

Dietrich Schuller's (Germany) paper, "Safeguarding Audio and Video Recordings as Ethnomusicological Sources." He began by summarizing the differing characteristics and variety of formats of sound and video recordings now in existence, and emphasizing their importance to the field of ethnomusicology. He reviewed the archival paradigm shift from concentration on the care of the carrier to preservation of the intellectual content. He envisioned an "eternal sound archive"—a mass data storage archive for audio, video and still images—with remote access, data integrity control, and the capability of automatically migrating the data to the newest format. Schuller reported that this vision is, for the most part, already a reality. The technology currently exists to do what is described above. The greatest problem confronting those sound archivists wishing to transfer data to this new environment is not the purchase of equipment or the acquisition of skills to perform the transfer, but the time involved—approximately four person hours for each hour of material. Schuller suggests that not all archives will be able to embrace this new environment themselves, but may have to contract the work out to other archives or contractors with the expertise, equipment and staff to devote to such a massive project. He concluded by emphasizing that a back-up strategy is essential and that, in the digital world, "one copy is *no* copy."

Throughout the week, sound archivists from several countries met informally to discuss current trends, technologies, and ask questions. Email addresses were exchanged and there was talk of establishing a listserv for this group, so that these exchanges could continue indefinitely. Such interaction was typical of the conference. I learned so much by taking advantage of the many opportunities to meet and talk with colleagues from around the world. I hope these opportunities will continue as ICTM begins its 51<sup>st</sup> year.

[Mary R. Bucknum, associate director, attended the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting of the International Council for Traditional Music this past summer. She gratefully acknowledges the support of Indiana University's International Programs (Opportunities for Librarians Grant) and Indiana University Libraries (Herbert and Virginia White Professional Development Award) in providing travel money to Slovakia.]

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## FROM THE VAULT: THE LATIN AMERICAN COLLECTION OF 78S

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The music industry recruited its raw material, live talent, from virtually all parts of the region [Latin America] and recorded those artists in makeshift studios in their home countries. The companies pressed the records in the United States and then marketed them to the populations of the countries from which the music had come. Record production, especially ethnic record production, was as much a sideline for North American companies as it was for the musicians, though for different reasons. Whereas artists used records to promote their live performances, companies utilized them to promote their phonographs. The net result of this confluence of motives was the almost incidental preservation of a primarily working class ethnic American music.<sup>1</sup>

In the October 1982 issue of *Resound*, Louise Spear's list of Archives' highlights included a brief reference to "The Colonial Publishers Collection of 78 rpm recordings."<sup>2</sup> Until recently this collection, Archives number 79088-C, has hidden undetected among other Archives treasures. The collection, now referred to as the Latin American Collection of 78s, first came to the attention of Frank Gillis, Archives director, in 1977 when K.H. Begley of Colonial Publishers in West Englewood, New Jersey, sent an advertisement to the Folklore Institute stating that:

We have recently acquired, as part of the inventory of a small liquidated company, an exceptional collection of out-of-print and rare recordings of Latin American folk and popular music. We are advised that the collection is important not only for study and research in music but also in such disciplines as linguistics, cultural history, ethnology, and sociology. The recordings (78 rpm) are for the most part brand-new...some were recorded in the United States (all by Latin American performers) and many others in all parts of Latin America. Most Latin American countries and many musical forms are represented.<sup>3</sup>



After examining the introductory offer of ten discs, Gillis began a two year effort to procure the \$6500.00 needed to purchase the entire collection of over three-thousand recordings. With the aid of IU faculty members, including Merle Simmons and Richard Dorson, Gillis convinced the University Research and Development Committee and the Office of Research and Graduate Development to provide the necessary funding.<sup>4</sup> By November 1979, the Archives received the first shipment of thirty-four cartons. Seventy-five of the original recordings were broken during shipping. Begley was able to replace fifty-two of the original discs with exact duplicates; he sent eighty-nine additional recordings to compensate for the twenty-three irreplaceable discs. According to the Archives shelf count, the collection now contains three thousand three hundred fifty-one 78 rpm (two-sided) 10-inch recordings.

K.H. Begley believed the collection spanned three decades, from the 1930s to the late 1960s.<sup>5</sup> Of the approximately one thousand discs that have been examined in the past year, only a handful include dates that are etched near the matrix numbers, and these are from the 1960s. Researchers and performers who have looked at the preliminary inventory for the collection believe the majority of the recordings are from the 1950s and 1960s.



There are over three hundred fifty different labels represented in the collection. While most of the recordings appear to have been recorded and manufactured in the United States, a large number of Latin American labels are also present, including Borinquen (Puerto Rico), Discomoda (Venezuela), Marvela (Puerto Rico) Odeon (Cuba), Peerless (Mexico), and Sololux (Colombia). Major U.S. labels, notably Columbia and Victor, are also represented. In addition, there are extensive runs from various labels including Alegre, Ansonia, Mardi, Marvela, Musart, Secco, Tico,

and Verne. As Begley noted, the collection includes a range of genres, from corridos, merengues, and plenas to boleros and cha-chas.

A partial listing of well-known artists includes: Johnny Rodríguez, Davilita, Canario, Yomo Toro, Plácido Aceveda, and Pedro Flores (Puerto Rico); Bimbi and Celia Cruz (Cuba); Luis Quintero and Nelson Pinedo (Dominican Republic); and Los Panchos, Tito Lara, and Pedro Infante (Mexico).



Access to the collection has been limited. Despite good intentions, Colonial Publishers never completed a full and accurate inventory of the collection. The inventory they sent consisted of a non-alphabetized listing of record company names and numbers for the collection (e.g., Ansonia 6632). Only two thirds of the inventory included titles and principal performer for each recording. A concordance, combining the old Colonial Publishers inventory with the corresponding Archives shelf numbers, has been created; nevertheless, title, performer, composer, and genre information is still incomplete.

Knowing of my interest in Latin American music, Archivist Marilyn Graf mentioned the collection to me when I first came to the Archives three years ago. Last spring I began a collaboration with Emma Dederick, a music librarian and native of Puerto Rico, to design an in-house database for this project. In April I received an IU Office of International Programs grant to hire an assistant to enter record label information from all the recordings in the database. Once data entry is complete, we will use the database to create a printed catalog for the collection. Although we do not have dates for the recordings, the catalog will follow a discographic model; principal performers will be listed alphabetically followed by a title listing of their recordings in matrix number order. We will index the catalog by performer names, composer names, titles, genres, record label numbers, and matrix numbers. We expect to have the database, with full record label information, completed by late next spring. The database will be accessible at the Archives and will eventually be

linked to the Archives Website. We hope to publish the catalog by the fall of 1998. As with other Archives commercial holdings, Archives technical staff will make duplicate in-house listening copies on request.

As part of this project, Emma Dederick and I will conduct research at the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, a division of the New York Public Library. This Archives, one of the richest sources



of recorded sound in the world, also has a vast collection of printed materials covering the entire field of sound recording from the 1890s to the present. We will examine record company catalogs and promotional materials, trade publications, discographies, and related periodicals to gather historical information on record companies that issued Spanish-language recordings in New York from the 1930s-1960s. We are also particularly interested in establishing recording dates and full names for performers and composers from the Archives of Traditional Music's collection. We will be assisted by Sara Velez, the Archives' Latin American specialist. In addition, the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives houses the Rigler Deutsch Index to 78 rpm recordings. This index covers the complete 78 rpm collections of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives as well as the extensive collections at the Library of Congress, and Yale, Stanford, and Syracuse universities. It appears very likely that the recordings at the Archives of Traditional Music may be unique as an institutional collection; an examination of catalogs from other major repositories for 78 rpm recordings in this country will help verify this. If we or other researchers do find pre-WWII recordings in the Latin American Collection of 78s, they will be important additions to Richard Spottswoods' discography on Spanish-language ethnic recordings.<sup>6</sup>

With the general popularity of salsa and growing scholarly attention to Latin American popular music, we expect great interest in the recordings from this collection. The Latin American Collection of 78s will undoubtedly provide valuable primary research material for the disciplines Begley noted twenty years ago, as well as ethnomusicology, Afro-American studies, Latin American studies, and folklore.

- <sup>1</sup> Glasser, Ruth, *My Life is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities, 1917-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 130-132.
- <sup>2</sup> Spear, Louise S., "The Sound Chest: Treasures from the Archives of Traditional Music," *Resound* 1, no. 4 (1982): 4.
- <sup>3</sup> Begley, K.H., Letter to Indiana University Folklore Institute, 12 October 1977. Colonial Publishers Correspondence File, Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- <sup>4</sup> Gillis, Frank, Letter to K.H. Begley, 30 May 1979. Colonial Publishers Correspondence File, Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- <sup>5</sup> Begley, K.H., Letter to Frank Gillis, 13 June 1978. Colonial Publishers Correspondence File, Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, Bloomington.
- <sup>6</sup> Spottswood, Richard. *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893 to 1942* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

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**RONALD R. SMITH:  
HIS LIFE AND MY REMEMBRANCES**

Gloria J. Gibson

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Ronald R. Smith will be remembered as a teacher, mentor, musician, administrator, researcher, and friend. During his lifetime he achieved many personal goals, but perhaps most important, he enthusiastically helped others realize their dreams. Ronald was a tireless humanitarian with a warm personality and effervescent presence.

Although it was almost twenty years ago, I remember as if yesterday, how nervous I was to meet my academic advisor, Dr. Smith. As I sat waiting, I reflected on my concept of an "advisor," as simply someone to assist me with class selection; he would be the person to guide me through my academic program. Finally, after what seemed to be an eternity, the secretary directed me to his office. Seated behind the desk, he gave me a warm welcome as I silently exclaimed, "Dr. Smith is black, how wonderful!" Throughout that meeting and countless others, Dr. Smith proved to be much more than an academic counselor. In transcription and analysis class, he challenged me to transcribe the complex melody of "The Ballad of Nockenoor." As my dissertation chair, he