

Folksong Resources Online

Compiled by Nyssa Brown

In recent years, folk music resources online have exploded exponentially. As contrary as it may seem, the traditional voices, instruments, and music of the past have become available on the futuristic internet.

As a teacher of folksong research and materials courses at Kodály certification programs at Indiana University and James Madison University and as a classroom music teacher in the public schools, it has been a pleasure (and relief) to discover the number of field recordings, audio, video, and historical information available online.

I would like to thank my students and colleagues who have helped me compile this list. In some instances below I have described the websites in my own words; in other instances I copied the website's description directly into this article. Although only a beginning, may these resources be of help to you and your students.

Field Recordings

1. American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

- a. "The American Folklife Center provides online access to selected portions of our collections. We create our own online presentations on various topics and the American Memory project provides additional online access to selected collections. Online content may include audio samples of music and stories, digital images of rare letters and photographs, and video clips. To use the featured collections in their entirety, please visit our Collections & Research Services page for information about doing research in our Reading Room."
 - i. Online Collections - <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>
 - ii. American Memory - <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>
 - iii. Information listed by state -<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/guides/findaid-topical.html>

2. The Max Hunter Collection

- a. "The Max Hunter is an archive of almost 1600 Ozark Mountain folk songs, recorded between 1956 and 1976. A traveling salesman from Springfield, Missouri, Hunter took his reel-to-reel tape recorder into the hills and backwoods of the Ozarks, preserving the heritage of the region by recording the songs and stories of many generations of Ozark history. As important as the songs themselves are the voices of the Missouri and Arkansas folks who shared their talents and recollections with Hunter. Designed to give increased public access to this unique and invaluable resource, this site is a joint project of the Southwest Missouri State University Department of Music and the Springfield-Greene County Library in Springfield, Missouri, where the permanent collection is housed."
 - i. www.missouristate.edu/folksong/MaxHunter

3. Stan Hugill

- a. “Stan Hugill was possibly one of the last Shantymen of the 20th century. He learned most of his shanties by sailing with Shantymen of another era.”
 - i. <http://www.stanhugill.com/>

4. John Quincy Wolf Collection

- a. “John Quincy Wolf, Jr. was ‘one of the few real scholars to become interested in Ozark folklore.’ This Website contains documents, audio recordings, and other materials from the John Quincy Wolf Folklore Collection, part of the Regional Studies Center at Lyon College. It is divided into eight topical sections:”
 - i. Ozark Folksongs contains transcriptions and audio files to hundreds of folksongs collected by Wolf from 1952-1970. Songs are indexed by song title.
 - ii. Sacred Harp documents Wolf’s interest in Sacred Harp singings.
 - iii. Memphis Blues discusses Wolf’s interest in the blues.
 - iv. Articles features a bibliography of Wolf’s folklore writings and several article reprints in full-text.
 - v. Life in the Leatherwoods links to materials by John Quincy Wolf, Sr., and includes six articles about White River that the elder Wolf published from 1938-1941.
 - vi. Biography contains articles about Wolf’s life.
 - vii. References lists links and bibliographic materials.
 - viii. Credits provides information about this Website.
 - ix. <http://www.lyon.edu/wolfcollection/>

5. The Alan Lomax Database: A Virtual Archive

- a. Sound recordings with sound samples, pictures, discussions, lectures, interviews; cross-referenced searches by title, culture, genre, performer, instrument
 - i. <http://www.lomaxarchive.com/index.html>
 - 1. must register, free account

Audio/DVD resources

6. Library of Congress recordings

- a. “Come discover the pioneers of the musical forms that combined on American soil to become the most pervasive music throughout the world.” Originally a PBS series, DVDs and full-color book available. Website includes classroom connections and support.
 - i. <http://www.pbs.org/americanrootsmusic/index.html>

7. Jean Ritchie

- a. info, books, recordings, videos, dulcimers
 - i. <http://www.jeanritchie.com/>

8. Library of Congress Shop

- a. Historic folklife recordings from the Archive of Folk Culture
 - i. <http://www.loc.gov/shop/index.php?action=cCatalog.showCategory&cid=>
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Online Folksong Collections

9. The American Folksong Collection

- a. An online resource of the Kodály Center for Music Education of Holy Names University, Oakland, CA. This database can be searched by rhythmic, melodic, formal, language etc. content.
 - i. <http://kodaly.hnu.edu/search.cfm>

10. Wisconsin Folksong Collection

- a. "The Wisconsin Folksong Collection, 1937-1946, represents materials from two collections . . . reflects and documents the state's colorful pattern of immigration and occupational development during those years. The Collection contains Wisconsin field recordings, notes, and photographs. . . co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin and the Library of Congress during the summers of 1940, 1941, and 1946."
 - i. <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/WiscFolkSong>

11. Child Ballads

- a. The Child Ballads Project: Recorded Sources of The English and Scottish Popular Ballads
 - i. www.thechildballads.com

Nyssa Maria Brown is an elementary music specialist at Park Spanish Immersion School in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Recognized for her dedication to students and her school community, Ms. Brown was one of ten finalists for 2004 Minnesota Teacher of the Year and received a 2004 Milken Educator Award by the Milken Family Foundation. Nyssa is a member of the faculty of the Kodály Levels Courses at Indiana University and James Madison University and serves on the boards of the Kodály Chapter of Minnesota, President Elect, and the Organization of American Kodály Educators, Midwest Representative II. At the local and national levels, Ms. Brown has presented, individually and collaboratively, workshops for professional organizations including Minnesota Music Educators Association, OAKE and the The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. She has spent time in Namibia and South Africa teaching and learning music and has participated in Eastman School of Music's Umculo: The Kimberley Project. Her travels have also taken her to Hungary where she studied at the Kodaly Institute's summer seminar. As a singer/songwriter and performer, Nyssa released her first CD in October, 2000, "Packwood or Paradise." Ms. Brown graduated from the Hartt School of Music and Hartford College for Women in 1998 with a BMus in Education and a BArts in Women's Studies. She received her Kodaly certification from Brigham Young University in 2001. Currently, she is pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Music Education at the University of Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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More Resources:

www.smithsonianmag.com/events-and-exhibitions/index.html

www.smithsonianmag.com/events-and-exhibitions/articles/celiacruz.php

Celia Cruz exhibit

www.csufresno.edu/folklore/balladsearch.html

memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices
www.smithsonianglobalsounds.org - VIDEO
www.folkways.si.edu

www.ed-cyberg.com/NCFR/collect.html

Bardic songs etc – go to website

www.chivalry.com/cantaria

The Leadbelly Web

<http://www.cycad.com/cgi-bin/Leadbelly/index.html> - leadbelly

<http://www.wku.edu/~smithch/essays/FOLK111.htm> - top 111 folk singers

Folksong Resources Online, Part II

By Nyssa Brown

Welcome to the second installment of Folksong Resources Online. With the continued help of my students and colleagues at the Kodály Summer Levels programs at Indiana University and James Madison University, I have collected another highly useful and practical list of resources. For our students and our communities, it is my hope that these amazing websites promote a sense of connection throughout our country and beyond.

*"Tradition dies hard. Memory may weaken, but the love of the song remains
and with little encouragement it springs up anew."*

-Maud Karpeles, song collector, [English Folksongs From The Southern Appalachians](#), 1952.

Smithsonian Global Sound

www.smithsonianglobalsound.org

This is the broadest and deepest online resource I have found for both US and global music including downloadable individual tracks, complete cds, as well as videos. Don't miss this amazing site. I HIGHLY recommend signing up for their newsletter by giving them your e-mail address. They send out an E-Newsletter once a month or so with the new additions to their collections – EVERY newsletter has intrigued me so much that I have clicked on the website link for more information.

Mission Statement: Smithsonian Global Sound delivers the world's diverse cultural expressions via the Internet in an informative way for a reasonable price. It also helps encourage local musicians and traditions around the planet through international recognition, the payment of royalties, and support for regional archives.

Irish, Scottish, and English Folk Songs

www.chivalry.com/cantaria

“Cantaria is a library of "bardic" folk songs, mostly from Ireland, Scotland, and England, intended to be an educational tool for propagating the living song tradition through passing on folk songs (old and new) in a medium where far-flung singers can share songs as easily as if we were all circled up around a fire. So, come join us; there is always room for one more singer and always time for one more song.”

“Cantaria is unique among lyric web sites because almost every song in our archive has an accompanying recording of the song being performed. The library currently contains lyrics for over 225 songs, contributed by a variety of singers.”

Ballad Information

www.csufresno.edu/folklore

The Leadbelly Web

www.cycad.com

click on Portfolios

Click on Leadbelly

(www.cycad.com/cgi-bin/Leadbelly/index.html)

- Includes: Biography, Discography, CD, Bibliography, Audio, List, and Links.

Voices from the Days of Slavery: Former Slaves Tell Their Stories

memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/

“The almost seven hours of recorded interviews presented here took place between 1932 and 1975 in nine Southern states. Twenty-three interviewees, born between 1823 and the early 1860s, discuss how they felt about slavery, slaveholders, coercion of slaves, their families, and freedom. Several individuals sing songs, many of which were learned during the time of their enslavement. It is important to note that all of the interviewees spoke sixty or more years after the end of their enslavement, and it is their full lives that are reflected in these recordings. The individuals documented in this presentation have much to say about living as African Americans from the 1870s to the 1930s, and beyond.

All known recordings of former slaves in the American Folklife Center are included in this presentation. Some are being made publicly available for the first time and several others already available now include complete transcriptions.”

Cultural Events and Museum-like Exhibitions

www.smithsonianmag.com/events-and-exhibitions

Scroll down to and click on

[Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz](#)

- The life and career of the undisputed Queen of Latin Music, Celia Cruz, is highlighted through photographs, costumes, videos, and music.

These exhibits rotate and may change.

Old Time Music

mikeseeger.info/html/oldtime.html

Mike Seeger’s Description of Old Time music past and present.

Nyssa Maria Brown is an elementary music specialist at Park Spanish Immersion School in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. In 2006, Nyssa was chosen by Education Minnesota, a state affiliate of NEA and AFT, to represent Minnesota at the national level in NEA’s Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. Ms. Brown was one of ten finalists for 2004 Minnesota Teacher of the Year and received a prestigious Milken Educator Award in 2004 from the Milken Family Foundation. Nyssa is a faculty member of the Kodály Levels Courses at Indiana University and James Madison University. She has spent time in Namibia and South Africa teaching and learning music and has participated in Eastman School of Music’s Umculo: The Kimberley Project. She also studied in Hungary at the Kodály Institute’s summer seminar. Nyssa released her first CD in October, 2000, "Packwood or Paradise." Ms. Brown graduated from the Hartt School of Music and Hartford College for Women in 1998 with a BMus in Education and a BArts in Women’s Studies. Her Kodály certification was earned at Brigham Young University in 2001.