

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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Cover: Grand entry at the 1984 Omaha Tribal Powwow in Macy, Nebraska. While traditions differ from tribe to tribe, the male fancy dancer, like those pictured here, has become one of the representative images for American Indians generally. (227546-4-25-26)
Photo by Dorothy Sara Lee

EDITOR'S NOTES

Encounters with "the Other"

As 1992 approached, it became clear that the commemoration of Columbus's

voyage to America in 1492 could not be a celebration in the sense that the Bicentenary of the Declaration of Independence had been a celebration in 1976. Native American groups had staged protests of Columbus Day celebrations long before 1992. A national discussion of American multiculturalism had brought about a new understanding that different ethnic groups are affected by historical events in different ways. For many, the question of historical interpretation had become one of point of view.

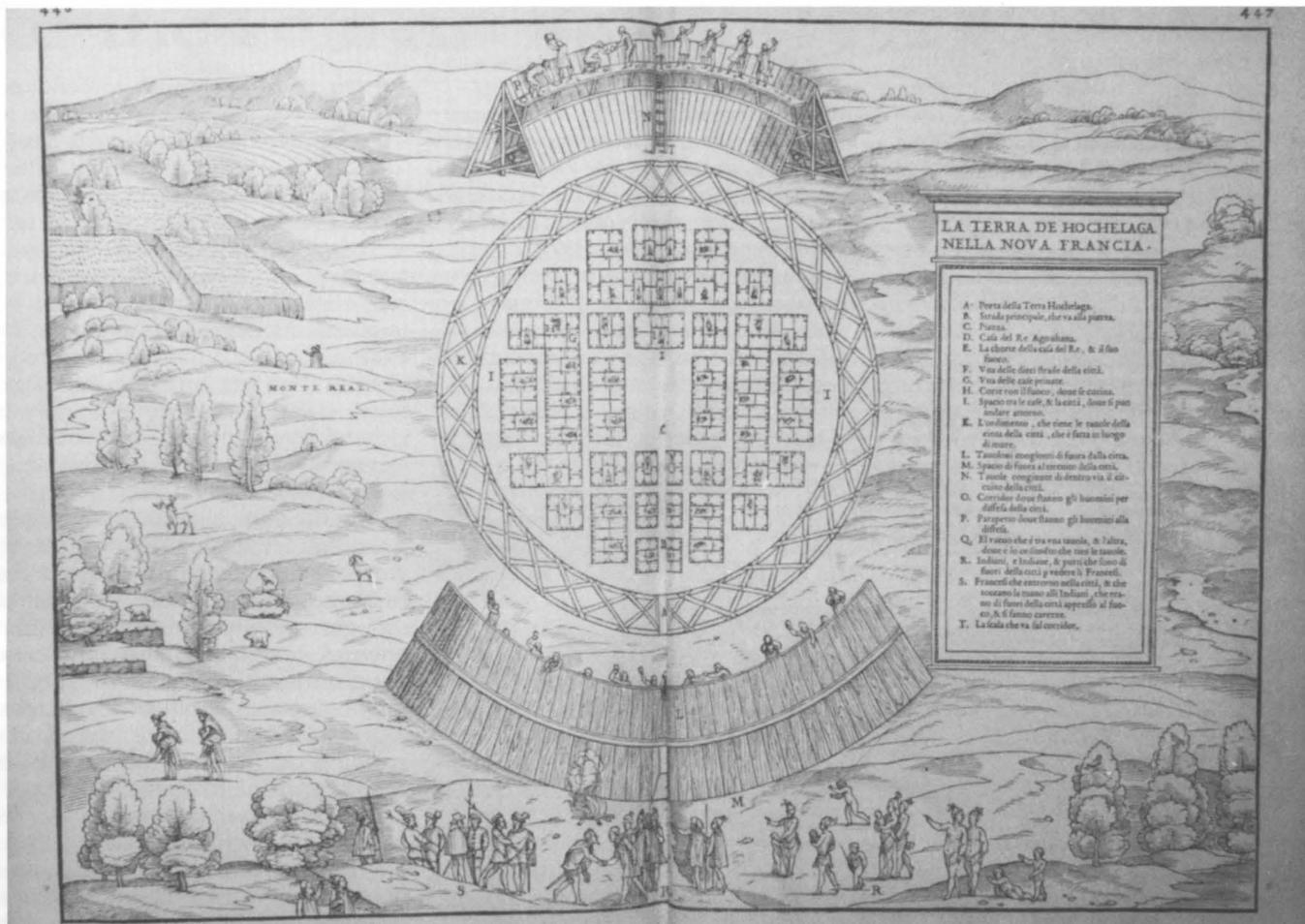
Although some plans for official events honoring Columbus faltered for lack of money and purpose, many Columbus Quincentenary exhibits, films, and books appeared. Most of these presented balanced, scholarly accounts that placed Columbus in the context of his times and examined the immense consequences of his "discovery." For example, an exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution, *Seeds of Change*, described the exchange of foods among North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, as trade developed. A series on PBS, "Columbus and the Age of Discovery," recreated the 1492 voyage using both historical images and scenes from the present. The Library of Congress exhibit and book, *1492: An Ongoing Voyage*, looked at the period 1450 to 1600 and described who was living in North and South America, who came, and what happened as a result. And the Folklife Center's exhibit and book, *Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian-American Folklife in the West*, focused on the lives of one immigrant group. Thus, instead of calling forth a reiteration of schoolroom platitudes, 1992 became the occasion for scholarly examination and public education.

One word that emerged to describe the events of five hundred years ago was encounter. In this issue of *Folklife Center News*, Judith Gray, ethnomusicologist and reference specialist for American Indian collections at the Folklife Center, offers a number of examples of what happens "When Cultures Meet." While the consequences of "1492" for native peoples were overwhelming, Gray notes that those who came to be known as American Indians were not simply passive victims. The effects of encounter are more complicated than the conquest and domination of one group by the other. The Columbus

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Folklife Center News

When Cultures Meet



La Terra de Hochelaga nella Nova Francia. Impression of the fortified Indian town Hochelaga, published in Gian Battista Ramusio's *Terzo volume delle navigationi et viaggi* . . . [Venetia] 1556. The engraver attempts to render a 1535 description by Jacques Cartier: a populous village, "circular and . . . completely enclosed by a wooden palisade in three tiers like a pyramid." Within the wooden palisade, Cartier found "some fifty houses . . . each of fifty or more paces in length, and twelve or fifteen in width, built completely of wood and covered in or bordered up with large pieces of the bark and rind of trees . . . which are well and cunningly lashed after their manner." Within each of these large houses, many Indian families lived in common. The hill to the left, Monte Real, is now covered by the modern Canadian city of Montreal. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

By Judith Gray

October 12, 1492, was not the date of first contact between peoples of the earth's two hemispheres; that much is clear. But it has become the emblem for all that happens when societies first experience one another. Consequently, the Columbian Quincentenary has been marked by symposia, religious observances, concerts, parades, publications, exhibits, food samplings, and many other forms of

cultural expression we commonly use to mark significant occasions.

But apart from an understanding that 1492 was significant, evaluations of—and reactions to—the events of that year and of their consequences have not been unanimous: at one end of the spectrum, there are celebrations of the spirit of discovery and the subsequent development of ideas and ideals in the "New World"; on the other, there is anger and mourning over the devastating realities of politi-

cal and cultural conquest. Those who negotiate the gap between such divergent positions often use the term *encounter* as a means of characterizing 1492 without immediately assessing its aftermath.

As symbols, the two years, 1492 and 1992, are complicated. Neither can be explained entirely as a series of events; both represent processes that can evoke the best or the worst, the most dogmatic or the most flexible, the most straightforward or the most

convoluted responses from individuals who come face to face with “the Other.” When societies meet, members of each group evaluate what the other has to offer. The items subject to such comparisons include material goods, but also ways of acting and speaking, techniques for doing things, ideas and ideals—the whole gamut of human cultural expression. Both parties have opportunities to affirm, change, or put aside items in their own cultural repertory; and, conversely, to reject, adapt, or adopt items from the other. While the political realities of the encounter may determine—and enforce—certain changes, the manner in which ideas, materials, or techniques are transferred across cultural boundaries is almost always selective. Smaller societies are neither passive nor entirely swallowed up by others, and even the dominant and domineering are affected by contact. Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union bear testimony to the ways in which ethnic identities can overwhelm national boundaries.

Cultural preferences and adaptations are found everywhere in history and contemporary experience. The items or practices that embody a society’s sense of itself are apt to be cherished and preserved intact precisely because they differentiate one society from another. Other categories of expression will be more open to outside influences. People may choose one set of behaviors for time spent among themselves, while choosing another for relations with members of another society. And, over time, the balance of these choices may change.

Look, for example, at some facets of the early cultural contacts between European and Indian people in the St. Lawrence River-Great Lakes region. The Europeans who arrived on these shores in the 1500s and 1600s were not a homogeneous lot. They came with different backgrounds and purposes, and interacted in different ways with the indigenous people they encountered. The French were among the first to follow the St. Lawrence River into the interior of the continent; their first representatives were primarily traders and Jesuit missionaries. Both groups sought out the Indians, but to different ends.

The traders primarily wanted one item from their new trade partners—furs. To persuade Indian hunters to change their traditional patterns (to

hunt small fur-bearing animals rather than larger animals that were more practical sources of food), traders had to determine what Indian people wanted in exchange. They offered various European goods; tribal people evaluated and chose those that made sense to them. Initially the items chosen were, by and large, practical substitutes for objects already available. For example, an iron cooking pot was more efficient in most circumstances—and clearly more durable—than a bark vessel in which food was cooked by means of heated rocks. Likewise, a metal knife held its edge, and trading for one was certainly easier than laboring to produce a stone implement. Guns were superior to bows and arrows in range and deadly effect.

On the “artistic” side, glass beads quickly became a supplement and sometimes a replacement for quillwork ornamentation. Quilling is a very time-consuming process, and the natural dyes available to people in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region formed a limited palette. European glass beads came in many colors—although certain colors were preferred (and those preferences varied from area to area). But the use of beads in place of porcupine quills was more than a time-saving adaptation. In certain contexts, glass beads may have been associated with power believed to lie in naturally occurring crystals. Beads also offered new possibilities: porcupine quills are not easily worked into curvilinear designs, while beads on a string can readily be shaped. Not all the groups who opted to use beads modified their distinctive straight-edged geometric patterns, but the curvilinear floral designs, perhaps partially modeled on the French embroidery taught in mission schools, became distinctive Great Lakes-St. Lawrence motifs. Thus the presence of these new items—glass beads—accommodated both the retention of traditional patterns and the expansion of the design repertory.

Indian people were not passive partners in the trading process; they made changes in their lives because they saw advantages to doing so. Later on, when there were competing trading companies, Indian trappers shopped around, looking for the best deals and the best quality items—and they frequently traveled long distances to do so. Economic self-interest operated on both sides of the trade partnership.

To be sure, trade created needs and desires that were not present earlier. Guns were clearly desirable for hunting but made the new owners dependent on traders for an ongoing supply of powder and bullets. The most pernicious “need” was created by the traders’ introduction of whiskey, with disastrous consequences for the native people.

Both the French traders and Jesuit missionaries chose to live among or in proximity to their Indian clients. They learned Indian languages, and many of the traders took Indian wives and stayed on. Individual Jesuits also stayed at their posts for years. The latter realized that Christianity could best be introduced to Indian communities by example and by building on concepts already found in Indian cultures. So they studied their new neighbors closely, sending back reports of observations and activities to Jesuit superiors in France.

But the opportunities for misinterpretation across cultural boundaries were many, then as now. Consider the presumptions and the patterns of thought underlying linguistic differences, for example. Many of the tribal people in the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes region spoke Algonquian languages. Algonquian verb forms differ, depending on whether the speaker is reporting an event that he or she personally witnessed or one that was related by another person. Latin-trained grammarians labeled the latter feature the “dubitative case,” the doubtful case, suggesting thereby that a speaker who used such verb forms was expressing some hesitancy about the truth of his or her report. How then would a missionary tell the narratives of the life of Christ? What verb forms would be appropriate? What selections needed to be made to accommodate theological realities of one party and linguistic practices of those he was attempting to reach?

In intercultural encounters, something as fundamental as kinship terminology could also present a problem. In some Indian cultures, I would identify my biological mother and her sisters by the same term, which is different from what I would call my father’s sisters. Correspondingly, I would address all the children of my mother and her sisters as my siblings, while the children of my father’s sisters would be identified by a word comparable to *cousin*.

Imagine all the possible reactions of a European missionary on hearing a single person identify two separate women as “my mother” and of an Indian person hearing that a European trader had married one of his mother’s sisters’ children. Such basic differences in the patterns of organizing human experience may have contributed to the misunderstandings that led some colonists, for example, to self-righteous reaffirmation of their own ways of perceiving the world and to total rejection of the world views of others.

What about the impact of intercultural contact on the societies back in Europe for whom traders and missionaries served as middlemen? Beyond the proliferation of beaver-pelt hats, the effect of Indian contact on the European societies was probably quite limited initially. But over time, the accumulated reports concerning such contacts contributed to the formation of ideas that shaped subsequent European experiences of America: Rousseau’s notion of “the noble savage,” for example, or the concept of the frontier. These ideas became part and parcel of the Ro-

mantic movement that swept both Europe and its colonies in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

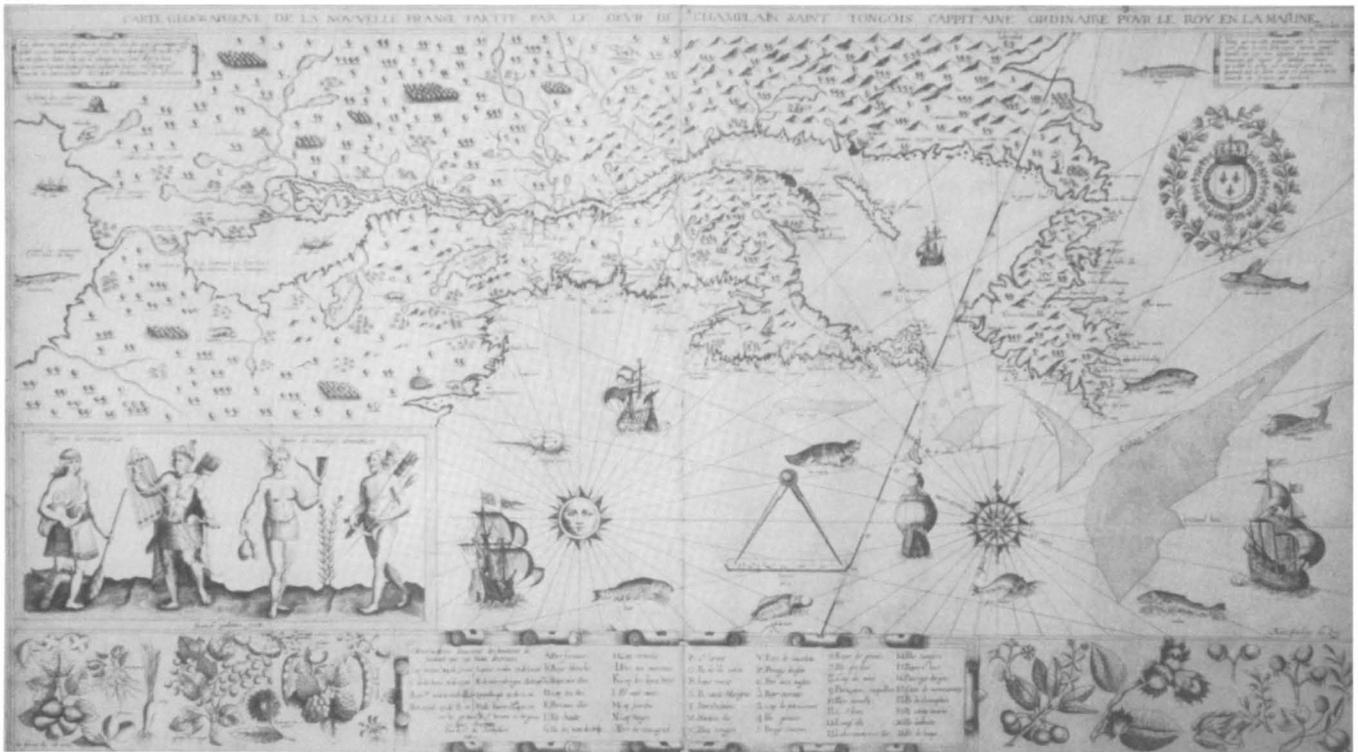
In the decades following American independence, many of the former colonists and their descendants felt that separate identity had not been achieved by virtue of a separate political structure. They struggled to differentiate American culture from European, to isolate that which was uniquely “New World,” just as various nations and ethnic groups in Europe were trying to identify what was unique to them. For example, features of the Iroquoian confederacy ultimately influenced the design of the Constitution of the United States.

The push on both sides of the Atlantic for national identities was reflected in the arts. But the image (rather than the reality) of “the Indian” was seized upon as the very epitome of the New World and used by artists, dramatists, poets, novelists, and composers. One manifestation of this use of American Indian

imagery to serve nationalistic expression was the school of “Indianist” composers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, men such as Edward MacDowell, Charles Wakefield Cadman, Thurlow Lieurance, and Carlos Troyer.

The timing of this movement is ironic. By the late-nineteenth century, the Indian wars were over. Indian people had been confined on reservations, and the official government policy was designed to squelch Indian culture and to turn the people into upstanding citizen-farmers divorced from their heritage. But artists and composers reflected the dominant society’s fascination with the people they had “subdued.” So while some genuine Indian song genres were disappearing (since the occasions for their use had been suppressed), composers were choosing and adapting elements of Indian song for their own work, precisely in order to establish a uniquely American content, if not style.

The operative words here are *choosing* and *adapting*. Certain elements of Indian song styles could



Carte géographique de la Nouvelle France . . . fait en 1612. From Samuel de Champlain, *Les Voyages du sieur Samuel de Champlain Xaintongois*, Paris, 1613. Engraving made from a drawing by Samuel de Champlain as a result of his voyages to New France. The figures depicted are Montagnais and Algonquians peoples; also shown are native plants and animals. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Apr. 22 1905
93213

NAVAJO WAR DANCE.

ARTHUR FARWELL.

With intensity, not too fast. ♩ = 76
mp With severe precision

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Farwell composed several settings of "Navajo War Dance." This piano version (1905) shows the steady drum-like beat in the left hand and the right-hand melody built on skips rather than on adjacent tones. Note his instructions on how the piece is to be played: "with severe precision of rhythm throughout, and savagely accented." Music Division, Library of Congress

easily be used by American-born but typically European-trained composers; other elements were not assimilated so easily into musical structures built on harmony and into a musical aesthetic that preferred an open-throated singing style. When we listen, for example, to a choral setting of the "Navajo War Dance," composed by Arthur Farwell (1872-1952), we do not have the illusion that we are hearing an Indian song. But the elements of Navajo style that caught his attention are clear: the sparse sound (few harmonies), the typical Navajo melodic skips, the vocables (non-lexical syllables like "way ya ha hi"—not characteristic Navajo vocables, but

vocables nonetheless), the pulsing beat. Farwell wrote:

This chorus is so notated as to bring out the inner pulsations of the Indian voice, as observed in the Indians' singing of songs of this type in the Southwest.¹

Farwell got his ideas about Indian music from visits to some southwestern reservations, from transcribing cylinder recordings of Indian songs collected in California by Charles Lummis, and from the study of transcriptions of melodies collected by Alice Fletcher, a noted scholar of Omaha ceremonial traditions.

Other composers were also inspired by Fletcher's work and borrowed material from her collections. The opening motif and the basic melodic outline for what is perhaps the most famous Indianist composition, Charles Wakefield Cadman's "From the Land of the Sky Blue Waters" (published in 1901) are fairly literal reproductions of an Omaha flute call and love song in Fletcher's collection. But, unlike Farwell, Cadman did not try to replicate Indian sounds. It is unlikely that a listener could guess that the melody had been borrowed from an Indian source, since Cadman embedded the tune in pure Euro-American harmonic structures and rhythms and all the conventions of accompanied solo song. What stands out more as "Indian" is the song's narrative, describing a fearless captive maid courted by a flute-player.

It is the text that marks many an Indianist composition, but the words are not usually those of direct tribal experience. While there is ample documentation of Indian oratorical eloquence, Indianist compositions seldom reflect it. For example, another of Cadman's songs, "The Moon Drops Low," includes the verse:

Our glory sets like the sinking moon;
The Red Man's race shall be perished soon;
Our feet shall trip where the web is spun,
For no dawn shall be ours, and no rising sun.

The texts that many of the Indianists chose to set to music are filled with similar elegaic evocations of past glory, supposedly the words of an heroic race at the brink of extinction. There is a passivity here that does not do justice to the struggles of Indian people over that which was happening to and around them. The images selected for Indianist compositions (and, indeed, even in some more recent songs about Indians by non-Indian composers) are just that: selections from a much broader array of Indian experiences, past and present. Would anyone know from such images that Native people had traditions of straightforwardly reciting achievements and victories, let alone an everyday world of work, education, childrearing, food preparation, and negotiating with government agencies?

The Indianists were Romantics who seized upon universal themes of love, war, and death cloaked in American Indian dress. Products of their times, the Indianists responded to and in turn reinforced prevailing stereotypes. Arthur Farwell also had the following to say about the piano version of his "Navajo War Dance":

Too many people think of the American Indian only as a "savage." I had in my Indian music depicted many phases of Indian life that were far from savage, but true to its quaint, poetic and pic-

turesque aspects, as well as to its mythological conceptions. Being criticized because of these matters, as being untrue to this "savage" Indian nature, I wrote the "Navajo War Dance" in the hope of gratifying my critics.

Thus he protested the stereotyped image—but proceeded to contribute to it.

Even when composers such as Farwell and Cadman had actual field-work experience, their music was most often a superficial evocation of Indian sounds and ideas. This is borne

out as well in the iconography on the sheet music for these compositions or the posters of the lecture-concert tours such composers and affiliated singers were apt to make: vignettes of tepees, borders made of arrows, photos of Anglo singers in buckskin with feathers in their hair.

Generally, the aural and visual images invoked in Indianist compositions are undifferentiated—they concern "the Red Man," "the Indian," and thus reflect the European and Euro-American tendency to see Indian culture as monolithic. Tribal distinctions did not seem to register with those who were not directly involved with Indian individuals. Much of that tendency carries over into the present. Indian people, however, know themselves as members of specific groups; tribal affiliation is a primary source of identification.

But identity labels are often context-dependent, sometimes chosen, sometimes assigned. For example, depending on the circumstances, I could say that I am German-American, white, a Protestant, a Wisconsinite, a Midwesterner, an American. One of those identities—Midwesterner—became mine only after I moved to the East Coast. I was not aware of myself as Midwestern until I encountered a lot of people who weren't. On a larger scale, but in similar ways, ethnic groups and whole societies literally are defined or define themselves in cultural encounters.

It might reasonably be claimed that the concept of "the American Indian" is a product of contact; though there were precontact tribal confederacies, "the American Indian," the pantribal identity, probably did not exist before. Prior to contact with Europeans, there was no inside need for a level of identity that included tribal neighbors as well as rivals or enemies, that spanned a continent or an entire hemisphere—and no outside view to lump together people as diverse as the Kwakiutl, the Hopi, the Cuna, the Pawnee, the Cree, the Natchez, the Tarahumara. Regardless of how the terms came into being, however, "American Indian" and "Native American" are now recognized concepts both inside and outside the societies so identified. And frequently the category "American Indian" takes precedence over specific tribal affiliation.

A flyer used to advertise concerts by Indianist composer Thurlow Lieurance. Note that Lieurance wears a tuxedo, while the singer, his wife, is in "Indian" dress, with furry headband and dress ornamentation. The border of the flyer also mixes generic flowers with an approximation of design motifs found in Plains quill- and beadwork. Archive of Folk Culture

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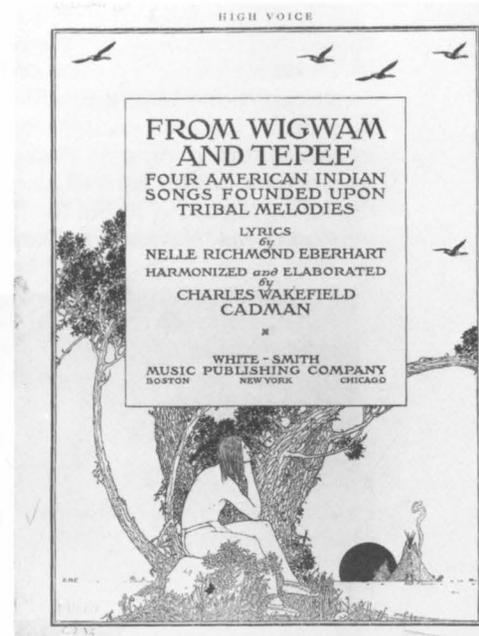
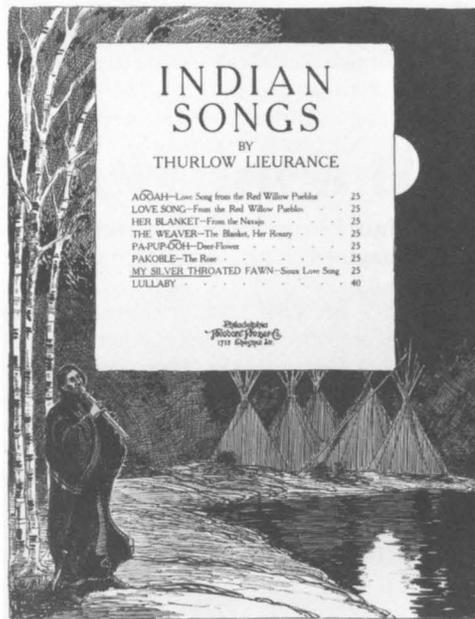
EDNA WOOLLEY-LIEURANCE

One important way in which pantribal identity is expressed is through song. Featured, for example, at one Library of Congress event was a local drum group that included singers identified as Arizona Pima and Kansas Potawatomi. The style of songs the group performed, however, was representative of Northern Plains rather than of the Eastern Woodlands or the Southwest or central Plains. Over time, a few particular images of American Indian people have been selected as *the* images of "the Indian." Visually, that image is often the male fancy dancer in feather regalia; aurally, it is the wide-range Northern Plains-style song, having characteristic forms and being sung with tense throat and pulsating voice.

Of all Indian song styles, the Northern Plains sound is probably the most different from Euro-American singing, and the most difficult aural pattern for a non-Indian to assimilate, let alone to replicate. Older Indian people often lament that young men are neglecting their specific tribal heritage for the sake of singing these pantribal songs, heard at powwows across the country. But this aural image of "Indian-ness" functions as a significant boundary for Indian and non-Indian societies. By differentiating as much as possible from the dominant culture, by staking out that which is most markedly unique and displaying it to the outside world, the selection of Northern Plains song-style helps to confirm cultural identities and borders. The music and the etiquette of its performance embrace all Native Americans as insiders, set apart from the dominant Euro-American culture.

But even as the Indianist composers selected sounds or notions about Indian music for their purposes, contemporary Indian groups choose and adapt certain items from Euro-American musical practice. In making such choices, they are not passive recipients of Euro-American musical imperialism but participants in a dynamic interchange of cultural items. For example, while many drum groups use a wooden drum covered with rawhide, others choose a Western-style bass drum turned on its side; in its decoration and use, it becomes literally an instrument of Indian identity.

Some tribes have adopted European instrumental traditions and



Sheet music covers for Indianist compositions by Thurlow Lieurance and Charles Wakefield Cadman. Note the design motifs: lone Indian males next to trees, tipis, the moon, and the setting sun. The illustrations convey a sense of closeness to nature as well as an impression, perhaps, that songs are individualistic expressions removed from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Music Division, Library of Congress

musical genres and made them their own. Quite a few Canadian and Alaskan indigenous people, for example, have adopted the fiddle as a means of cultural self-expression; in fact, there is now a yearly music festival and competition for Athabaskan fiddlers. Such activities may reflect Euro-American influence, but native expressive traditions are also represented, for example, in the way songs are introduced, typically identifying the source and the occasion for the song's composition, and in accompanying activities, such as the community feasts.

Similar examples of cultural expression tied to syncretism are found in Indian rock music. One of the best-known groups from the Southwest, XIT, released an album called "Relocation" in 1977 (Canyon Records 7121-C). Here, Indian youth, immersed in teen popular culture, encountered songs using standard rock instrumentation and style that addressed non-mainstream topics. For example, the song "Nothing Could Be Finer Than a 49'er" refers to a widespread Indian social dance genre; its text even incorporates an allusion to one of the most well-known 49 songs ("One-eyed Ford"), and at the end of the piece, the mu-

sicians overlaid the rock-song foundation with the sound of a traditional drum group singing a 49'er. But on the same album, there is also a song called "Christopher Columbus," including these lyrics:

Christopher Columbus, what have you done to us?
They give you the credit, and the whole world's read it,
But we discovered you—I said,
we discovered you!

This song, though addressed to the archetypal non-Indian and his kind, is on an album distributed primarily to Indian audiences and thus only incidentally tweaks the nose (or pricks the conscience) of the establishment. Though the song has all the aural patterns of mainstream rock that originated in non-Indian culture, the real audience here is the group identified in the lyrics as "we" rather than "you" or "they." As stated in a recent discussion about musical multiculturalism, "[even when] a culture . . . no longer control[s] the production of all of its music . . . it still listens with its own ears."²

A last example comes from Mormon-inspired music recorded about twenty years ago and directed to an

Indian audience. Songs such as "Proud Earth," composed by Arliene Nofchissey Williams, a Navajo student at Brigham Young University, express Mormon respect for tribal ways and the hope for broader unity. In the recording, the nationally known performer Chief Dan George recites the text while Nofchissey sings it:

The beat of my heart is kept alive
in my drum . . .
I am one-with nature, Mother
Earth is at my feet,
And my God is up above me, and
I'll sing the song of my People.³

Particularly fascinating in such songs is the use of some of the same aural images of Native American music that the Indianist composers had chosen: the drum beat, the vocables, the flute, the shaken bells or rattles, all in conjunction with string orchestra and mixed chorus. This time around, such elements seem to be chosen in order to single out the Indian audience, to say, "This is for you."

The sights and sounds of other forms of contemporary cross-cultural

borrowing are everywhere, not just in music. We could just as easily look, for example, at the tendency in the environmental movement to hold up a generalized "American Indian" as the ideal model of human interrelatedness with nature. Or we could look at advertising, or at the New Age fascination with shamanism, sweat baths, and the sound of Indian flutes.

What is important, in the context of this article, is not an assessment of the social effects of such borrowing (or, in some cases, possible misusing or at least misunderstanding) but rather an awareness that, in each of these instances, two societies have come into contact. In the process, each has recognized some aspects in its own and in the other culture that touch a nerve—some aspects to be rejected outright, others to be affirmed, some to be deliberately appropriated for use in ways that speak to members of the same group or to the other.

Cultural encounter is performance, the expression or enactment of that which is significant to a society in all domains—artistic, economic, linguistic, political, and religious, to name

some possibilities. Contact with "the other" is not a one-time-only event but a complicated, ongoing process of dynamic interchange in which selectivity is a key word for all participants. In the course of such contacts, we have opportunities to examine that which unites and that which divides us, all that we hold in common and all that makes us unique. In this way, what began five hundred years ago is far from over.

Notes

1. This and the following quotation by Farwell are taken from the liner notes for New World Records NW 213, a collection of Indianist compositions by Farwell, Charles Wakefield Cadman, and Preston Ware Orem.
2. Marc Perlman, in his opening remarks for an electronic-mail conference on multiculturalism and ethnomusicology, April 16, 1992.
3. Salt City Records SC-60, no date; reissued by Proud Earth Productions in 1990.

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It's foot-stompin' time at the festival

By JENNIFER BRICE
Staff Writer

Moosehide strips, trade beads and porcupine quills dangled from the neck of Bill Stevens' blue plastic fiddle. An Athabaskan woman in moosehide dress and beaded moccasins danced a two-step on the crowded floor as hundreds of Natives and a handful of whites listened and watched from tables at the Eagles Hall.

The Fourth Annual Athabaskan Old-Time Fiddling Festival was in full-swing Thursday night.

For the past four Novembers, after the fishing season ends and before the trapping season begins, Yukon River musicians have flowed into Fairbanks with their fiddles, guitars, friends and families for three days of music and dancing at the Institute of Alaska Native Arts' invitation. This year's festival attracted 77 musicians from 17 towns in the Interior and four in Canada.

The 500 tickets for tonight's final banquet and dance were sold out long in advance, according to Rose Atuk Fostick, one of the organizers.

The fun began Wednesday when first-time and veteran performers played side by side for school children and Native elders. Thursday, the musicians played 15- and 30-minute sets from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the public.

"People were out on the dance floor early this morning," said Jean Flanagan Carlo, IANA's executive director. "It's a major social event, not just a cultural event."

Bill Stevens played an early set of reels, waltzes and jigs Thursday evening, before trading his boots for something more comfortable—a pair of beaded moccasins in this case.

Stevens' mother ordered his first fiddle from the Sears Roebuck catalog when he was in his teens. He abandoned music for other interests until he was in his 30s.

"When I quit the booze, I took up the fiddle again," he said. "Now I enjoy life and I enjoy the fiddle."

Stevens, who limps slightly from a shooting accident, helped plan the first fiddling festival four years ago. A student of his, 13-year-old Diana Peter of Fort Yukon, practiced two hours a day for months to perform Thursday.

Athabaskan fiddle music was born in the mid-1800s when Hudson Bay employees traded furs for violins along the Porcupine

(See FIDLER, Back Page)

TUNED UP—Bill Stevens of Fort Yukon plays his electric, blue plastic fiddle at the fourth annual Old-Time Fiddling Festival Thursday afternoon at the Eagles Hall.
Randy Bellamy/News-Miner

Newspaper articles such as this one from the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* convey the popularity of Athabaskan fiddling, while identifying both the historical-traditional aspects and striking new elements of these performances.

The Folklorist Becomes the Folk



Winery proprietors Ed and Phyllis Pedrizzetti being interviewed in their office at Pedrizzetti Winery, Morgan Hill, California, by American Folklife Center fieldworkers Russell Frank and Paola Tavarelli. (IAW-KL-B132-35) Photo by Ken Light

By Francesca McLean

In 1989, when I heard about the American Folklife Center's Italian-Americans in the West (IAW) project, it occurred to me to apply for a fieldwork position. But I was a graduate student studying for comprehensive exams at the time, so I put the thought of fieldwork out of my mind. I had all but forgotten the project by September of 1992 when I took a part-time job in collections processing for the Center's Archive of Folk Culture. I didn't pay much attention to the IAW project other than to note that an ex-

hibit was about to open and staff were working hard on it—even though I am both a folklorist and an Italian-American from the West.

The history of the Italian side of my family is very typical of Italian immigrants to the West. Both sets of my maternal great-grandparents migrated from Italy to the San Francisco Bay Area in the late 1800s. The Marsalás, my nonno's (grandfather's) parents, survived the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906. My biznonna (great-grandmother) then insisted that the family move to the East Bay. They opened first a livery stable and then a

grocery store in El Cerrito, a small town on the north border of Berkeley. There Concetta and my great-grandfather Anthony raised Joseph, my nonno, Mary, James, Frances, and Lillian. Little did she know the move put them almost directly on top of the Hayward fault.

Meanwhile, the Maggiora's, my nonna's (grandmother's) family made their home in Wine Haven, a wine-making community at the foot of the Richmond side of the Richmond-San Rafael bridge. My great-grandfather Marcellino worked for a winery until Prohibition, when everyone was left

without work and the town effectively ceased to exist. He and his first wife, Francesca (my namesake), had four daughters, Laura (my nonna), Livia, Eda, and Lena. My great-grandfather moved the family a few miles south to the small town of Albany, where the girls grew up. Eventually, Laura Maggiora met and married Joseph Marsala and they had children of their own, Charmaine and Anthony. My mother and uncle grew up speaking Italian at home and English at school.

For my sister and me, Italian-American cultural influences were one generation removed from our mother's experience and, thus, diluted. Yet there were plenty of cultural ties that were part and parcel of our family circumstances. We were a close-knit extended family, and I saw my grandparents every weekend. As the family grew and spread, we often traveled to Morgan Hill, an hour and a half south of our home in Oakland, on the southern edge of what became Silicon Valley. Both my Aunt Eda (Pedrizzetti) and Aunt Lena (Borgnino) married farmers. Uncle John Pedrizzetti eventually bought vineyards and a winery, and Uncle Louis Borgnino, a prune ranch. My grandparents spoke English as well as Italian, so my sister and I didn't need to learn Italian to communicate with them (they still speak Italian in public when the matter at hand is not for "public consumption," and my

mother speaks to me in Italian under the same conditions). Pasta is the family staple dish, and as I grew up I learned how to make various sauces.

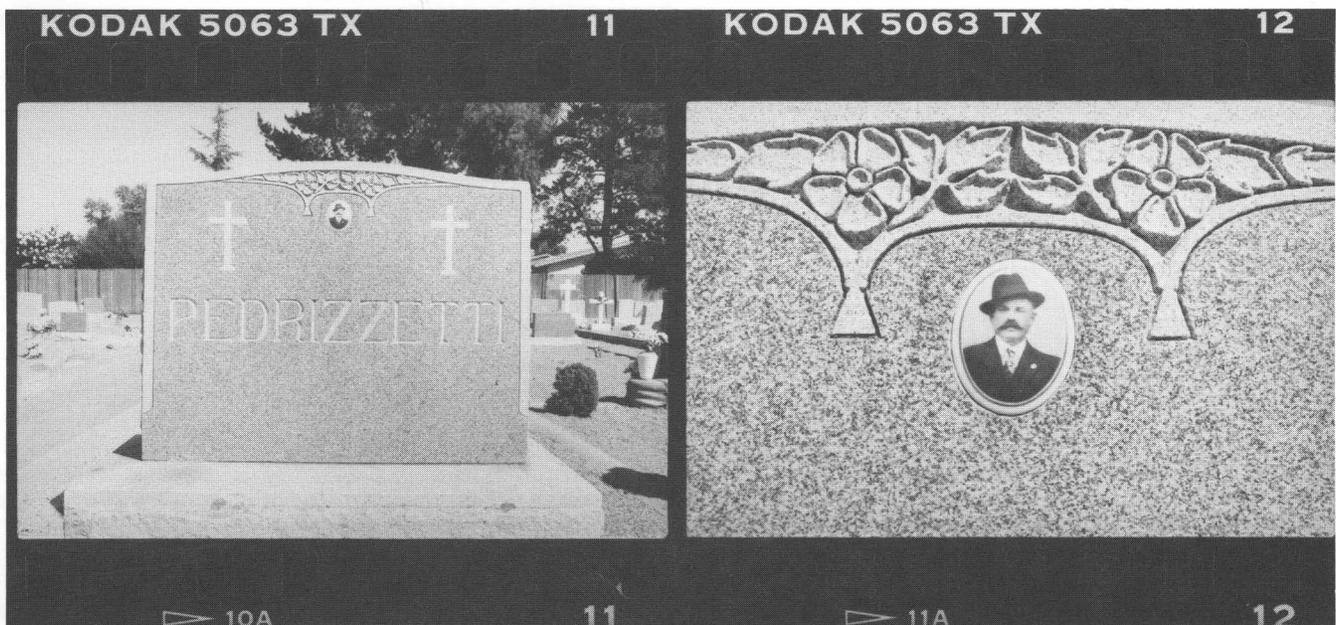
One day at the Folklife Center, as I stood looking over the shoulder of one of my colleagues at proof sheets from the IAW project, I made an amazing discovery. There on the sheet was the image of a gravestone with the Pedrizzetti name inscribed. The project fieldworkers had been working with my very family and a section of narrative from Phyllis Pedrizzetti about my family was to be included in the exhibit. Suddenly, I realized that my own family had been identified as the folk, "the other," part of that body of people I studied and sought to understand, but always stood apart from. All at once and with a jolt, I found myself symbolically on "the other" side of the microphone, transformed from folklorist to folk. My colleagues wryly congratulated me on my newfound status and joked about my increased value to the professional community; I could now program myself into public presentations as both a folklorist and an informant on Italian-American culture in the West. Or could I?

I read the fieldnotes and listened to the taped interviews the Center's researchers made with my cousins.

As I heard their voices, I could see them in my mind's eye. I began to recall family memories, but my nostalgic mental journey was interrupted by two unfamiliar voices asking questions. The answers revealed parts of my family history that I'd never heard. I wanted to ask more questions, fill in more parts of the picture. But, I also felt a strange sense of violation, as if the presence of two fieldworkers with a microphone invaded my privacy and trespassed on my ownership of this family history. On the one hand, I was excited to have part of my life experience recognized as important; on the other hand, I was ambivalent about my family being the topic of research. If my family's history was shared with the general public through inclusion in an exhibit, would it any longer have special meaning for me?

My feelings of excitement were understandable to me both personally and professionally; my feelings of invasion were not. In order to sort them out, I had to examine the differences between my public, folklorist self, and my private self. As an ethnographer I know that as soon as field research begins, my informants become subject to my professional standards and values. I had to examine the values I applied to my work and then determine whether they remained constant when my own family was the subject of research; or

Frames from a contact sheet of photos taken in an Italian cemetery, showing the Pedrizzetti family headstone. Francesca McLean experienced a shock of recognition when she noticed these pictures on the desk of a colleague at the Folklife Center. (IAW-DT-B012-10A-11 & 11A-12) Photos by David A. Taylor



if the IAW Project held itself to a similar set of values I could approve.

In exploring traditional culture in people's daily lives, folklorists often are entrusted with very personal and intimate details. Consequently, folklorists who wish to present the results of their research in a book, a film, or a public program are often faced with a dilemma: which of these details, if any, should be made public? The folklife festival is the form of public presentation with which I have had the most experience, and it was on the basis of this festival experience that I reacted with ambivalence to my family's inclusion in the Center's exhibit.

When I am producing a festival I must balance a number of considerations. Curatorial matters, such as who to include and how to present the larger context that envelopes their tradition, vie for equal attention with production details such as the design and fabrication of demonstration and performance space. Underlying these decisions are ethical considerations, for example, the fairness of featuring one group to represent a community tradition shared by many, and the effects on the future practice of tradition by that selected group. The festival is a "frame" in which very specific purposes are served. As an event producer I control and shape information that informants and participants share with me (as much as anyone producing programs in the public sector can be in control of any event). I had never before thought that my personal and family history would be presented at a festival, or in any other public format. I often share the details of my own life with those I know, trust, and like, but I have never considered creating a display that featured them.

Why had this possibility never occurred to me? Like many members of a cultural community, I did not think my family and experience were in any way distinctive. When I found that the attention of the American Folklife Center had been focused on it, I began to realize that my "normal" experience was a very particular one, and that my family was part of exactly the kind of ethnic community any folklorist might study.

But when the Center staff decided what part of my family narrative to feature in the exhibit, I had no part in the decision. I was unfamiliar with the

motives and points of view of the researchers and with the exhibit as a form of public presentation. My personal reaction mirrored a professional concern every fieldworker and presenter has felt at one time or another throughout his or her career: in what "frame" do we present the personal details of a person's cultural life? Folklorists' relationships with the people they study are complicated. We seek to maintain objectivity and intellectual and personal distance and do so, in part, by labeling them "informant" or "participant." But we are often deeply touched by the lives and traditions of the people we work with, and friendships can blossom. In staging a folklife festival, the relationship between folklorist and folk becomes one of collaboration. Circumstances and the exhibit format did not allow that kind of collaboration between myself and the Center during the research and design phase of the IAW exhibit. Would I be comfortable, I wanted to know, with the "frame" of the IAW exhibit?

Old Ties, New Attachments, the folklife exhibit based on the Center's Italian-Americans in the West Project, focused on the maintenance of traditional culture through ethnic group and family ties and on the dynamics of change within these communities as time passed (see *Folklife Center News*, summer 1992). One of the places the project carried out field research is California's Santa Clara Valley. Historically significant as an agricultural region (once known as the "garden spot of the world"), the valley soil is rich and still supports family farms and wineries. In the past twenty years, however, as the urban development of San Jose sprawled southward, considerably less acreage has been devoted to agriculture. The Center chose the valley because of the large number of Italian-American, family-owned and -operated small businesses, some of which have been in the same families for generations. The cultural base upon which the businesses began is still intact and flourishing, as younger generations continue family and community traditions and add their own. In contrast to the Napa and Sonoma Valleys to the north, where wine-making attracts wine makers and tourists from around the world, the Santa Clara Valley remains strongly rooted in traditional

Italian and Italian-American working-class culture. It also remains the seat of the maternal side of my family.

The Pedrizzetti Winery is a good example of the kind of Italian-American family-owned and -operated business the project chose to study. My Aunt Eda and Uncle John Pedrizzetti of Morgan Hill, California, bought the winery in the 1940s, operated it for years and eventually turned it over to their son Ed and his wife, Phyllis, when they retired. The wine-making community in the valley is old and established, and many members belong to Italian-American families who have been in the state for over a century. The wine makers know each other through ethnic as well as occupational ties, and as Folklife Center fieldworkers discovered to meet and talk with one family is equivalent to gaining access to the whole community.

Different frames are appropriate and necessary for the effective presentation of different aspects of traditional culture. Traditional music may lend itself easily to presentation on a festival stage when its usual performance context is a public one. Although there are many people for whom narrating becomes a performance, personal details of cultural life are not so easily presented in the festival frame. Once I got over the discomfort of sharing my family history with the "public at large," I saw that the framework of the IAW exhibit, with its specific foci and its venues in the communities who contributed to it, was an appropriate frame for the presentation of my family's experience within the larger cultural contexts that encompass it.

For any folklorist, there is a dynamic tension between the desire to present folk culture in public contexts and the ethical need to be mindful of the life details people share in trust and friendship. That tension, I realize now, is one I want to work with rather than seek to resolve, for it requires me to periodically question my motives and goals as a professional folklorist.

Francesca McLean is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Pennsylvania, writing a dissertation on the repertoire of mandolin player Red Rector, of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Significant Acquisitions for the Folk Archive in 1992

By Joseph C. Hickerson

During the period from October 1991 to September 1992, Folk Archive activities suffered from a staff shortage and the Center's move to newly renovated quarters in the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building. As a result, acquisitions activity was significantly curtailed. Nevertheless, we can report a variety of interesting additions to the Archive of Folk Culture. The following report describes collections comprising especially large bodies of material, those of particular interest to folklore, ethnomusicology, and related areas of study, and those that exemplify the wide variety of format categories and subject matters represented in the collections. I hope readers will be inspired to consider the Archive of Folk Culture as a repository for their collections and publications.

To begin with, the Folk Archive has received an important group of recordings from the collection of the late Ida Halpern of Vancouver, British Columbia. Dr. Halpern, a Viennese-trained ethnomusicologist, moved to Canada in 1939, and there she began documenting the music of Northwest Indians. Before her death in 1987, Dr. Halpern expressed interest in giving the Library of Congress an opportunity to acquire portions of her collection. In anticipation of this event, Dr. Halpern donated to the Archive in 1976 a photocopy of the index and catalog cards that describe the songs she collected from British Columbia Indians over a thirty-five year period. The present acquisition has been donated by the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, the official repository of the Ida Halpern collection. It consists of seventeen seven-inch and three five-inch audiotapes of one of Dr. Halpern's most prolific informants, Kwakiutl chief and master singer Mungo Martin. On these recordings, which were made in 1951-52 in

Vancouver, Mr. Martin performs over one hundred songs, a number of which were acquired from such neighboring tribes as the Bella Bella, Bella Coola, Haida, and Nootka. Included are dance songs, feast songs, game songs, hunting songs, love songs, thank-you songs, and war songs. Also included with the tapes is a copy of a hundred-page inventory of the complete Halpern collection.

Mike Seeger of Lexington, Virginia, has supplemented his collections of field recordings in the Archive with the addition of archival quality duplications of fifty-eight hours of audiotape, primarily taken from his original reels numbered fourteen through sixty-nine. The bulk of this group of recordings was made in the late 1950s and document a number of aspects of Appalachian folk music as well as

Independence, Virginia, banjo player and string-band musician Wade Ward is shown here with his wife and mother-in-law, Granny Porter, 1957. Ward is among many Appalachian folk musicians featured in the collections of tapes acquired from Michael Seeger. Photo by Michael Seeger





Frank Proffitt, Jr., plays a five-string banjo made by Tut Taylor. D. Michael Battey made the photograph in 1991 at the home of Clifford Glenn in Sugar Grove, North Carolina, during his in-depth recorded interview with Proffitt.

early forms of bluegrass and country music. Also included are recordings of several members of the Seeger family. In addition to the tapes, Seeger has provided complete logs on four diskettes.

D. Michael Battey of Clearwater, Florida, has contributed twelve seven-inch audiotapes of singer/storyteller Frank Proffitt, Jr., of Beech Mountain, North Carolina. These recordings contain oral history as well as a variety of songs and stories, many of which were learned from the performer's father, the late Frank Proffitt. The elder Proffitt was a prolific source of songs for collectors Frank C. Brown, Frank and Anne Warner, and Folk-Legacy Records from the late 1930s

through the 1960s, all of which are represented in the Archive's collections. It was Frank Sr.'s version of "Tom Dooley," as recorded by the Kingston Trio in 1957, that sparked the commercial "folk boom" of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Dr. Batty used one of the Center's Nagra recorders to make these tapes.

Art Thieme of Peru, Illinois, has donated a typed manuscript entitled "Songs of the Life, Times and Assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy." The collection includes approximately one hundred song texts, with source information, collected by Thieme over the period 1960-90 from a variety of sources and musical genres.

Robert Caulk has contributed a variety of materials concerning international folk dance that were gathered and compiled by his mother, Ruth Feuer Caulk, in connection with her work at settlement schools in New York City in the 1930s and 1940s. Included in the gift are 257 five-by-eight-inch cards and nine sheets containing folk dance instructions, twelve folk dance and dance music books, two pamphlets, and one article.

Six videotapes featuring Russian and Armenian folk dance and song have been donated by Alexander Medvedev, musicologist and chairman of the Musicology and Folklore Commission, Union of Composers of the former Soviet Union. The videos were brought to the Archive by Michael Levner of the Library's Moscow office. Included on the videos are the professional dance theater at the State Institute of Theatrical Arts, Russia; a men's choir; Cossack dances; and dances performed in village settings.

Stuart Jay Weiss of Staten Island, New York, has donated a unique sixteen-inch, instantaneous, single-face acetate disc containing an "audition" by Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter for the National Broadcasting Company. Dated June 19, 1940, the fifteen-minute segment includes seven songs performed by Leadbelly, with an introduction and narration by Woody Guthrie.

Joe Broadman of Carmel, California, has donated a cassette containing twenty-five songs performed in May 1961 in Minneapolis by Bob Dylan. Twenty-three of the songs are traditional folksongs or Woody Guthrie compositions; two are early Dylan compositions. In addition, Broadman has contributed ten published song collections, four song sheets, five periodical issues, nine ephemera, and a page containing "Songs and Poems" from the May 1, 1934, issue of *Semi-Weekly Farm News* (Dallas).

Mark Schoenberg of Port Jefferson, New York, has donated eighteen periodicals and a number of photographs, souvenir/song books, and ephemera dealing with bluegrass music in the early 1960s. Included are songs books from Jim and Jesse and the Virginia Boys and Don Reno and Red Smiley and the Tennessee Cut-Ups containing autographs of members of the two ensembles.

The University of Nebraska Library has donated a photocopy of a rare thirteen-page mimeographed collection of "Negro jokes" compiled by the late Sterling Brown, presumably in the late 1930s.

John Reynolds of New York City has donated over one hundred newspaper and magazine articles and other ephemera, principally concerning Leadbelly, Odetta, Elija Pierce, and Bill Taylor.

Douglas Meade of College Park, Maryland, has donated a 1,179-page printout of his late father Guthrie T. Meade's annotated discography of traditional songs and tunes on hill-billy recordings. He has also generated and contributed a 41-page index to the discography. Guy Logsdon of Tulsa, Oklahoma, has donated a 20-page printout of his discography of the published and unpublished recordings of Woody Guthrie.

Joe Glazer of Silver Spring, Maryland, has donated nineteen LPs, seventeen cassettes, and one compact disc from his Collector Record label. The recordings cover a variety of labor and union topics. The

Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies has donated twenty-five LP recordings on the Smithsonian Folkways label.

Among serial publications donated are the following: Richard K. Spottswood of University Park, Maryland, has donated approximately 350 serial publications, primarily dealing with bluegrass and blues. J. A. "Ted" Theodore of El Cajon, California, has donated 168 issues of the *San Diego Folk Song Society Newsletter*, along with 4 other periodical issues and 23 ephemeral publications dealing with folk music in the San Diego area. Sam and Eleanor Simmons of the Somers Traditional Folk Club of Malvern, Worcestershire, England, have contributed 6 directories and 17 journals and newsletters published by that organization over the past ten years. Kip Lornell has loaned us 33 issues of *Blues & Rhythm* for photocopying to complete our set of this important magazine from England. Twenty-five issues of *News from Native Califor-*

nia have been received from its publisher in Berkeley, California. Eighteen issues of the *Jewish Storytelling Newsletter* have been received from the Jewish Storytelling Center in New York City. In addition, our recommendations have resulted in the receipt of 138 issues of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 42 issues of the *Folk Music Conflict Calendar*, 17 issues of *Autobarp Clearinghouse*, 11 issues of the *Journal of Negro History*, 34 issues of *Chinese Music*, 47 issues of *Them Days* (Happy Valley - Goose Bay, Labrador), 20 issues of *Native Peoples* (Phoenix, Arizona), and 26 issues of *ArMen*, a cultural magazine from Breton, France.

Watch this column next year for such pending acquisitions as the Italian-Americans in the West Project, Ukrainian cylinders of blind bardic singers, collections from John Niles, Jeff Titon, and Henrietta Yurchenco, and, time, staff, and space willing, many more.

EDITOR'S NOTES (from page 2)

landing was only the beginning of myriad cultural exchanges that continue today.

If *encounter* describes what happened historically, *the other* describes what was encountered psychologically. Although Columbus sought trade routes to the East, he "discovered" something that was both other than his expectations and other than anything in his experience or imagination. In a second article, folklorist Francesca McLean grapples with her discovery that the folk culture being studied for the Center's Italian-Americans in the West Project is her own. She must come to terms with the fact that "the other" of the folklorist's study might well be herself, and is thus forced to rethink some of the elements of her own developing professional point of view.

Caption Correction

Simon J. Bronner, professor of folklore at Penn State, Harrisburg, wrote

to call attention to an error in a caption (*Folklife Center News*, summer 1992, page 16). "In the caption for the sheet music published by the Hebrew Publishing Company, the Yiddish transliteration is incorrect. The transliteration you have is *Wieber* and it is listed as *Weiber* on the sheet music. Actually, in modern orthography the word is usually given as *Veiber* or *Vaiber*. It's an unusual use of *women* in Yiddish; usually speakers use *Froyen* from *Di Froy*. *Dos Veib* means wife; *Veiber* has the connotation of married women or steady women."

The Last of the Folklife Annuals

The 1990 volume of *Folklife Annual* presents eleven articles on scenic murals, photograph albums, costume, decoration, and architectural design, all of which demonstrate how these forms are used to establish the terms and boundaries of personal and community life. The 176-page, clothbound book includes 156 illustrations, 45 in color.

The 1990 volume is the last in the series from the American Folklife

Center. Producing the volume each year became too expensive for the Library in a time of shrinking budgets.

Copies of *Folklife Annual 90* are still available from New Orders, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. The stock number is S/N 030-000-00230-0, and the price is \$19, which includes postage and handling. Make checks payable to the Superintendent of Documents.

FOLKLINE

For timely information on the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities and news items of national interest, a taped announcement is available around the clock, except during the hours of 9 A.M. until noon (eastern time) each Monday, when it is updated. Folkline is a joint project of the American Folklife Center and the American Folklore Society. Dial:

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Ed Pedrizzetti at his winery in Morgan Hill, California, 1989. One of the participants in the Folklife Center's Italian-Americans in the West Project, Pedrizzetti is also the uncle of folklorist Francesca McLean, whose comment on finding her family the subject of study begins on page 10. (IAW-KL-B130-36-36A) Photo by Ken Light

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