

## 2022 ARSC CONFERENCE DETROIT AS VIRTUAL HOST CITY CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

*Yuri Shimoda*  
*Chair, ARSC Program*

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections invites proposals for presentations, posters, and panels at its 56th annual conference, to be held virtually, May 18-21, 2022.

Although the 2022 conference will be online, the Program Committee has selected Detroit, Michigan as our virtual host city. ARSC welcomes proposals for presentations, panels, and posters on any aspect of sound recording. In recognition of our host city, we especially encourage presentations across all genres and eras that highlight composers, broadcasters, musicians, performers, record labels, studios, songwriters, and personalities from the Midwest region of the United States.

Since the online platform for the 2022 conference also offers opportunities for global participation, we invite sound recording scholars, collectors, preservationists, and creators to engage in a broad range of topics that cross geographic, cultural, and collection boundaries. We seek presentations and panels that are informative, display a passion for their subjects, and include compelling audio and/or audiovisual content.

In addition, the Program Committee seeks proposals pertaining to:

- Discographies, record label and/or artist histories from all genres and eras, and the life and times of lesser-known audio formats.
- Watershed moments in history, either recorded sound history or documentation of history through recorded sound.
- Innovative research, preservation and access projects, community-based archiving initiatives, digital humanities, cultural approaches to sound recordings, soundscapes, etc.
- The challenges of born-digital materials and emerging sound recording formats and genres (collecting, producing, promoting, archiving, and curating).
- Advancements in audio production and preservation tools and techniques for legacy and digital formats

Share your special interests and expertise with our engaged community of archivists, audio engineers, collectors, historians, musicians, and preservationists.

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*Photo of Motown Museum by Chris Butcher  
from Wikimedia Commons*

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## NEW YORK CHAPTER REPORT

*Dennis D. Rooney*

With the gradual relaxation of restrictions on public gatherings already gathering momentum, the New York Chapter of ARSC has begun planning the regular resumption of regular in-person programs as it becomes feasible. Programs for 2022 will be finalized in the coming weeks. We will shortly be making available on the ARSC YouTube channel the second and third installments of the Virtual Tour of Seth Winner's studio begun last year. An announcement on the arsc-audio website will be posted when they are available.

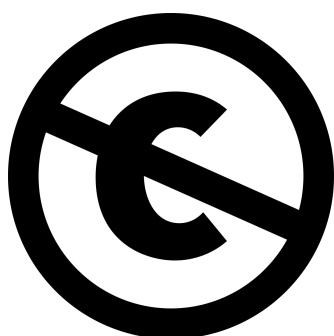
## FROM THE TREASURY

*Steve Ramm*  
*Treasurer*

The Board passed the "Unrestricted Operating Budget (Cash Basis) for Calendar Year 2022"

## PUBLIC DOMAIN DAY

**JAN. 1, 2022**



## 2022 CONFERENCE CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

*Continued from page 1*

### SUBMISSION INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The deadline for presentation proposals is January 31, 2022. Presenters will be notified of acceptance approximately one month thereafter.

### IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Presenters must register and pay for the conference. Presenters grant ARSC the right to record and distribute their conference presentations, including PowerPoints or other slide shows, unless they specify otherwise in writing.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference.html>

Please direct questions to Yuri Shimoda, ARSC Program Chair, at [arsc.program@gmail.com](mailto:arsc.program@gmail.com)

To submit your proposal, complete this form:



## WATCH LAST YEAR'S CONFERENCE ONLINE

ARSC's 55th Annual Conference and Pre-Conference Workshop, held virtually May 12-15, 2021, is now on our Aviary site:

<https://arsc.aviaryplatform.com/collections/1510>

Members must log into or create an Aviary account using the email address on file with ARSC in order to gain access.

Alternatively, members may email ARSC Executive Director ([execdir@arsc-audio.org](mailto:execdir@arsc-audio.org)) to request an invitation to join ARSC on Aviary.

In keeping with its purpose to promote the preservation and study of sound recordings, ARSC has made selected presentations available to the public here:

ARSC 2021 Conference Playlist in YouTube  
<https://tinyurl.com/dpzzpsb8>

ARSC 2021 Conference Playlist in Aviary  
<https://tinyurl.com/3zdw5twx>

Users must create a free Aviary account.

Thank you to all who presented or contributed!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Rebecca Chandler*  
ARSC President

Hello ARSC! It's been a busy few months since our last newsletter. With the support of the NRPB and with CLIR funding, ARSC hosted two webinars, Archiving Hip Hop: Community-Based Approaches and What's Up with DAT?: A Discussion on Digital Audio Tape. I would like to thank our webinar coordinators, Yuri Shimoda and Dan Hockstein, for putting together such great programming for ARSC members and the greater community.

The Technical Committee just held another installment of their popular "Ask the TC" program on November 10th. A big thanks to Brad McCoy, Seth Winner, and all the panelists for answering folks' burning technical questions.

The ARSC Board just met virtually on November 7th to catch up on business and approve the 2022 budget. I am pleased to announce that the 2022 conference will be held virtually on May 18-21, 2022! Given the current economic climate and pandemic uncertainties, we were unable to secure a hotel contract that did not put ARSC at significant financial risk. While I will miss seeing you all in person, I am looking forward to the many advantages a virtual conference brings, like being more accessible to our friends overseas. I am excited to see what the 2022 virtual conference has in store for us!

We also eagerly await Public Domain Day 2022 on January 1st, when pre-1923 recordings will officially enter the public domain. Many thanks to the ARSC Copyright & Fair Use Committee for all of their advocacy work in making PDD a reality - we all look forward to enjoying the fruits of their labor. In further celebration of PDD, the ARSC Journal will publish a special edition celebrating pre-1923 recordings; both a CD and a digital download will be included. Many thanks to Journal Editor Christopher King, Publications Chair Matthew Barton, and all of the contributors to this special celebratory journal issue.

I end, as always, with an invitation to become more involved in ARSC. As a volunteer-led organization, ARSC is powered and guided by you. Please consider joining a committee or becoming a committee chair; we all benefit when we hear more and different voices in the mix! A current list of open positions can be found on the ARSC Volunteer Opportunities page: <http://www.arsc-audio.org/volunteer.html>.

I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish in the new year.

### Volunteer With The ARSC Newsletter

Joining the Newsletter Editorial Team is a great way to get involved in the ARSC community.

- Contribute articles, interviews, or artwork -

Contact Eric Silberberg to learn more.  
[ericstil218@gmail.com](mailto:ericstil218@gmail.com)

## ARSC NEWSLETTER

**Issue 157**

**Fall-Winter 2021**

The ARSC Newsletter is published three times a year: in March, July, and November. Submissions should be addressed to the editor via email.

### Editor

Eric Silberberg  
[ericstil218@gmail.com](mailto:ericstil218@gmail.com)

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The opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views ARSC.

## ARSClist The Online Discussion Group of ARSC

Since 1999, the Association for Recorded Sound Collections has sponsored an unmoderated mail reflector to facilitate the exchange of information on sound archives and promote communication among those interested in preserving, documenting, and making accessible the history of recorded sound. The list is sponsored by ARSC as a service to its members and the archival community at large.

### Subscribe

To join the list, send an email to: [listserv@listserv.loc.gov](mailto:listserv@listserv.loc.gov)

Leave the "Subject" blank. In the first line of the body of the message, type "subscribe ARSClist [your name]" and send the message normally.

To post to the list, send an email to [ARSCLIST@loc.gov](mailto:ARSCLIST@loc.gov)

Only subscribers can post to the list. You may also subscribe to the list via the Library of Congress website at [listserv.loc.gov/listarch/arsclist.html](http://listserv.loc.gov/listarch/arsclist.html)

### ARSClist Archives

Current archives are maintained by the Library of Congress on the above website. ARSClist archives through June 2009 are kept on the Conservation OnLine (CoOL) site at [cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/arsclist/](http://cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailling-lists/arsclist/). Once archived, messages will not be removed from the archives.

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

*Eric Silberberg*  
Editor, ARSC Newsletter

Greetings ARSConians from Newsletterville and encouraging you all to flip back to page 1 and re-read Yuri Shimoda and the Program Committee's Call for Presentations at the 2022 ARSC Conference. Whether you are going to present on your accessions, obsessions, collections, or recording sessions I am already excited for May 18th. Last year the committee put on a seamless remote conference, and I know they will repeat that success this year.

Making the Motor City our Host Virtual City is exciting given all the great music Detroit has given us: from the Four Tops to the Belleville Three. This year, ARSC awarded a Certificate of Merit to the late, great Billy Miller and Michael Hurtt's book "Mind Over Matter: The Myths & Mysteries of Detroit's Fortune Records." The slap-back saturated singles of Fortune were a rawer and more inventive alternative to its cross-town rival Motown. Miller and Hurtt's book explores what regional music production looked like in this country (when it still existed?). The sounds of Nolan Strong & The Diablos' "Route 16" will be a great soundtrack on the road to ARSC LVI.

The Newsletter is also looking for volunteers to join the editorial team. If you have ideas on columns or interviews you'd like to see here, reach out to the Editor to find out how to get involved.

*Now Spinning: "The Wind" by Nolan Strong and the Diablos*

Over the summer, the Newsletter invited readers to share how they listen. Not the stereo system or furniture in your room, but how the music speaks to them. Carl Tancredi shared these thoughts:

In one sense, it's quite simple  
Just listen to their voices.  
Collectively or individually.  
Their voices guide your ears.  
I remember the first time  
I was introduced to these  
Unknown vocal groups  
With their strange names:  
Dominoes, Spaniels, Five Keys,  
Five Discs, Clovers, Jacks,  
Orchids, Moonglows, Dells,  
Harptones, Solitaires,  
Heartbeats, Channels.  
The list goes on and on.  
I never knew any of their  
songs.  
Well, maybe one or two,  
Definitely less than ten.  
The important thing  
For the first time listener

Is just listen.  
Don't think. Don't compare.  
It's not required.  
After 50 years,  
What am I now listening for?  
Fast forward to the now.  
Pure enjoyment.  
The overall sound of the group itself.  
Is the lead singer interesting?  
Is the song any good?  
Is there anything going on  
In the background  
that catches my ear.  
How does the group end their song?  
The ending is important.  
In closing,  
Please don't refer  
To these vocal groups  
As doo-wop.



*Photo of Mamie Smith from Wikimedia Commons*

## PRE-1923 RECORDING SURVEY

*Tim Brooks*  
1st Vice President

Many ARSC members voted in a recent survey to identify “Ten Notable pre-1923 Recordings.” The purpose of the project was to create a list for ARSC to use in publicizing the introduction in January 2022 of a U.S. public domain for recordings, the treasures that it will make available to the public, and ARSC’s role in making this public domain, which will grow in the future, a reality. The press (and public) like short, easy-to-digest lists, and it is hoped this will serve that need.

We estimate that approximately 400,000 recordings will enter the U.S. public domain in its inaugural year.\*

An initial list of about 60 candidates was assembled by a panel of experts from within ARSC who interact regularly with the public and have a sense of what the broader public will react to. The panel consisted of Dr. Patrick Feaster, David Giovannoni, Colin Hancock, Rich Martin and Meagan Hennessey, Cecelia “Cece” Otto, Dennis Rooney, and David Sager. ARSC members were invited to vote for up to ten entries from that list on a survey questionnaire, and could also add their own candidates. All major genres were included, including popular, classical, roots music, spoken word, and social movements of the period.

The result will be a curated list of ten recordings

representing the pre-1923 period. All principal genres will be represented, and within each genre the examples given will be the recordings that got the most votes. In addition, there will be a page on the ARSC web site where you can read about all nominated recordings, and click on links that take you to sites where you can hear those recordings.

The survey was developed with invaluable assistance from my fellow research professional David Giovannoni, who commented on drafts and located online examples of the recordings. Many examples were mounted on David’s own site, [www.i78s.org](http://www.i78s.org). In addition, Archeophone Records kindly established a special page on its site containing examples ([www.archeophone.com](http://www.archeophone.com)), and others were located on sites maintained by the Library of Congress/National Jukebox, Internet Archive, Wikimedia, YouTube, and the University of California-Santa Barbara. All of these are excellent sites on which to listen to historical recordings. Alex McGehee, chair of the Membership Committee, also offered valuable support.

The final list of ten notable recordings, plus the entire list of nominees, will be announced shortly and will be used by the Membership Committee to help promote ARSC and Public Domain Day, January 1, 2022.

*\* Estimate developed by David Seubert, Sam Bylawski and Tim Brooks, based in part on analysis of pre-1923 contents of the Discography of American Historical Recordings (DAHR).*

## NEWS FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

*Brad McCoy & Jeff Willens*  
Co-Chairs, Technical Committee

The last several months have been a busy time for the Technical Committee. TC members played active roles at the May 2021 ARSC Virtual Conference. The Pre-Conference Workshop “Digital Restoration in the 21st Century”, co-sponsored by the Education and Training Committee, was led by Seth Winner with Jessica Thompson and ARSC members Bryan Hoffa and Richard Martin. Conference presentations were given by Gary Galo, Seth Winner, and John Levin; several panels were chaired by Dennis Rooney and TC co-chair Brad McCoy. The annual conference event “Ask the TC” was held by a panel consisting of Jessica Thompson, Melissa Widzinski, Seth Winner, Gary Galo, Dennis Rooney, and Richard Hess, with honorary member Steve Smolian, moderated by co-chair Brad McCoy.

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## NEWS FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

*Continued from p. 5*

At the May TC meeting, three new committee members were introduced. They are: Angie Dickinson Mickle (Avocado Productions); Nick Bergh (Endpoint Audio); and John Levin (CPS1). All three are exceptionally talented experts in their fields, and the TC is both fortunate and honored to have them join us.

The September TC meeting saw updates on the various projects TC members have been working on. These include the sourcing of new styli for archival preservation of discs; compiling a complete list of phono EQ curves from around the world into a reference document or database; and further collaborations with Education and Training on more webinars and pre-conference workshops.

In October, Jeff Willens was named co-chair of the TC, filling the spot previously held until January, 2020 by Marcos Sueiro Bal.

November saw another successful and lively "Ask the TC" virtual public meeting with a panel consisting of co-chair Brad McCoy, host Seth Winner, Gary Galo, Dennis Rooney, Adrian Cosentini, Marcos Sueiro, John Levin, Angie Dickinson Mickle, Marie O'Connell, and Richard Hess. There are plans for another "Ask the TC" perhaps early next year or during the virtual ARSC conference in May of 2022.

## PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

*Matthew Barton  
Chair, Publications Committee*

This January will bring a special Winter issue of the ARSC Journal with a 28 track CD tucked inside filled with classic recordings from around the world that will be in the new US public domain for sound recordings as of January 1st, 2022. It's been sourced from the collections of ARSC members and covers the years 1895 to 1922 vertically and laterally with cylinders, discs and even a music box.

## ARSC JOURNAL SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Journal is looking to fill two positions. Please send inquiries and resumes to Publications Committee Chair Matthew Barton at shellaxed@gmail.com. See descriptions below.

### ASSISTANT EDITOR

- Recruit writers of articles from presentations at the ARSC conference, other conferences, suggested contacts, and publishers of books in the field.
- Image research for articles and the color section.
- Occasional assistance with proof reading and other production matters with the Spring and Fall issues and third "special" issues that may be published in a given year.
- Correspond throughout the year with reviewers, the Journal Editor and Journal Publisher.

### SOUND REVIEWS EDITOR

- Identify releases that are suitable for review and obtain copies for reviewers. Alternatively, solicit suggestions from reviewers for things they would like to review and consider same, maintaining a range of genres and fields in music, spoken word and other areas in recorded sound.
- For the Spring and Fall issues, assemble, format and sequence the reviews received for the Journal Editor's review. Proof the typeset review section for typos and errors and correct same. Specials issues like the Winter, 2022 issue may not have review sections.
- Handle solicitations from producers of releases who contact the editor wanting a release reviewed.
- On an ongoing basis, identify individuals who are good candidates to be additional reviewers based on their interests, background, writing skills and experience.
- Correspond throughout the year with reviewers, the Journal Editor and Journal Publisher.

## IASA BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DISCOGRAPHY

Paul T. Jackson  
Member and Initiator of ARSC

I have been writing articles, since retirement, for publiclibrariesonline.org about finding answers and keeping found things found, along with other items of interest to librarians. This was probably an avocation developed from my research of recorded sound archives in 1965, which started me asking questions and initiating meetings leading to the founding of ARSC.

I suspect many of our ARSC members are, in fact, not only collectors, engineers, and archivists, but researchers looking for information just as our librarian members are and do for others.

In 1988, our family placed, with the International Trombone Association's archive, Glenn D. Bridges' research papers, his premier recording collection of brass soloists, and his book, *Pioneers In Brass*. Glenn was on the steering committee for the startup of ITA, and later its Historian. I republished the book with additions on CD-ROM which included all of Glenn's writings we could locate. Glenn had also helped writers of Sousa books; Paul Bierley and James Smart. Glenn had known and heard Sousa concerts, and, Glenn told me, Sousa had been at his house one time.

While it seems that the 4th edition of the book is lost due to newest technology, qPress of Canada, now has the assigned copyright and the material, and will eventually bring it back into print.

After years of moving from place to place, the ITA archive and Glenn's things were finally brought to one place, the Columbia State University (Georgia). <https://archives.columbusstate.edu/findingaids/mc359.php>

When I retired in 1996, I decided to put my collection of 20 years of research on discography in one place; with the ITA archive and Glenn's recording collection. I was pleased they had a person who could do an inventory of all my collected papers and works along with those of my uncle.

It was especially pleasing that, with this inventory, the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) bibliography of discography project could add additional discographies. I have continued helping to add to that bibliography of discographies when, in other research, I have discovered various discographies. Perhaps all members could do this as well.

## THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPHY AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY, RICHARD TAYLOR BURSARY

The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society (CLPGS) is the oldest society of its kind devoted to recorded sound, founded in 1919 with Thomas Edison as Patron. It supports and encourages scholarship and publication by individuals in the field of sound recordings, early talking machines and audio preservation. The CLPGS Richard Taylor Bursary programme is designed to fund specific eligible projects in this field, including discography, bibliography, historical studies of the sound recording industry and its products, company label research, the history of talking machines, developments of the technology and any other subject likely to increase the public's understanding and appreciation of the lasting importance of recorded sound. Richard Taylor Bursary grants are primarily (but not exclusively) designed to encourage applications from individuals whose research forms part of an academic programme at the master's or doctoral level. They could, for instance, help fund independent research and publishing projects.

Both CLPGS members and non-members are eligible to apply for grants of at least £500. Grant funds can be used to underwrite clerical, travel, and editorial expenses. However, grants may not be used to purchase capital equipment or recordings; or to create recordings (including field recordings), or to perform operations on sound recordings; or to reimburse applicants for work already performed; or to support projects which form part of paid employment. In addition, grant recipients may submit documentation to reclaim any reasonable extra expenses; any such expenses must be claimed within eighteen months of the grant award.

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## CLPGS RICHARD TAYLOR BURSARY AWARD

*Continued from page 7*

Grant recipients are required to provide regular status updates on their projects to CLPGS; and are encouraged to submit articles about them for publication in the CLPGS Journal "For the Record".

Applications for a CLPGS Richard Taylor Bursary should include:

1. A summary of your project (one page maximum), with samples of the work attached if possible.
2. An outline budget for the project, highlighting the costs and expenses the Bursary will cover (one page maximum). Indicate any funds that have already been committed to the project, and any pending funding proposals, giving their source(s) (e.g. foundation name and location), the amount requested, and the purpose.
3. Your curriculum vitae.
4. An indication of the prospects for publication or other public presentation of the project results.

Applications should be forwarded to:

Tom Stephenson  
co-ord@clpgs.org.uk

The closing date for applications is 31st March 2022.

The web page [www.clpgs.org.uk/news.html](http://www.clpgs.org.uk/news.html) also provides details of the previous Richard Taylor Bursary awards made by the CLPGS in the years 2018 to 2020.

## HOW EDISON FOUND HIS FAVORITE SONG

*Ryan Barna*

When Thomas Edison celebrated his eighty-second birthday on February 11, 1929, a special WJZ radio broadcast paid him a tribute. Throughout the program, a theme was heard, announced as a "particular favorite -- a love song which he enjoys above all other songs..." The song, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," written by Thomas P. Westendorf in 1876, is notable for being his favorite song, and the Diamond Disc by Walter Van Brunt is frequently mentioned as his favorite (or one of his favorite) records. When and how "Kathleen" become his favorite song is due to the recording itself.

Edison could have heard "Kathleen" as a young man, but there is no documentation of Edison expressing admiration for it until it was issued on Diamond Disc. For example, he left it out of his various lists and comments on songs he selected for his initial disc releases between 1911 and 1912. According to Edison Records of Music That Lives, published in 1925, the story goes that "More than ten years ago Mr. Edison purchased a lot of old music which he found stored in the cellars of music publishers. He bought this music by the ton and among it he found 'I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen'" (p. 10).

While this anecdote gives an appropriate time frame for when he first heard it (and it may be true for other tunes he auditioned for his discs), thanks to documentation found in the Edison Papers Project, he most likely first heard the song on a Blue Amberol cylinder in late 1913 by minstrel balladeer Will Oakland (#2103), and not necessarily from purchasing sheet music. (It was originally issued as a fragile wax Amberol in 1912, but remained popular enough to be reissued on the more durable Blue Amberol in December 1913). As Edison was reviewing Blue Amberols for titles and talent for his discs, he felt the song was "Ok for Disc" but wanted a different singer.

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*Image Courtesy of Ryan Barna*



## EDISON'S FAVORITE SONG

*Continued from page 10*



Walter Van Brunt. Edison Papers  
Project Reel 287, Image 793

His initial response was not overwhelmingly enthusiastic, but his interest apparently grew enough that he had the Music Department write to Westendorf, who was still living at the time: "Mr. Edison has passed your selection...and it will appear in a future list of our disc selections. Will also add that it will be sung by a good singer."

Walter Van Brunt, a popular tenor under

contract with Edison, was selected, despite his reluctance. (In a 1960 interview with music professor Milford Fargo, he first thought to himself, "Where did he pick this dog up?") He finally "gave in" and recorded it on June 8, 1914, with a chorus consisting of Elizabeth Spencer, Helen Clark, Royal Fish, and Donald Chalmers. By April 1915, the Edison Phonograph Monthly mentioned that Edison "has again and again expressed his admiration for 'I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen'" (p. 13). The earliest documentation listing the disc (#80160) as among his favorites is in a letter dated June 9, 1915, and it appeared in other advertisements subsequently listing his favorites. By 1925, the special catalog of Edison Records of Music That Lives publicized it as "the biggest selling Edison Record."

It was the sound recording itself by Van Brunt in 1914 that made "Kathleen" a particular favorite of Edison, enough to have it played on the pump organ at his funeral on October 21, 1931.

*Ryan Barna is a Grammy-nominated album notes writer. His latest release, Collins and Harlan Anthology: America's Favorite Entertainers (Popular Selections 1902-1924) (co-authored with Richard Martin), is available from Archeophone Records (www.archeophone.com). He is advocating for Van Brunt's "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen" to be selected for the National Recording Registry.*



## WHAT'S AN ORIGINAL WHEN EVERYTHING IS A COPY? CHUCK PERSON'S ECCOJAMS VOL. 1 RESURFACES FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE INTERNET

*Leonard Martin*

Electronic music producer and film composer Daniel Lopatin recently reentered the spotlight with his film score for the Safdie brothers' film *Uncut Gems* and his work as musical director for Super Bowl LV half-time show featuring R&B singer The Weeknd. Lopatin principally releases music under the alias Oneohtrix Point Never, including his most recent studio album *Magic Oneohtrix Point Never* (2020). Several long out-of-print OPN albums were repressed for Record Store Day on June 12, 2021, including *Betrayed in the Octagon* (2007), *Zones Without People* (2009) and *Russian Mind* (2009). However, Lopatin is known in much smaller circles as Chuck Person and for the 2010 genre-breaking album *EccoJams, vol. 1*. In an interview with Motherboard Lopatin describes his creation of *EccoJams*:

"...I do these things called 'eccoJams,' and essentially eccoJams is like a really simple kind of practice that anybody can do, if you have really basic recording capabilities of grabbing a phrase from a track, slowing it down,

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## ECCOJAMS RESURFACES

*Continued from page 9*

and putting a little echo on it. So, the sort of key then is if everyone can do it then... each piece reveals something about what its producer likes about it. So, I'm always sort-of searching for the juiciest moment in a pop track to sample and then sort of strip away, pull away, deconstruct, and kind of suave in echo... and get into the hypnotic state with it"--Interview with Daniel Lopatin, *Motherboard* (Vice), 2010.

Lopatin's "eccojams" would later incorporate samples of Toto's "Africa" and 2Pac's "Me Against the World," slowed down, saturated with echo, pitch-shifted, and often deconstructed to the point of becoming glitch music. The production choices Lopatin explores in "eccojams" draw notably from plunderphonics, chopped and screwed music, noise pop, new age music, and ambient music. Lopatin's 2010's foray into plunderphonics and the ever-elusive genre hypnagogic pop arrived alongside an ever-growing online experimental electronic music community. This burgeoning scene would later coin the term "vaporwave" to describe this emerging chimera of DIY (do-it-yourself) electronic music. Interestingly, Lopatin was producing "eccojams" as early as 2008 on his YouTube channel "Sunsetcorp." This project culminated as the album *Memory Vague* released on DVD in 2009, and later uploaded to YouTube. Ultimately, Lopatin would produce four official releases of "eccojams" under the name Chuck Person.

*Chuck Person's Eccojams, vol. 1* was released in 2010 by the Curatorial Club on cassette (TCC011) as an edition of 100 cassettes. Tapes featured j-card album art incorporating washed-out imagery and a signature mustard-yellow text pilfered from the box art of 1992 Sega Genesis/Sega CD video game *Ecco the Dolphin*. In typical DIY fashion j-card reverse

side is blank, noticeably lacking liner notes and track listings. Crowdsourced track listings present the album in 15 tracks: A1-A8 and B1-B7. Several tracks from *Memory Vague* (2009) are featured on Vol 1 (2010) including "Demerol," often referred to as track A4. "Demerol" is essentially an "eccojams" version of Michael Jackson's "Morphine," and appears to be directly inspired by John Oswald's "Dab," a plunderphonics piece based on the Michael Jackson single "Bad." *Eccojams, Vol. 1* recently made number 6 on Discogs, "The most wanted cassettes of all time," with a median resell price around 430 USD.

In 2012, Lopatin released additional "eccojams" through his Brooklyn-based record label Software. For Record Store Day 2012 Software issued four 7" singles titled *Chuck Persons A.D.D.* Complete as hand-numbered editions of 120. Each edition is titled *Locked Groove Edition [I-IV]* and features a 45 rpm A-side, consisting of approximately 30 "eccojams;" and a 33 1/3 rpm B-side, containing a single track that incorporates samples from the A-side. Each disc was designed to play music infinitely with the help of a self-contained groove track on the inner and outer areas of the disc surface. Software also released *A.D.D. Complete*, a box set containing all four *A.D.D. 7"* singles as an edition of 50. The box set shares an identical publisher number (SFT012) with the Record Store Day 7" singles.

Lopatin's final official release as Chuck Person was a 2016 remastered edition of the original *Eccojams, Vol. 1*. This edition was self-released and downloadable as 19-tracks encoded as FLAC and MP3 on his official Oneohtrix Point Never website. This was the first and only Chuck Person release to include liner notes and official track listings with song titles. The website also included a detailed description of samples used along with clarity over where the cassette was split into 19-tracks, rather than the 15-tracks produced from earlier tape rips hosted on YouTube. *Eccojams, vol. 1* (2016) features noticeably faster versions of certain tracks. Lopatin would later remove *Eccojams, vol. 1* (2016) from his website, presumably due to copyright infringement claims.

In early 2021, *Eccojams, vol. 1* was unofficially released on vinyl and made available through Rollin' Records, an internet-based music distributor. An initial pressing on blue vinyl (ECC01) sold out almost immediately, but received a second pressing a few weeks later. Thankfully, I managed to procure a personal copy, and an institutional copy as a part

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### Tell us the story behind a historic recording

The Newsletter publishes original columns on the history of recorded sound culture

Send a proposal to the editor:  
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## ECCOJAMS RESURFACES

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of the research I am carrying out on chopped and screwed music's influence on the stylistic origins of vaporwave music. This unofficial 2021 release utilizes a 2014 "fan-made" edit of *Eccojams, vol. 1* (2010) called the "Asterite edition." Exhaustive details on this edition are available on the Internet Archive, Discogs, and YouTube. *Eccojams, vol. 1* (2021) sounds surprisingly crisp on vinyl with cassette noise, tape deck hum, and other "imperfections" edited out by Lopatin himself in 2016, and further refined in this vinyl release. The album jacket notably features fan-made "Ecco the Dolphin" album art plundered from the internet without attribution. Unfortunately, this otherwise excellent fan-made release includes liner notes beleaguered with typos. Lastly, labels for Kunaki, an on-demand CD/DVD/vinyl manufacturer, and OPN (for Oneohtrix Point Never) appear on the back jacket.

Unfortunately, under existing copyright law an official reissue of *Eccojams, Vol.1* is all but impossible without paying a "kings' ransom" to various rights holders. For now, fans and newcomers alike can enjoy one of the most eclectic electronic music albums of the 2010s on bootleg... or feel inspired enough to self-publish their own "version."

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Jimmy Sweeney. Courtesy of the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum

## MYSTERY SINGER WITH THE CAPTIVATING VOICE: JIMMY SWEENEY FINALLY RECOGNIZED

*Chris Kennedy*

On Saturday, June 26, 1954, the shrill ring of the telephone at 462 Alabama Street, Memphis, Tennessee must have stirred the oppressive 100-degree summer afternoon. A 19-year-old apprentice electrician and aspiring singer answered the call from Sam Phillips' Sun Studio business associate, Marion Keisker, who told him that Mr. Phillips would like to hear him sing a song called 'Without You.' Legend has it that a breathless Elvis Presley burst into the studio before Marion had hung up the phone.

It's likely Presley felt this was his last chance to win over Phillips. He had made personal records at Sun in 1953 and earlier in 1954, hoping to be noticed. It was Keisker who had first heard something special in the young man's voice, jotting down on a piece of scrap paper, "Elvis Presley – Good ballad singer" and the boy's phone number. Phillips seemed ambivalent, sensing the kid had potential, but needed nurturing that he hadn't time for. Presley would have been anxious to really nail 'Without You' for Phillips, and fulfill his dream of becoming a professional singer.

Phillips had returned from a trip to Nashville

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## ECCOJAMS

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*Leonard Martin is the Resource Description Librarian at the University of Houston Libraries.*

## VOLUNTEER WITH ARSC

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## JIMMY SWEENEY RECOGNIZED

*Continued from page 11*

in May of 1954 with a demo of the song. The purity of the singer's voice had captivated him, but according to Keisker, "Sam couldn't find out who the singer was. He was told it was just a Negro kid hanging around a Nashville studio when the song came in." Phillips considered releasing the demo as it was, but at Marion's suggestion, he agreed to let Elvis try the song. The story goes that Presley listened intently to the demo, but when he tackled 'Without You,' he couldn't rival the recording's yearning and vulnerability. Phillips was not impressed. During a break, Keisker said Elvis pounded on the table, saying, "I hate him! I hate him! Why can't I sing like that?"

After a break, Phillips set 'Without You' aside and encouraged Elvis to just sing, be himself. In the next few days, Phillips put Elvis together with guitarist Scotty Moore and bassist Bill Black for a proper audition. 'That's All Right' was released in July 1954, and shortly afterwards, Elvis became ELVIS, for better and for worse.

For over 60 years, the story of an unknown singer and the role his song played in the origins of the Elvis Presley phenomenon has become rock'n'roll folklore. Numerous biographies and documentaries have analyzed how this mystery singer's unique voice challenged and inspired the fledgling future King of Rock'n'Roll.

As a lifelong Elvis fan, I was familiar with the legend of 'Without You' and its phantom singer, but it wasn't until early 2017 that I had the opportunity to hear a fragment of the acetate. The song's opening line – "Always at twilight, I wish on a star..." – left me thunderstruck. I immediately recognized the obscure R&B singer whose records I've been collecting for over 20 years. The singer's voice was ethereal and unpredictable, kindred to Elvis or Roy Orbison at their best. It was Jimmy Sweeney.

Some listeners who hear Sweeney's records mistake him at first for Elvis Presley but in 1954 it was Elvis who was drawing inspiration from African-American artists. Sweeney's voice already possessed the fusion of genres that Sam Phillips coveted, but in the segregated south of 1950s America a black artist would never be afforded the same opportunities of national airplay and acceptance that a white artist would. As Phillips famously noted, "If I could find a white man who has the Negro sound and the Negro feel, I could make a billion dollars."

In 2011, long fixated, I contacted his only daughter, Eugenia Sweeney. She let me know that her father retired from the music business in 1962 and was employed as a U.S. Postal worker for thirty-seven years. "I would learn that the applause, accolades and positive reviews had not been enough to make him feel secure," she told me. "I learned that my father never believed in himself. He never felt worthy of success. He quit the business to devote himself to his family. He could have done so much more and when I asked him whether there were any regrets, he quietly said, 'No.'"

Jimmy Sweeney died of cancer on October 6, 1992 at the age of 69. If he'd ever heard rumor of the role played by a song he sang in the creation story of rock'n'roll, he never let on.

## DEEP CUTS: RESISTENCIA SONORA FROM OVEJAS, COLOMBIA

Melody Feo



Andres Narvaez performing with Vision Vallenata at the meeting space of the Asociación de Campesinos y Campesinas de la Finca la Europa, the peasant organization of which he is currently president.

Ovejas is a small town nestled deep in the Montes de Maria— a rural, mountainous region of the Caribbean coast of Colombia. This region was home to Indigenous and African communities who sought refuge from the Spanish rule, and would later continue to suffer many other kinds of oppression and violence in the present day. The cultural diversity of this region formed by different groups of people coexisting in the same territory for generations led to the emergence of what is now known as gaita music, a tradition that fuses Indigenous, Africa, and Spanish musical traditions that features the chuana (gaita)— an indigenous woodwind instrument made of a hollowed cactus stem and a beeswax, charcoal, and quill mouthpiece. Ovejas is home to a rich chuana (gaita) traditions, earning the title of the “university of the gaita.”

For many generations, gaita music was synonymous with the campesino lifestyle prior to the onset of violent conflict in the territory. During the peak of the conflict, gaita music nearly disappeared from rural communities outside of Ovejas, along with the people who were forcefully displaced and persecuted by armed actors and private groups. Despite Colombia's rich history of commercially recorded music and output in its major cities, there remains relatively little documentation of gaita traditions, especially from the rural communities where these traditions originated.

This is what gave rise to RESISTENCIA SONORA, an initiative to record musicians and songwriters from Ovejas who have firsthand experience about

events that shaped the current political, social, and cultural landscape of the region. The recordings will feature four masters: Marqueza Mercado, Alejandro Mendoza, Ismael Ortiz and Andrés Narvárez, each notable and well-respected elders in the community who haven't had the opportunity to record their music.

The project itself launched October 2021 by Totumo Seco, a collective headed by one of the key songwriters, Andrés Narvárez, and supported by an intergenerational group of musicians, students, and producers based in Colombia. Given the spread of locations of the musicians, the recordings will take place in remote rural areas of Ovejas as well as in studios in Bogotá. The recordings in Ovejas will use portable equipment to capture audio and visual content with the support of Tumbaga Estudio, a recording studio based in Bogotá. Eventually, these recordings will be mixed, mastered and pressed into a 7-inch vinyl record series by the producer Eric Banta of the NYC label, Names You Can Trust. Funding for this project was provided through online crowdfunding campaigns and a grant by NYU and Universidad del Rosario.

The objective of the project, RESISTENCIA SONORA, is for these narratives and community-led processes to reach and be recognized by a much wider audience through the production and distribution of traditional music. In this aspect, Narvárez emphasizes that music as a psycho-social endeavor that can be used to reclaim narratives and traditions in order to combat the stigmatization and marginalization of campesino communities in various territories of Colombia. An essential part of this project is the collective and community-centered process that aims to build the social fabric of a territory that has been disenfranchised for generations. Interested people can follow this project and future projects by Totumo Seco by following their pages on social media (@totumoseco).

*Melody Feo is an educator, musician, and environmental & human rights advocate with RESISTENCIA SONORA and is a Graduate Student in the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at New York University. Readers are invited to reach out via social media or the Newsletter to learn more about this project.*



Ismael Ortiz on the gaita.

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Nathan Georgitis  
Executive Director, ARSC



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*Aapo Juhani playing the accordion. Screenshot from film footage shot by Alan Lomax during his fieldwork in Michigan in 1938-1939. Archive of American Folk Song films, 1936-1942 (AFC 1990/017). Library of Congress American Folklife Center.*