FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The New U.S. Public Domain for Recordings Uncovers Some Remarkable Recordings

A First-Ever CD Release by the Association for Recorded Sound Collections

Eugene, Oregon – February 21, 2022

At last, a public domain for sound recordings in the U.S.—and the Association for Recorded Sound Collections is celebrating with its first-ever album, an international tour of audio riches. This new public domain for early recordings (including those imported into the U.S.) was made possible by provisions of the Music Modernization Act of 2018 that became effective on January 1, 2022. ARSC fought for these changes in U.S. law for 20 years, on behalf of the public.

The new public domain includes an estimated 400,000 recordings released before 1923, with more years to be added later. But how do you compile a CD that’s not full of records that aren’t already available somewhere, legally or illegally? Difficult, but far from impossible when the technical skill, historical knowledge, and spectacular collections of ARSC’s members are available.

A few of these tracks definitely have not been available since they were first released. Others are heard in better sound than ever before. Others were obscure enough that most people might never have found them even in murky YouTube videos.

The CD comes with a special Winter 2021 issue of the ARSC Journal, which contains detailed essays on each track and color images of rare labels and other documents from the pre-1923 era, along with articles on the fight to establish the public domain and on rights management in archives. The CD and issue are available from ARSC at cost ($12), at www.arsc-audio.org. Here’s what you get:

1. **Actors’ Equity – An All-Star Comedy (USA, 1922)**
   Famous but rarely recorded actors kid each other on a benefit disc for their colleagues.

2. **Eubie Blake – Sounds of Africa (USA, 1921)**
   Blake wrote this as a teenager in the 1890s, but still far ahead of its time.

3. **Arturo Toscanini & La Scala Orchestra – Il Segreto di Susanna (USA, 1920)**
   The maestro pushes the acoustic recording process and his own orchestra to their limits.

4. **Wolkowski Balalaika Orchestra – Temptation Rag (Germany, 1911)**
   Russian veterans of American circuses headlining in Berlin plays ragtime on the balalaika.

5. **Art Hickman’s New York London 5 – When My Baby Smiles at Me (USA, recorded in England, 1921)**
   Five American jazz musicians show their English audience how it’s done.
6. **The Four Sicilians (I Quattro Siciliani) – Camporale Bello (Italian, recorded in USA, 1919)**

Four musicians from southern Italy adapt old music for their new world in New York.

7. **Blanche Marchesi – Bist De Bei Mir, geh mit Freuden (Germany, 1906)**

A legendary voice teacher schools the world and her old students.

8. **Orquesta Felipe Valdes – La Carne Liquida (Cuba, 1907)**

Hot sounds from turn-of-the-century Havana.


An English banjo legend plays a tune named for an Australian mammal.

10. **La Nina De Los Peines – Sequidilla Gitanas (Spain, 1909)**

From the first recording session of the greatest flamenco singer of the age.

11. **Talim Hussain – Bagesari (India, 1916)**

The otherwise unknown Hussain was one of the greatest ever on his instrument, the shehnai.

12. **Charles D’Almaine – Donkey and Driver (USA, 1904)**

The first recording made on the hybrid violin and horn called the Stroh.

13. **A.H. Knoll & Marie McNeil – McNeil’s Schottische (USA, 1898)**

The greatest cornet duo of their times in one of their only recordings.

14. **Regina Music Box Disc – Dora Dean Song (USA, 1899 music box disc)**

Dancer Dora Dean’s theme was heard on stages throughout the USA and Europe but the only discs of it you could buy were made for music boxes.

15. **Eduard Jedlička – Možná to na světě věc (That's the Way of the World) (Czech, recorded in USA, 1902)**

A Czech immigrant looks homeward through rose-colored glasses, and at New York through the bottom of a wineglass.

16. **Takis Zakas – Horos Nifiatikos (Roma, recorded in USA, 1920)**

Greek village music from a traveling player who made his only recordings in New York.

17. **W.O. Beckenbaugh – Sale of Toys, Dolls, and So Forth on Christmas Eve Night (USA, 1898)**

Baltimore’s “Leather Lunged Auctioneer” holds forth on a very early cylinder.

18. **Song Man Gap – The Song of Ten Lashes (Korean, recorded in Japan, 1913)**

A singing-storyteller enacts a key scene from an epic that takes hours to perform.

19. **Orchestra Albaneza – Bosiok (Borzilok) (Albanian, recorded in Rumania, 1911)**
Albanians in Bucharest make the first known releases of their music.

20. **Grupo Chiquinha Gonzaga – Corta Jaca (Brazil, 1912)**
Brazil’s most recorded composer leads her group through a signature song.

21. **Samuel Siegel – Boston Ideal, March (USA, 1902)**
Did this mandolin virtuoso invent shredding?

22. **Dabney’s Band – Slidin’ Sid (USA, 1918)**
The African-American house band for Ziegfeld’s late-night parties, roaring even before the 20s.

23. **Lucille Hegamin and her Blue Flame Syncopators – I Like You Because You Have Such Loving Ways (USA, 1921)**
A little jazz, a little blues, and a lot of style.

24. **Mathild De Bartoky – Húzd rá Cigány (Play, Gypsy)/Edes Anyam (My Sweet Mother) (Hungarian, recorded in USA, 1915)**
A mezzo-soprano from Hungary defers her dream of singing opera in the U.S. to make records for other immigrants, and what records!

A choir of thousands at a Billy Sunday revival in New York sing young men off to WWI.

26. **Jazz Band U.S.A. Ambulance Service with Italian Army – Hokum (USA, recorded in Italy, 1918)**
Is it jazz? Is it country? American volunteer ambulance drivers in post WWI Italy bring some cheer from across the water.

27. **Abrego & Picazo – Adios, Adios (Mexico, 1904)**
Goodbye for now, from pre-revolutionary Mexico.

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and study of sound recordings, in all genres of music and speech, in all formats, and from all periods. ARSC is unique in bringing together private individuals and institutional professionals—everyone with a serious interest in recorded sound.

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