

## A Note from the Chair

**Sarah Cunningham**  
**LBJ Presidential Library**

Over the last two years audiovisual archives reported increased levels of requests for audio. With higher levels of use, including the need for clips, quotes, and sound bites for the media and documentary filmmakers, it looks like we will be even busier in the future.

To be prepared for the escalating interest in our holdings, the Recorded Sound Roundtable will

address the needs and training of archivists and technicians in the field and institutions with collections of audio.

Our program for the SAA Annual meeting *Audio Preservation, Archivists, and the Future of Collections*, will feature Steve Weiss, Curator of the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who will give

a preview of his session “Remain in Light: Archival Practise for Popular Music Collections.” “The Education for the Next Wave of Audio Preservation Archivists” will close out the program.

The 2016 meeting of the Recorded Sound Roundtable will be held on August 3, 2016 from 4:00 to 5:30 in room 309/310 at the Hilton Atlanta. Please join us!

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## Severely Warped Paper Substrate Disc Playback: A Story of Inter-Disciplinary Cooperation

Deborah Fox, Paper Conservator

Nathan Coy, Audio Preservation Specialist

Stanford University Libraries

The Stanford University Libraries media preservation lab and conservation lab routinely face challenges related to degrading physical objects, but recently the two departments were presented with an opportunity to collaborate on a project. The project involved developing a strategy to mechanically play back severely warped, commercially produced, stamped, paper-based lacquer discs. The discs in question are a set of three released by Hollywood Star Records titled *Man-Talk by Three Great Western Stars*.

The recordings feature John Wayne, Bill Elliott, and Johnny Mack Brown individually speaking on one side and an image of the performer on the other side.

The first step we took was to explore current

documentation on paper substrate discs and the lacquer coatings into which the grooves are cut. There are suggestions in IASA TC-04 Second Edition that the coating could be gelatin,



Front cover of album sleeve. Photo by Geoff Willard, Stanford University Libraries.

documentation on paper substrate discs and the lacquer coatings into which the grooves are cut. There are suggestions in IASA TC-04 Second Edition that the coating could be gelatin,

the very flexible nature of the coating easily ruled out shellac and cellulose nitrate, leaving us with gelatin, vinylite, or a third unknown coating as possibilities.

Already with a hunch that the lacquer wasn't gelatin due to a lack of discoloration, Deb tested the lacquer in an inconspicuous, uncut section using both de-ionized water and Isopropyl alcohol to check for a response. The lacquer coating didn't react adversely to either solvent, further suggesting that the coating was not gelatin, shellac, or cellulose nitrate.

Now that we had ideas about what was used for the coating, we shifted to our other concern: how to flatten and play back the disc. As can be seen in the photos, the cardboard substrate



Warped disc, pre-treatment. Photo by Deborah Fox, Stanford University Libraries.

of the discs was severely warped on both sides. Deb had the idea to split the discs to reduce the amount of tension and distortion once re-flattened so Nathan purchased a paper lacquer disc from a popular auction site to serve as a test subject and Deb successfully separated the two sides of the disc. On Nathans' suggestion, Deb was able to affix the now separated disc to a commercially available aluminum support for 16 inch transcription discs using Japanese paper and paste.

The next test was to try to play back the test disc that had been split and affixed to the support. Our first try was successful and we were able to mechanically reproduce the sound. We now had the testing portion of the job

completed. Now to flatten and play back the Hollywood Star Records discs.

Deb separated the Bill Elliott Hollywood Star disc first and noticed that it had water

damage, but a fully intact and flexible coating; this suggests that water damage had caused the warping. This also supported the idea that the disc coatings were in fact not gelatin. Deb then commenced to flatten it utilizing humidity introduced through a Gore-Tex membrane in order to relax the paper core. The damp and flat disc was then dried under felts, plexi and weight. Then we waited.

After several days of waiting, the grooved half of the disc was almost entirely flattened. It was then affixed to Japanese paper with paste and then pasted to the 16 inch aluminum supporting base. Then, with great anticipation,

we waited. As soon as the paste had set we attempted playback. To our delight it was quite successful and the disc played back wonderfully. This process was then undertaken for the Johnny Mack Brown disc with similarly successful results. Additionally, the discs showed no signs of damage from the processes we had carried out.

The John Wayne disc had minimal separation with shallow warp. We decided to leave that disc intact, humidify it to relax the paper core, then adhere the split sections together with wheat starch paste. Once dried, under weight, the paper disc showed a nearly complete



Disc prepared for playback. Photo by Deborah Fox, Stanford University Libraries.

return to flatness and was able to be played mechanically. Our process for this disc ultimately led to its successful transfer, as well as the preservation of the physical object.

What we learned was an effective process for de-warping and playing back select paper substrate lacquer discs. While this method may not work on all paper-based discs based due to the chemical makeup of the lacquer coating, it did work in this case. The questions we



Characteristic image on back of John Wayne disc. Photo by Deborah Fox, Stanford University Libraries.

still have include what is the exact make up of the coating on these discs and also what is the chemical make up of

coatings on other paper discs? This is especially important since this is a commercially pressed lacquer disc as opposed to a home recording disc. More information on coatings could provide insight into how widely this process could be used and also what coatings were used in paper-based lacquer discs. This knowledge could then be applied toward the preservation of a range of paper substrate lacquer discs.

## Recollection Wisconsin

**Dana Gerber-Margie, A/V and Digital Archivist  
Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS)**

Recollection Wisconsin, the state's collaborative digitization program, was recently awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to locate, inventory, and plan for the digitization and preservation of hidden, at-risk audiovisual materials from collections across Wisconsin. This yearlong planning project, entitled

*Listening to War: Uncovering Wisconsin's Wartime Oral Histories*, will bring to light oral history collections capturing personal accounts of Wisconsin veterans and civilians during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Persian Gulf War. The project will seek out collections likely to be at high risk for loss – those held by public libraries, archives, historical societies,

museums, and schools in small, rural, isolated Wisconsin communities – in order to ensure that this important content does not permanently vanish from the historical record.

Improving access to firsthand accounts from a wide range of individuals – servicemen and women, their spouses and children, antiwar activists, refugees, and others – will facilitate a deeper understanding of the impact of war on American life and the ways

in which global economic, political, and social issues are enacted on the local level. In Wisconsin, the lived experience of military conflict encompasses not only the stories of the tens of thousands of men and women who served on the battlefronts in Europe and Asia, but women who donned overalls and welding masks to work for Great Lakes shipbuilders and other manufacturing industries during World War II, Holocaust

survivors who immigrated to Wisconsin, student activists on campuses across the state who organized sit-ins and demonstrations to protest the Vietnam War, Hmong refugees who sought asylum in the Upper Midwest following the United States' withdrawal from Southeast Asia, and members of Wisconsin's eleven federally-recognized American Indian tribes who have served in all branches of the United States military.

The project will be led by Emily Pfothenauer, Program Manager for Recollection Wisconsin, and assisted by an Advisory Committee

made up of experts in military history, oral history, public humanities, digital preservation, and digital access. The Advisory Committee members are



Recruits at Camp Douglas, Wisconsin. Photo by William Wessa. Courtesy of Langlade County Historical Society.

Dr. Stephen Kercher, Professor of History at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh; Dr. Mark D. Van Ells, Professor of History at Queensborough Community College, City University of New York; Erika Janik, from Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin Public Television; Susan McLeod, retired director of the Chippewa Valley Museum; Troy Reeves, Head of the Oral History Program for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives; Ellen Brooks, Oral Historian for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum; Paul Hedges, Emerging Technologies Archivist for the Wisconsin Historical Society; and

Dorothea Salo, Faculty Associate in the School of Library and Information Studies at UW-Madison. Together, they will develop a detailed road map for digitizing, preserving, and providing access to audiovisual collections documenting Wisconsin citizens' experiences of war in the 20th century. This road map will lead to the creation of best practice guidelines and a community of practice for oral history capture and preservation in Wisconsin, with an understanding of the challenges and needs of participating institutions. Another outcome of the grant is an increased public awareness of hidden audiovisual collections in Wisconsin.

The grant supports the hiring of a Digital Archives Assistant who will travel to memory institutions across Wisconsin to inventory and assess identified collections. Dana Gerber-Margie, a graduate of the School of Library and Information Studies at UW-Madison and an Audio Archivist at the Wisconsin Historical Society since 2013,

began this position in June 2016. Gerber-Margie will be using the open source web applications mediaSCORE and mediaRIVERS, created by AVPreserve and Indiana University to assist with preservation prioritization. MediaSCORE analyzes the degradation and obsolescence risks to media and mediaRIVERS provides a rating of research and instructional value to an institution. Collection holdings will be scored using both tools, ultimately supplying a prioritized list for digitization and care. Recollection Wisconsin is managed by Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS), a non-profit membership organization for libraries. Additional partners in this collaborative initiative are Marquette University, Milwaukee Public Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and the Wisconsin Historical Society.

For more information about the Listening to War project, visit [recollectionwisconsin.org/wioralhistory](http://recollectionwisconsin.org/wioralhistory).

## Audio Digitization at University of Maryland Libraries

**Robin C. Pike, Digital Collections Librarian**

**Vincent J. Novara, Curator, Special Collections in Performing Arts**

The University of Maryland Libraries began targeting audiovisual materials for digitization and preservation in 2012 by reserving preservation funds for mid-sized projects in specific collections, and later by participating in the American Archive of Public Broadcasting project in 2013-2014. In September 2015, the Libraries began their largest internally funded mass-digitization effort of audio and audiovisual content, the largest project being 1,555 ¼" open reel audio tapes from the University of Maryland School of Music. The content in the selected portion spans 1963-1990 and documents the faculty, doctoral, masters, and ensemble recordings from the School of Music.

These recordings provide a comprehensive perspective in the history of studying and teaching music at the

University of Maryland. Some of the students featured here in recital (e.g. Chris Gekker) have gone on to internationally distinguished careers as performers and educators. The faculty recitals from this period reveal programming trends for solo literature and chamber music during this musically revolutionary phase of the 20th century. This collection will serve multiple audiences: historic scholars of what was then considered new music, scholars of performance for various instruments, and those interested in the history of music in American higher education.

Metadata will be publicly searchable and the files will be available via on-campus streaming in late summer 2016. Patrons will be also able to request copies of files for personal use.

## Arthur Russell Archives Acquired by the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound

Danielle Cordovez, Reference Librarian

Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

The Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound is pleased to announce the recent acquisition of compositions and recordings from the gifted cellist, composer, singer, and songwriter, Arthur Russell (1951-1992).

Arthur Russell was a prominent figure in New York's downtown avant-garde and disco scenes in the 1970s and 1980s. Although unknown in mainstream music circles, he served as the director for

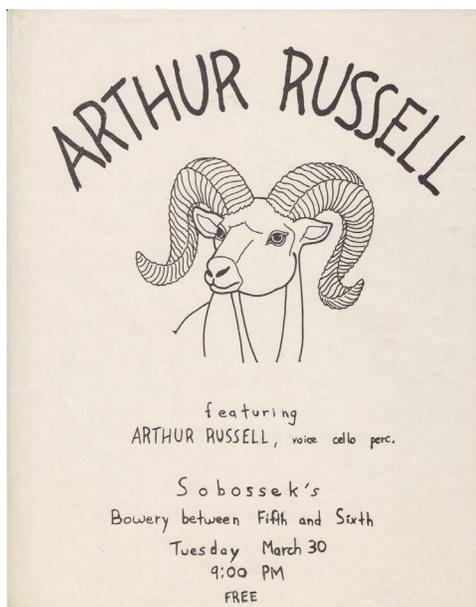


Photo by Jonathan Hiam.

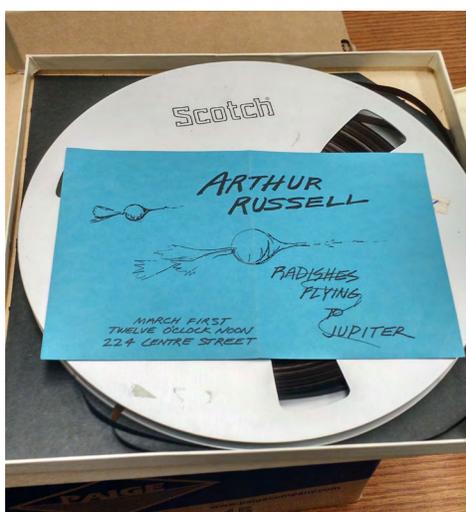


Photo by Jonathan Hiam.

the performance art space 'The Kitchen,' and was lauded by contemporaries in New York for his inventive experimental compositions that married popular and classical music. Russell's interest in the underground dance music scene led him to release several well-received records under various monikers which have continued relevance. Over the course of his career, Russell produced a considerable body of work that disparately reflected his varied musical interests and included collaborations with notable figures such as Allen Ginsberg, David Byrne, Philip

Glass, and Rys Chatham.

It wasn't until after Russell's death in 1992 that his works were recognized on a large scale. He has influenced present-day musicians like Dev Hynes, James Murphy, Planningtorock, Tracey Thorn, and most recently Kanye West.



Photo by Jonathan Hiam.

The collection consists of 166 linear feet of notebooks, manuscripts, audio, and video content that document and provide insight into the creative process of an artist many considered a musical genius.

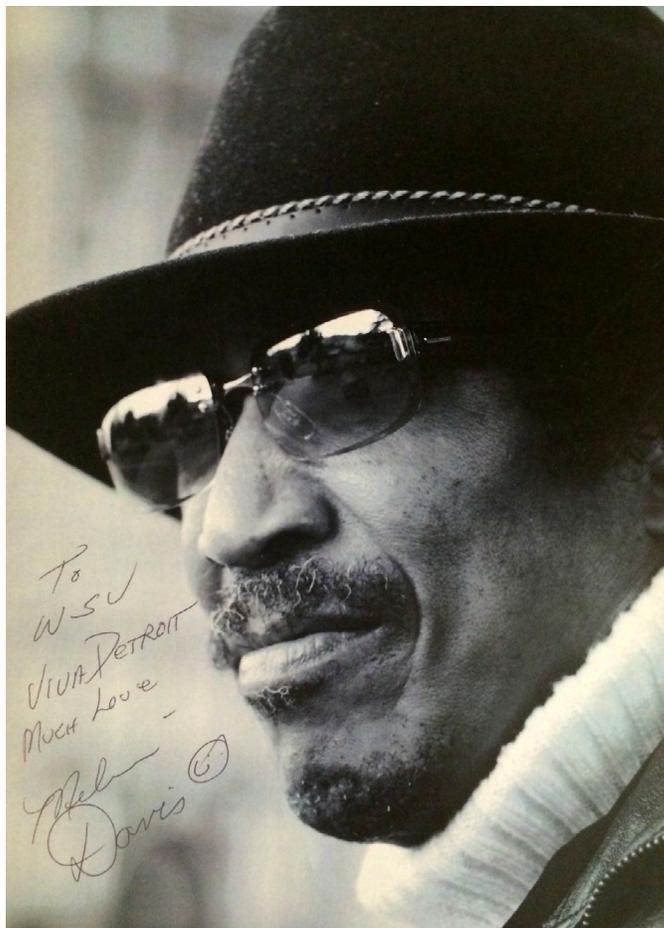
## Detroit Music Oral History Project

**Mike Dutkewych, MLIS Candidate**

**Wayne State University School of Library and Information Science**

This past fall, I worked with Wayne State University School of Library and Information Science lecturer, Kim Schroeder, to coordinate an oral history project that aimed to capture unique firsthand perspectives on the last 50+ years of Detroit music. Done in conjunction with Professor Schroeder's class, *Oral History: A Methodology for Research*, and with direction from the Walter P. Reuther Library Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, the project paired eight Archival Administration students

with eight notable figures active across multiple decades and music scenes throughout Detroit. The goal was to collect multi-generational, multi-genre perspectives—many of which had never been formally documented—on a city responsible for countless



Autographed publicity photo of Melvin Davis. Photo courtesy of the Wayne State University School of Library & Information Science.

contributions to American music and culture that continue to resonate the world over.

We selected individuals who participated in not only different eras, but also different facets of the industry to cover Detroit

music from multiple angles. In addition to performers, we interviewed studio session players, a recording engineer, a visual artist, and a radio disc jockey. What resulted is a diverse collection of accounts that explore both the well-worn narratives in the city's musical legacy, like the early-2000s garage rock explosion; and those less-celebrated but equally worthy, like the prolific Fortune Records label that churned out everything from local hillbilly to gospel music through its ramshackle single-track recording studio.

Interviewees included:

- Eddie Baranek – Singer and guitarist best known for his long-running garage rock band, the Sights. Active: 1990s-present.
- Steve “Muruga” Booker – One of Detroit's most

prolific percussionists. He has played with everyone from Parliament to John Lee Hooker during the course of his career. He still performs and releases music regularly. Active: 1960s-present.

- Dennis Coffey – World-renowned guitarist and music producer. If it came out of Detroit in the 1960s-70s, it's a safe bet he either played guitar on it or produced it. He was the Funk Brother credited with introducing the wah pedal at Motown. He still performs weekly in Detroit. Active: 1950s-present.
- Melvin Davis – Singer, songwriter and drummer. Though he never had a hit record of his own, he wrote several for other artists, and played drums behind big names like Smokey Robinson & the Miracles. He still performs regularly. Active: 1950s-present.
- Dennis Loren – Psychedelic poster artist who went on to serve as art director for eminent music magazine, Goldmine. Active:



Mike Dutkewych and Ed Wolfrum in Mr. Wolfrum's recording studio in Royal Oak, Michigan. Photo by Susan Wolfrum.

- 1970s-present.
- Matthew Smith – Singer, guitarist and producer with a long resume that includes Detroit legends like Rodriguez, Nathaniel Mayer, Andre Williams, and the White Stripes, as well as his own longtime projects, Outrageous Cherry and the Volebeats. Active: 1980s-present.
- Peter Werbe – Detroit broadcasting personality best known for Nightcall, the longest-running phone-in talk show in radio history. He was also instrumental in the early days of counterculture publication, the

Fifth Estate. Active: 1960s-present.

- Ed Wolfrum – Detroit recording engineer who cut records at renowned studios like Motown, Golden World, and United Sound Systems. He contributed to the creation of countless hit records, as well as a number of innovations in recording techniques and technology. Active: 1960s-present.

The interview recordings and full transcripts will be available to researchers later this years through the Reuther Library. We also

intend to continue the project with a new group of students and interviewees in the Fall 2016 semester.

“The musicians that I have worked with out of Detroit, they really are the best

musicians in the world. This city, for whatever reason, produces these kind of individuals that have a really different way of working, just a different vibe.” – Matthew Smith, as told to WSU SLIS student, Kim Kelly.

*Mike Dutkewych is a music enthusiast and collector from—you guessed it—Detroit. He will complete his MLIS studies later this year. He can be reached at [mikedutkewych@gmail.com](mailto:mikedutkewych@gmail.com).*

## Center for Popular Music Receives \$19K Grammy Grant to Digitize Newly Acquired Bluegrass Collection

**Rachel Morris, Coordinator and Archivist**  
**Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University**

The Center for Popular Music received another national grant from the Grammy Foundation to digitize the “Marvin Hedrick Audio Collection,” a historically and culturally significant collection of audio tapes of live bluegrass performances. The \$19,537 grant will allow the Center to catalog,

preserve, digitize, and disseminate the content of the 167 open-reel tapes via a dedicated website and the Center’s documentary record label, Spring Fed Records.

Marvin Hedrick was a musician and radio/television repairman who was a fixture at the Bean Blossom

which was donated in 2015 by Mr. Hedrick’s sons, Gary and David, consists of recordings of priceless festival performances and backstage jam sessions, as well as impromptu sessions held at Hedrick’s own shop.

The Center for Popular Music, housed at Middle Tennessee State University as part of the College of Media and Entertainment, is one of the nation’s largest and most significant repositories of research materials related to the full study of American vernacular music.

For more information, please visit <http://mtsu.edu/popmusic/>.



The Marvin Hendrick Audio Collection as it arrived to the CPM. Photo courtesy of Dr. Greg Reis.

Bluegrass Festival in Brown County, Indiana. Through this festival, he befriended Bill Monroe and many other pioneers of bluegrass during the late 1960s. This collection,

## Texas A&M University Collaborates on Texas Soundmap Project

John Bondurant, Digital Archivist

Cushing Memorial Library & Archives, Texas A&M University



Aluminum disc from the Williams A. Owens Folksong Collection, Texas A&M University. Photo by John Bondurant.

In the spring of 2016, the Cushing Memorial Library & Archives at Texas A&M University began a collaboration with Performance Studies professor Dr. Leonardo Cardoso to make archival audio recordings available for his students and the Texas Soundmap Project (TSP).<sup>1</sup> Cushing had recently processed the William A. Owens Folksong Collection, 199 instantaneous discs of

field recordings made during the late 1930s and early 1940s in the Brazos Valley region of Central and South Texas.<sup>2</sup>

The TSP is a collaborative initiative to register and study Texas' acoustic diversity. Performance Studies students combined the archival recordings with contemporary field recordings to document geographic and chronological

changes in sound throughout the state.

After the successful inauguration of the project, Dr. Cardoso met with University Archivist Greg Bailey and Digital Archivist John Bondurant in the summer of 2016 about expanding the material from Cushing Library's holdings for the next round of student research. Recordings from collections of the Texas Forest Service, various oral histories, University sports archives, and other collections are among those to be explored. In addition, Dr. Cardoso is looking for other Texas-based institutions and collections, public and private, who would like to collaborate in the TSP.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Texas Soundmap Project - <https://go.gl/qx6Q0h>

2 The William A. Owens Papers - Folk Song Collection: Instantaneous Disks, 1937-1941 - <http://archon.library.tamu.edu/?p=collections/controlcard&id=1102>

3 Dr. Leonardo Cardoso - [cardoso@tamu.edu](mailto:cardoso@tamu.edu)

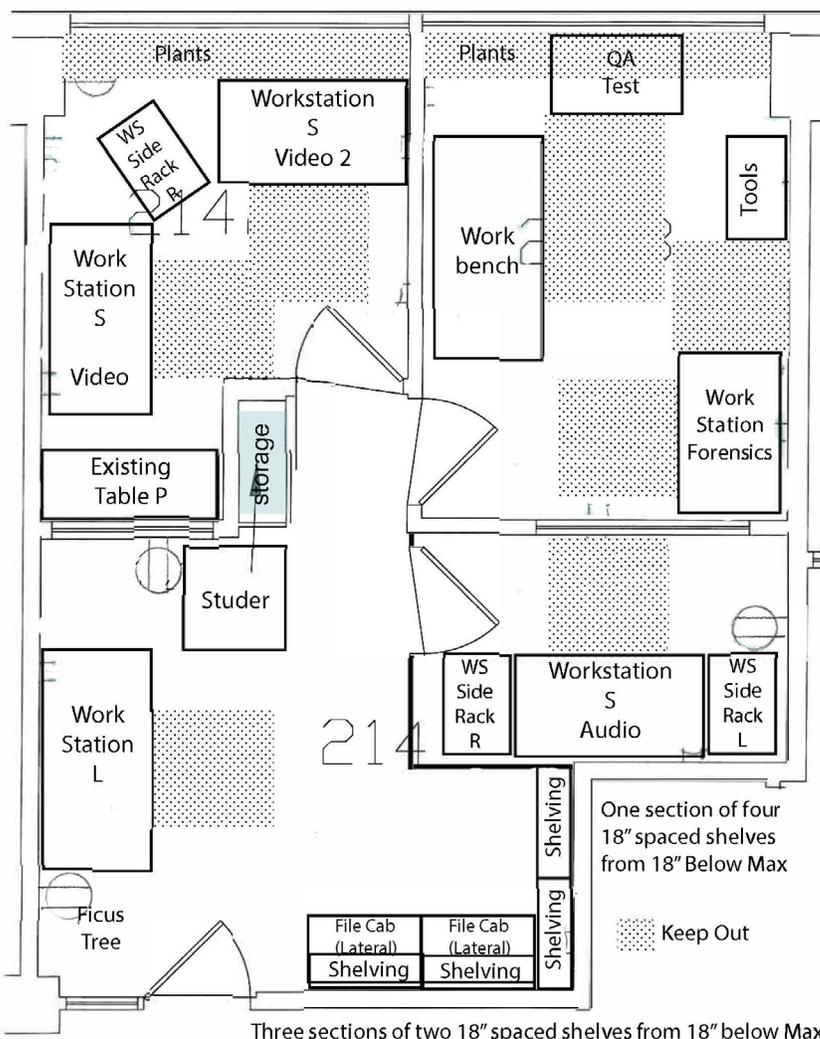
## Crank It Up, Cornell

Tre Berney, Director of Digitization and Conservation Services  
Cornell University Library

Since 2012, Cornell University Library's Digital Media Group has been developing our audio and moving image preservation workflows. It started with a couple of VHS decks and a computer and has since grown dramatically, incorporating support for in-house 1:1 digitization of many different formats including open reel audio, U-matic, audiocassette, DAT, grooved discs, and more. With our current, two-station lab, we have digitized over 1,000 analog items in the past two years, creating over 60TB worth of content. We've recently partnered with the Cornell University Library Information Technology team to begin running fixity checks across our archive's storage shares and are preparing to explore a more elastic storage solution for digitized audiovisual content.



Photo by Tre Berney.



Three sections of two 18" spaced shelves from 18" below Max

Diagram by Karl Fitzke, AV Specialist.

In August, we are moving and expanding our AV digitization lab into a new suite of rooms with a chilled water cooling system, nearly doubling our capacity for 1:1 digitization. This move will allow us twice the number of digitization stations, more sophisticated workflow pipelines, further the development of existing "micro-service" style scripts, and the creation of a digital forensics station. Our expansion into digital forensics



Photo by Tre Berney.

is a natural one, as many of our acquisitions are digital. All of this will give our Digital Consulting and Production Services group even more tools for the building and preservation of digital collections here at Cornell University Library.

Cornell has some amazing audio collections, from our Southeast Asia field recordings to over 40,000 hours of labor related oral histories. One particular noteworthy collection recently launched through our Duraspace instance (eCommons) is the Cornell University Lecture Series,

which contains a staggering 5,656 catalogued titles. The first few hundred digitized titles can be found here: <http://bit.ly/29Le4rs>.

Also, Cornell University Library's membership in the Hydra community has brought about our brand new Digital Collections Portal (<https://digital.library.cornell.edu/>), affording us more flexibility with search and display of collections like the Cornell Hip Hop Collection's Flyer Collection (<http://bit.ly/29WgXJc>). Pro tip: Be sure to check out the map view.

These are exciting times at

Cornell University Library. Along with the Cornell Hip Hop Collection, our Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections is now home to the Bob Moog Archive, the Velvet Underground Collection, a growing punk rock archive, and more. Not to mention, Ithaca and the Finger Lakes are beautiful and are always worth a visit. Just saying.

**THE ROUNDTABLE  
SERVES AS A FORUM FOR  
DISCUSSING ARCHIVAL  
ISSUES RELATED  
TO THE CREATION,  
MANAGEMENT,  
PRESERVATION,  
AND USE OF AUDIO  
AND AUDIOVISUAL  
RESOURCES IN  
ARCHIVES AND OTHER  
CULTURAL HERITAGE  
REPOSITORIES.**

THANKS TO NANCY MAYSMITH  
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Editor: [Rebecca Chandler](#)