and, from 1983 – and featuring the stellar line-up of *Mastermind* winner Fred Housego, TV presenter Nicholas Parsons and disc jockey Tommy Vance – 'This House Believes that Debating is a Waste of Time'. From the same year, DJ Paul Gambaccini and comic actor Rory McGrath debate the proposal 'Nothing Matters Very Much and Most Things Don't Matter at All'.

Speakers are drawn from all walks of public life and include politicians, peers, scientists, journalists, celebrities, experts of all kinds, and student debaters – teams from the Cambridge Union currently win more competitive debating tournaments than any other British institution. The earliest tapes – from 1963 – feature future MPs Michael Howard and Kenneth Clarke during their respective tenures as President of the Union. More recent speakers have included US President Ronald Reagan, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and the Dalai Lama.

The material in this unique collection should prove of value not just to social and political historians but also to anyone interested in the history and fine art of persuasive oratory.

Picture, above Cambridge Union Society Crest

# NEW ACQUISITIONS

## World and Traditional Music

A generous Korean music-lover and publisher, Chan Kwan Jung, has been donating published CDs issued for the Korean market. The collection, now running to some 150 issues, represents the full range of music genres from new compositions to ethnographic recordings of folk traditions. Other private collectors have donated material too, perhaps the most noteworthy being a collection of 80 shellac discs of historic recordings from West Africa, donated by Russell Parkes who lived and worked in Ghana for much of his career. The donation includes 29 issues in the Decca West Africa series, and thus greatly enhances our Decca West Africa content package being processed for online access as part of the ASR 2 project.

Besides the roughly 650 published items purchased from our main distributors, Harmonia Mundi, Discovery Records and Proper Music Distribution, we also found ourselves lucky and opportunistic. Lucky to finally find the 35 CDs of ethnographic recordings made among the Xhosa in Transkei by Dave Dargie available for purchase. These are rare recordings that only come available periodically. Very little research has been done on Xhosa music and this series is a major contribution to scholarship and our collections. Opportunistic when a researcher at Royal Holloway University alerted me to a collection of 25 rare shellac discs of Indonesian music available on eBay.

Unpublished ethnographic recordings have continued to roll in. In a programme to archive collections of established British-based ethnomusicologists, we acquired the first batches of DAT and DV recordings from Nepal and India made by SOAS's Professor Richard Widdess. Richard is one of the world's authorities on north Indian classical music and his archive epitomises the sort of material we aim to acquire through this programme.

We continued to assist new scholars in their fieldwork and as a result have added 40 DATs recorded by Hettie Malcomsen (PhD candidate, University of Cambridge) on danzon in Mexico and Cuba and 8 DATs recorded by

Anne Henochowicz (MMus candidate, University of Cambridge) on the long-song form in Inner Mongolia.

We took further tentative steps into the world of film archiving by acquiring 32 reels of 16mm film recorded in the 1930s and 1940s by Arnold Bake (Dutch ethnomusicologist associated with SOAS) in Nepal and India, adding to the 510 wax cylinders recorded by Bake during the same period.

And then there was WOMAD; 99 wav recordings were made at the festival's new location at Charlton Park, Wiltshire. Long may our relationship with WOMAD continue, but without the rain please...

## Wildlife

The collection of Richard Savage was bequeathed to the British Library following his death in May 2007. Richard was a respected member of the Wildlife Sound Recording Society and widely considered one of the best wildlife sound recordists in the UK. Renowned for his technical ability, field craft and knowledge of natural history, he spent over 30 years developing an outstanding collection of wildlife recordings. Birds, mammals, amphibians and insects were all immortalised in sound and collectively form an impressive audio summary of wildlife and soundscapes from across the British Isles.

The amphibian recordings of the late Alex Duff-Mackay were donated by his family in July. Alex was regarded as one of the most knowledgeable biologists in East Africa and spent over 30 years as Head of Herpetology at Kenya's National Museum in Nairobi. As well as collecting physical specimens for the museum's holdings Alex developed an additional collection of



Alex Duff-Mackay

Courtesy of Joy Duff-Mackay

African frog recordings. The recordings date from the late 1960s to the early 1970s and represent some of the earliest unpublished amphibian recordings to be archived with the Wildlife Section.

As well as maintaining links with existing donors, a number of new relationships were forged in 2007. PhD candidate Michael Mills archived over 1400 recordings of African wildlife from countries including Malawi, South Africa, Uganda and Rwanda.

Based at the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute at the University of Cape Town, Michael is a talented ornithologist with a gift for sound recording. He recently published the only dedicated audio guide to the birds of Angola and continues to develop his already impressive collection through fieldwork and his role as a specialist bird watching tour leader.

## Oral History

In the mid-1980s entertainer and oral historian Jaki Leboff toured older people's residential and care homes in the East End of London, carrying out interviews and recording informal singing sessions. She discovered that although many of the tunes were the same, the words were often changed to reflect particular localities and events, and that they represented valuable historical insights. This cultural snapshot of some 200 recordings came to us with photographs and song sheets.

Over the past year we have been seeking to enhance our history of science holdings. Two important pioneering collections were deposited by the University of Edinburgh: eight interviews with distinguished British scientists, recorded for the Science Studies Unit at Edinburgh, between 1969 and 1971, including Sir Lawrence Bragg, Sir Bernard Lovell, Sir Frederick Russell, Sir Maurice Yonge, Sir Geoffrey Taylor, and Lord Boyd Orr; and 11 interviews with staff of the Institute of Animal Genetics at the University of Edinburgh. We also accepted 51 interviews with people diagnosed with diabetes between 1927 and



Chickens for Pin Money 1930

Photo supplied by Polly Russell

1997, recorded by Helen Lloyd for the Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, and funded by the Wellcome Trust. This material also formed the basis of a website, Diabetes Stories, at [www.diabetes-stories.com](http://www.diabetes-stories.com).

A major new National Life Stories fieldwork project – Authors' Lives – got underway with interviews with Paul Bailey, Nina Bawden, Maureen Duffy, Dannie Abse and Michael Holroyd. And we will be working with the Booker Prize Foundation to collect interviews with shortlisted authors. Important life story interviews with press and newspaper figures were added to the Oral History of the British Press, notably recordings with Andreas Whittam Smith (proprietor and launch editor of *The Independent*), Ken Morgan (former General Secretary of the National Union of Journalists), Frank Barlow (Managing Director of the *Financial Times*), Bob Edwards (former editor of the *Daily Express*, the *Sunday Mirror*, *The People* and deputy chairman of the Mirror Group under Robert Maxwell), Donald Treford (*The Observer*) and Roy Greenslade (a media commentator who has worked for most of Britain's newspapers over the past 40 years). Finally, a ten-year project on the food sector came to an end with the launch of a new interactive web resource about food – Food Stories ([www.bl.uk/learning/histcizen/foodstories/index.html](http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcizen/foodstories/index.html)) – and the completion of 300 interviews, including 40 recordings with Tesco employees. It also marked the conclusion of a successful partnership research project with the universities of Sheffield and Newcastle about the food chain.

## Drama and Literature

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The Pain and the Itch

Location audio recordings of live drama at the Royal Court Theatre last year included the new production of Chekhov's *The Seagull* and the inaugural production of the Royal Court's new artistic director Dominic Cooke, *The Pain and the Itch* by Bruce Norris. A lively post-show talk with the director, writer and cast was also recorded.

Location video recordings of live drama included a new production of *The Tempest* by Tara Arts. Presented at the company's studio in Earlsfield, the show marked the company's thirtieth anniversary and has since opened in the West End.

Also captured on video: one of a run of only three performances of a new production of Harold Pinter's first work for the stage *The Room*. The play was re-staged by

Bristol University Drama Department in the very space – now a storage area for tables and chairs – in which it was first performed in May 1957.

Interesting donations included a unique set of tapes of the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges's appearance over four nights at the ICA in 1971. The tapes were donated by Jasia Reichardt, formerly Assistant Director of the ICA, and organizer of the original event.

Harriet Devine, daughter of English Stage Company founder George Devine, donated 27 recordings of interviews with playwrights made for her book *Looking Back: Playwrights at the Royal Court 1956 – 2006*. Subjects include John Arden, Christopher Hampton, David Hare, Ann Jellicoe, Ayub Khan Din, Hanif Kureshi, David Storey, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Arnold Wesker and Roy Williams.

## Popular Music

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Among the most important acquisitions of the past year was a unique collection from Cadillac Records. Independent jazz/free improvisation labels Cadillac and Ogun Records were established in the early 1970s by John Jack and Harry Miller respectively in response to what they felt was a tendency by the major labels to ignore the cutting-edge of the new music scene. The collection is comprised primarily of unpublished recordings from the Cadillac/Ogun archive, including 1978 concert recordings by Elton Dean's Quintet and Sextet with Keith Tippett, and the master tapes of unissued LPs by saxophonists Mike Osborne, who sadly died last year, and John Surman, the latter a set of solo recordings entitled 'Surman from All Saints'.

Surman is also featured, this time as an interviewee, in a recently acquired collection of original recordings made by jazz trumpeter/writer Ian Carr in the course of research for his books. In addition to several of the key figures of Britain's improvised music scene of the early 70s – John Stevens, Evan Parker, Trevor Watts – the

collection includes interviews with such seldom heard figures as British record producer Denis Preston, South African pianist/bandleader Chris McGregor, and Zimbabwe-born composer/trombonist Mike Gibbs.

## Classical Music

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Thomas Ratter donated some more broadcasts including the Brahms Violin Concerto played by Henryk Szeryng with the Scottish National Orchestra and Alexander Gibson from 1966 and Richard Strauss's *Don Quixote* with Rostropovich from 1974. As lending libraries continue to de-accession their LPs and look to dispose of them we are always interested in acquiring these discs. In March Harrow library donated 126 LPs, some of which were unusual small American labels including Concert disc, Grenadilla, and Golden Crest. There were also discs from Poland, Germany and Greece with such unusual composers as Popovivi, Pancho Vladigerov, Juliusz Zarebski and Thodorakis. In July another donation came from Holborn library, LPs all of music by Beethoven including three very rare discs of Polish pianist Stanislaw Niedzielski on the French label Edici. The major donation of 2007 came in October from record collector Martin Moir who donated 160 compact discs that were not held by the Sound Archive and many rare LPs and 78rpm discs of both jazz and classical music including early vocal recordings by Ida Sambo, Rose Caron and Antonio Magini-Coletti.

Another important collection to be received this year was from composer Peter Maxwell Davies who donated his archive of video and tape recordings (C1260), the video recordings going as far back as 1976.

The most impressive purchase was from Japan: a 32 DVD set of the history of the Warsaw Chopin Competition including a lavishly illustrated 304-page book on the subject. Further purchases from Japan continue as this is one of the few countries that are producing quality historical re-issues in any quantity.

# AN ULTRASONIC PASSION

## The David Pye collection by Cheryl Tipp

Professor David Pye has spent more than 40 years studying and recording animal ultrasounds. 'So-called "bat-radar" fascinated me as a teenager' David says. 'That animals could actually navigate in the dark by detecting obstacles and flying prey, using their voices and hearing in ways analogous to radar, seemed quite wonderful – and still does'.

As a student in 1955, David wrote a small dissertation that covered virtually all the existing literature on bat echolocation and in 1959 the opportunity arose to start studying the subject professionally. With the help of a colleague he built the first bat detectors outside the United States and listened enthralled to bats hunting over the ponds of Hampstead Heath.

It was during a trip to Trinidad with leading echolocation expert Donald Griffin that David found his true vocation. Studying the island's fishing bats uncovered an enormous variety of species with differing forms, ways of life and acoustic signals. Being able to record

ultrasounds for the first time using Griffin's tape recorder was a dream come true and set David on a path that would see him become one of the world's leading experts on animal ultrasound.

In 1963, two years after his life-changing trip, David returned to Trinidad. Armed with a second hand recorder from the US Air Force, he began recording and documenting the calls of as many bat species as possible. The heavy, mains-powered recorder made field recording extremely difficult and most subjects had to be captured and then recorded either in the hand or when flying indoors.

A research grant in 1965 provided a new recorder that, although still large and heavy, was powered by an external power supply and meant that extensive field recording was finally possible, at least from the back of a vehicle. This machine was used during research trips to Uganda and Nigeria and became the main recording device for lab studies and students' research for many years.

The Rolls Royce of ultrasonic recorders was obtained in 1968. The Pemco-110 weighed only 8kg, included internal rechargeable batteries and could be carried, making it a near perfect model for recording in the field. For the next 15 years this device accompanied David on recording trips across Europe, Panama, East Africa, Malaysia and Thailand.

Some recordings in the collection are of particular significance. Examples include the first ever recordings of the Bumblebee Bat *Craseonycteris thonglongyai* made along the River Kwai, Thailand in 1981. This species had only been discovered seven years earlier and was so unique it had to be assigned a new family of its own. The Bumblebee Bat is almost certainly the smallest living mammal, weighing under 2g and possessing a wingspan of 130 – 145mm.

One of the most intriguing recordings was made in 1963 on the university campus at St Augustine, Trinidad. Flying just too high to be seen, a bat



emitted extremely long and rather low frequency cries with an erratic upwards frequency sweep, unlike any found before or since. Each sound was answered by a shorter downsweeping 'standard' echolocation pulse almost certainly from a second bat. At times the exchanges became quite excited so that the two callers overlapped. Just what was going on remains a mystery.

As well as bats, David, along with colleagues and students, also recorded non-echolocation (social or communication) ultrasounds produced by rodents and a variety of insects including moths, beetles, mice and rats. He was part of a group that discovered a completely new method of sound production in moths (the microtymbal array). Certain species of moth are able to hear predatory bats and take evasive action by emitting ultrasonic responses. Upon realising its cover was blown, the approaching bat would usually abort its attack. This behaviour was subsequently recorded in Panama and Africa, often in response to artificially generated batlike sounds.

The recordings of Professor David Pye represent the largest and most comprehensive single collection of animal ultrasounds anywhere in the world. Almost 150 tapes have been archived with the British Library along with recording notes, equipment and sonograms. There is still a lot to be learnt about ultrasonic systems and this wealth of material would make an excellent starting point for further research. It is a great pleasure to accept this outstanding collection from one of Britain's most respected academics.



## USER PROFILE

### Penny Dyer



*Penny Dyer trained at The Central School of Speech and Drama in the late 1970s and has worked as a voice and dialect teacher for the past 25 years. She is a leading specialist in her field.*

*Her recent projects that have required research at the Sound Archive include Stephen Frears' award-winning film, 'The Queen', 'The Last Days of Judas Iscariot' for the Almeida, the musical 'Parade' for the Donmar Warehouse and coaching the multi-talented actor Michael Sheen for his roles as Tony Blair, Kenneth Williams and David Frost.*

*Future forays to the British Library will include research for a BBC drama on Margaret Thatcher, with Lindsey Duncan in the title role.*

*Access Accents is a series of Dialect CDs, published by Methuen Drama, which have greatly benefited from Penny's years of listening at the Sound Archive.*

#### **When did you first visit the Sound Archive?**

It was in 1983. I was in the fourth year of my training at the Central School of Speech and Drama specialising in voice. I was told about the Sound Archive by Helen Winter who ran the course and I visited virtually straightaway. It was based in Kensington back then.

#### **What did you listen to when you last came?**

I was working on a play *The Man who had all the Luck* by Arthur Miller which was put on at the Donmar Warehouse earlier this year and was very well received. It is set in the Midwest of America and I came to listen to voices from 1930s rural Michigan. I also listened to recordings from Wisconsin as experience has taught me that if you cast your net a little wider than the immediate thing that you are researching it can help to inform you about why people say things or speak the way they do.

#### **How does the Sound Archive help you with your work?**

I am a phonetician and a technician and I like to sit and listen for a long time to accents and voices when I am researching. I then combine this with a great deal of reading and watching. I like to listen as much to what is being said as to how it is spoken. Some of the stories being told give a landscape and a history about the types of people involved that often provide the ingredients for the way they then speak. The Sound Archive also provides a mix of old and new. I could not access the older, period recordings on the internet but there is also access to the more instant recordings if I need them. There isn't a better audio resource available.

#### **How did you find our services?**

It is a delight to be able to go somewhere where people are passionate about sound. The Listening and Viewing Service is very accommodating and I am always offered so much choice – more than I could ever listen to. I also love the British Library building and feel very at home there surrounded by knowledge and books – and sounds, of course!

## EVENTS

### ■ WILDLIFE SOUND RECORDING WORKSHOP

Workshop run by Chris Watson.  
8 August 2008

The British Library Centre  
for Conservation St Pancras.

Details from [cheryl.tipp@bl.uk](mailto:cheryl.tipp@bl.uk)

### ■ WHO CARED? ORAL HISTORY, CARING, HEALTH AND ILLNESS: MARKING 60 YEARS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Annual Conference of the Oral History Society 4 – 5 July 2008,  
University of Birmingham

Details at [www.ohs.org.uk](http://www.ohs.org.uk)

### ■ 'THE GOLDEN GENERATION?' NEW LIGHT ON BRITISH THEATRE BETWEEN 1945 AND 1968

A two day conference presenting some of the findings of the Arts and Humanities Research Council British Library Theatre Archive Project

8 – 9 September 2008, British Library Conference Centre,  
St Pancras

Details at [www.sheffield.ac.uk/goldengeneration](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/goldengeneration)

### ■ NO ARCHIVE IS AN ISLAND

Annual Conference of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives 13 – 19 September 2008, Sydney, Australia

Details at [www.iasa2008.com](http://www.iasa2008.com)

If you are not already on the Sound Archive's mailing list and would like to be, please fill in and return this slip to  
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