



Ethical Access to *Music Time in Africa*

QUARTERLY REPORT

June to September 2016

Overview

The National Endowment for the Humanities provided \$260,000 to the University of Michigan in support of a two-year project (2016-18). The project will provide online access to over 900 audio recordings and the associated scripts for *Music Time in Africa*, broadcast by the Voice of America from 1965 to 2000, along with a selection of original field recordings of beautiful and influential African music recorded for the radio programs by musicologist Leo Sarkisian. An innovative, online interface will permit exploration of the digital collection and the juxtaposition of audio streaming and script texts. In conjunction with the Voice of America's listener outreach programs, the project will identify and engage performer communities about the release of field recordings and tracks included in the radio broadcasts. The primary outcomes of the project are a model for culturally sensitive online / web-based distribution of digitized musical recordings and a demonstration of the power of community engagement in providing access to scholarly resources on musical heritage.

Goals and Tasks Completed

1. *Workspace*: The University Library's Special Collections Department provided the project with a flexible workspace in the Buhr Building on south campus. The Buhr Building also houses the University Library's Conservation Lab and the Digital Conversion Unit, providing the project with ready access to advice on preservation and digitization. With the support of Shannon Zachary, head of conservation and preservation, the PI and project staff configured the workspace to support the processing of audio tapes to the digitization vendor. The University Library installed appropriate shelving and furniture and has made available three computer workstations to support the project.
2. *Student staff*: NEH funding provides support for graduate students to work on various aspects of the project. During the first quarter the PI recruited and trained four UMSI graduate students: Jacob Kidd (audio tape processing); Kayla Carucci (tape processing); Leigh Gialanela (finding aid; website development); and Stephanie Zang (website development). Jacob Kidd will provide continuity and serve as team leader for the fall 2016 term.
3. *Package model*: The project team developed a model specifying the elements of a complex package representing the concept of "radio program" from *Music Time in Africa*. The elements include the analog audio recording for a given date and its associated script (if available), along with multiple digital surrogates of audio program and script, all of which are tied together by descriptive and technical metadata. Some elements of the package are preserved in a digital repository, while other elements of the package are integrated into the access system.
4. *Audio tape processing*: During the first quarter, the project team identified and processed 750 radio program recordings to the digitization vendor, using shipping protocols established by the vendor. Audio recordings are on either 7" or 10" reels of ¼ inch magnetic tape. The team developed an inventory control and shipping manifest system to support processing of tapes to

and from the vendor and follow-up quality control processes. The project team assigned each audio recording one of the following codes, indicating the completeness of the analog components of the package:

- a. **Platinum:** an audio recording of a full 25 to 30 minute radio broadcast [including the voice of the announcer] and the associated script.
- b. **Gold:** an audio recording of a full radio broadcast without the script.
- c. **Silver:** the musical inserts for a radio broadcast and the associated script [missing the voice of the announcer]
- d. **Bronze:** incomplete broadcasts or scripts.

A future quarterly report will describe the distribution of completeness codes across the full set of radio programs, along with examples of the scripts.

5. *Website:* During the first quarter, the project developed an informational website for the project, built on the WordPress platform. The URL for the project website is: <http://mtia.sites.uofmhosting.net/>. The project website is distinct from the content management system that will deliver digitized content and manage access protocols for the system. A future quarterly report will provide the specifications for the access system.
6. *Online finding aid:* During the first quarter of the project, the team created a master inventory of the Leo Sarkisian live field recordings, which are currently accessible on CDs at the University of Michigan School of Music Library. The foundation for the inventory is an existing tracking spreadsheet created as part of the digitization of 360 live field recordings between 2010 and 2012. Co-PI Kelly Askew provided detailed supplementary information on each recording, including variant titles and lists of performers. The finding aid will be published in the second quarter of the project and will provide a framework for additional access tools for the entire Leo Sarkisian Archive.

Digitization Vendor

The MediaPreserve, an audiovisual laboratory in Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, is the vendor selected to digitize the 900+ radio program tapes. MediaPreserve is well equipped, highly experienced, and fully capable of completing the digitization processing on the schedule required for the grant. MediaPreserve will provide: customized services needed to obtain preservation quality master files; production files identical to master files except for normalization and noise reduction processing; and appropriate access derivatives. Preservation master files will conform to the highest standards recommended by IASA TC-04, the accepted international standard for audio digitization. In this project, MediaPreserve will provide the technical metadata for each digital file, with all files for a given batch wrapped in a master METS record that will then receive descriptive and administrative metadata as part of quality review and post processing activities. For more information about MediaPreserve, see: <http://ptlp.com/en/mediapreserve/overview/about-us/>

Goals and Activities for Next Quarter

1. Complete the processing and shipment of all identifiable radio program recordings to The MediaPreserve for digitization. We expect the total number of programs to exceed 900. Prepare and post a report on the distribution of the programs over time by quality level.

2. Organize and process program scripts to ready them for digitization and OCR processing of the text.
3. Design and test a quality review workflow necessary to accomplish three goals:
 - a. Assess vendor compliance with the specified digitization standards.
 - b. Identify the content of the radio programs and link audio content with the associated script. Begin assembling the metadata required to populate the access system.
 - c. Prepare as many of the elements of the package required to populate the access and delivery system and provide for the preservation of the digital master files. The project will make optimal use of the open-source ResCarta Toolkit to produce radio program transcripts, descriptive and technical metadata, and appropriate derivatives.
Information on the ResCarta Toolkit can be found here: <http://www.rescarta.org/>
4. Specify delivery and access system, working closely with technical staff of the University Library. The project team will explore the functionality of the MiVideo audiovisual streaming service (powered by the Kaltura content management system) and the advisability of utilizing elements of the Library's existing DLXS platform for images, texts, and finding aids.
5. Brief the members of the external Advisory Board and seek specific advice regarding the design and functionality of the access system.
6. Receive digital files from The MediaPreserve and begin the process of depositing preservation masters in the university's digital preservation repository.
7. Blog on project developments through the project website.
8. Develop and present a talk on the innovative aspects of the project at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in Washington, DC. The PI and co-PI will also prepare and submit a research article to the organization's peer reviewed journal.

Respectfully submitted,



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Principal Investigator

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