

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CONNECTION

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC SECTION

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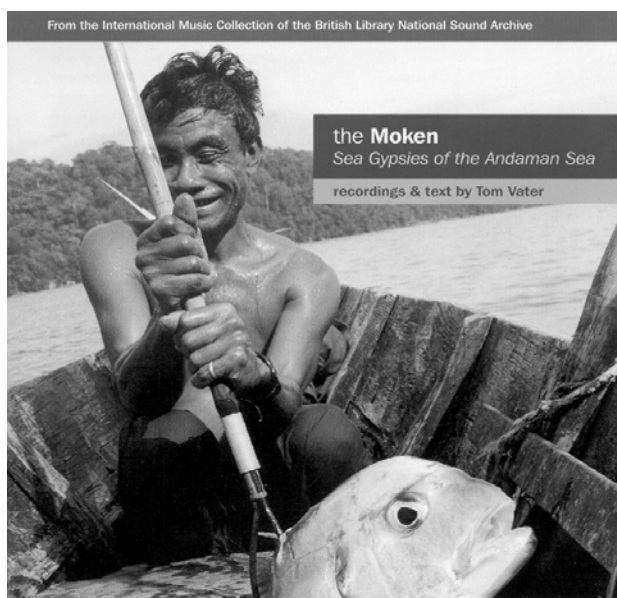
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## Traditional Music in England

Just to prove there is some continuity to our work, readers will recall articles on the Mike Yates (C796), Topic Archive (C11) and Jim Carroll/Pat Mackenzie (C13) collections written by Clare Gilliam in 1997 and 1998. Work on these collections of English traditional music recordings was conducted as separate pilot projects for a larger project then in the making. We are thrilled now, some four years later, to be able to announce that the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded us a grant of £68,000 to do more. The British Library is still raising extra money for the project, but we have been given the go-ahead from the HLF to start. We've appointed Clare Gilliam and Andrew King, both formerly employed/involved at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at the English Folk Dance and Song Society, on two year fixed term contracts. They will be bringing in something like 2000 hours of existing music recordings from collectors around the country. Recordings will be digitised to CD for access (via our listening service) and preservation, and the originals housed in the NSA's secure storage areas. They will be catalogued onto CADENSA, now available on the Internet (<http://cadensa.bl.uk>). (Contd. on page 2)

### **T**raditional Music in India - acquisition project

In November last year Rolf Killius (see IMC 14) and Jutta Winkler set out on a new recording/research project in India. The project, lasting around two years including 17 months in the field and 6 months processing, is concentrating on the less well documented folk, devotional and ritual musics rather than on north and south Indian classical styles. With valuable assistance from Shubha Chaudhuri at the Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology (ARCE) in Delhi, and together with Indian researchers and musicians Rolf and Jutta will make digital audio and visual recordings in Kerala, Majuli (Assam) and Upper Assam, the border area Andhra Pradesh/Orissa, and in Arunachal Pradesh, spending 3 to 4 months in each region. The project is also in collaboration with the Horniman Museum which is using the chance to update their instrument collections from these parts of India. Funds have so far come from the NSA's and Horniman's acquisitions budget, with a very much-appreciated contribution from Elizabeth Chatwin.

Until March, Rolf and Jutta were working among the Saora in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. This is what they wrote: "For weeks we have been living here at the premises of the NGO Jana Chetana in Palakonda (Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh)... Although the small town Palakonda is in the centre of the tribal area, we usually have to travel for one or two hours by

jeep and to climb between one and three hours to reach the Saora

hill top villages. We have already attended two traditional festivals, where numerous buffaloes were sacrificed and lots of dancing and ritual singing was happening.... It seems at least for the tribal areas the term 'endangered cultures' is more than justified. In one village in the Palakonda area the villagers entertained us with Hindi and Telugu film songs. They could not remember any indigenous song and not a single musical instrument was left in the village".

In March they moved to Kerala where their first "gig" was to record at the Bharani festival in Kodungallor. "Although it happens at one of the bigger temples, the Bharani festival is famous for the attendance of hundreds of Bhagavati (goddess) priests and priestesses. They all come in their red cloths and ritual daggers.... The festival seems to be one of the remaining links between Hindu caste temple culture and (the older) Adivasi religion. The festival is also famous for the outspoken erotic content of the Bharani songs, sung by the priests and priestesses."

We hope to bring further updates in later newsletters as the project progresses. We are currently trying to raise more funding for it to continue beyond Kerala. All ideas are welcome.

Rolf has compiled a sampler of video extracts from the original recordings so far made. This will be added to his already large collection as reference C815.

**Janet Topp Fargion**

### **T**raditional Music in England

(Cont. from cover page)

Scores and manuscripts of art music (classical music in its widest sense) can be studied in libraries. Traditional music, however, is transmitted orally and not documented, and many of these recordings are presently at risk of deterioration as they are on old open reel tape. This project is the result of consultation with collectors, musicians and specialists in the field of English traditional music who for several years have expressed concern over the future of their recordings. The NSA is thrilled

to be able to respond to these concerns by facilitating the preservation and access of this large body of work, and we are extremely grateful to the HLF for making it possible. Of major concern too is the fact that so many of the traditions documented on the recordings are themselves in danger of dying out. The ultimate aim of the project, therefore, is to foster a more widespread appreciation for the music and a rejuvenation of its performance.

The IMC extends a very warm welcome to Andrew and Clare.

Janet Topp Fargion

### **P**roject Acetate: preservation at the NSA

'Project Acetate' was set up as an initiative from our conservation section, financed by the British Library's Collection Management department. Its initial aim was to copy the NSA's 'acetate' discs which were in real danger of disintegrating. These discs, dating for the most part from the 1940s/50s, were manufactured using an organic mixture of cellulose nitrate and other chemicals which could in time (and often did) not only become mouldy, but also crack and peel off from its metal base, obviously losing at the same time the sound it carried.

In 1999, this operation evolved into a second phase which consisted of preserving acetate-based magnetic tapes, as well as other vulnerable tape media, such as those made with synthetic polyurethane binder which developed what is better known as 'sticky tape syndrome', thin-based double play tapes - which can suffer from 'print-through', and finally Betamax tapes for which playback technology has now become obsolete. Acetate tapes were manufactured between 1935 and 1965, mostly in America. Symptoms of deterioration include geometrical distortion in

storage and brittleness. In this case too, the sound must be recovered rapidly, as the degradations are not reversible and the tape's shelf life can be as short as 30 years.

After a search through the collections, it turned out that a sizeable number of the IMC's tapes belonged to these categories. Many privately made field collections deposited by musicologists and researchers over the years have included such tapes, as have many of the recordings generated by the IMC itself through its concert recording programme. While most of the acetate-based materials have now been identified, digitised onto CDRs by external contractors, and documented on our catalogue by our conservation staff, work on other vulnerable carriers remains to be completed. So far fifteen 'international music' collections have been processed. Among them are: Wolfgang Laade/Music of Man Archive (C947), Ewan MacColl/Peggy Seeger (C102), Anthony King (C1), Commonwealth Institute (C81), Arts Worldwide (C111), Topic (C11), Jim Carroll/Pat Mackenzie (C13).

Marie-Laure Manigand

### **T**reasures from the Ark exhibition

The IMC was recently involved in the selection and provision of recordings for the current British Library exhibition, *Treasures from the Ark: 1700 Years of Armenian Christian Art* (open until 28<sup>th</sup> May). A large collection of Armenian Orthodox recordings was assembled from IMC holdings, from which the curator of the exhibition, Rev. Dr Vrej Nersessian chose the most suitable after spending an afternoon listening to them with us.

The tracks, all published, range from those on currently available CDs, to early acoustic 78rpm discs. Although primarily chosen to reflect the Christian context of the exhibition, some examples of secular folksong are included. No overview of Armenian music culture could be complete without Komitas Vardapet (1869-

1935). Priest, composer and folklorist, Komitas only recorded his voice on

one occasion, and an example from that recording session, taken from the CD reissue on the Traditional Crossroads label, is included in the exhibition. Also included is the track *Alagyaz Batsr Sar E* by Vahan Ter-Arakelian, a pupil of Komitas, coincidentally recorded on the same day as his teacher, and in his presence. The recording used in the exhibition was taken from an original 78rpm disc held by the NSA, and is soon to be reissued on CD by Topic Records in their ongoing partnership with the IMC. It forms part of a collection of IMC discs recorded by Franz Hampe in 1909 for the Gramophone Company, which will be gathered together on *The Caucasus and Central Asia before the*

## Activities

*Revolution* (TSCD 921), and should be available in July.

**Will Prentice**

## For your information...

### *Two new CDs from the Topic/IMC label*

Healing, feasting and magical ritual: songs and dances from Papua New Guinea (TSCD918) features recordings made by John Thornley during a field trip to PNG in 1987. He recorded in Karkar Island, Green River (West Sepik Province), Mount Hagen (Western Highlands), and New Ireland. The Moken - sea gypsies of the Andaman Sea (TSCD919) are nomads surviving, despite political turmoil and repression around the islands of the Mergui Archipelago off the coast of Thailand. Tom Vater is one of the very few people ever to have recorded among this

group of people. The CD presents the fruits of a few nights' music-making among a single family; songs, accompanied on a single plastic barrel and hand-clapping, are drawn from experience of daily life. Listening to the recordings, one finds oneself drawn into this close, warm and friendly circle. (Tom's recordings are included in the IMC with the reference C799, while John's have C838.)

The CDs can be obtained from the BL bookshop (020 7412 7735) or from Topic Records web-site: [www.topicrecords.co.uk](http://www.topicrecords.co.uk)

## Forthcoming events

**KlezFest London** is a four-day intensive, interactive, participatory programme of klezmer music and Yiddish song, literature, humour, dance and folklore evoking the cultural life of Jewish communities in Eastern Europe. Organised by the newly established Jewish Music Institute at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, it will take place from the **1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> July 2001**. Further information and registration available by telephone (020 8909 2445), e-mail ([klezfest@jmi.org.uk](mailto:klezfest@jmi.org.uk)) or from the Institute's website ([www.jmi.org.uk](http://www.jmi.org.uk)).

Asian Music Circuit is presenting the only UK show by John McLaughlin and Zakir Hussain's legendary band **Remember Shakti** at the Royal Festival Hall, London on the **15<sup>th</sup> July 2001**. Information and booking from the South Bank Centre on 020 7960 4242 or on [www.sbc.org.uk](http://www.sbc.org.uk).

The first biennial international **symposium and festival on the theme "Composition in Africa and the Diaspora"** will take place at Churchill College, University of Cambridge, from the **2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2001**. More information can be obtained from Akin Euba at: [oea21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:oea21@cam.ac.uk)

The **British Forum for Ethnomusicology** is holding its annual one-day conference at the Royal Holloway, University of London, on the **17<sup>th</sup> November 2001**, under the title "The new (ethno) musicologies". The conference aims to explore recent directions in ethnomusicology and to engage creatively with musicologists and researchers of music from other disciplines. For more information and offers for papers, contact Henry Stobart at: Music Department, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EXH, e-mail [h.stobart@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:h.stobart@rhul.ac.uk).

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catalogue website: <http://cadensa.bl.uk>

## The UNESCO collection of traditional music

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed..." (UNESCO charter 1945).

In the years that followed the Second World War, the need to build a lasting peace and trust between nations was recognised as imperative and the United Nations was born. The need for communication between cultures was foremost, yet cultural differences remained and so it was that UNESCO - the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation was formed "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the people of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the charter of the United Nations."

In 1949, four years into its development, UNESCO created the International Music Council - to serve musical creation, performance, education, training, research and promotion on an international scale. One important aspect of the constitution involved the need for new recordings and a detailed study of the music of the world's cultures. The international music trade was nearly as old as the development of the gramophone and recording itself, yet the concentrated study of music within cultures was set to change.

To carry out these studies the International Music Council enlisted the help of Alain Daniélou and the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies - Berlin/Venice. Under the direction of Alain Daniélou the production of the UNESCO recorded anthologies of traditional music was initiated with Jacques Cloarec in charge of the realisation and coordination. The production and distribution of the collection was undertaken by three firms: Philips (Phonogram - Holland), Odeon (EMI - Italy) and Barenreiter Musicaphon (Federal Republic of Germany). So the UNESCO LPs began.

The collection of traditional music was initially devised in four series: "Musical Sources" - to be produced by Philips Records and published by Phonogram; "Musical Atlas" - to be produced by Odeon Records and published by EMI; finally "A Musical Anthology of the Orient" and "An Anthology of African Music" - to be produced by Musicaphon Records and published by Barenreiter Verlag. Each series had a different approach and aim.

The first series was the "Anthology of the Orient" which was started by Alain Daniélou in 1961 on the Barenreiter label. This collection was "dedicated to the art music of the civilisations of the Orient". With the help of the committed efforts of some of the most prestigious musicologists, this collection is extremely well documented with photographs and texts describing the individual instruments and musical forms, each rendered with some of the highest quality recordings. This was swiftly followed by the "Anthology of African Music" and the "Anthology of North Indian Classical Music". For any student or indeed anyone interested in learning in comprehensive detail about the differences and indeed similarities in musical forms throughout Asia and Africa this collection is unique. One striking example can be found in the collection of North Indian classical music by Manfred Junius with commentary by Alain Daniélou, where over a series of four records the world of Indian music is revealed. The collection covers not only the wide range of different forms of singing styles, but allows for a detailed look at the difference in tone and form of the many stringed instruments of India. The influences of these anthologies are most evident in the recordings of the Ba-Benzélé pygmies by Simha Arom whose recordings of the *hindewhu* technique were adapted by Herbie Hancock's "Headhunters" in the track "Watermelon man" and became part of the history of Acid Jazz.

The series "Musical Sources" that was released on Philips was conceived as an "historical survey of the development of the various concepts of musical art such as they appear in the various civilisations, taking into account the role attributed to music which varies considerably from one civilisation to another." The records are classified according

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to the type of music represented - ritual and ceremonial, modal music, art music, etc. - so as to permit comparisons that may prove useful for a better understanding of the main historical currents.

This collection has some of the freshest and most immediate field recordings. From the unique recording of the Ainu songs from Japan to the complex forms of the Banda polyphony from the Central African Republic - this series illustrates the complex and varied approach to musical composition inherent in cultures throughout the world. This collection has stored in its archive many musical forms that, like their cultures, are slowly disappearing. One of the things shown by this collection is the similarities that can be found in musical forms in cultures so far apart; the *katajjait* breathed songs or throat games from the Inuit hold rhythmic structures that are echoed in the Balinese *kecak* "monkey chant" songs. Each record in this wide ranging series provides a unique insight into a community with detailed explanations of the associated cultural traditions.

The final series in the UNESCO collection was issued on Odeon - "A Musical Atlas". The fact that Odeon was one of the companies to be chosen to represent the world music collections is I think somewhat significant. It was Odeon that in the early years of recording was the first to appoint local agents to find and negotiate terms with local artists in their overseas offices instead of exporting Odeon agents. This resulted in the recording of a lot of regional music for local consumption, records that allow us today to hear music that would have otherwise disappeared. This collection is one of the most approachable and popular in format. It covers folk music and songs from each region that are as likely to be performed by children as adults. The importance of music within a social context is displayed in this collection and the growing popularity of music such as *qawwali* singing in the wider world music scene perhaps reflects this. In a similar way to the Philips "Musical Sources" collection there are moments of great immediacy and intimacy to be found in these recordings - one of the best examples of this is on a record from the Cameroon. The recording of the water drums that are played by the children of the Baka

pygmies is so fresh that it even picks up the breathlessness of the children amidst the rhythm and the laughter. This collection also pays homage to some of the more popular European musical forms from the Portuguese *fado* to the folk songs from the Byelorussian republic that are still heard throughout that region today.

As a collection the UNESCO set of traditional music provides not only a record of traditions and a reflection on the art forms of many cultures but it shows the position that music holds within so many cultures of the world.

The work that was started in this collection of LPs has been continued since 1988 in collaboration with a new partner Auvidis which continues to this day with new recordings and reissues on CD. Most of Philips' "Musical Sources" and Odeon's "Musical Atlas" have been reissued on this label as part of the collection of traditional music which is released in three series: "Music and Musicians of the World", "Anthology of Traditional Music" and "Traditional Music of Today". However the rights to the Barenreiter Musicaphon anthologies were bought from the International Institute for Traditional Music by Rounder Records. The first albums were released back in 1998. Since then Rounder Records have reissued periodically parts of the original collection although the original sleeve notes and pictures have been changed as they continue to publish the series. The original collection of LPs is one of the most informative selections of world music and a great introduction to the traditional music of the world's cultures. In order to see this collection in its entirety the best place to come is the National Sound Archive where the original records and documentation can be viewed and you can make the comparisons yourself!

**Isobel Clouter**

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[Isobel has been a volunteer with the IMC for two years. She's now employed one day a week as cataloguer in the section.]