

Current Bibliography

"Current Bibliography" is an annotated index of research on recording history that has appeared recently in specialized journals. To be indexed here an article must be in English, be reasonably substantive, and deal with recording history - as opposed to musicology, sociology, or contemporary subjects such as record reviews. "W/D" or "discog". indicates that the article was accompanied by something at least remotely resembling a discography.

Issues covered this time were received between September, 1994 and September, 1995. If you contact one of these publications or authors, please mention ARSC and "Current Bibliography".

Notes

Because "Current Bibliography" was unavoidably absent from the last issue of the *ARSC Journal*, this installment will catch up on a year's worth of publications (my apologies for the missed issue; your compiler was frantically working on the sixth edition of his *Complete Directory to Prime Time Network and Cable TV Shows, 1946-Present*, which will have been published by the time you read this). Further complicating matters, the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of the New York Public Library, where I do some of the research for this column, has been closed all summer for renovations, so a few of the journals normally covered are missing. We will catch up with them next time.

Sunrise, sunset. Bid farewell to one of the oldest, and most respected jazz publications, *Storyville*, which ended its 30-year run with issue #162 in January, 1995. It was always packed with interesting information, and nicely (though not opulently) produced, and it will be missed. Editor Laurie Wright has indicated his intention to publish an occasional hard cover volume of new articles in the future. I certainly hope he does so, as he is sitting on a manuscript by Howard Rye and myself about the second black orchestra to record commercially in the U.S. (shortly after Jim Europe's 1913 sessions). You'd never know who it was from the name on the label!

Also ceasing operations is *Old Time Country*, published for the last ten years by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi; its final issue was Volume X, Number 2 (1994). "Gone missing," and perhaps consigned to that big file cabinet in the sky, are two well known "monthlies," Don Mennie's *Record Collectors Monthly* and Allen Koenigsberg's *Antique Phonograph Monthly*, both of

which were last seen in 1993 (as of this writing). Len Kunststadt's increasingly infrequent *Record Research* seemed headed for the same fate with a year-and-a-half gap after its April 1993 issue, but a new issue unexpectedly showed up at the door in January, 1995. Perhaps these editors, who have contributed so much over the years, have "Bill Griggs' Syndrome". Bill, you may recall, was the editor of *Rockin' 50s*, a slick, enthusiastic little magazine about that era that reached number 38 (October, 1992) before Bill, in an anguished and apologetic letter to subscribers, announced that he was taking "a couple months to a year" off to recuperate, after which he hoped to resume. *Rockin' 50s* hasn't been heard from since.

One long-running journal that has survived the retirement of its founder is England's *Talking Machine Review*, begun by Ernie Bayly in 1969, and passed to new hands in 1989. Among its distinctions is the fact that since 1972 its pages have been continuously numbered, and it is now up to page 2,828! For those of you who catalog things, we're not sure what its proper name is, though. The new editors changed the name to the *International Talking Machine Review*, but lately the "*International*" has flitted on and off the front cover and inside masthead, from issue to issue, and the editors now request that checks be made out simply to "Talking Machine Review". Perhaps the extra word fell into the same hole as the 200 pages which seem to have disappeared between issue no. 88 (which ended at page 2,574) and no. 89 (which began at page 2,775).

Another closing is that of Fred Turco's Oak Lawn Books, an important supplier of specialized books and discographies to collectors. Turco donated his remaining stock to the Providence, Rhode Island, library system and retired.

Achtung! A Remarkable Project

Mention should be made of ARSC member Dr. Rainer Lotz's monumental project to publish The German National Discography, described as "a systematic listing of all recordings of the 78 rpm shellac era that were made in Germany". Owing to the size of the project, it is being divided into five thematic series, each consisting of multiple hard cover volumes. The series are:

1. German Personalities
2. German Dance Bands
3. German Operatic and Lieder
4. German Spoken Word
5. Ethnic and Traditional Music

Three volumes of series one and four of series two are already out, and more are scheduled for 1995 and 1996. Each volume is limited to a print run of 300 copies. More information is available in issue no. 89 of *The (International) Talking Machine Review*, or from Dr. Lotz at Jean Paul Str. 6, 53173 Bonn 2, Germany.

Dueling Discographies

At least Dr. Lotz has his field to himself. Two authors are simultaneously publishing sweeping, multi-volume jazz discographies. The two gargantuan projects are remarkably similar. Each will occupy approximately 25 volumes, and at \$45-\$50 per volume, cost about \$1,250 when complete. Each has more than half a dozen volumes out so far.

Jazz Records, 1942-1980 by Erik Raben picks up where Brian Rust's *Jazz Records, 1897-1942* left off, and includes issued and unissued recordings, and all subsequent reissues, including LPs and CDs (which Rust did not). *The Jazz Discography* by Tom Lord covers a broader time span, 1898 to 1993, but omits unissued sides, reissues on 78 rpm (though not on later formats), and issues on foreign labels. It has also been criticized for being basically a computerized compilation of previously published discographies, with little effort to correct old errors or incorporate recent findings. "Corrections," as they come in, are appended to subsequent volumes. I can't vouch for the accuracy of these complaints, which have appeared in *The IAJRC Journal* and *The Mississippi Rag* (see the September, 1994 issue of the latter, page 21, for a comparison of the two projects). Perhaps a knowledgeable ARSC member can undertake to do a comparative review for the *ARSC Journal*.

Whether it is due to coincidence or competition, both of these projects are actively issuing volumes, and should in fact be completed within our lifetimes. We wish we could say the same of the fabled Fagan-Moran *Encyclopedic Discography of Victor Recordings* (of which two out of a projected 20-plus volumes have been issued, the last one nine years ago), or for that matter the Columbia discography on which the late Bill Bryant, Brian Rust and I have allegedly worked during the last decade or two.

The Raben books are published by Jazz Media Aps, Copenhagen; the Lord books by Lord Music Reference, Inc., West Vancouver, B.C., Canada; and the Victor discography by Greenwood Press. All are available from specialty booksellers. As for the Columbia discography, look for it from someone, someday. (For those who can't wait, Claude Seary, 2863 Glen Lake Road, Victoria, B.C. V9B 4A8 has issued a somewhat less detailed compilation of the Columbia "A" series in five spiral-bound volumes.)

Collectors' Fantasies

Another favored fantasy of collectors is the laser playback system, capable of playing their treasured discs and cylinders with zero wear, flawlessly, and with minimal surface noise. Even untouchable tin foil recordings could theoretically be "read" this way. Some of you will recall the startling announcements made about the Finial laser turntable in 1986. The April 1995 *Historic Record* reveals that Finial was bought by ELP Corporation, Chiyodaku, Tokyo 101, Japan, which further developed the system and now offers a model for approximately \$32,000. It was recently demonstrated on British television, where a copy of Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" was nicely reproduced, however reports on more stringent tests are mixed. Rumor has it that at least one archive now has such a system in use, but no details are known, and no reports of tinfoil reproductions have surfaced. I can hardly wait to hear the voice of President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1878 yelling into the horn, "My dear Mr. Edison, what IS this confounded thing?"

Cylinders on End

Another fantasy, an affordable, modern cylinder player for taping purposes, is edging closer to reality. I recently visited its builder, Eliot Levin of Symposium Records, at his home outside London, and was treated to a brief but fascinating demonstration of a prototype unit. It is all new (not an adapted original machine), and carefully tooled, with variable speed, two and four minute tracking capability, and interchangeable mandrels for three sizes of cylinders. Its most striking feature, however, is that the

cylinder stands on end and is played vertically, from the bottom up, via a special cartridge transport! (Levin says this is done to counter the problem of cylinders slipping off the mandrel.) At a recent meeting of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society standard two-minute cylinders tracked well, but some other types did not. Presumably these problems will be ironed out by the time production units are delivered. Levin's small, initial production run is sold out in advance. Perhaps if demand is great enough he will consider producing additional units, though the price will no doubt rise from the current \$800.00 or so.

Required Reading

Finally, we offer for your consideration two recent and entertaining articles. The first describes a remarkable, and acrimonious, debate between eminent jazz writer James Lincoln Collier and famed performer Wynton Marsalis that took place at Lincoln Center in New York in August, 1994. The critic and the artist agreed on virtually nothing (Marsalis called Collier "a pompous social scientist who for too long has passed as a serious scholar of music," Collier attacked Marsalis' self-serving, ethnocentric view of jazz). The distinguished audience hooted and jeered. For details see the *ISAM Newsletter*, Volume XXIV, No. 1 (Fall, 1994) and reports in *The New York Times*.

And who could resist returning to the pages of the April, 1995 *Historic Record* for a perfectly deadpan account of the career of the well-known, and apparently real, cinema organist, Oliphant Chuckerbutty?

Acknowledgements

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Publications Listed:

American Music, University of Illinois Press, 54 E. Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820

American Heritage of Invention & Technology, P.O. Box 5335, Harlan, IA 51593

Antique Phonograph News, Canadian Antique Phonograph Society, 122 Major St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2L2 Canada

Black Music Research Journal, Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College, 600 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605

Bluegrass Unlimited, Box 111, Broad Run, VA 22014

Cornwall Family History Society Journal, c/o Joe Pengelly, 36 Thorn Park, Mannamead, Plymouth PL3 4TE, England

DISCoveries, P.O. Box 1050, Dubuque, IA 52004-1050

Echoes Of the Past, Box 40, Agawam, MA 01001

Goldmine, 700 East State St., Iola, WI 54990

Hillandale News, c/o Chris Hamilton, Hon. Treasurer, City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society, Ardlarich, 2 Kirklands Park, Cupar, Fife KY15 4EP England

Historic Record, The, 185 The Wheel, Ecclesfield, Sheffield S30 3ZA, England

IAJRC Journal, International Assoc. of Jazz Record Collectors, Murray Slochover, P.O. Box 855, Tenafly, NJ 07670

I.S.A.M. Newsletter, Institute for Studies in American Music, Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY 11210

In The Groove, Michigan Antique Phonograph Society, 2609 Devonshire, Lansing, MI 48910

International Talking Machine Review, 105 Sturdee Ave., Gillingham, Kent ME7 2HG, England

Joslin's Jazz Journal, Box 213, Parsons, KS 67357

Journal of Country Music, Country Music Foundation, 4 Music Square East, Nashville, TN 37203

Mississippi Rag, P.O. Box 19068, Minneapolis, MN 55419

Musical Traditions, address unknown

New Amberola Graphic, 37 Caledonia St., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Old Time Country, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677

Popular Music & Society, Bowling Green University Popular Press, Bowling Green, OH 43403

Record Collector, The, c/o Larry Lustig, 111 Longshots Close, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 5DU, England

Record Research, 65 Grand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11205

Resound, Archives of Traditional Music, Maxwell Hall 057, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405

17th Century Music, Society for Seventeenth-Century Music, c/o Paul Walker, 1437 Rugby Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22903

Sound Box, The, Calif. Antique Phono. Society, Box 67, Duarte, CA 91009-067

Stereo Review, address unknown (on newsstands)

Storyville, 66 Fairview Drive, Chigwell, Essex, IG7 6HS, England

Tailgate Ramblings, Chas. V. Ritterli, 10005 Evergreen Ave., Columbia, MD 21046

Talking Machine Review - see *International Talking Machine Review*

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Popular, General

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