

# liner notes



ARCHIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC AND CULTURE



photo by Beverly Parker (Nelson George Collection)

of renowned rhythm and blues artists from this same time period lip-synching to their hit recordings. These three collections provide primary source materials for researchers and students and, thus, are invaluable additions to our growing body of materials on African American music and popular culture.

The Archives has begun analyzing data from the project Black Music in Dutch Culture by annotating video recordings made during field research conducted in the Netherlands from 1998–2003. This research documents the performance of African American music by Dutch musicians and the ways this music has been integrated into the fabric of Dutch culture. The

**"The legacy of Ray Charles is a reminder of the importance of documenting and preserving the achievements of creative artists and making this information available to students, researchers, performers, and the general public."**

## From the Desk of the Director

On June 10, 2004, the world lost a musical genius and internationally renowned artist—Ray Charles, who made an indelible mark on the whole of American music, creating his own brand of rhythm and blues, blues, jazz, soul, popular, and country and western. Charles defied and crossed all musical boundaries, but not without controversy. When he transformed gospel songs into rhythm and blues, many churchgoers openly expressed their dissatisfaction, condemning him for this "blasphemous" act. Yet, this act led to the evolution of soul music—a music that many churchgoers embraced and that provided the melodies and refrain lines for protest songs created by college students during the 1960s Civil Rights movement. Not only did Charles's music inspire new protest songs, it also influenced the musical style of many artists, including British musician Joe Cocker. The musical legacy of Ray Charles lives on through recordings, radio, television commercials, and movie soundtracks (see *tribute inside*).

The legacy of Ray Charles is a

reminder of the importance of documenting and preserving the achievements of creative artists and making this information available to students, researchers, performers, and the general public. Over the past twelve months, the staff of the AAAMC has worked toward this goal by acquiring new collections; participating in collaborative research/exhibition projects; and disseminating information about the Archives, its collections, research, and other activities through publications and conference presentations.

Our collection development activities have resulted in the acquisition of the personal papers of journalist/music and culture critic Nelson George, and the second installment of the Phyl Garland Collection (see *Featured Collections inside for descriptions*). We also acquired the second installment of the Johnny Otis Collection, which includes the original video masters of *The Johnny Otis Show* and *Johnny Otis's Oldies but Goodies*. The *Johnny Otis Show* videos consist of thirteen programs taped live in a television studio during 1974 and 1975, and feature Otis and his band with well-known rhythm and blues artists. The *Johnny Otis's Oldies but Goodies* musical revue footage consists

of annotation component of this project is part of a joint initiative of Indiana University and the University of Michigan that is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The objective of this initiative, the Ethnomusicological Video for Instruction and Analysis Digital Archive project (EVIA), is to create a repository of ethnomusicological field videos for use by scholars, instructors, and students. Participation in this project provides the resources for the AAAMC to organize and analyze

*continued on page 2.*



*Portia K. Maulsby*  
Portia K. Maulsby  
Director

## aaamc mission:

The AAAMC is devoted to the collection, preservation, and dissemination of materials for the purpose of research and study of African American music and culture.

[www.indiana.edu/~aaamc](http://www.indiana.edu/~aaamc)

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## In the Vault Recent Donations

### Nelson George

Interview transcripts, photographs, research materials, and notes

### Phyl Garland

Interviews, published articles, correspondence, cassettes, press releases, photographs

### Jason Yoder

Funk-related 45 rpm records

### Charles Connor

Book manuscript, photographs, CDs, and videos documenting Connor's career as Little Richard's original drummer

### Venise Berry

Book, *The 50 Most Influential Black Films*

### Sony Legacy

Compact discs

### Rhythm & Blues Foundation

Let the Good Times Roll radio series on thirteen compact discs

### Michael Woods

Additions to the Michael Woods Collection of original compositions.



From the Director...

research data for use in the development of educational materials on black music in Dutch culture and for scholars to explore broader issues of musical transnationalism.

Other research activities included our collaboration with the Indiana Historical Society on the development of an exhibition on Indiana Soul and Funk. Our participation involved research, identifying potential participants, and conducting oral histories for the exhibit, which opens March 11, 2004, and will be on display through December 31, 2005.

Over the past year, the staff of the AAAMC participated in several publication projects and professional conferences. Head of Collections Brenda Nelson-Strauss wrote an article for Indiana Magazine of History's annual series on Indiana Archives which is scheduled to appear in December 2004. It discusses various AAAMC collections with an emphasis on Indiana-related materials and ties into the theme of the issue, which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. In March 2004, Nelson-Strauss began serving a two-year term as president of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), an organization dedicated to the preservation and study of sound recordings.

Jason Housley, our Interim Program Coordinator, presented a paper titled "The Dayton Funk Movement" at the joint conference of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections and the Society for American Music held in Cleveland in March 2004; a revised version of the paper was presented at the Association for the Study of African American Life conference held in Pittsburgh in October, 2004. During the 34th Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., in September 2004, I presented a paper, "Response of the Music Industry to the Message of Soul," for Issue Forum, Our Day Will Come: How R&B Inspired the Civil Rights Movement, hosted by Rep. John Lewis of Georgia.

Since the mid-1990s, the AAAMC has collaborated with the African American Arts Institute and the School of Music to sponsor "Extensions of the Tradition," a series of concerts showcasing the works of African American composers that was conceptualized and first produced by former faculty member Dr. William Banfield. This year's concert will be held on January 23, 2005, at 4:00 p.m. in the IU School of Music's Auer Hall. The program will feature composers with a connection to the African American Arts Institute in honor of the AAAI's 30th anniversary. A corresponding exhibit will be mounted in the Cook Music Library during January and February, 2005.

In closing, I announce the departure of AAAMC's Assistant Director, Dr. Stephanie Shonekan, who accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Humanities and Cultural Studies at Columbia College in Chicago. Shonekan served the Archives with distinction in various capacities from 1996 through 2003 (see inside story). I express my appreciation for her many valuable contributions to the AAAMC and I wish her much success in her new position. I also announce the appointment of Jason Housley, who became the Interim Project Coordinator in the fall of 2003. Housley has brought a wealth of knowledge on African American music and history to the Archives, and has contributed greatly to our collection development activities. He has also worked on several new research projects and community outreach initiatives (see inside story).

## Featured Collections

### AAAMC Receives Nelson George Papers

Nelson George, the noted author and critic, recently donated a significant collection of personal papers and research materials to the Archives. A prolific writer, George has published numerous books and articles, and is considered an authority on the music industry, as well as a preeminent interpreter of black popular culture.

The majority of the collection is composed of research materials used by George for his influential book on Motown, *Where Did Our Love Go* (Omnibus, 1986). Included are interviews with various important figures, photographs of Motown artists, newspaper and magazine articles, George's handwritten notes, and even photocopies of legal files pertaining to lawsuits brought about by Motown principals.

These legal documents reveal a great deal about the Motown operation and help to clarify the sometimes complicated history of the company. Among the documents are copies of former Supremes member Florence Ballard's lawsuit against Berry Gordy and Diana Ross; prolific songwriting team Holland-Dozier-Holland's legal proceedings against Motown; and singer Mary Wells' suit to extricate herself from her Motown contract on the basis that she was a minor when she was initially signed. There is also a copy of Temptation member David Ruffin's artist's contract, which, among other things, reveals his real name as "Davis Ruffin."



Nelson George

photo by Simon Crossell

During the course of his research, George interviewed a number of Motown artists, executives, and employees, including choreographer Cholly Atkins, bandleader Choker Campbell, Drummer Uriel Jones, keyboard player and bandleader Earl Van Dyke, and singer Freda Payne. The complete transcripts can be consulted in the AAAMC along with numerous subject files full of newspaper clippings, advertisements, and promotional materials. These files contain details of Florence Ballard's ouster from the Supremes, the strife between Motown and hit songwriters Holland-Dozier-Holland that led to their defection from the label, and Motown's move from Detroit to Los Angeles.

Additionally, the collection includes numerous photographs of jazz, soul, blues, and reggae artists, as well as materials pertaining to George's biography of Michael Jackson (Dell, 1984) and his acclaimed analysis of the black music industry, *The Death of Rhythm & Blues* (Plume, 1988).

The Archives greatly appreciates the donation of these papers and looks forward to augmenting the collection with future gifts from George. A complete finding aid for the collection will be posted on the AAAMC Website in the near future.

—Jason Housley



Stevie Wonder



Hale Smith



T.J. Anderson

### Phyl Garland Donates Personal Papers

Noted journalist, music critic, and scholar Phyl Garland recently added a collection of personal papers to her previous donation of artist publicity photographs and press releases. The papers consist primarily of the original typescripts of Garland's record reviews published in *Ebony* magazine's "Sounds" and "Black Music Poll" columns from 1972–1977, and in *Stereo Review* from 1978–1994. Also included are research materials for *Ebony* feature articles on Jesse Norman, Mary Lou Williams, Nina Simone, and B.B. King, and on a variety of other music-related topics.

Supplementing the above are 41 original audiocassette recordings of interviews conducted by Garland with various musicians, artists, and filmmakers on topics ranging from jazz, rhythm & blues, and soul, to classical music. Particularly notable are interviews with Paul Freeman, Ulysses Kay, Hale Smith, Olly Wilson, and T. J. Anderson for a series on black composers. Popular artists interviewed by Garland

include Ron Carter, Josephine Baker, Melba Moore, Roberta Flack, and Stevie Wonder.

Phyl Garland, recently cited as one of the most influential black journalists of the twentieth century, has had a long and distinguished career. Beginning with a stint at the *Pittsburgh Courier* in 1958 where she made her mark covering the Civil Rights movement, she moved to Chicago in 1965 to join the staff of *Ebony* and became the magazine's New York editor in 1969. In 1973 she joined the faculty of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, where she taught for more than 30 years before retiring this past spring. The addition of Garland's personal papers to the AAAMC's holdings will allow researchers the opportunity to study critical reviews of the most notable recordings of black music issued from 1972–1994, as well as a wide range of articles published in the black press.

—Brenda Nelson-Strauss



## Ray Charles 1930–2004

By Ray Charles Biographer Michael Lydon

ray

T R I B U T E

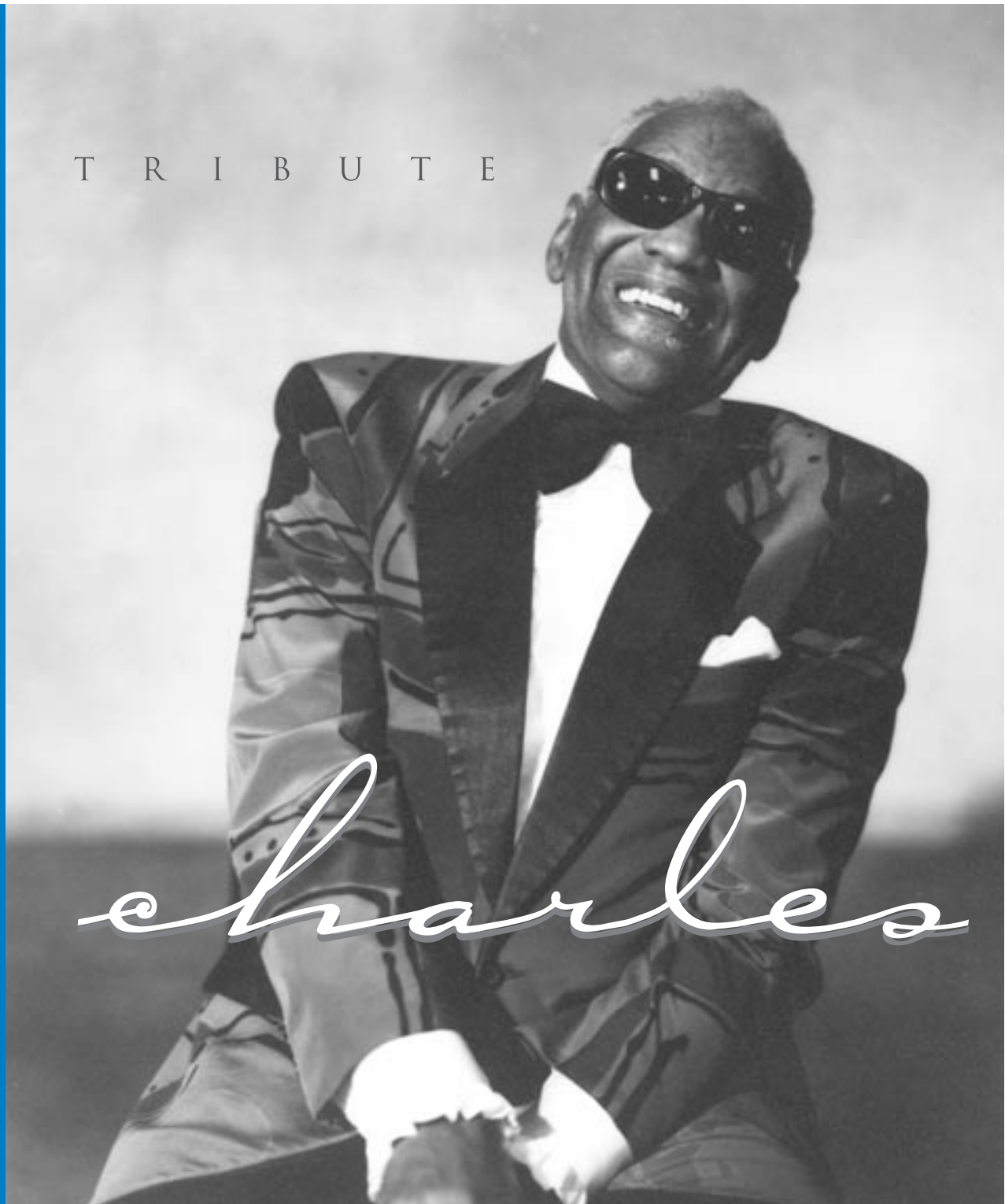


photo by Mark Hammer (Karen Steiner Collection)



“I NEVER WANTED  
TO BE FAMOUS... BUT  
I ALWAYS WANTED  
TO BE GREAT.”

Ray Charles lives. A spirit this noble cannot die. Ray Charles is an artist of such vigor, insight into life, and titanic determination that, like Shakespeare, Beethoven, Dickens, and Chaplin, he will live forever in his works. Generations will listen to Ray's music, marveling as we do at its beauty, variety, and depth. God bless and keep our great friend, Ray Charles Robinson.

“I never wanted to be famous,” Ray Charles said, “but I always wanted to be great.” He succeeded, achieving a place beside Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and a dozen giants of 20th century popular music. Five decades of Ray's music pulse in the airwaves, touching millions every day. Total self-confidence fueled Ray's greatness. He knew, he declared, “no reason for the music to come out any different from the way I hear it in my head.”

Ray's greatness endures because he became a superb sound painter. With his “Georgia” earnings, Ray built a studio in Los Angeles, and there, through four decades, like Rembrandt in Amsterdam, Ray piled up canvases drenched in sexy red-purples, glorious gospel golds, blues of every shade, even the grays of Paris in the rain. Blindness posed no handicap for this sound painter. “You don't have to *see* life,” Ray once said, “you have to *observe* life.”

Writing *Ray Charles: Man and Music* was a challenging, absorbing four-year project. I traveled to his birthplace, Greenville, Florida; to the school for the deaf and blind in St. Augustine where he was educated; to Seattle, Los Angeles, Dallas, New Orleans, and Paris; following his trail and meeting many musicians and friends he knew along the way. Interviewing Ray was a thrill—he bounced up and down in his chair as he recounted fascinating stories of his past. No one's life can be completely captured in a book, but I did my best, and people who knew him well told me I did a good job. That praise meant more to me than ordinary reviews.

I last saw Ray Charles perform on the Fourth of July a year ago, in Atlantic City. Middle-aged couples sat at tables in the dark. An unseen voice boomed, “The Legendary Genius of Soul, Mr.—Ray—CHARRR-LES!” To mounting applause, out

came Ray on his valet's arm, grinning but stepping gingerly—arthritis in a hip, said band scuttlebutt. He sat at the keyboard, found his mic, and kicked the band into a rocker. Applause, then “Busted.” More applause, and the band slid into “Georgia.” The crowd sat back to listen, the ladies nestling back against their gents. Ray Charles, now white-haired and spidery-frail, singing “Georgia”: this is what they had come to see.

Each song stirred memories. The energy flowing between Ray and the people became a sinewy bond, woven from his music and the crowd's shouts and cries, wordless yet, in sum: we know Ray, Ray knows us. We admire Ray for his triumphs over blindness, poverty, and prejudice. Nobody else can color a song in such passionate tints, wring so many tears from a lyric. We love Ray Charles and believe he loves us. He's an old man now, but none of us are as young as we used to be.

Ray set up a driving keyboard riff, the drummer added a Latin sizzle on his cymbals. “What'd I Say.” As one, we leapt to our feet, clapping and whooping.

“Ooooh,” sang Ray.

“Ooooh,” we sang with the Raelets.

“Ooo—oo—oooh,” sang Ray.

“Ooo—oo—oooh.”

Back and forth we went, ooohing and eeeing and ow-owing, goofily following every vocal contortion Ray put us through. All too soon, the valet reappeared, and a dapper MC told us we'd been entertained by the Ray Charles orchestra, the world-famous Raelets, and by the Genius himself, Mr. Ray Charles!

Ray bent to the mic. “Thank you, thank you, there are no words to say how much I appreciate you staying with me all these years.” He stood and spread his arms and, as he had done countless times before, wrapped them around his body, embracing us. Then, bobbing his head and smiling, Ray disappeared offstage. Still stirred by all we'd felt, we drifted up the aisles to the exits.

*Lydon, the author of Ray: Man & Music (Routledge, 1998), was one of the founding editors of Rolling Stone magazine and serves on the AAAMC's National Advisory Board.*





photo by Robert Elias (Nelson George Collection)

According to Ray Charles biographer Michael Lydon, “Ray Charles stands beside Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and a handful of others among the presiding geniuses of twentieth-century popular music.” He does so literally in this late 1960s photograph.

## Ray Charles and the Michael Lydon Collection

The term “genius” is applied sparingly to individuals. However, on June 10, 2004, the world lost an artist of whom “genius” is a most apt description. Ray Charles was an architect of modern music as much through his interpretations of American music standards as his original compositions. He was also the living embodiment of the American Dream: here was a man born black and impoverished in the segregated Depression-era American South, who had to deal with the additional burdens of blindness and heroin addiction. Ray Charles had more strikes against him than any human being should have, yet he managed to achieve fame and fortune through intelligence, drive, and sheer talent.

The AAAMC is honored to be in possession of the original audiocassettes containing interviews used to create the critically acclaimed biography *Ray Charles: Man & Music* by former *Rolling Stone* editor Michael Lydon. Lydon interviewed more than 70 individuals who were intimate with Charles, including former band members and employees, managers, producers, girlfriends, and family members, as well as Ray Charles himself. Many of the interviews, such as those conducted with Atlantic Records head Jerry Wexler, jazz vocalist Jimmy Scott, and son Ray Charles Jr., are often quite candid and reveal an honest, multifaceted portrait of Ray Charles.

Every music performer to emerge during the last 40 years could learn from the example of Ray Charles. He broke down the rigid racial divide in music with his influential albums *Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music Vols. 1 and 2*. When black popular music was still primarily a singles-oriented medium, Charles was among the first rhythm & blues singers to sell significant numbers of albums as well. He was also one of the first recording artists, black or white, to own his own master recordings—that most precious commodity of record companies.

Incidentally, Bloomington, Indiana, played a significant role in Ray Charles’s career. His first number one pop hit, “Georgia on My Mind,” was written by Bloomington native Hoagy Carmichael, and Charles’s interpretation of the standard is now the official state song of Georgia. He also performed a number of times at the IU Auditorium and once used groups from IU’s African American Choral Ensemble as the opening act. It was on the way to one such Bloomington engagement in 1985 that Charles and his band were in a serious plane crash, one that produced no casualties but nevertheless convinced Charles to trade his private plane for a bus and commercial airline flights.

As with the passing of any celebrity, public interest in Ray Charles’s life and career will increase immensely. With a recently released feature film based on his life, as well as an updated, second edition of Lydon’s biography, Charles’s musical legacy will continue to live and grow. The AAAMC is pleased to contribute to the preservation of that legacy.

—Jason Housley

**Every music performer to emerge during the last 40 years could learn from the example of Ray Charles.**

## Visiting Scholars Scot Brown

According to Dr. Scot Brown, assistant professor of history at UCLA, funk music has not been given adequate scholarly attention. A recent visitor to the AAAMC, Brown spent a week in Bloomington conducting research for a book exploring funk music as a community cultural phenomenon during the 1970s. According to Brown, “The study of funk, for my purposes, helps answer the riddle of the African American experience at the tail end of the Civil Rights/Black Power period.”

Originally from Rochester, New York, Brown began playing in a funk band when he was twelve and drew inspiration from the many funk bands that proliferated during the 1970s. Of particular interest was the funk music that emanated from Dayton, Ohio. “As I continued to grow musically, I realized that Ohio in general and Dayton specifically, was home to a number of my favorite funk bands—Slave, Lakeside, Roger Troutman & Zapp, and Sun.”

Brown, who holds a Ph.D. in American history from Cornell University, found his visit to



Nelson George

the AAAMC quite rewarding. He was particularly impressed by the Archives’ oral history collection of interviews with Dayton musicians and ordinary citizens, which forms part of an ongoing Archives project chronicling the story of the Dayton Funk movement.

“Funk is a cultural expression,” says Professor Brown, “that best captures and synthesizes both black optimism and disappointment as we passed through the 1970s and ran into the 80s.”

—Jason Housley

## Geneva Smitherman visits the AAAMC

In June 2003, Dr. Geneva Smitherman visited the AAAMC to conduct research on black female disc jockeys. Smitherman, a Michigan State University distinguished professor of English, is also a member of the executive committee for the department of African American and African Studies at MSU, as well as co-founder and director of “My Brother’s Keeper,” a student mentoring program for middle school African American males in the Detroit public schools. She is the author of numerous books and articles on Black English, including *Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner* (Houghton Mifflin, 1974) and *Talkin’ That Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America* (Routledge, 2000).

Smitherman’s visit came exactly two years after her student, Lamonda Horton-Stallings, visited the AAAMC to conduct her own research on African American folk and oral tradition. Horton-Stallings, who was then a faculty summer fellow in English at Indiana University and a doctoral candidate in English at MSU, had also examined AAAMC’s black radio collections. Having heard about the AAAMC collections from her student, Smitherman was eager to plan a research trip to Bloomington.

Smitherman began to focus on black women as she discovered that much of the research on black language had been generated from collections on black males. Her interest in black female disc jockeys reaches back decades, to the time when black personality disc jockeys first became popular on the airwaves. Smitherman remembers being fascinated by the power and personality of black female deejay Martha Jean “The Queen” Steinberg in Detroit during the 1960s. Like other black women on the airwaves, Steinberg’s masterful use of language constructed a powerful bond with the community.

While studying the interview tapes and transcripts in the AAAMC’s black radio collections, Smitherman was able to hear interviews with and about black female disc jockeys. By listening to their voices and language, she was able to gain the unique historical perspective necessary for framing her current research.

Accompanying Smitherman was another MSU professor, Denise Troutman. Smitherman and Troutman are two of the few black female scholars who study the linguistics of black women.

The AAAMC holds several collections pertaining to black radio, including the production materials and interviews for a documentary series produced by Radio Smithsonian (see Liner Notes #8), in addition to the William Barlow Collection (see Liner Notes #3) and the Jack Gibson Collection (see Liner Notes #1).

—Stephanie Shonekan  
Former AAAMC Assistant Director, 2000–2003



photo from (El Castiberry Black Radio Collection)

Announcer-activist Peggy Mitchell



## People Introducing Jason Housley, Interim Project Manager

"Much of what I do as an employee is what I enjoy doing in my spare time. Doing research on music, maintaining collections of albums and compact discs—I do that for fun! In essence, I'm working on projects that I would just as soon do for my own personal satisfaction." Comments such as this one make it clear why Jason Housley is a perfect fit as the AAAMC's new interim project manager. The Archives is pleased to take this opportunity to introduce Housley, who has held the position since August 2003, following the departure of Assistant Director Stephanie Shonekan (*see story, this issue*).

A native of Chicago, Housley first came to Indiana University in 2001 to pursue a masters degree in African American Studies. His undergraduate work at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, had resulted in a degree in Radio and Television and an ambition to work in television or print journalism. After a few years and a tough job market, however, restlessness set in. As Housley set about reassessing his career goals, he had a happy encounter. "Actually, it was Dr. Gloria Gibson who introduced me to the African American program here at IU," recalls Housley. "I met her in Chicago where she was giving a lecture on early black independent film, another interest of mine. I asked how I could do what she does and she informed me of the opportunities at Indiana University." An exploratory visit to campus brought him into contact with Dr. Portia Maulsby, but it wasn't until six years later that he decided to become part of the Bloomington community.

Housley has always had an intense interest in black history and black musical forms, backed by a hobby as a record collector specializing in 45 rpm R&B singles from the 1950s to the 1980s. Upon entering the African American Studies program here at Indiana University, he found many ways to channel those interests into research pursuits. His work in the program focused on African American history and culture; he took a number of classes in African American literature and music, and his master's thesis dealt with the depiction of the Civil Rights movement in Hollywood films. During this time, Housley's passion did not go unnoticed by the staff of the AAAMC. He frequently utilized the Archives' resources while working on a variety of projects for his graduate research, and he was soon

offered a student position. When Housley graduated with his M.A. in 2003, he was offered his current full-time position as interim project manager.

**"I would love to create an oral history project where the Archives could conduct interviews with every living black musical artist... Time marches on and many of the performers and writers are getting older. It would be nice if we could record their histories for posterity."**



photo by Brenda Nelson-Strauss

Jason Housley

Maulsby had an extremely positive impression of Housley's abilities from the start. "Prior to enrolling at IU in 2001, Jason had worked as a public historian in the DuSable Museum in Chicago. At IU he discovered, frequently visited, and used the AAAMC's resources. During his time as a student in a graduate course I taught on African American music and as a graduate assistant at the AAAMC, I discovered that Jason knew a lot of obscure details about radio stations and radio personalities, record labels, recordings, and musicians. He was especially knowledgeable about the 1960s and 1970s popular musical styles and had a particular interest in funk."

Housley's duties at the AAAMC range from serving as a primary point of contact for scholars who wish to use the Archives' resources, to participating in special research projects that involve intense engagement with collections. He describes his daily duties as "processing and accessioning incoming collections, reorganizing our LP and CD collections, making suggestions for new acquisitions, corresponding with record companies and scholars, and answering questions pertaining to black music that are posed by people who write, call, or come in." In terms of special projects, Housley has been most deeply immersed in the Dayton Funk project, an undertaking whose beginning predates his arrival at the AAAMC. The project began in 1998 as a collaborative museum exhibition at the National African American Museum and Culture Center at Wilberforce College, Ohio, and the AAAMC continues to work to further build public awareness of this

influential music scene.

"The work that had already been done has been helpful to me as I continue the project," says Housley. "Dayton was a hotbed of musical talent during the late 1970s and early 1980s, spawning nearly a dozen nationally known funk bands. The best known was the Ohio Players, but many other acts followed in their wake. The project seeks to give these artists recognition for creating a distinct creative musical subgenre, in some ways as vibrant and important as the musical output of better-known centers like Detroit, Memphis, and Philadelphia. The project will consist of interviews with some of the principals of the movement, as well as the acquisition of memorabilia (music, promotional materials, etc.). In conjunction with these aspects of the project, I wrote and presented a paper [at the Association for Recorded Sound Collections Conference in Cleveland, Ohio], 'Dayton Funk: Midwife of Album-Oriented Black Pop,' which dealt with the impact that funk music, specifically the Dayton variety, had on shaping the recording industry, by transforming black popular music from a singles-oriented form to an album-oriented one." Housley is also helping to coordinate a funk exhibit with the Indiana Historical Society, which will spotlight funk and soul music originating in Indiana.

The AAAMC certainly looks forward to more of Housley's energy and careful scholarship. His knowledge of R&B, soul, and funk artists and recordings has already contributed significantly to AAAMC cataloging and collection development efforts related to these genre areas, and he continues to be an invaluable source of reference information for patrons. Housley has lots of ideas for the future. "I would love to create an oral history project where the Archives could conduct interviews with every living black musical artist," he says. "Time marches on and many of the performers and writers are getting older. It would be nice if we could record their histories for posterity. I would also like to do more research on black radio, ultimately creating an aircheck archive. Radio broadcasts are the most ephemeral mode of communication. As a young person, I used to tape songs off the radio and would get frustrated when the DJ talked over the song. Now I wish I had recorded more of the DJ patter! I would also like the Archives to collect more rare video footage of black musical artists in films and on television. We have a lot with Johnny Otis, but early episodes of Soul Train would be terrific. I would like to do more writing on the subject of black music and film as well as teach on the collegiate level."

Please join us in welcoming our newest staff member!

## In the Vault Featured Collection: The Arizona Dranes Papers

The Arizona Dranes Papers, donated to the AAAMC in 2003, were given to Malcolm Shaw in 1969 by the family of Elmer Fearn. The papers consist primarily of contracts and correspondence dating from 1926–1929 between Dranes and Fearn, president of the Consolidated Music Publishing House and owner of the Chicago Okeh Records franchise.

Arizona Dranes (1894–1963) was one of the most influential gospel performers of the early twentieth century. She recorded 16 sides for Okeh records between 1926 and 1928 and helped to define gospel music within the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) for more than 30 years. Producing such acts as Madam Ernestine Washington, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Edwin and Walter Hawkins, Sandra and Andrae Crouch, and the Clark Sisters, COGIC is the largest African American Pentecostal denomination in the United States. A pianist, composer, and singer, Dranes mixed



barrelhouse and ragtime instrumentation with high energy holiness lyrics. Small slices of the enigmatic artist's life have been chronicled by Horace Boyer, Anthony Heilbut, and Paul Oliver. Now, thanks to a generous gift from music critic Malcolm Shaw, the complete correspondence between Dranes and Okeh records are available at the Archives of African American Music and Culture.

Beginning with an initial letter of introduction from Okeh, the collection provides insight into Dranes' life, the development of COGIC, and the early experiences of African American artists in the recording industry. Before the availability of Shaw's collection, scholars knew Dranes almost exclusively from her recordings. In the pages of the letters between Dranes and Okeh representatives, specific parameters of the blind pianist's early life finally come into

focus. The letters make it clear that her missionary activities and feeble health had a great influence on what, when, and where Dranes recorded.

Seemingly always in motion or bedridden, Dranes used addresses in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Tennessee over the two year period. Initially a Fort Worth-based pianist for Bishop Samuel M. Crouch, great uncle of Sandra and Andrae Crouch, Dranes assisted musician and minister Ford Washington McGee with his church planting in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. It also seems that she spent a significant amount of time in Memphis, site of the denominational headquarters, and frequented Little Rock in the home state of COGIC founder Charles Harrison Mason.

Her relationship with Okeh was sometimes problematic. While Dranes was very enthusiastic about using her recordings to spread the gospel, she was also very concerned about getting payment for her services. In letter after letter, she asks for royalty payments, advances, and copies of her recordings and contracts. Sometimes successful, sometimes not, Dranes is extremely frustrated with Okeh on a number of occasions. At one point, the record company does not respond to her inquiries for nearly a year. Because she had signed a contract that gave the company exclusive rights to her

services for two years, she was eager to make as many records, at \$25 a side, as she could.

With the completion of her contract in 1928, Dranes continued to devote the majority of her time to COGIC, serving as a missionary for the next 30 years. Two of her early touring partners were the mandolin-playing evangelist Katie Bell Nubin, and Nubin's daughter, who later gained international fame as Sister Rosetta Tharpe. Dranes was the featured performer for Mason, Crouch, and a host of other COGIC leaders. During the denomination's annual Holy Convocation, she shared musical headlines with holy blues guitarist Utah Smith, singer Ernestine Washington, and composer/arranger Mattie Moss Clark. In her later years, Dranes relocated to Los Angeles, seemingly to help Crouch build the denomination's following on the West Coast. She died July 27, 1963, and was buried in an unmarked grave in Southern California.

—Daniel E. Walker

Walker, an assistant professor in the Department of History at Indiana University from 2000–2003, was the founding director of The Gospel Music History Project and is currently writing a book, *Sanctified Singing for an Unsaved World: The Church of God in Christ and the Early Gospel Sound*.

Telegram from (Arizona Dranes Collection)





**“I was really happy with that job, because it gave me access to all this music, all this black music . . .”**

## People

### Assistant Director Stephanie Shonekan Moves to Chicago

In August 2003, the AAAMC bid a fond farewell to Assistant Director Dr. Stephanie Shonekan. She had worked at the AAAMC since 1996 and had been assistant director since 2000; she leaves a legacy of contributions to the Archives that will have an impact for many years to come.

From West Africa to Indiana, from business consulting to biography, Shonekan’s time in Bloomington and subsequent move to Chicago are steps on an extraordinary journey. Born in Equatorial Guinea and raised in Nigeria, she earned her master’s degree in literature at the University of Ibadan. During this phase of her scholarly career, her work focused on the connections between African American music and African American literature. After finishing her degree and working at Arthur Andersen in Lagos for several years, Shonekan felt a strong desire to continue her Ph.D. studies along similar lines as her M.A. work and to remain involved in research dealing with the creative expression of African Americans. When one of her Nigerian professors, Dr. Isidore Okpewho, met IU’s Dr. Ruth Stone at an African Studies Association conference and learned about the field of ethnomusicology, he knew instantly that this discipline was a perfect fit for Shonekan, who agreed wholeheartedly. In 1996, she came to Bloomington to begin work on her Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at Indiana University.

Shonekan first met Dr. Portia Maulsby and Dr. Mellonee Burnim at church in Bloomington, and there was instant rapport. She soon became a research assistant for Burnim and later took an hourly position at the AAAMC. Her duties during that first year involved helping the archivist and doing hands-on work with the AAAMC collections, including indexing and cataloging. This early position formed a solid foundation for Shonekan’s future at the Archives: “I was really happy with that job, because it gave me access to all this music, all this black music . . . the music was right there at my fingertips, really, and the national advisory board was so impressive. And so I decided that I would stay there.”

From 1997 to 2000, Shonekan expanded her responsibilities by taking a graduate assistantship at the AAAMC. With her love of this music and the many opportunities to access valuable resources, she called this position “the perfect situation for a graduate student . . . I was in touch with the music, I was in touch with individuals who were in the industry.” The AAAMC was between archivists at that time, so she took on the challenge of working as both archivist and assistant director—a valuable combination. “I got to know the Archives, all aspects of it,” recalls Shonekan. “I was the point-woman for the Archives. People would come in looking for materials, and I would find it; we would order new material and I would have to find a way to put it in a place that anybody who walked in would know where to find it. So I really got my hands into the collection. As assistant director, my roles were on a different level . . . it wasn’t so much the hard collection, but the visioning of the collection, strategies around it, programming, interacting with people, the newsletter, that sort of thing. In that year that I had to do the work of an archivist, I had to deal with the material. It was a useful experience, and I really got to know the Archives, through and through.” As the Archives expanded and Maulsby made the decision to hire an assistant director in 2000, Shonekan applied and got the job. “Stephanie con-

tributed to the AAAMC on many levels,” remarked Maulsby, “in large part, because of her superior administrative and interpersonal skills as well as her knowledge of African American music.”

During the early years of her involvement with the AAAMC, Shonekan played a key role in helping the Archives to grow and expand. The Archives had been in existence for a number of years prior to her arrival, but she came along during a time when Maulsby and the board were looking into the future and seeking to reshape and define a clear vision, mission, and direction. Working with a representative from the Office of the President, Shonekan participated in a series of Total Quality Management (TQM) workshops and brought some highly relevant skills to the table. “For me, that was perfect because I’d worked as a management consultant for five years at Arthur Andersen in Nigeria, after I got my master’s,” Shonekan remembers. “Therefore all of the catch phrases that consultants use, like ‘TQM’ and ‘strategic direction’ and ‘visioning’ . . . I was quite comfortable with them, so when they came in with these workshops I had the skills to take the documents and meetings and help to develop strategies for the operation of the Archives, on flow charts and organization charts—what we are now and what the ideal is. And so I was able to draw on those skills that I thought might never be useful again.”

Deeply involved with this forward-looking agenda for the Archives, Shonekan expressed her satisfaction with the way she “evolved with the AAAMC and got to see it blossom.” One of her favorite contributions during that time was her work on the newly envisioned *Liner Notes* newsletter, launched in 1999. Together with Maulsby, she developed the idea to create a publication that would let people know about the AAAMC as a research destination—to publicize information about what collections and resources are available, to highlight visiting scholars and programs, and to attract new collections, new donors, and new patrons. Shonekan helped design the concept for the newsletter, and she took responsibility for writing and editing articles and managing the production process. In particular, she relished her opportunities to talk with AAAMC National Advisory Board members to gather information for feature articles, and really get to know these active participants in black music. Some of her favorite interviews were with Patrice Rushen, Regina Baiocchi, and Dr. Bobby Jones.

Shonekan also gave numerous presentations about the Archives around campus and in classrooms, introducing the AAAMC facility and resources, or using AAAMC materials to talk about some aspect of black music. “I really enjoyed that,” she commented, “putting a face on the Archives and making it come alive with the presentations I did, and the programming. I really think that while I was there I was able to bring it to more people, in different ways and different forms.”

As Shonekan moved through her Ph.D. program, her work at the AAAMC also had a strong influence on her approach to her dissertation research, which focused on the process of developing an autobiography as a collaborative project, with a particular emphasis on examining issues of voice, truth, and identity. This project came to focus on the life of Camilla Williams, the renowned soprano who bears the distinction of being the first African American performer to sign a contract with a major opera company (the New York City Opera, in 1946). In the course of this collaborative project with Ms. Williams, Shonekan drew heavily on her work experience at the AAAMC. “I found that having worked at an archive, I knew the kinds of things that archives held about musicians. So I found out from her where her personal papers were, got a grant from IU, and went out to the Amistad

Research Center at Tulane University in New Orleans, which holds her personal collection. And I delved into all the correspondence, the programs. I knew what to ask for, I knew how to treat the material, I knew how an archive worked, I knew what materials would be most useful.” One high point of Shonekan’s work with Ms. Williams was the opportunity to produce a concert with the legendary singer, presenting her in the Grand Hall of IU’s Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center and reuniting her with her pianist from the 1940s and ‘50s, Dr. Borislav Bazala.

In the summer of 2003, Shonekan received a job offer from Columbia College in Chicago, and she made the decision to take the position. “It was time for me to move on to another threshold of my development,” she decided, “as a writer, a researcher, and a teacher.” She is now assistant professor of humanities and cultural studies in the Liberal Education Department at Columbia College, teaching courses on the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts movement. Columbia College is primarily known for its programs in film studies, art and media, journalism, and communication arts, and so for Shonekan the most exciting part of her job is the chance to inform the cultural perspectives of these budding artists: “All of these students have to come through my department in order to fill their general education requirements, so I love the fact that I get to work with people who are in film, photography, journalism, radio or television. I appreciate the fact that they have to come and learn about culture and learn about literature, history, social sciences—things that they need to know when they go back to create their films or their TV programs, or documentaries, or photographs. I serve as one of the context-givers for these individuals.” In the fall of 2004, Shonekan began teaching a new course on “Contemporary Africa: Life, Literature, and Music,” and she will be teaching another new course in the spring on “Hip Hop: Global Music and Culture.”

Living in Chicago with her husband and three children, Shonekan also continues to work with Camilla Williams to turn their project into a book. Recently, she reflected even further on the connection between archival collections and the process of telling a life story. “Because I’m a writer and I write about life, whether it is fiction or non-fiction, I’ve learned to really appreciate primary source materials. Working on Camilla’s book now, I find that the programs, the correspondence, the photographs are just as useful as the interviews. With all the archival material that I’ve seen, I can remind her about certain things. Just this afternoon, I showed her copies of letters that she hadn’t seen for years, what people had written to her, and she was so touched. She had forgotten about them. But it’s in her life, and it’s in her book. So there’s so much respect that I now have for documents, things that archives keep. That’s the most important thing I got from the AAAMC—that archives are really important. We document music, but archives also document lives.”

The AAAMC will miss Shonekan. “I enjoyed her independent spirit, the enthusiasm she brought to the job, her creative ideas, and her ability to function effectively as part of a team,” said Maulsby. “Stephanie has prepared herself for a rewarding career as a professional in higher education and in cultural institutions. She has worked extremely hard over the years and deserves the opportunity to explore new challenges. I wish her well in all future endeavors, especially in her work as a writer on the lives of musicians.” We all share this wish—good luck, Stephanie!

—Summi Fass  
Ph.D. candidate in Ethnomusicology at IU and  
Graduate Assistant at the AAAMC





## Board Member Highlight: Suzan Jenkins

***“To be an artist advocate working inside the music industry is an exciting place to be, because it allows you to remind people why we are here...It allows you to talk to people about why they have to be careful when they are trying to represent the art—that it represents the art of individuals who bring a creative sensibility to the table.”***

*In the spring of 1997, the AAAMC established its National Advisory Board, a volunteer group of prominent, distinguished professionals who are committed to our mission and lend us their support and expertise. Members are actively involved in the production, promotion, and study of African American music and culture. They have contributed to our growth and influence by aiding in the acquisition of materials, assisting with program development, bringing national visibility, and providing valuable input to discussions on future projects.*

Suzan Jenkins has spent her life pursuing her passions by taking her appreciation for arts and culture, her fascination with organizational psychology, her love of jazz, her innovative ideas about marketing and education, and blending them seamlessly together into an extraordinary career in the arts that has spanned more than 20 years. She has held many leadership positions in arts organizations, including that of director of operations at the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, executive director of the America’s Jazz Heritage initiative at the Smithsonian Institution, and senior vice president of marketing for the Recording Industry Association of America, where she headed such initiatives as the *Songs of the Century* project (<http://www.songs-of-the-century.com>). She was also the first executive director of the Rhythm and Blues Foundation and was the conceptual and executive producer of the 13-week radio series *Let the Good Times Roll*, which aired nationwide in 2002 and showcased the history of rhythm and blues music (<http://www.goodtimesroll.org>). During her tenure at the Smithsonian, Jenkins was a leading force in the development of the exhibition *Latin Jazz: La Combinacion Perfecta* (<http://www.sites.si.edu/exhibitions>). She also produced the compilation CD of the same title (released by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings in 2002), which is accompanying the exhibition during its four-year tour of the United States.

In addition to her leading roles in program development, Jenkins has been deeply involved in the arts community in an advisory capacity. She has served on panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, Maryland and Michigan State Councils for the Arts, and Arts Midwest, a regional arts council. She also serves on the board of the World Music Institute and has served on the advisory boards of the International Association of Jazz Educators, the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, the Berklee School of Music board of visitors, the BMI Foundation John Lennon Scholarship Program, the National Music Council, the National Association for Music Education, and has served as an advisor to Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Armstrong Curriculum Program.

Currently, Jenkins and her husband, Willard, are principals of Open Sky Jazz, their own company in which they combine their extensive experience in the world of jazz. Open Sky Jazz provides consulting services for a full range of jazz-related activities, including artist career development, series or festival programming and promotion, and educational outreach. Their impressive client list includes BET Jazz, the International Association of Jazz Education, Jazz Alliance International, Jazz Journalists Association, the National Jazz Museum, the Recording Industry Association of America, the Festival of World Sacred Music, the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, the



Ike & Tina Turner, circa 1970



Chuck Berry on tour, early 1970’s

Smithsonian Institution, and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz.

In a series of conversations in February and April 2004, Jenkins shared some of her thoughts about her journey. We spoke about her different levels of involvement in the arts and the important role played by her degree in psychology. We also talked about her favorite projects, jazz as a metaphor for life, and the ways in which her frequent position as the only woman of color in the room helped her open doors and introduce awareness of other perspectives. Following are some excerpts from those exchanges:

**Fass:** *I’ve read that you have a B.A. in psychology. How do you see your interest in that field relating to the path you have chosen for your life?*

**Jenkins:** Understanding how people think is all about how the world goes. And because I have a particular interest in organizational psychology, not only did I want to know about how individuals think, but I wanted to know how people working in certain structures think—how things go when there’s a cer-

tain structural thought. I have found that psychology has helped me understand people’s motivations for doing things, how to interpret people’s reactions . . . how to understand why people react the way they do and to help them get around some of those reactions, to get around some of their fears, and to reinterpret things. That has been really, really helpful in business, in establishing relationships and understanding that people do business with people—it is not people doing business with business! And, understanding that, I’ve always tried to be the best person that I can possibly be, the most honest person that I can possibly be.

**Fass:** *In your career, you’ve worked as both an artist advocate and for the music industry. Can you describe what it was like to move between those worlds?*

**Jenkins:** It was really exciting. To be an artist advocate working inside the music industry is an exciting place to be, because it allows you to remind people why we are here. It allows you to remind people what is important about what we do, and why it’s important. It allows you to talk to people about why they have to be careful when they are trying to represent the art—that it represents the art of individuals who bring a creative sensibility to the table. Sometimes, I think, in the industry people don’t always think about the artist. Unfortunately, sometimes artists are referred to as “products” or “content providers”—and when you have a situation where people disassociate the art with the human, there’s always a problem. So being an artist advocate and working inside the industry, I felt it was always my job to remind people that while, for your bean counters or your number-crunchers, it may be a business product, for the artist it is an art. You have to remember that there is a creative energy that goes into it, and you have to respect it as such.

**Fass:** *You’ve mentioned that your work on *Let the Good Times Roll* has been some of the most thrilling work of your career. Why is that?*

**Jenkins:** It’s been a thrilling project because it is an opportunity to allow history to be told in the voice of those who made the history. So many times, it’s been my experience that history is interpreted and reinterpreted through the eyes and voices of others, and sometimes without the reflection of those who were involved at that particular time. *Let the Good Times Roll* allowed the people who created the music, the people in the industry, and the people around the industry to reflect, in their own words, on how the music was made and how it reflected the times. And that was very, very critical to me, in being able to tell the story of the social, political, and cultural impact of rhythm & blues music.

*Suzan Jenkins continued on back page*



Suzan Jenkins

**Fass: What about the Latin Jazz exhibition? What motivated the creation of the exhibit, and what are some of your favorite aspects?**

**Jenkins:** I grew up in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and my sister went to Howard University in Washington. When I would come to the Smithsonian Institution, as excited as I was about being in Washington to visit my sister—as I walked through the halls of the Smithsonian in the '60s, I never saw a reflection of the culture that I was living in. I was just a child—I was 12—but I still was very amazed by the fact that there was a commonwealth (I understood at that time what our affiliation was with the United States), yet there was no reflection of the culture I was living in, that was so rich and so vibrant and so exciting. So I made a mental note that when I grew up, I wanted to work in the Smithsonian. There's a great picture of my sister and I in the fountain in front of the American History Museum that was taken by my brother-in-law in '68, and I had that in my office for years. But not only did I want to work there . . . I guess, even though I was 12, in my own mind I also was saying, "I want there to be some reflection of who I am at a major institution."

And so after I was so lucky to be offered the position of executive director of American Jazz Heritage, and looking at the fact that the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund had given \$10 million to the program, I wanted to be able to show a reflection of who I was and what I was doing at the museum. So I began to speak with the Fund about the fact that we wanted to have a reflection of something more than the mainstream. We wanted to show the width and the breadth of jazz music and its impact on world culture . . . and

so we began to talk about Latin jazz, because that was the music I had grown up with, that I understood. I approached the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund with the concept of doing a Latin jazz exhibition to accompany the exhibition that had been done on Armstrong, Ellington, and Ella Fitzgerald, and they were very excited at the concept, embraced it, and we went about the business of doing the exhibition. For me, it is just the fact that it exists . . . and I was very excited that Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet was in the exhibition! But for me, the major thing was the fact that it existed at all, and that the culture I grew up with was being reflected at a major institution.

**Fass: Can you give me an example of a project that Open Sky Jazz is working on now?**

**Jenkins:** Just in the last two weeks, the International Association for Jazz Education has brought in Jazz Alliance International as a subsidiary, and we are now the industry arm of the International Association for Jazz Education. All of the major leaders of the industry—all the record companies, the performing arts groups, the major festivals in the United States—they're all on the Board of Jazz Alliance International, and we'll bring that to the table to join up with heads of educational organizations all over America. And we are, together, going to be working as well as we possibly can to widen audiences' appreciation for jazz.

**Fass: The last time we spoke, you mentioned that through much of your career, you have found yourself the only woman, and the only woman of color, in many situations. What have been the challenges of that position, and what have been the positive outcomes of**

**being in that situation?**

**Jenkins:** I think there is a personal challenge that you experience. Many times you second-guess whether or not your perspective is a perspective that people would understand and appreciate, whether it's a perspective that's valid. Sometimes it even is a question of self-worth, whether or not what you bring to the table is as important as that which others bring to the table. But what comes out of that is that I find that I am much stronger, and I understand that I have a reputation as being tough. It has garnered the respect of others, because you begin to step out and say, "This is how it is, this is how I think it should be, and this is how people will feel about it." And when you do that enough and it pans out to be true, then I've found that it does garner the respect of lots and lots of people, inside the field and out. And you can't buy that.

**Fass: What makes jazz, in particular, so attractive and exciting for you?**

**Jenkins:** Improvised thought! Improvisation is what makes jazz the most exciting thing to me. Because when you have to take a standard line—whether it's in the way that business is done, or in the way that life is handled, or in the way that you should approach a challenge—you have to add improvisation to that, to figure out how to get the results you need. And by hook or by crook, you have to get those results! Whether it's finishing a tune, or attacking a project, or meeting a challenge . . . you're allowed to improvise on that theme to get what you need. I have never in my life been more excited than when improvisation meets challenge for results.

—Sumi Fass

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