



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SURREY**

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**EXPLORING TRADITIONAL  
MUSIC ON WAX  
CYLINDERS: HISTORICAL  
TECHNOLOGIES AND  
PERFORMANCE STYLES**

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WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

12-13 June 2024

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## INTRODUCTION

The phonograph has played a crucial part in ethnomusicological research since the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Very light and easy to transport, the phonograph was the main machine to use in ethnographic data collections, until challenged by the portable disc recording equipment and wire recording systems in the 1930s.

Exploring Traditional Music on Wax Cylinders: Historical Technologies and Performance Styles workshop provides a forum for the discussion of historical field recording practices, addressing the use of phonograph recordings in both ethnomusicological research and creative practice, while seeking to connect researchers and performers through critical and reflective debate.

This two-day event will include a mechanical recording workshop, and a series of presentations and discussions by expert musicologists, academics, and musicians, on various aspects of the phonograph field recordings, including research on historical creation, collection, and circulation of ethnographic wax cylinders, focusing on interdisciplinary scholarly research and practice.

### **Project Lead:**

Dr Inja Stanović, University of Surrey

### **Organising committee:**

Dr Barbara Gentili, University of Surrey  
Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez, University of Glasgow and Dr Fatima Volkovskii, Independent Scholar

### **Administrative support:**

Louise Jones, Institute of Advanced Studies

# PROGRAMME

## DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE PATS Studio 1

(BST) 09.00 – 09.30	Coffee and Welcome
09.30 – 11.00	<b>Keynote Presentations: Resounding Histories</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Dr João Silva: Romantic Ears and Phonographic Objectivity: Ethnology, Anthropology, and Musicology at the Age of Empire</li><li>2. Will Prentice: Looking at a Lens Through a Lens: Understanding What we Hear When we Listen to Ethnographic Cylinder Recordings</li></ol>
11.00 – 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.15	<b>Cylinder Workshop with Duncan Miller and Damir Imamović (Voice)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Je li Rano (Bosnian Folk Song)</li></ol>
12.15 – 13.00	<b>Cylinder Workshop with Duncan Miller and Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez (Voice), accompanied by Dr. Inja Stanović (piano)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. "Zapateao" From <i>El Caramelo</i>, by Federico Chueca</li><li>2. "Carceleras" From <i>Las Hijas del Zebedeo</i>, by Ruperto Chapí</li></ol>
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 14.45	<b>Cylinder Workshop with Duncan Miller and Dr Aleksander Javier Kolkowski (Violin), accompanied by Dr. Inja Stanović (piano)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. James Scott Skinner: "The Weeping Birches of Kilmorack"</li></ol>
14.45 – 15.30	<b>Cylinder Workshop with Duncan Miller and Ziazan (Voice)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Basket of Eggs (English Folk Song)</li><li>2. The Herring's Head (British Traditional Song)</li></ol>

15.30 – 16.00

Break

16.00 – 17.30

### Session 1: Collections and Archives

**Chair: Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez**

1. Michele Banal: The Ethnographic Wax Cylinder Collection at the British Library
2. Dr Filip Šir and Martin Mejzr: The Story of the Oldest and Biggest Collection of Ethnic Recordings for Bohemians in the USA
3. Dr George Kennaway: Marjory Kennedy Fraser's Graphophone Cylinders: Gaelic Song Collecting in the Hebrides

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## DAY 2 – THURSDAY 13 JUNE

### PATS Studio 1

(BST)

09.30 – 10.30

#### Session 2: Language Cylinders

Chair: Dr Barbara Gentili

1. Dr Simon Heighes: The Pioneering Language Cylinders of Mrs J. G. Frazer
2. Stephen Miller: "A New Ally has Come to the Cause" (1905). The Manx Language Society and the Phonograph

10.30 – 11.00

Break

11.00 – 12.30

#### Session 3: Online Presentations

Chair: Dr Fatima Volkoviskii

1. Dr Julia Bishop: 'A Wrestler with Sounds': James Madison Carpenter as a Recordist and Transcriber of Traditional Song from Britain and America (c.1928-40)
2. Dr Christian Poske: Curating Exhibitions with Wax Cylinder Recordings in the Global South: A Case Study from Nagaland
3. Professor Don Niles: The Essential Contribution of Wax Cylinder Recordings to Music Research in Papua New Guinea

12.30 – 13.30

Lunch

13.30 – 15.00

#### Session 4: Performance Practices

Chair: Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez

1. Dr Warwick Edwards: 'Singing Beyond Measure': Bartók's and Brăiloiu's Cylinder Recordings as Exemplars of Rhythmic Processes that Transcend Time and Place
2. Dr Fatima Volkoviskii: In Search of Revolutionary Voices: Performance Practices of Mexican Singers in Cylinder Recordings
3. Dr Arja Kastinen: Challenges and Insights - Wax Cylinders as a Tool for a Modern Musician's Access to Music from an Ancient Tradition

15.00 – 15.30

Break

15.30 – 17.00

#### Session 5: Wax Cylinders Today

Chair: Dr Inja Stanović

1. Dr Aleksander Javier Kolkowski: The Cylinders of San Simón
2. Damir Imamović: Influence of Early Recordings on Bosnian Traditional Music
3. Jonathan Emeruwa: The Digital Archive as a Transformative Tool in Preserving Historical Cylinders and Community Cohesion: A Presentation on the 'Ambientscape Project Website'

# BIOGRAPHIES

## Michele Banal

Michele Banal is Lead Curator of World and Traditional Music at the British Library's sound archive. He holds a master's degree in ethnomusicology from SOAS University and has worked in ethnomusicology, documentary filmmaking and radio production. His research interests include audiovisual ethnomusicology, the music of West Africa (with a focus on Mande music), and the music of the Black diaspora. Since joining the British Library, he has been increasingly interested in issues of archival representation and in digital reconnection of intangible cultural heritage.

## Dr Julia Bishop

Dr Julia Bishop is a folklorist with dual specialisms in traditional song and children's folklore. She is an honorary research fellow at the Elphinstone Institute at the University of Aberdeen and a part-time research associate in the School of Education at the University of Sheffield. Julia has extensive experience of fieldwork in Newfoundland where she focused on local songmaking, and among children in the UK where she has studied musical play. Her ethnographic work is complemented by historical and comparative research, with a particular interest in musical analysis and vernacular musicianship. She leads the team working on a critical edition of the J. M. Carpenter Collection and co-edited *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* with Steve Roud (2012).

## Dr Warwick Edwards

Dr Warwick Edwards is Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Music at the University of Glasgow and a former vice-president of the Royal Musical Association. His publications include editions of Elizabethan consort music and Byrd's motets, together with articles on Renaissance instrumental music, the music of Scotland, and words and music in medieval and early modern European song, with cross-references to parallel performance traits in the traditional music of eastern and south-eastern Europe.

## Jonathan Emeruwa

Jonathan Emeruwa is founder of the Ambientscape Project who grew up in a largely working-class part of Northwest London, an avid collector and enthusiast of wax cylinder records, 78s and World Music. He is an experienced mental health counsellor and a composer of production stock library music and has also spent time in the field of sound restoration. He is currently a Fellow with the British Library where his area of research is on the music of Black Spirituals in healing emotional trauma. He runs a weekly online experimental radio broadcast show each week called the 'Crystal Radio Receiver Broadcast.'

## Dr Simon Heighes

Dr Simon Heighes is a broadcaster, scholar and early sound collector. After teaching at Magdalen and Oriel colleges, Oxford, he moved to the BBC as a presenter for Radio 3, Radio 4 and the World Service. He is a Baroque specialist, with a particular interest in Bach, as well as the musical landscape of Georgian England – most recently explored in *British Music, Musicians, and Institutions 1630-1800* (Boydell, 2021). He is one of the architects of Apple's new classical music streaming service, and the latest addition to his own discography is *Francisco Valls' Missa Regalis (1740)* performed by the choir of Keble College, Oxford and the Academy of Ancient Music (AAM008).

## Damir Imamović

Damir Imamović (BA in Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Sarajevo, 2003; MA in Ethnomusicology at the University of Sarajevo, 2022) is a musician and music researcher from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He curated a multi-media exhibition "Sevdah, the art of freedom" (Art Gallery of BIH, Sarajevo, 2015) and wrote the first history of Bosnian traditional style of Sevdalinka/Sevdah, "Sevdah" (Vrijeme Zenica, 2016). He regularly teaches workshops in history and performance of sevdah. As of 2024 he is a member of the Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology at the Music Academy in Sarajevo.

## Dr Arja Kastinen

Dr Arja Kastinen is a researcher and musician specialising in 19th century Karelian kantele improvisation. She received her doctorate from the Folk Music Department of the Sibelius Academy in 2000. She has published several recordings, books and articles on the subject. She is currently a visiting researcher at the Sibelius Academy, Uniarts Helsinki, working on the project "Kantele of the Runosong Culture and the Dialogue of Creativity". Home page: temps.fi.

## Dr George Kennaway

Dr George Kennaway is a Scottish cellist, musicologist, conductor, teacher, and publisher. Born in Edinburgh, he studied at the universities of Newcastle and Oxford, the Salzburg Mozarteum, Guildhall School of Music, and the University of Leeds. He has taught at the Royal Northern College of Music, the Lithuanian National Academy of Music, the Abbaye aux Dames (Saintes, France), and the Sibelius Academy Helsinki. He is Visiting Research Fellow at the universities of Leeds and Huddersfield. His publications include *Playing the Cello 1780-1930* (2014), *John Gunn: Musician Scholar in Enlightenment Britain* (2021), and articles and book chapters on aspects of 19th-century performance research, topical analysis, and historiography. He is also an authority on the work of the Lithuanian composer/artist Mikalojus Čiurlionis (1875–1911) and has recently joined the editorial team creating a new critical edition of his music.

### Dr Aleksander Kolkowski

Dr Aleksander Kolkowski is a composer, violinist and researcher who uses historical sound recording and reproduction apparatus and obsolete media to make contemporary mechanical-acoustic and electronic music. Awarded PhD, Brunel University (2011); Sound artist-in-residence, Science Museum, London (2012); Research Associateships at the Royal College of Music, London (2013) and Science Museum (2014-15); Composer-in-residence at the British Library Sound Archive (2016-18). Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Luxembourg (2019-22). Co-author of *Doing Experimental Media Archaeology: Practice* (De Gruyter, 2023). Currently an Honorary Research Associate at the Science Museum, London. He is resident in Málaga.

### Martin Mejzr

Martin Mejzr is a researcher from the National Museum, Czech Republic. In 2018-2022 he was a member of the New Phonograph Project under this institution. His professional orientation are the social and cultural history and he focuses on the topics concerning the history of sound industry in Czech Lands and Czechoslovakia. For instance, he collaborated on the research project which explored the beginnings of trade and distribution of the oldest sound media in the first half of 20th century.

### Stephen Miller

Stephen Miller's research covers the folklore and folk song of the Isle of Man, the institutional history of the Folklore Society, and the Scottish folklorists the Rev. Walter Gregor and William George Black. Current research is on Edward Lovett and Manx fairy beliefs for which a compendium of source material is close to completion.

### Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez

Dr Eva Moreda Rodríguez teaches Musicology at the University of Glasgow. She has published widely on the history of Spanish music during the Franco dictatorship and in exile (*Music and exile in Francoist Spain*, Ashgate 2015; and *Music criticism and music critics in early Francoist Spain*, Oxford University Press, 2017), and most recently on the early history of recording technologies (*Inventing the recording. The phonograph and national culture in Spain*, Oxford University Press, 2021).

### Professor Don Niles

Professor Don Niles has worked at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies since 1979, as ethnomusicologist, director, and presently consultant, researching and publishing on many types of music and dance in Papua New Guinea, including traditional, popular, and Christian forms, as well as matters concerning archiving. He was vice president of the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance, and editor of their journal. He is an honorary associate professor at Australian National University, and an Officer of the Order of Logohu and Companion of the Order of the Star of Melanesia.

### Dr Christian Poske

Dr Christian Poske is an ethnomusicologist who learned Hindustani classical music for over twenty years in India and Germany. He completed his BA and MA in Instrumental Music at Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata and his PhD in Music at SOAS University of London and the British Library, where he worked as an Audio Cataloguer and Bengali Cataloguer. Since then, his research has focused on the performing arts of east and northeast India and Bangladesh. His research interests include music minority studies, music and conflict, ecomusicology, organology, medical ethnomusicology, oral history, audiovisual archiving, community outreach and engagement, applied ethnomusicology, and historical ethnomusicology.

### Will Prentice

Will Prentice is an audio archivist with the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. He has a Masters degree in Ethnomusicology from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and is a Trustee of the EMI Archive Trust. For many years he has served as a member of both the Technical Committee and the Training & Education Committee of the International Association of Sound & Audiovisual Archives (IASA).

### Dr João Silva

Dr João Silva is a musicologist and cultural historian whose research focuses on popular entertainment and its relationships with modernity, nationalism, historiography, technology, and everyday life. He published in books and journals such as *Phonographic Encounters: Mapping Transnational Cultures of Sound and Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300–1918*, *Popular Music*, and *Radical Musicology*. Oxford University Press released his *Entertaining Lisbon: Music, Theater, and Modern Life in the Late 19th Century* in 2016. Silva teaches in specialist music schools in Portugal and works as a program annotator for institutions like Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and Casa da Música, where he develops music appreciation programmes and digital learning platforms. He participates in the Scientific Board of Museu Nacional da Música and the artistic direction of the Festival Internacional de Música de Espinho. Silva is Associate Editor of the *Journal of World Popular Music*.

### Dr Filip Šír

Dr Filip Šír: Positioned as a front-runner in preserving the historical audio legacy of the Czech Republic, I have played a pivotal role in establishing a portal that serves as an informational hub for all historical audio documents in the Czech Republic. From instigating national surveys across various institutions to actively coordinating efforts on a national scale, my focus is on uniting institutions and individuals. With the mantra of "Collect, Connect, Collaborate," I am committed to pioneering the art of audio

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preservation globally. I am currently stationed at the National Museum (Prague, Czech Republic) in the newly established National Museum's Sound Lab, I take charge of coordinating audio documents preservation efforts as a multifaceted professional - a librarian, project manager, and researcher. Since 2012, I have immersed myself in finding comprehensive preservation solutions, addressing everything from sound document identification principles to the methodologies of digitization and long-term conservation.

### Dr Fatima Volkoviskii Barajas

Dr Fatima Volkoviskii Barajas defended her doctoral thesis at the Universidad Complutense in Madrid in June 2023. Her dissertation focuses on the singing performance practices of early flamenco music in pre-electrical recordings. Recent conferences include: "Flaunting the Mantilla: The Embodied Tease of the Spanish Singing Style in Early Recordings" read at the Hochschule der Künste, Bern, and a talk presented at Glasgow University as part of the RMA Research Colloquia in Music. She received a research grant from The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society in 2023 and has also participated in phonograph recording sessions at the AHRC-funded research network Redefining Early Recordings Symposium held in January of that year, where she recorded early 20th century Spanish songs.

### Ziazan

Ziazan is a singer, instrumentalist, actress, researcher, and singing teacher. Her teacher, Rae Woodland, trained her in the tradition of the ancient Italian singing school, bel canto, dating back to circa 1600. Building on what she learnt in the oral tradition, she utilises early aural records alongside written sources to reconstruct how it was taught and practiced in previous centuries. She was supervised in this by Edward V Foreman. She studied trumpet and piano at JGSMD and historic voice at RWCMD — she left the latter after a year in order to conduct her research independently. She is an experienced recording artist, having worked as a session singer covering everything from folk to music theatre, and has also premiered new works with the LSO and historic opera for Naxos. Her YouTube channel, Phantoms of the Opera, is dedicated to educating and raising interest in the ancient Italian school around the world.

## ABSTRACTS

### WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE Keynote Presentations: Resounding Histories

*Romantic Ears and Phonographic Objectivity: Ethnology, Anthropology, and Musicology at the Age of Empire*  
Dr João Silva (INET-MD/Nova FCSH)

This presentation addresses the role played by recorded sound in ethnology and anthropology during the early phonographic era. The 19th century saw the spread of Romanticism as the rising nation-state fed the imaginary of liberal intellectuals who collected traditional culture. In the quest to find a genuine Volksgeist, people transcribed oral traditions of many places. Thus, collecting folk songs became instrumental in creating an 'imagined community.' Many transcriptions resonate with the transnational conventions of sheet music; they illustrate the importance of the drawing-room piano for bourgeois sociability. In the late 19th century, the manufacturing of identity and alterity through sound gained an ally: the phonograph. Its spread met the rise of evolutionism and positivism, reshaping the new social sciences in the Age of Empire. By purportedly bypassing human intervention, the phonograph became the sonic equivalent of the photograph. Carving an 'objective' reality into wax cylinders enriched the methods of early anthropology and ethnomusicology. The ability to study human diversity through sound waves became a staple of an age shaped by nationalism and colonialism.

### Looking at a Lens Through a Lens: Understanding What we Hear When we Listen to Ethnographic Cylinder Recordings

Will Prentice (Phonogrammarchiv,  
Austrian Academy of Sciences)

It's never been easier to listen to ethnographic recordings which originated on wax cylinders, and yet we've never been further removed from the technology that enabled them than we are today. How well do early ethnographic recordings represent their subject, and in what ways? Beyond the obviously limited frequency and dynamic ranges that 21st century listeners encounter in such recordings, how else might the technology and its users have influenced what we hear? This presentation will draw on the experience of digitizing more than 2,000 ethnographic cylinders, to identify some of the lenses through which we are viewing the past, and attempt to offer some technological context to the modern listening experience, shedding light on some of the processes that led to the audio files we hear today.

## Session 1: Collections and Archives

### ***The Ethnographic Wax Cylinder Collection at the British Library***

*Michele Banal (The British Library)*

The British Library's sound archive holds a collection of over 3,000 ethnographic brown wax cylinders, dating from 1898 to 1941, which document music, song and language from throughout the world, as well as the work and research interests of several early anthropologists, musicologists and linguists. This presentation will give a general overview of the collection, its history and contents, while also mentioning some of the research conducted on the collection to this date.

### ***The Story of the Oldest and Biggest Collection of Ethnic Recordings for Bohemians in the USA***

*Dr Filip Šír and Martin Mejstřík (National Museum, Czech Republic)*

Eduard Jedlička immigrated to the New York from Bohemia under the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1895. In addition to having a career as a jeweler, Jedlička recorded all manner of Czech songs and poetry on his own label, Jedličkovy České Rekordy. Jedlička's cylinders are some of the first recordings made for a specific ethnic group in the United States. This presentation will trace the history of Jedlička's life, his business, and the recent discovery of original Ed. Jedlička cylinders. The National Museum, Czech Republic has worked to identify, describe, transcribe, and translate these cylinders in collaboration with the University of

Iowa's Rita Benton Music Library. These unusual specimens of early recording document Czech culture in the United States, which this paper will explore through the songs, performers, and producers of the content.

### ***Marjory Kennedy Fraser's Graphophone Cylinders: Gaelic Song Collecting in the Hebrides***

*Dr George Kennaway (University of Leeds, University of Huddersfield)*

The Scottish singer and folk-song collector Marjorie Kennedy Fraser (1857–1930) came from a musical family; her father, David Kennedy was a famous singer of Scots songs to expatriate Scots throughout the British Empire, and from the age of thirteen she was her father's official accompanist. She, and her sister Helen, were singing pupils of Mathilde Marchesi. Later she was also her father's business manager. In the 1890s she taught singing and piano in Edinburgh, and read music at Edinburgh University under Niecks. She developed an interest in the Scottish folk repertoire, and with the encouragement of the artist John Duncan made her first of many trips to the Hebrides in 1905, collecting traditional songs in Gaelic—first by notating them with pencil and paper, and later by making cylinder recordings (which she called 'graphophone' records), for later transcription and arrangement with piano accompaniment. Her published versions of these songs were for many years seen as totally inauthentic essays in the so-called 'dim Celtic twilight' vein, but they are now seen in a historical context as part of the Celtic Revival. Edinburgh University Library

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holds a collection of her cylinder recordings, comprising 296 cylinders. Each gives a sample verse or two, and there are often several different items on one cylinder; it is estimated that there are 544 separate items recorded. This paper summarises the current situation vis-a-vis these cylinders, informed by discussions with the library and with the most recent attempt to digitize some of the recordings.

## THURSDAY 13 JUNE Session 2: Language Cylinders

### ***The Pioneering Language Cylinders of Mrs J. G. Frazer***

*Dr Simon Heighes (BBC, CLPGS)*

During the first decade of the twentieth century the rise of the recording industry coincided with a surging market in language courses. The potential for enhancing popular textbooks with practical demonstrations on accompanying cylinders and records was quickly grasped by the major record companies. Smaller enterprises also flourished, including Cambridge Phonographic Records produced – on cylinder – by Mrs J. G. Frazer (c.1855–1941). A gifted linguist from an academic background, her aspirations transcended the mass market, eschewing basic grammar and vocabulary, aiming instead for cultural breadth and literary fluency. Produced in small quantities, for an essentially elite clientele, few traces of her work have survived. Drawing on fragmentary material in private collections, this paper offers a preliminary portrait of one of the first women, and one of the most enterprising educationalists, to work in the field.

### ***"A New Ally has Come to the Cause" (1905). The Manx Language Society and the Phonograph***

*Stephen Miller (Austrian Academy of Sciences & University of Vienna)*

"A new ally has come to the cause in the form of an Edison Phonograph, whose function it is to preserve the Manx sounds as uttered by native speakers." This is taken from the 1905 Annual Report of the Manx Language Society. The key figure here was Sophia Morrison, a Pan Celtic activist and leader of the Celtic Revival in the Isle of Man which started in the 1890s. The Island was also to see a visit in 1907 and 1909 by Rudolf Trebitsch on behalf of the Phonogrammarchiv of Vienna and Berlin. The MLS were not the first to use the phonograph in the Island but the first to be systematic in its use. Whilst the phonograph survives and the cylinder recordings made are in large part lost, there is useful detail as to how the programme was organised and implemented which will be subject of the presentation.

## Session 3: Online Presentations

### ***'A Wrestler with Sounds': James Madison Carpenter as a Recordist and Transcriber of Traditional Song from Britain and America (c.1928-40)***

*Dr Julia Bishop (University of Aberdeen)*

James Madison Carpenter (1888–1984) was a Harvard-trained scholar who recorded traditional singing in Britain and, to a lesser extent, in his native United States, in the period c.1928–40. [His extensive collection](#) includes 179 Dictaphone cylinders, totalling some 35

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hours of examples. Although he worked on the collection throughout his life, Carpenter's hopes for publication were never realized and he eventually sold it to the Library of Congress. It has since been digitized and is now [available online](#) via the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, facilitated though the work of [an ongoing project](#) by a team of UK- and US-based scholars towards surfacing the collection in a critical edition. Carpenter was the first to consistently use a recording device in British folk song collecting. The cylinders thus have the potential to provide insights into traditional performance style and the comparative study of folk song melodies, as well as providing a relatively untapped source of repertoire for contemporary performers. The quality of the sound recordings is, however, disappointingly poor, making Carpenter's own transcriptions an essential complement. A self-trained musician, he found the process laborious, taking inspiration from the dictum that 'a wrestler with sounds is a wrestler with shadows'. This paper focuses on Carpenter's approach to recording and evaluates his transcriptions, as well as outlining the issues involved in producing new ones. As we continue to wrestle with these historic sounds today, what is their potential for scholarship and performance, and what is the role of transcription in this context?

***Curating Exhibitions with Wax Cylinder Recordings in the Global South: A Case Study from Nagaland***  
*Dr. Christian Poske (The Highland Institute, Kohima)*

Today, community outreach and engagement are essential aspects of the institutional policies of museums and archives holding wax cylinder recordings in the UK and the Western world, and the recirculation of such collections among cultural heritage communities is an established method of applied ethnomusicological research (Gunderson, Lancefield, and Woods 2018). Sound exhibitions offer a way of engaging communities with historical recording collections in countries of origin, but limited technical resources and poor infrastructure often complicate such efforts. These issues became apparent during a project funded by the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives between January and March 2022 concerning the cylinder recordings of the British administrator-anthropologist John Henry Hutton (1885–1968), held by the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. Further project partners included the Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology in Gurgaon and the Highland Institute, an independent research institute in Kohima, the state capital of Nagaland (India). Despite many difficulties, the project concluded with a well-received sound exhibition at the Highland Institute. In this presentation, I discuss how staff and fellows of the Institute organized the exhibition in collaboration with Naga visual artists, musicians, and academics, importing technical equipment from the UK, manufacturing soundboards with the

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help of local artisans, designing standees and posters, arranging performances, and conducting workshops with students from surrounding schools and colleges. In this way, my presentation offers insights into how to successfully organize an exhibition with cylinder recordings in a region without exhibition design companies and where professional technical support is difficult to find.

***The Essential Contribution of Wax Cylinder Recordings to Music Research in Papua New Guinea***  
*Professor Don Niles (Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies)*

Between 1898 and 1938, over 1,600 wax cylinders were recorded in what is today Papua New Guinea. Recordists came from the colonial powers (Germany, Britain, Australia) and beyond, with the cylinders themselves being deposited in archives in those countries, but also in Austria, Finland, Hungary, and France, often according to the nationality of the recordist. Recordists were ethnographers, missionaries, linguists, government officers, and other adventurers, many with an association with Erich von Hornbostel at the Berlin Phonogramm Archive. Since the establishment of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies in 1974, staff have been trying to obtain copies of these cylinders for its Audiovisual Archive: it is strongly felt that such materials should be available in the country in which they have most meaning. And, where possible, attempts have been made to reconnect communities today with such early recordings made in their regions. Locating and obtaining copies of cylinders has been greatly successful, so that copies of

almost all these cylinder recordings are held in the IPNGS Audiovisual Archive. According to the project concerned and available funding, the reconnection work continues in a variety of ways, such as through published recordings or research focused on particular collections. This presentation will consider this considerable history of wax-cylinder recording activity in Papua New Guinea, the various uses that have been made of such recordings internationally, reactions to hearing the cylinders locally, and possible future directions.

**Session 4: Performance Practices**

***'Singing Beyond Measure': Bartók's and Brăiloiu's Cylinder Recordings as Exemplars of Rhythmic Processes that Transcend Time and Place***

*Dr Warwick Edwards (University of Glasgow)*

Among the phonograph cylinders held at the Budapest Museum of Ethnography are over 3,000 with Bartók's field recordings made before the outbreak of WW1 in the Romanian-speaking territories of what was then Hungary. The Bucharest Institute of Ethnography and Folklore has more than 10,000 further cylinders with field and studio recordings made in the 1930s in Romania by Constantin Brăiloiu and his collaborators. For Bartók the cylinders were, at the time, a means to an end: the detailed notation and classification of folk music in pursuance of his growing interest in 'comparative musical folklore'. For Brăiloiu the chief interest lay in his conviction that oral traditions are underpinned by system no less than those of notated classical music.

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Today the two collections present us with an incomparably rich repository for further research, not least in understanding the psychology of how lyrical verses are stored in and retrieved from memory in notationless cultures. This is a topic that has resonance in medieval songs whose notation is similarly is a matter of record rather than prescription. The most teasing aspect of such songs has long been considered to lie in their rhythms. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, since it was not until the mid-thirteenth century that the utterly novel idea was rehearsed that certain kinds of music are precisely measurable. Surprising as it may seem, the cylinder recordings, taken in conjunction with Bartók's writings on 'parlando-rubato' rhythm and Brăiloiu's on 'syllabic giusto', have much to tell us about singing 'beyond measure' in medieval times.

***In Search of Revolutionary Voices: Performance Practices of Mexican Singers in Cylinder Recordings***  
*Dr Fatima Volkovskii (Independent Researcher)*

Through the technological developments of their northern neighbor, many Mexican performers found themselves participating in wax cylinder recordings. However, in 1910 Mexico burst into the Revolution which brought unrest for the following decade. Perhaps due to this sociopolitical turmoil, very few homegrown cylinders have been found. By reviewing different collections of cylinders, including those preserved at the Fonoteca Nacional in Mexico and the University of Santa Barbara (UCSB) audio archive, we can trace performance practices of musicians before and during

the Mexican Revolution and listen to the voices of that period. In this presentation I will demonstrate how popular songs were interpreted both with a lyrical use of the voice as well as with a more vernacular singing style. With the relatively minimal number of cylinders available, is it possible to offer insight into the diversity of performance practices of popular songs? In this first approach to Mexican cylinder recordings, it is my aim to review the singing practices revealed and consider what performance styles could characterize this period.

***Challenges and Insights - Wax Cylinders as a Tool for a Modern Musician's Access to Music from an Ancient Tradition***  
*Dr Arja Kastinen (Sibelius Academy, Uniarts Helsinki)*

In the summers of 1916 and 1917, the young folk music researcher Armas Otto Väisänen travelled through the remote villages of Border Karelia with a phonograph and a small hollow kantele from a museum. He aimed to collect the laments, kantele tunes and shepherd's songs that were so scarce in the archives at the time. The old kantele tradition connected with the ancient runosong culture was disappearing, and by bringing an old instrument, Väisänen gave those who didn't even have a kantele of their own the opportunity to play what they could remember. Supplemented by a short trip to Olonets Karelia in 1919 and later meetings with some individual tradition-bearers, Väisänen made detailed observations about the scales used by kantele players, the old playing technique and, above all,

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the special aesthetics of the music within the ancient tradition. The copies of the wax cylinders are kept in the archives of the Finnish Literature Society in Helsinki. They present many challenges to modern listeners as it was not possible to get the instrument close enough to the phonograph horn, and thus it was not able to record all of the highest and lowest sounds. Also, the extremely poor quality of the surviving copies and their short examples, mostly of the dance tunes of the time, don't open up the hours-long trance-like improvisation described by Väisänen and other scholars of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But they do provide insights for musicians seeking new ways of performing this ancient music.

## **Session 5: Wax Cylinders Today**

***The Cylinders of San Simón***  
*Dr Aleksander Javier Kolkowski (Science Museum, London)*

Since the early 2000s, I have made phonographic recordings on cylinders of traditional musics at music festivals, artistic residencies and for public demonstrations of acoustic sound recording. Musicians from Spain, Senegal, Nigeria and South Korea, among other countries, have played and sung into my recording horn and their recordings reproduced to them mechanically on an 'Edison' phonograph. Their responses may arguably be compared to those experienced by the earliest phonographic recording subjects over one hundred years earlier - the awe of hearing a sound recording reproduced for the first time is replaced in this instance by feelings of

curiosity, delight and amazement in the process of acoustic sound recording. In the manner of early ethnographic practices, the recordings were all made 'in the field', often in difficult-to-record locations such as in the open air. Similarly, the recording apparatus used included a domestic Edison phonograph, such as those employed by ethnographers in the early 1900s, along with recorders and recording horns based on original examples. In this way, the entire recording set-up or dispositif, may be seen as a media-archaeological reenactment of past ethnographical recording practices. The results were likewise documented and archived as well as being disseminated through digital channels. My presentation will focus on phonographic recordings on cylinders and documentation made at the annual Sinsal SON music festival on the island of San Simón in Galicia where since 2018, I have contributed to an ever-expanding archive of cylinder recordings that includes a variety of traditional musics from five continents.

***Influence of Early Recordings on Bosnian Traditional Music***  
*Damir Imamović (University of Sarajevo, Music Academy, Department of Ethnomusicology)*

Music from Bosnia and Herzegovina was first recorded on cylinders during the Paris Exhibition in 1900. In 1907/1908 a series of recordings were made in Sarajevo and soon after commercially published as a part of the Zonophone series by Gramophone Company. Even though most of these recordings have been lost to history with the First World War, they provide us with an important glimpse into the state of Bosnian music scene in the

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beginning of the 20th Century. This paper offers an overview of the local perception of these recordings in local press, literature and subsequent repertoire of musicians in Sarajevo and wider region.

**The Digital Archive as a Transformative Tool in Preserving Historical Cylinders and Community Cohesion: A Presentation on the 'Ambientscape Project Website'**

*Jonathan Emeruwa (Independent Researcher, British Library)*

The Ambientscape Project is an online wax cylinder preservation website and 'Community Interest Company' established in 2022, the title of the project is a homage to the British musician and composer "Brian Peter George Eno." The purpose of the Ambientscape project is to preserve and restore diverse cultural historical phonograph cylinder and disc recordings, making them available online in digital form with particular emphasis on having the audio easily accessible to content creators, researchers and enthusiasts. The Ambientscape Project is also an educational platform. Cultural diversity and inclusion are core tenets at the heart of Ambientscape. The project also helps to raise greater awareness of sound from around the world, documenting rich histories, music and languages of early recordings from Africa, Asia, Indigenous America and Oceania. This experiential short talk describes the process of setting up the Ambientscape digital archive from the beginning, exploring some of the barriers and how the project has been able find new ways of utilising existing technologies in unconventional ways that challenge the existing paradigms of

traditional archiving to achieve goals and to bring together people of different backgrounds and age groups.



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