

TALKStory

SMITHSONIAN CENTER FOR FOLKLIFE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



A tapestry by Mississippian Ethel Mohamed captures Festival activities on the Mall for the Bicentennial.

ON THE OCCASION OF OUR 40TH FESTIVAL

DIANA PARKER, DIRECTOR, SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

Where does the time go? In the summer of 2006 we will present our 40th Festival. There was much discussion about whether we should celebrate the 40th Festival (2006) or the 40th anniversary of the Festival (2007). In classic Center fashion, we decided to do both.

On July 1, 1967, the Smithsonian opened its first Festival of American Folklife. It was held on the National Mall, in front of the National Museum of History and Technology

(now American History). With performances, demonstrations, workshops, and panel discussions, the Festival presented some sixty craftspeople and twenty performance groups to an appreciative audience. The artists were largely from the southeastern United States but also included Navajo, Hopi, and Osage from the Southwest, and an Alaskan ivory carver. By the time the Festival closed on July 4, the event had attracted over 431,000 visitors, more than doubling previous peak attendance to the Smithsonian on the holiday weekend. The public wrote letters of praise to the Institution, and politicians in the Congressional record and journalists both print and electronic called for the Festival to become an annual event.

And it did. For the second year the Festival added a state program (Texas) and a printed booklet, similar to the catalogues produced by other Smithsonian exhibitions. In short order, foodways, occupational, and children's traditions were added. But it is a tribute to the wisdom

of the founders of the event that so little has changed. Ralph Rinzler and a group of academic folklore luminaries—Roger Abrahams, Henry Glassie, Alan Lomax, Bess Lomax Hawes, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Mike Seeger, Clydia Nahwooksy—approached this new medium with care, thought, and passion. It was envisioned as an educational tool, a conservation strategy, a celebration, a political statement, and a tribute to the wisdom and artistic excellence of the folk who created beauty in their everyday lives.

Since the first Festival we have experimented with different sites, different event durations, and different times of year, but we have settled back where we started—on the Mall between the museums, on the July 4 weekend. In 1998 we changed the name to Smithsonian Folklife Festival. (The Festival had been presenting international programs since the early 1970s, so Festival of American Folklife didn't seem a perfect fit.)

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RICHARD KURIN

These days I think a lot about continuity and change.

On one hand, the Center is remarkably stable. Its historical mission of encouraging the understanding and vitality of diverse cultural traditions across the nation and around the world is as important now as when first formulated. Though it began as a somewhat countercultural experiment during tumultuous times, the Center has become a highly accomplished and well-respected mainstay of the Smithsonian, and well regarded in the museum and scholarly world, while maintaining its own, somewhat unconventional institutional ways. Its varied sources of support—federal appropriations, Smithsonian trust funds, Smithsonian Folkways sales, gifts, and grants—have been quite dependable. Among its staff are more than a dozen whose careers at the Center span four decades! That's continuity.

On the other hand, there are staff changes, and many who will be retiring in the next few years' time are looking ahead toward a new generation that will take the Center's work forward. Our office is moving to a new location this autumn—at Capital Gallery, closer to the Mall—and that occasions rethinking our collections and internal organization. We have also brought focus to new initiatives, such as Smithsonian Global Sound, and found new partners in a changing Smithsonian—working more closely with other museums and research and educational units.

This summer we will produce the 40th Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Decades of thought and work have gone into making the Festival what it is and establishing it as the preeminent educational event on the National Mall of the United States. As might be imagined, the arrangements for its production—legal, logistical, and bureaucratic—are incredibly formidable. Yet each Festival

is born anew, with its programs addressing vital, contemporary cultural communities and issues with fresh perspectives and compelling new voices. This year, those voices come from the plains and fields, mountains and metropolises of Alberta, Canada; from the Latino community of Chicago; from Native American homes and workshops; and from the churches, streets, and clubs of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Enabling these voices are some fine Festival partners, a host of organizations in and joined with Alberta's provincial government, but also the Smithsonian Latino Center, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

With Smithsonian Folkways, we have a collection that stretches back to the beginning of recorded sound and that contains a canon of traditional music, song, and story. We continue to publish that canon, from classical blues and bluegrass to classical balladry and folk music. But look closer and you'll find that our GRAMMY Award nominations—seven over the last two years—contain newly made recordings: for example, the songs and music of the New York Puerto Rican group Los Pleneros de la 21, of Californian Nati Cano's mariachi group, of ranchers from the Colombia-Venezuela border, and of an African Jewish community, all seeking to preserve their identity but doing so in the most creative of ways. Just recently we launched a new Central Asian series featuring contemporary artists from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan with a concert at the Freer Gallery in Washington. Those artists will now tour the U.S., and the experience they take back home with them will profoundly affect how Central Asian traditions can be recovered and used to define a cultural future.

Smithsonian Global Sound well illustrates the dynamic nature of an innovation necessitated by new technologies and social relationships that builds upon past continuities. This highly interactive digital cultural web site offers not only our digitized music and spoken-word Folkways and related collections—but also interviews from research, videos from the Festival, and photographs from our archives. It builds upon decades of work and now provides an interesting window upon American and world cultures. See for yourself at www.smithsonianglobalsound.org why more than one hundred fifty university and city libraries are now subscribing

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TALK Story

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

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ALBERTA TO BE FIRST CANADIAN PROVINCE FEATURED AT FESTIVAL

NANCY GROCE, CURATOR

This summer, more than 150 Albertans will join us at the 40th Smithsonian Folklife Festival to share the distinctive culture of their beloved province.

Named after Queen Victoria's fourth daughter, Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, "Wild Rose Country," as it is called by its 3.26 million residents, is a land of contrasts. Its physical landscape is among the most diverse in North America, with badlands, prairies, arboreal forests, rolling foothills, enormous freshwater lakes such as the Athabasca, and mighty rivers such as the Peace and the North Saskatchewan. Its western border is defined by some of the most breathtakingly spectacular ranges of the Rocky Mountains, its eastern border by the Great Plains. Alberta is enormous: it stretches 764 miles from the U.S.-Montana border to the Northwest Territories, and 412 miles east to west from Saskatchewan to British Columbia. With a total area of 255,213 square miles, the only U.S. states to exceed it in size are Texas and Alaska.

Alberta's economy is the fastest growing in Canada, yet its wealth extends beyond its oil sands and gas fields, beyond its majestic Rocky Mountains and rich agricultural plains, and beyond its legendary ranches and its thriving cosmopolitan, multicultural cities. Alberta's true wealth is its people—a diverse, hard-working, innovative population whose "can-do" spirit has transformed a frontier territory into a prosperous province with a vibrant cultural landscape. Its people are tremendously proud of its past and increasingly confident of its future. Because of its rich and dynamic culture and its recent Centennial Celebration, it is most appropriate that Alberta is the first Canadian province to be featured at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

Among the participants joining us for *Alberta at the Smithsonian* this summer will be family ranchers such as the Biggs Family from the TK Ranch in Hannah, retired elevator operators from The Grain Academy in Calgary, and craftspeople from the Blackfoot, Woodland Cree, and Nakoda nations. World-renowned saddle maker Chuck Stormes and Western silversmith Scott Hardy are coming to the Festival from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, as is the distinguished ceramic artist Les Manning from the Medalta Artist-in-Residence Program at the Clay Historic District in Medicine Hat. There will also be engineers from Alberta's high-tech industries, officers from the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police),



Alberta's culture is shaped by its magnificent landscape.
Photo by Nancy Groce, Smithsonian Institution

hockey and ringette coaches, wilderness guides and fly-fishing experts, paleontologists from the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller, and award-winning cooks from throughout the province. Workers from Alberta's "oil patch" and the northern oil sands around Ft. McMurray will explain and demonstrate their skills—and they will be bringing some rather large equipment with them!

The performing arts will also be well represented by some of Alberta's most respected musicians, including Ian Tyson, Corb Lund, Cowboy Celtic, Maria Dunn, Asani, The McDades, John Wort Hannam, Calvin Vollrath, Sid Marty, and Tim Hus, and traditional dance groups from Alberta's Ukrainian, French, and First Nation communities. Spoken-word artists include Dene storyteller Hal Eagle Tail, oral historian Linda Goyette, and cowboy poets Doris Daley, Terri Mason, and Don Wudel. With the help of Theatresports, an art form created in Alberta, Calgary's Loose Moose Theatre and Edmonton's Rapid Fire Theatre will explain the unique cultures of their home cities (known to harbor a bit of rivalry between them), draw attention to the distinctions between American and Canadian culture, and enlighten audience members on any number of other topics.

Two primary goals of the Folklife Festival are to educate and strengthen cultural understanding between Festival visitors and the people of those cultures we have the honor of featuring on the National Mall. Some years, Festival programs present cultures strikingly different from our own. At first glance, Alberta might not impress Americans as "exotic," but make no mistake: Alberta is very much its own unique entity, one with a distinctive sense of self and an intriguingly complex culture. We look forward to celebrating the traditions that make Alberta so special this coming summer in Washington.

Alberta at the Smithsonian is produced in partnership with the Province of Alberta and with support through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. The City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton are major donors. Suncor Energy Inc. is a donor, and Calgary Economic Development a contributor. Additional support comes from the City Lumber Corporation.

CARRIERS OF CULTURE: LIVING NATIVE BASKET TRADITIONS

C. KURT DEWHURST, MARSHA MACDOWELL, AND MARJORIE HUNT, CURATORS

Weaving lauhala [palm] is like weaving a relationship.... It is weaving together the older with the younger generation.... We are all connected through weaving. Gladys Grace, Native Hawaiian



Navajo basket weavers Mary Holiday Black and her daughters, Lorraine and Sally, from Mexican Hat, Utah.
Photo by Carol Edison, courtesy Utah Arts Council

Across North America and throughout the Hawaiian Islands, hundreds of Native peoples are engaged in an artistic activity that is deeply rooted in the everyday and ceremonial traditions of their communities. In the face of dwindling natural resources and challenges of access to them, the loss of elders holding specialized knowledge, the availability of cheap mass-produced goods, and the use-it-and-throw-it-away attitude of so many, Native artists continue to gather natural materials and weave them into objects of profound beauty and meaning. *Carriers of Culture: Living Native Basket Traditions* examines the contemporary state of Native weaving and the ways in which Native baskets—and their makers—are literally and symbolically “carriers of culture.”

Our young people also need to know that our culture is important, and it doesn't matter if you are educated or not, traditional arts and crafts need to be continued not just for financial support but to retain our traditions. Leah Brady, Western Shoshone

In 1999, Michigan State University Museum began to hold a series of national meetings that brought together weavers and other individuals who were vested in efforts to document, present, and support living basket traditions. Meeting participants identified a number of issues concerning the current status and future of Native basketry across America, and pinpointed strategies to bring national visibility to these issues. *Carriers of Culture* is one of those strategies, and a national curatorial council has worked to insure that these issues are at the core of the program.

Most exhibitions, festivals, or other public programs have centered on the weaving traditions of a specific tribe or region, or focused on baskets as either objects of history or as emblems of cultures past. *Carriers of Culture* affords an unprecedented opportunity to examine contemporary issues across tribal and geographical lines and to reflect on relatively recent efforts by Native basket weavers and others to address these issues.

At the Festival, visitors will see demonstrations by master artists, many of whom have been honored with state, tribal, and national awards, including the National Endowment for the Arts' National Heritage Fellowship. Dance and narrative performances, discussion sessions, and hands-on activities will explore how Native basketweavers have acquired and sustained their extraordinary skills and knowledge—passing these treasured traditions on to new generations of weavers in their communities.

The Festival will also serve as a learning laboratory for 26 Native young people in a program funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Some youth will demonstrate weaving at the Festival alongside more experienced master weavers. Under the mentorship of staff members of the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) and the Center, others will get hands-on and behind-the-scenes experience in museum and festival work.

In conjunction with the Festival, NMAI will host demonstrations by master weavers, show films on weaving, and showcase a preview of the forthcoming *Carriers of Culture* national exhibition.

This program is produced in collaboration with the National Museum of the American Indian and Michigan State University Museum. Major support comes from the National Museum of the American Indian, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Smithsonian Women's Committee on the occasion of their 40th anniversary. Additional support is provided by the Alaska State Council on the Arts and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

NUESTRA MÚSICA: LATINO CHICAGO

OLIVIA CADAVAL, CURATOR

Chicago is called the Windy City, the Industrial Heartland, the Grid on the Prairie, the City of Big Shoulders, and the City that Works. Chi-City is a City of Neighborhoods and a Gigging Town. Chicago is My Kind of Town. It is also Latino Chicago. Increasingly, public officials, scholarly studies, mass media, and the marketplace recognize and celebrate Latinos as the fastest-growing population in the United States. They feature stories of Latinos in New York and California, in the Southwest, and now in growing communities in the South. However, Chicago is seldom mentioned, even though metropolitan Chicago has a Latino population of over a million and a half people that dates back to the early 19th century, when the city began to establish its reputation as the Industrial Heartland with the railroads, stockyards, steel mills, and other industries that drew the earliest Mexican immigrants. Latino Chicago has now grown into a multinational, multicultural community. The largest Latino population is Mexican (second largest in the U.S., after Los Angeles), followed by the Puerto Rican and Guatemalan. Smaller groups from the Caribbean and Central and South America include Ecuadorians, Colombians, Cubans, Peruvians, Salvadorans, and Chileans. A small group of Belizeans and Brazilians also consider themselves part of the community. Latino Chicago has not only made its imprint on the political and economic landscape, but its vibrant cultural presence in this Gigging Town offers us a very distinctive and unique window into Latino culture in the United States.

In partnership with the Old Town School of Folk Music, the Center launched a research project in the spring of 2005 in preparation for a *Latino Chicago* Festival program in 2006. Under the guidance of guest curator Juan Días, 20 local researchers explored various aspects

of Latino folklife in Chicago, recording the stories of artists and organizations, documenting special events and parades, foodways, and more. Two overarching questions guided the researchers: How do the arts shape, and how are they shaped by, community and identity? What characterizes Chicago's Latino community as unique and distinct from other Latino communities elsewhere? Researchers found many different answers and perspectives. Most importantly, the questions have led to a cultural dialogue that will continue during the Folklife Festival, when many Latino Chicago artists come to share their lives and experiences with the public on the National Mall.

The *Latino Chicago* program will evoke Chicago as a City of Neighborhoods with multiethnic stores, cafés and restaurants, clubs and ballrooms, community cultural centers, murals, the CTA "EL" (elevated-rail system), and street food and ice cream vendors. The Aragón Ballroom stage, honoring a popular ballroom that opened in the 1960s, will come alive with music and dance performances that include traditional Mexican *son* accompanied by renowned folkloric dancers, Peruvian *música criolla* and dancers with a local folk group, Puerto Rican *bomba* and *plena* music and dance, a popular Mexican *banda* featuring Latino Chicago's own "*pasito duranguense*" along with *cumbias*, *merengues*, *bachatas*, and more. The audience will be invited to join dance workshops. The Aragón will also feature sacred Azteca music and dance, Puerto Rican *jibaro* music featuring the traditional *cuatro* guitar, Latino hip hop, *boleros* (romantic songs), Andean music, and South American *nueva canción*. Suni Paz, a Smithsonian Folkways Recordings *Traditions/Tradiciones* Series Argentinian artist, also will participate in the music program at the Aragón Ballroom.

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Gamaliel Ramírez's mural brings to life the rich cultural activity of Chicago's diverse Latino communities. Photo courtesy Gamaliel Ramírez

NUESTRA MÚSICA: LATINO CHICAGO *(continues from previous page)*

At the Old Town School of Folk Music stage, Festival visitors can compose a song, play a tune, drum a rhythm, dress their hair for a regional dance, or swirl a skirt to the rhythms of a Puerto Rican *bomba* or a Mexican *jarabe* dance. Inspired by their city and its multicultural Latino communities, Chicago artists will create murals with the assistance of local Washington, D.C., apprentices. Radio Arte, a Chicago youth-run radio station, has inspired the narrative stage. Two

young Radio Arte radio producers will intersperse interviews and conversations with participating artists with their own reporting on the Festival as it unfolds.

Jarocho music artists from Mexico will complement the Chicago artists during the *Latino Chicago* program. As part of the AfroMex Festival sponsored by the Cultural Institute of Mexico in collaboration with the Kennedy Center and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural

Heritage, *Latino Chicago* will present Trío Chalchihuecan during the first week of the Festival and Son de Madera during the second.

This program is produced in partnership with the Old Town School of Folk Music, with the collaboration of the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, the Cultural Institute of Mexico, and the support of the Smithsonian Latino Initiatives Fund and the Music Performance Fund. Media support is provided by California-based Radio Bilingüe Satélite radio network, broadcasting live from the Festival.

BEEN IN THE STORM SO LONG: SPECIAL EVENING CONCERT SERIES



The Young Tuxedo Brass Band represented New Orleans at the 1985 Festival. Photo by Dane Penland, Smithsonian Institution

Been in the Storm So Long will feature African-American musical traditions from the region devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Produced in collaboration with the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the concerts will present New Orleans jazz, brass bands, rhythm & blues, Mardi Gras Indians, and gospel.

The exciting rhythms and improvised melodies that first appeared over one hundred years ago live today in traditionally oriented jazz ensembles

and innovative hot brass bands. The city's unique Afro-Caribbean and blues spirit continues in the tradition of the greatest gospel and rhythm & blues legends. Mardi Gras Indians carry on the majesty of a street parade tradition, combining colorful costumes with West African-influenced chants and rhythms.

The three concerts, curated by Michael White, celebrate the strength and richness of the musical heritage of New Orleans.

BE A FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER THIS YEAR!

To check the variety of opportunities available before and during the Festival, call Judy Luis-Watson at 202-275-2003.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

INSPIRATIONS FROM THE FOREST

JIM DEUTSCH, CURATOR

The ways in which our national forests—timberlands, grasslands, mountains, and waterways—have served and continue to serve as artistic inspirations is the focus of a traveling exhibition produced by the Center with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. The exhibition, entitled *Inspirations from the Forest*, will travel to 33 different sites—most of them in rural communities, including Forest Service visitor centers, museums, and festivals—in 21 states during 2006.

The traveling exhibition was developed from the 2005 Folklife Festival program *Forest Service, Culture, and Community*, which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Forest Service by highlighting the occupational and cultural traditions of those who live and work in our nation's forests and rangelands.

Consisting of 16 panels with texts and photographs, the exhibition illustrates how artists are able to transform natural materials such as grass, wood, and wool into objects of beauty, while also contributing to their rural communities' sense of local identity. In

addition to hosting the exhibition, most sites will offer live demonstrations, workshops, and musical performances by nationally recognized craftsmen and artists, including National Heritage Fellowship recipients. The exhibition also is available online (www.folklife.si.edu/explore/inspirations.html), where visitors will find links to audio and video clips of the featured artists represented; a Learning Guide for younger visitors on the arts and natural resources; and a Resource Directory, with information about individuals, publications, and web sites related to the arts and the environment.

The artists featured in the exhibition include Keith Bear, flute maker and storyteller, North Dakota; Angie Bullets, cradleboard maker, Arizona; Jim Denney, landscape painter, Oregon; Terry Evans, photographer, Illinois; Jack Holcomb, guitar maker, Georgia; Dorica Jackson, Chilkat weaver, Alaska; Nathan Jackson, totem pole carver, Alaska; Wally McRae, cowboy poet, Montana; Paula Morin, photographer, Illinois; Heather Murphy, wildlife painter, Washington state; Hank Nelson, logger poet, Alaska; Leona Pooyouma, wicker basket weaver, Arizona;



Henrietta Snype, a sweetgrass basket maker from Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, is one of the artists represented in the traveling exhibition.

Photo by Jillian Foley, Smithsonian Institution

Marvin Pooyouma, textile weaver, Arizona; Rodney Richard, wood-carver, Maine; Michelle Ryan, quilter, Montana; Gary Snyder, environmental poet, California; Henrietta Snype, sweetgrass basket maker, South Carolina; Sidne Teske, landscape painter, Nevada; Walt Thies, wood turner, Oregon; Teresa Trulock, quilter, Wyoming; and Francisco Valenzuela, photographer, Colorado.

EL RÍO EXHIBITION OPENS IN ALBUQUERQUE

The *El Río* Traveling Exhibition, now at the end of its tour, was inaugurated at the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, on April 7, 2006, and will continue on exhibit until January 2007. Throughout the year, public programs will complement the

exhibition. A poster-size version of the exhibition, accompanied by a Do-Your-Own-Exhibition Kit, will tour through the schools.

Based on the 1998 and 2000 *El Río: Culture and Environment in the Rio Grande/rio Bravo Basin* Smithsonian Folklife Festival programs, the

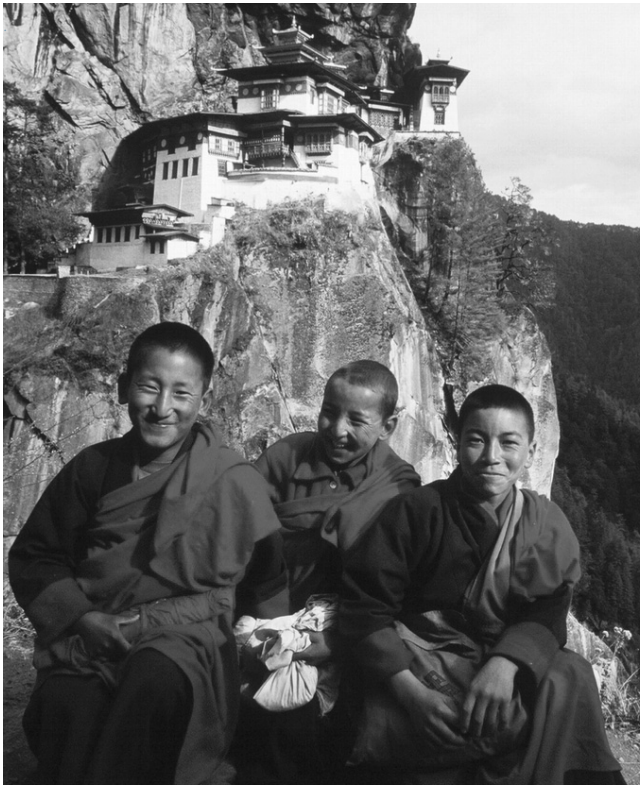
exhibition was first shown at the Smithsonian Arts & Industries Building in 2003.

This project has been generously supported by the Smithsonian Latino Initiatives and Special Exhibition Funds, The Houston Endowment, Inc., and the Rockefeller Foundation.

UPCOMING FESTIVAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Roots of Virginia Culture

What cultural influences helped shape the Commonwealth of Virginia? Like Captain John Smith, Festival-goers in 2007 can explore the commonwealth at *The Roots of Virginia Culture*, a program commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. The program focuses on Native American, English, and African-American culture but will include a number of other important cultural influences as well. Participants from Kent County, England, and from West Africa will demonstrate cultural parallels as well as different cultural routes taken since the 1600s. Participants from the eight Indian tribes of Virginia will also be present to showcase their traditions. The program will show how “the past is present” through the roots of Virginia music, dance, foodways, agriculture, and building arts, among other traditions. Fieldwork is currently underway in both Virginia and England to identify traditions and potential participants. The program’s curator is Betty Belanus. The program is sponsored by Jamestown 2007 and the Kent County Council, England.



Bhutan at the 2008 Festival

Lyonpo Jigme Thinley, Bhutan’s Minister of Home and Cultural Affairs, surveyed the Festival site last June and considered the story his country might tell on the National Mall in 2008. Situated in the eastern Himalayas and bordered by China and India, Bhutan rises in just a few hundred miles from steamy jungles to some of the world’s highest peaks. No roads led outside the kingdom until the 1960s, and access by air became possible only a few decades ago. Bhutan has decided to go carefully into the world of nations and has chosen a different path towards development, rooted in deep respect for and protection of its cultural and natural resources. National policies are formulated partially in light of how they will increase “Gross National Happiness,” and the Festival program will show how, drawing on this challenging alternative approach to modern life, Bhutan tries to balance the protection of its unique culture with increasing globalization.

On March 16 Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence Small signed a Memorandum of Agreement in Bhutan between the Smithsonian Institution and the Bhutan Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs for the support of a Smithsonian Festival program in 2008. Following a visit by Center staff to Bhutan in January 2005 and a reciprocal visit by a Bhutanese delegation to the 2005 Folklife Festival, a program committee has been formed in Bhutan and a Leadership Committee in the U.S. Walter Cronkite, Yo-Yo Ma, Mickey Hart, and other interested individuals will assist in identifying financial and programmatic support for the project. Center Research Associate Preston Scott and Richard Kennedy will work closely with both committees over the coming years.

Three monks rest on their pilgrimage up the mountainside to the Taktshang Monastery above the Paro Valley, Bhutan.

Photo by Andrew Connors, courtesy World Foundation for Environment and Development

Also planned for 2007 are Festival programs on Northern Ireland and the Mekong region.

SEEING THE WORLD OF SOUND

DAN SHEEHY, DIRECTOR AND CURATOR

Music-making is best seen as well as heard, an important but often undervalued notion. The future, though, holds great promise that the visual dimension of music will be more a part of its reproduced renditions and its general appreciation. The DVD, iPods with video, internet digital streaming, podcasts, and other technological innovations make this a certainty. It is a truism that looking back over time can clarify our visions of looking ahead. For me, with the visual dimension of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings in mind, this idea rang truer than ever as I roamed through the *Seeing the World of Sound: The Cover Art of Folkways Records* exhibition in the Fine Arts Building Gallery at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta.

The exhibition marked the centennial of the birth of Moses Asch, the founder of Folkways Records. As I wrote in the foreword to the exhibition catalogue, the exhibition “offers, for the first time, a major retrospective analysis and display of a frequently mentioned, but little-explored, dimension of the Folkways Records legacy, its cover art. Since the record label’s birth in 1948, Folkways cover art has been a signature of its mission and message—discovering the fascinating beauty of music by and for people everywhere, and exploring the subtlety of the auditory environment that surrounds us. Selecting from its more than 2,000 recordings, this exhibition illuminates the ‘look’ that invites the ‘listen’ of the recordings, evoking the breadth and diversity of audible and especially musical creation, and celebrating the Folkways contributions to visual design.” Moses Asch, who visited his son Michael during Michael’s career as professor of anthropology at the University of Alberta, once donated an entire copy of the Folkways catalogue to the university. In 2003, this collection became the cornerstone of an institutional collaboration between Smithsonian Folkways Recordings and the University of Alberta, named the *folkwaysAlive!* project. Flowing from the shared vision of the collaboration, co-curators Margaret Asch and Joan Greer, along with designer Susan Colberg and Folkways liaison Atesh Sonneborn, conceived and produced the milestone exhibition. The 209 covers selected and their interpretative signage explore Moses Asch’s attention to the “marriage” of sound and cover image, how they cumulatively tell a story of human creativity and experience, and how they intersect with the artistic, cultural, and social currents of

their time. Now that it has closed, our hope is that *Seeing the World of Sound* will find new life as a traveling exhibition.

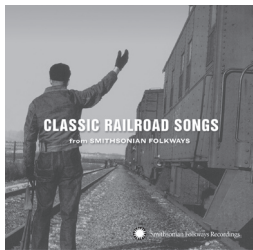
The visual dimension of long-play albums was severely eclipsed by the advent of cassettes and CDs, which offered precious little room for visual expression. Today, however, we may be on the brink of renewed potential to see this aspect and more of the visual realms of the world of sound, and Smithsonian Folkways, in tandem with its digital sibling, Smithsonian Global Sound, is taking steps in this direction. Released in October, *Dark Holler: Old Love Songs and Ballads* (SFW 40159) included a bonus DVD with the music CD, a 1972 film by compiler John Cohen, paving the way for more of the same. In March 2006, the first three volumes of the *Music of Central Asia* series each include a bonus DVD, offering a deeper sense of geographic, social, and cultural contexts and performance settings. As we grow the content of Smithsonian Global Sound, so grows the number of features with moving image, still image, and text that augment the liner notes of Smithsonian Folkways releases. Just as Folkways Records was a pioneer in conveying the meaning of music beyond the sound alone through descriptive liner notes describing the musical genres, instruments, and cultures, the enhancement of today’s Folkways releases with bonus DVDs, additional information on the www.folkways.si.edu web site, and rich, multimedia metadata delivered by www.smithsonianglobalsound.org takes this concept several steps forward. The potential to radically expand the intellectual and visual dimension of our recordings has arrived; our challenge is to use these tools to best effect in carrying out our educational mission.

Another, “old-fashioned” means of visual musical expression—the live performance—also enhanced Folkways artists and their music in recent months. A sold-out matinee concert at the D.C.-area’s Strathmore Hall on February 5 paid homage to “The First Lady of Children’s Music,” Ella Jenkins. Artists and concert producers Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer assembled a blue-ribbon lineup of the nation’s leading children’s music artists, along with The First Lady herself, all of whom appeared on the GRAMMY-winning *cELLABration* album (SFW 45059). We videotaped the concert with the aims of creating a major DVD release for distribution through Folkways and of producing features on Smithsonian Global Sound.

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New Releases

JANUARY



Classic Railroad Songs from Smithsonian Folkways (SFW 40192)

Since the railroad's rise in the 1800s, it has been a thing of musical fascination and fodder for American musicians and songwriters. Railroad work songs, ballads recounting riveting exploits, and instrumental echoes of the once-familiar sounds of the steam locomotive have enshrined the railroad in America's musical memory. *Classic Railroad Songs* mines the Smithsonian Folkways archives to create this tribute to a favorite American source of inspiration.

FEBRUARY



¡Arriba Suena Marimba! Currulao Marimba Music from Colombia by Grupo Naidy (SFW 40514)

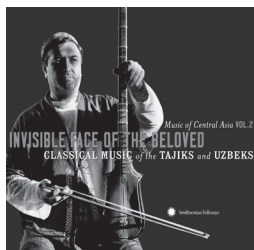
The marimba is a vivid legacy of the African presence in Latin America, but only on the Pacific coast of southern Colombia and northern Ecuador does it keep its close connections to a strongly African culture. Hailing from small towns along the river-ridden Colombian coast, the seasoned women singers of Grupo Naidy raise their voices to the accompaniment of marimba and drums, performing their unique styles of music known collectively as *currulao*.

MARCH



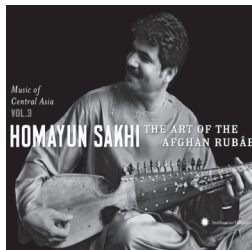
Music of Central Asia, Vol. 1 Tengir-Too: Mountain Music of Kyrgyzstan (SFW 40520)

Jew's harps, fiddles, plucked stringed instruments, and powerful voices transmit the vibrant rhythms of nomadism and the serene atmosphere of the Kyrgyz mountains in a musical language as contemporary as it is ancient. This deluxe package launches *Music of Central Asia*, a multi-volume series that brings to life the diverse and remarkable musical culture of a region long inaccessible to outsiders. An accompanying DVD contains a series introduction, 24-minute film, interactive glossary, and map.



Music of Central Asia, Vol. 2 Invisible Face of the Beloved: Classical Music of the Tajiks and Uzbeks (SFW 40521)

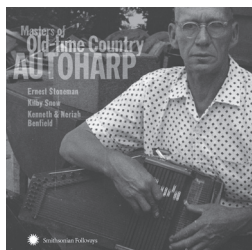
Amid the mosques and minarets of Samarkand and Bukhara, generations of vocalists set the mystical, Sufi-inspired verse of Hafiz and other classical poets to lyrical melodies. They created a spiritual art music of great refinement and sublime beauty called *Shashmaqâm*, which occupies an important place among the great art music traditions of Eurasia. Includes DVD.



Music of Central Asia, Vol. 3 Homayun Sakhi: The Art of the Afghan Rubab (SFW 40522)

From Kabul to California, Homayun Sakhi is admired as the outstanding Afghan *rubab* player of his generation, a charismatic virtuoso who has pushed the limits of his instrument. With tabla player Taryalai Hashimi, Sakhi plays music that is uniquely Afghan, yet resonates strongly with the spirit of Indian raga. Includes DVD.

APRIL



Masters of Old-time Country Autoharp (SFW 40115)

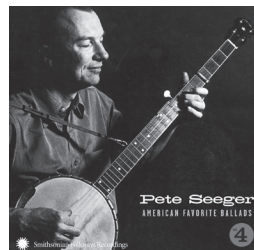
The autoharp, invented in the 1870s, became a virtuoso instrument among musicians featured here and a few other players in the early to mid-20th century. Spirited breakdowns, sentimental and gospel songs—some played as instrumentals—and even a bluegrass song are presented in this re-release of the only documentary of traditional Southern autoharp players. Includes 14 previously unissued tracks. Recorded, edited, and annotated by Mike Seeger; song notes by Charles Wolfe.



Classic African-American Ballads from Smithsonian Folkways (SFW 40191)

Classic African-American Ballads is an uncommon sampling of an important, historic, and engaging slice of America's Black music heritage. The heyday of the Black ballad tradition (1890–1920) left a lasting strain of creativity and a monument to African-American life of the time. Ranging from songs created from the heritage of the English ballad to social commentary vilifying abusive white authority figures and “blues ballads,” this album reminds us of the enormity and constant evolution of African-American musical tradition.

MAY



Pete Seeger: American Favorite Ballads, Vol. 4 (SFW 40153)

Pete Seeger has long set the standard for interpreters of American traditional and topical songs. This fourth volume in the popular series compiled from the Folkways Records *American Favorite Ballads* series of the 1950s and 1960s features Seeger's versions of classic folk songs from America's past. Extensive liner notes by folk-song scholar Guy Logsdon describe their origins in an emerging nation and their place in the American folk song movement. *American Favorite Ballads* is a classic among classics.

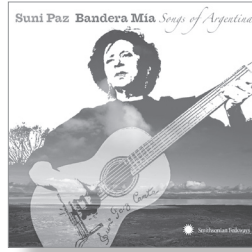
New Releases

JUNE



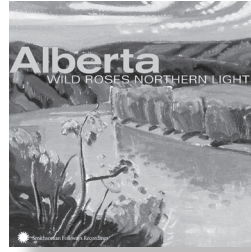
Classic Labor Songs from Smithsonian Folkways (SFW 40166)

Songs of the American labor movement over the 20th century voiced grievances, affirmed the value of the worker to society, and painted a picture of a just world that could, one day, exist. *Classic Labor Songs* is a collage of these voices, singing with a passion and love for their fellow workers that still rings true today. Utah Phillips, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Joe Glazer, the Almanac Singers, and more chronicle the history of the American labor movement in stirring song.



Classic Canadian Songs from Smithsonian Folkways (SFW 40538)

Canadian identity was once truly a mosaic—of disparate regions and small communities widely dispersed over a vast and inhospitable landscape. *Classic Canadian Songs from Smithsonian Folkways* showcases the rich musical traditions from generations of European settlers and contrasts them with the music of Aboriginal peoples fiercely determined to preserve their ways of life in the wake of colonialism and its injustices.



Alberta: Wild Roses, Northern Lights (SFW 40539)

The music of Alberta is as beautiful, dynamic, and varied as its scenery. From Alberta's majestic Rocky Mountains to its prairies, foothills, badlands, forests, lakes, and cities, this 19-track CD introduces listeners to some of the very best contemporary singer/songwriters and musicians from Wild Rose Country. Join k.d. lang, Ian Tyson, Corb Lund, and their fellow Albertans and capture the energy, excitement, and can-do spirit of their beloved province in sound.



Suní Paz—Bandera Mía: Songs of Argentina (SFW 40532)

In *Bandera Mía*, "My Flag," veteran folk singer, songwriter, and guitarist Suní Paz paints a melodious musical mosaic of favorite Argentine folk rhythms, including tango, *chacarera*, *bailecito*, *carnavalito*, *gato*, *zamba*, and *vidalita*. Original arrangements and artful interpretations give new life to classic forms adopted by the pan-Latin American folk revival and pay inspired tribute to Argentina's powerful musical heritage.

SEEING THE WORLD OF SOUND (continues from page 9)

March 15 marked the launch of the *Via Kabul: Central Asia Without Borders* tour of Central Asian artists featured on the first three volumes of the 10-volume *Folkways Music of Central Asia* series, created in partnership with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. Produced by the AKTC and attended by His Highness the Aga Khan himself, the tour launch treated a capacity audience at the Meyer Auditorium of the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery to musical delicacies from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The three CD volumes, in numerical order, are: *Tengir-Too: Mountain Music of Kyrgyzstan* (SFW 40520); *Invisible Face of the Beloved: Classical Music of the Tajiks and Uzbeks* (SFW 40521); and *Homayun Sakhi: The Art of the Afghan Rubâb* (SFW 40522). Outstanding reviews in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* praising the extraordinary music and its deluxe packaging also added momentum to the new releases.

Additional recordings published since the previous *Talk Story* report include *Classic Railroad Songs from Smithsonian Folkways* (SFW 40192) and *¡Arriba Suena Marimba! Currulao Marimba Music from Colombia* (SFW 40514). The former was compiled by Center Archivist Jeff Place and earned mention in the widely circulated *Parade Magazine*, sparking a flurry of orders. The latter release, the first 2006 installment of our Latino music series *Traditions/Tradiciones*, was recorded by Folkways Audio Supervisor Pete Reiniger in Cali, Colombia, and is the only widely available recording of the Western Hemisphere's sole African-based marimba tradition. While the marimba was brought from Africa and is widespread throughout Central America and southern Mexico, only in the region overlapping

the Pacific coast of southern Colombia and northern Ecuador is it an ongoing tradition of a strongly African culture. In the same breath, I should mention that two 2005 Latino releases produced with the support of the Smithsonian Latino Center's Latino Initiatives Fund won GRAMMY nominations: *¡Llegaron Los Camperos! Concert Favorites of Nati Cano's Mariachi Los Camperos* (SFW 40517) and *Para Todos Ustedes: Bomba y Plena desde Nueva York by Los Pleneros de la 21* (SFW 40519). Several more new recordings are being released this spring (see "New Releases").

In January, we bade farewell to our colleague and Sales Associate Ryan Hill, who left Folkways to follow his professional dream of opening a specialty record store. Ryan was a true music-industry professional and broke much new ground in connecting our recordings with museum stores and other niche markets. We wish him well in this new chapter of his career.

As always, many talented interns passed through our offices and contributed greatly to our work. We thank Folkways interns Susan Frye, Suse Goericke, David Kantor, Oana Lupu, Melissa Marquardt, Alex Reidl, Berenice Sánchez, and Benjamin Teitelbaum, as well as Smithsonian Global Sound interns Cameron Adamez, Stephen Barkley, Chris DeWitt, Cat Lao, and Vina Lervisit. The previous "graduating class" included Wills Glasspiegel, Jenna Homrich-Micocci, Clifford Kaplan, Meghan Krembel, Daniel Moscov, Elana Sabolch, and Jessica Schwartz. They will forever be part of the Folkways family, and we look forward to hearing of their future endeavors. Additional thanks go to volunteer Pam Adler.

BRINGING WORLD AND
FOLK MUSIC VIDEOS TO THE WEBAMY SCHRIEFER,
SMITHSONIAN GLOBAL SOUND
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

I've never known music without music videos. Growing up, MTV was my main portal into new music. My love of Madonna's song "Vogue" is just as much about wanting to dance like they do in the video as it is about the music. And now with my laptop, video iPod, video cell phone, and web sites like YouTube.com, watching videos is more a part of my music listening experience than ever.

This is why I am so excited to add free streaming videos to the Smithsonian Global Sound web site. Almost all of our articles and artist profiles are enhanced with video content. Just look under the "Features and Education" section to find a wealth of moving images. Or go directly to "Global Sound Live" (www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/sgs_live.aspx), our newest page featuring only videos.

View archival material on Elizabeth Cotten and Dewey Balfa, new footage of Rahim Alhaj in the studio for his upcoming oud recording, and legendary past Folklife Festival performances by Los Pleneros de la 21 and Hasan Gure. And you'll find not only performances. Listen to Bernice Johnson Reagon lecture on the meaning of freedom in her artist profile, or Ana Veydó from Grupo Cimarrón discuss being a woman vocalist in the male-dominated style of *joropo* music in the feature for Women's History Month. Also watch a demonstration of the *pandereta* in the Puerto Rican *bomba* and *plena* article and a throat-singing demonstration in the American Indian Heritage Month piece. There is so much to explore, and more continues to be added weekly.

We hope the video content entertains and educates visitors to Global Sound while spurring greater interest in the music and sound available on our web site. This multimedia approach strengthens our mission by affording a richer experience of the diverse musics and cultures and giving not only a voice but a face to the artists we support.

Global Sound videos look as good as they do because of the hard work of Folklife Media Specialist Charlie Weber, our curators and archivists, Global Sound Technology Director Toby Dodds, and Global



Sound intern Cameron Adamez. Their dedication to identifying and contextualizing quality material make us stand out in a sea of Madonna videos.

Global Sound is especially proud to offer a worldwide platform for the incredible video footage collected from the Smithsonian Folklife Festival over the years. This year, we are taking it a step further by webcasting selected Festival concerts and events live. If you cannot make it to the 2006 Festival, we hope you will log on to www.smithsonianglobalsound.org and experience the Festival music with us.

In additional Global Sound news, we are getting a reputation around the Smithsonian as being the go-to group to work with for great music and technology. The National Museum of African Art approached us to create a streaming radio for their new web site. Radio Africa launched on their home page last fall, enhancing their site with hours of incredible music from Africa. The best part is that every track links back to Global Sound, so you can learn more about the music and purchase the tracks. The success of Radio Africa led to Radio Asia, which launched on the Freer and Sackler Galleries' web site this month. More radio programs are in the works.

The Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies asked us to provide the soundtrack to their recent issue of *Smithsonian in Your Classroom* featuring lesson plans on music and poetry. We created an online feature to accompany the lesson plans; teachers and students can access audio samples, full-length tracks, and video performances to better understand the ballad and blues stanzas found in music and poetry. *Smithsonian in Your Classroom* will be sent to over 100,000 schools across the country and is also available at www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/siyc.

With limited resources for marketing, partnerships such as these are vital in getting the word out about our web site. We hope our reputation keeps growing throughout the Smithsonian and beyond.

SMITHSONIAN GLOBAL SOUND NOMINATED FOR AN "ONLINE OSCAR"

Smithsonian Global Sound was up for a 2006 Webby! Out of almost 6,000 submissions, Smithsonian Global Sound was nominated for Best Charitable/Nonprofit Organization web site.

The Webby Awards are the leading international awards honoring excellence in web design, functionality, and creativity. The Webbys are presented by The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, a 500-member body of leading web experts, business figures, luminaries, visionaries, and creative celebrities including David Bowie, "The Simpsons" creator Matt Groening, and Real Networks CEO Rob Glaser. In addition to the academy's award, we were also eligible for The Webby People's Voice Award. Thanks to everyone who voted for us!

WEB NEWS/VIEWS

"WATER WAYS" LAUNCHES

The online exhibition *Water Ways: Mid-Atlantic Maritime Communities* was launched in January. The site, based on research done for and documentation gathered during the 2004 Folklife Festival's *Water Ways* program, is a resource for anyone interested in the culture of maritime communities and the challenges these communities face. With a boat-load of photos, audio and video clips, and a special "Kids' Coast" section for students and teachers, the site offers

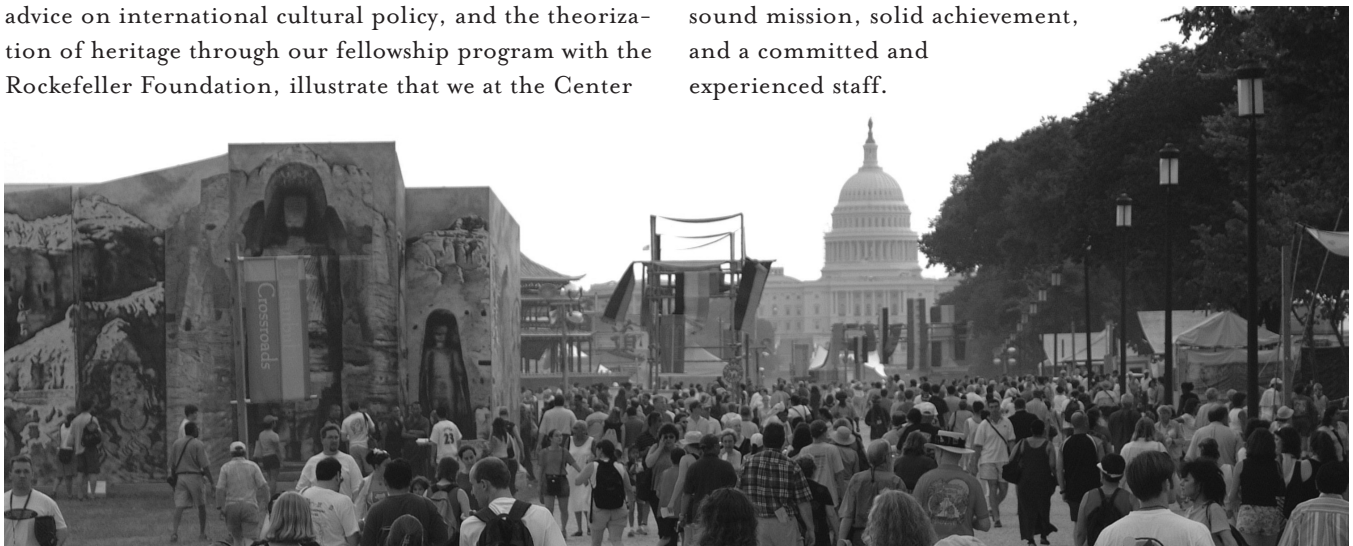
layer upon layer of information. Come test the waters at www.folklife.si.edu. Click on "Online Exhibitions" under the heading "Explore Culture" to find the site. Many people, including a number of Center interns, worked to make the site a reality; you can find a list of them all in the credit section under "About the Water Ways Exhibit Site." The curator of the program and the exhibition, Betty Belanus, invites comments at belanusb@si.edu.

DIRECTOR'S TALK STORY *(continues from page 2)*

to Smithsonian Global Sound, why more than a million people have visited the site, and why other Smithsonian units like the Freer Gallery and the National Museum of African Art have used it as the sound track to their museum collections.

All of these developments and others, such as our advice on international cultural policy, and the theorization of heritage through our fellowship program with the Rockefeller Foundation, illustrate that we at the Center

consider our efforts to be an ongoing work in progress by no means finished or staid. We relish the many opportunities we have to play a significant role in the cultural future of many, many people around the planet. And though we face challenges, we do so with optimism, founded in the confidence guided by a sound mission, solid achievement, and a committed and experienced staff.



Huge crowds attended the 2002 Festival, walking a simulated Silk Road along the Mall. Photo by Jeff Tinsley, Smithsonian Institution

NEWSMAKERS

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently re-appointed **Richard Kurin** to the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO for an additional three-year term. He had originally been appointed by Secretary Colin Powell. Kurin and **Carla Borden** attended a conference on cultural heritage and development in the Arab world in Alexandria, Egypt, in January.

Peter Seitel was invited to a meeting on documentation and archiving at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, January 12–13, to present Synchronotext, a computer application described in a previous *Talk Story*. While there, he also represented the Center's point of view on the recently passed Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), which can be summed up in two broad principles. First is the imperative to open all aspects of institutional practices of cultural representation—not only performance and other provision of content but also interpretation, dissemination, documentation, etc.—to local cultural groups. This policy imperative was at the center of Festival founder Ralph Rinzler's practice. And second is the principle articulated by James Early as "No folklore without the folk," that is, the necessity of a holistic perspective, which includes economic and quality-of-life considerations, in all aspects of Center practice vis-à-vis ICH.

Diana N'Diaye participated in two expert meetings convened by UNESCO to make recommendations on the implementation of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The first meeting, held in December in Paris, concerned developing criteria for inscription on the representative lists established by the Convention. At the second meeting, in Tokyo in March, she made a presentation on community involvement in safeguarding ICH. She also worked with the Bahamas Department of Tourism organizing a nationally televised town meeting in Nassau's Fox Hill community during National Tourism Week (January 8–13, 2006) on community-based heritage tourism.

Jim Deutsch's articles "Bad Man," "Maya Deren," and "John Michael Vlach" were published in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Folklore*, ed. Anand Prahlad (Greenwood Press,

2006). He published book reviews in the *Journal of American Folklore* and *Film International*, and taught a course this spring, "The American Cinema," at George Washington University. He also presented several papers: "The Rise of American Film in the Progressive Era" at the American History Fall Institute Workshop in Bedford, New Hampshire, in December; and "How Is the Greatest Good Defined?" at the Eckerd College Environmental Film Festival in St. Petersburg, Florida, in March.

Rockefeller Humanities Fellows in residence at the Center this spring included **Bernard Bakaye** of Uganda, **Mary Kenny** of Eastern Connecticut State University, **Laurajane Smith** of the University of York, **Susan Keitumetse** of the University of Cambridge and Botswana, and **Sharon Clarke** of North Carolina. Center staff and local colleagues had an opportunity to hear their reflections on the economics of cultural heritage at a series of seminars.

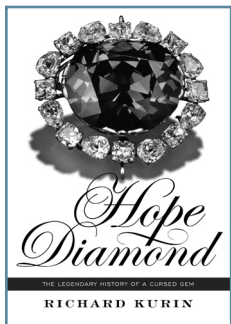
Former Center Research Associates **Ivan Karp** and **Corinne Kratz** have edited a volume to be published this fall by Duke University Press, *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. It is the third volume of a series on culture, society, and museums that began with *Exhibiting Cultures* and was followed by *Museums and Communities*. The first two have become classic reference books both for museum and heritage professionals and for scholars from a range of fields interested in museum and heritage studies and the politics of representation.

Comings and Goings: Center reorganization has eliminated five staff positions: **Carla Borden**, **Rachelle Hardy**, **Peter Seitel**, **Norman van der Sluys**, and **Cynthia Vidaurri**. Seitel will become Folklorist Emeritus; Borden and Vidaurri will become Research Associates.

Denise Arnot has moved to Delaware. The Center's new Art Director, **Krystyn Confair**, has been Graphic Designer at the Center. **Kevin Blackerby** is now the Center's Development Officer. **Loretta Faye Cooper** became VP for Development at the Scottsdale Cultural Council.

Marquinta Bell gave birth to Marques D. Bell in November.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR NEW BOOK BY THE CENTER DIRECTOR!



Hope Diamond
The Legendary History of a Cursed Gem
RICHARD KURIN, *Smithsonian Books/HarperCollins*

"Kurin takes us on a journey that is full of adventure and reminds us that objects have biographies that are both full of drama and revelation. This is a history lesson with panache!"

—Rubie Watson, Curator, Peabody Museum, Harvard University

"Dr. Kurin's book is an exciting retelling of the tragic and magical, yet true story of the Hope diamond. I relived many of my personal memories of my late father, Harry Winston, when he bought the stone and ultimately donated it to the Smithsonian. Carefully researched and well-written, Dr. Kurin brings the story alive."

—Ronald Winston, Chairman, Harry Winston, Inc.

RELEASE DATE: MAY 9, 2006

I cannot imagine where the Festival will go in the next 40 years, but I am sure it will continue to challenge, engage, and exhaust us. And to remind us from time to time what our world can be at its best. *Diana Parker*

Technology has given us some wonderful tools for production, context setting, and sound reproduction, but the basic elements of presentation have remained. The power of the Festival still comes from the personal interaction between artist and visitor, and we still spend a great deal of time exploring ways to enhance that interaction.

While each Festival has its own importance, we seem to have had a milestone per decade. In 1976, the Festival was chosen as the centerpiece of the U.S. Bicentennial celebration. The Festival ran for three months and featured the cultures of every region of the United States. In addition, there were programs highlighting Native Americans', working Americans', and children's culture. *Family Folklore* collected stories from thousands of families attending the event. *Old Ways in the New World* brought together American artists and tradition-bearers from their mother countries. The extraordinary *African Diaspora* united African Americans with people sharing a common culture from Africa and the Caribbean. On any given day at the Festival, there were some 600 musicians, cooks, craftspeople, ritual practitioners, workers, storytellers, ballad singers, dancers, and others sharing their artistic excellence and personal history with a large and enthusiastic audience. Many of these programs switched participants weekly, creating a gargantuan production challenge. Thousands of airline reservations, visa requests, supply needs, dietary requirements, honoraria, and more had to be processed. But in the end, what is remembered is that for one beautiful summer people met and shared their songs, food, artistry, stories, and hope for the future.

In 1985, the Festival was part of the larger Festival of India. Our Festival featured India, Louisiana, and a program on strategies for cultural conservation, and our office co-produced *Aditi: The Living Arts of India*, a two-month-long living exhibition in the National Museum of Natural History. Both were huge popular successes, drawing record crowds to the Mall and, in the process, affecting the way exhibitions are envisioned.

The year 2002 brought the *Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*. Co-produced with Yo-Yo Ma and his wonderful Silk Road Project, it brought artists from Italy, Japan, and places in between, including Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, and more. In the post 9/11 environment, it was a moment of hope, as American visitors embraced our guests with warm enthusiasm. Attendance records were set, and the critical response was overwhelmingly positive. The event received unprecedented international press coverage.



Dejan's Olympia Brass Band from New Orleans played at the first Festival in 1967. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution

The Festival has also become a model for large-scale content-based commemorations. Festival staff have been asked to produce the Smithsonian's own 150th "birthday" celebration in 1996, the Atlanta Olympic Arts Festival that same summer, inaugural celebrations for all but two U.S. presidents since Jimmy Carter, the 2004 Grand Opening of the National Museum of the American Indian, and the national reunion for the dedication of the World War II Memorial, also in 2004, among others. Each of these national events has called for thoughtful programming, sophisticated technology, and careful production. But most of all, they have needed that special element that has made the Festival unique; they have required us to present the participants in a dignified, respectful way, to create for them a stage from which to share with the public their particular perspective on who we are at this point in our history.

The Festival has also served as inspiration for a wide variety of artists. Many Festival participants have honored it in their own genre. Ethel Mohamed stitched a magnificent embroidered piece that served as the cover for the 1976 catalogue. A striking *thangka* commemorating the Festival was commissioned for the Center by Greg Kruglak, a partner in the Tibetan Culture program. Banku Patua from the India program created a haunting ballad with accompanying illustrated scroll to share his Festival experience with villagers back home. Authors have written critical analyses and novels about the Festival, including at least three murder mysteries!

I cannot imagine where the Festival will go in the next 40 years, but I am sure it will continue to challenge, engage, and exhaust us. And to remind us from time to time what our world can be at its best.



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**40th Annual
Smithsonian Folklife Festival
on the National Mall**

June 30–July 4 and July 7–11, 2006