

PACIFICA RADIO ARCHIVES:
REPORT TO THE PACIFICA NATIONAL BOARD

Submitted to Arlene Englehardt
By Brian DeShazor, Archives Director April 16, 2010

Since the last report, The Pacifica Radio Archives (PRA) furthered its mission to preserve and make accessible Pacifica's legacy to a broader range of the American public, and yet the tapes continue to deteriorate, bringing need for professional staff, office space and a much more aggressive preservation process and a more secure funding structure.

PRA staff hosted two community events resulting in dozens more schools sponsored with the Campus Campaign collection, increased revenue and positive press coverage¹. The mission of PRA is to ensure the historic collection is preserved and made accessible for the future. Despite its success, PRA struggles to maintain these priorities amidst Pacifica's financial difficulties. To date PRA is waiting central services data to complete the six month financial and operational forecast.

PRA continues to manage multiple grant funded preservation and access projects with continued dedication by PRA consultant Preservation and access coordinator, Adi Gevins, PRA staff, consultants and volunteers. A new grant application to the National Endowment for the Arts was completed and submitted in March. We have requested extensions on current grant projects funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to fulfill the requirements of the grant projects. This is due to the additional time and energies of PRA staff to raise funds and serve stations and listeners. To ensure completion of these critical preservation and access projects, PRA requires the professional or support staff to complete the tasks in the allotted time frame.

PRA has greatly influenced and helped shape the newly established Corporation for Public Broadcasting's American Archive and is a leading participant in the nationwide effort to identify, inventory, preserve and make accessible the recorded history of public broadcasting to help create "a digital repository of content produced by public television and radio stations and available to the general public, educators, and historians." Projects like these help maintain the mission priorities: preserving audio, correcting database descriptions, upgrading database functionality, and making materials accessible to the widest possible audience

PRA staff members, Edgar Toledo and Mark Torres presented, virtually via Youtube video², the Campus Campaign Chicano/Chicana collection compiled with Professor Jose Maldonado the 37th meeting of the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies. We are waiting for report from Professor Maldonado on the response from the attendees. This and other collections are now showing an increase in sales revenue as

¹ <http://www.latimes.com/theguide/events-and-festivals/lat-et-soundofsoul-pg.0.2371356.photogallery>

² <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2TpseU3DcY>

recordings are required listening in courses at Cal State Los Angeles, the American University and Los Angeles Mission College.

PRA continues to produce and distribute *From the Vault* to the Pacifica stations and affiliates, and a second version produced for the BBC Radio Five Live. Recent programs have featured recently restored recordings on Black History Month and Women's History Month and have included scholars and educators giving commentary and context to the programs.³

Station and Affiliate Services

PRA continues to serve the Pacifica-affiliated community radio stations by providing programs for broadcast such as *From the Vault*, and special obit or commemoration programs, premium use, fulfillment of premium orders, premium broadcast clips and archives research.

The Black History Month premium packages distributed to stations for fundraising were well received and helped raise over \$120,000 for the network. Twenty-eight public service announcements were created and distributed to the stations and affiliates for broadcast or web-posting during the month of February.

The Gay Time Capsule project created last June for Gay Pride month continues with a successful community event in Los Angeles, and an upcoming collaboration with Pacifica affiliate station WOMR in Provincetown, Mass. Thanks to the efforts of John Braden, PD at WOMR, the Pacifica Radio Archives will be bringing the project, collecting LGBT recorded stories to Provincetown Carnivale. Provincetown Community Television is donating a studio to host the recording project. Funds raised during the weeklong event allowing the public to record their stories for a donation of \$5.00 for 5 minutes will benefit both PRA and WOMR. The collected stories will be cataloged with restricted access for fifty (50) years.

Acquisitions. PRA has ingested over 100 tapes from the KPFK music library, many copies of master tapes already housed at PRA, some unidentified and some that are not Pacifica property. Thanks to volunteers, the tapes have been sorted and organized for the next step in processing. Some tapes have been included in the selection of tapes to be preserved in the current NEA grant project. Conversations with WBAI GM Muriel Tillinghast and Pacifica staff at other stations have identified many reel to reel tapes that need preservation and conservation. Without funding to send the tapes to PRA for special treatment there is a serious danger the recordings will either be lost or compromised if transfer is not done to the standards and practices set by PRA. We look forward to a meeting with GM's and National office to create a station tape rescue mission plan.

Printed Materials. PRA continues its digitization project in collaboration with Archive.org of Pacifica historic folio program guides. KPFK and WBAI program history

³ <http://fromthevaultradio.org>

is now available and being utilized by the public.

<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=mediatype%3A%22texts%22%20AND%20%28pacifica%20radio%20archives%29>

Challenges

The shortfall of the PRA budget has all but crippled the unit as far as staffing is concerned. It has been reported for over 9 years that PRA desperately needs a professional archivist on staff. PRA also needs an IT staff member to maintain and upgrade technical equipment and adapt to changing digital storage technology and archival standards and practices.

PRA has had numerous assessments of the physical plant which have resulted in recommendations for more storage space for the tapes and appropriate studio space for preservation and workspace for tape processing and offices.

PRA's core mission: PRA supports the mission and goals of Pacifica Foundation. In doing so, the PRA will appraise, collect, organize, describe, preserve, and make available for research and reference-the past, present, and future creative work generated by, or produced in association with Pacifica Radio.

PRA's key duties: Collection management: Collecting, cataloging, preserving, maintaining, and making available the program legacy of Pacifica Radio. Station services: Producing "premium" (fund raising) programs for Pacifica stations and affiliate stations; original program production. Reference services: Providing historic Pacifica programs, and program materials to Pacifica stations and affiliated stations and to Pacifica producers; as well as to libraries, educational institutions, authors, scholars, artists, journalists, documentarians, researchers, and individual consumers (among others). In 2002, PRA added the duties of developing and actualizing new funding mechanisms to support its core mission.