Preserving America’s Black Gospel Heritage:

Baylor University’s Black Gospel Music Restoration Project
About Bob Marovich

- Host, “Gospel Memories”
  88.7 WLUW Chicago
  www.gospelmemories.com

- Editor, The Black Gospel Blog
  www.blackgospel.blogspot.com

- Contributor to encyclopedias, articles and books on gospel music.

- Collector of records, photos, sheet music and other memorabilia.

- Working on…
  *Shout Troubles Over* – A history of black gospel music in Chicago.
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Why Preserve Gospel Recordings?
Why Preserve Gospel Recordings?

• Rarely reissued on CD; audience avid but small.

• Many of the original masters are lost.

• Confusing trail of ownership of masters.

• Some of the only recorded examples of historically important gospel artists.
Why Preserve Gospel Recordings?

• Many gospel recordings were pressed in very limited quantities.

• Quartet recordings sought after by collectors.

• Extant copies “well loved.”

• Black gospel music is an American art form.
For more information:
www.gospelmemories.com
bob@gospelmemories.com

The Black Gospel Blog:
www.blackgospel.blogspot.com
Baylor University’s Black Gospel Music Restoration Project:

The Ins & Outs
In the beginning ...

- Professor Robert Darden through his research for his book *People get ready!*, found many albums from the Golden Age of Gospel (mid 1940s – 1970s) were either lost or disappearing.
- Being frustrated with this, Darden wrote a NY Times op-ed piece.
- It caught the attention of a business man, who became the donor who provided two years of financing to get the project started to collect and preserve these rare and fast disappearing albums digitally.
Gathering Gospel Albums

- **The gospel albums we digitize mainly come from two sources:**
  1. From people who have heard Robert Darden’s interviews with newspapers, magazines, and radio shows promoting the project and want to contribute
  2. From serious private collectors of black gospel music

- **Other contributors of gospel albums:**
  - Academic institutions who have a gospel collection that is relevant to the project
  - Private organizations or societies that have a gospel collection relevant to the project

- **Loans or Donations:**
  - Contributors can either make a loan or a donation
  - Baylor will ship containers for the albums to the contributor, and will pay for all shipping expenditures
  - Contributor will need to fill out and sign either the loan or donation form before digitization can begin
Choosing Metadata Standards

- Because of the complexity of this project from different types of formats to different types of digital objects to the complete description of each album, multiple metadata standards needed to be implemented for different purposes. The next few slides will be covering the metadata standards we chose for descriptive, technical, rights, digital provenance, and structural metadata.
Descriptive Metadata

- **MARC**
  - Used for original cataloging of the gospel albums
- **Dublin Core (DC)**
  - Used for the album description in ContentDM
- **Metadata Object Description Standard (MODS)**
  - Used for the descriptive metadata for our digital preservation files
- **Encoded Archival Description (EAD)**
  - Used only for the description of the collection as a whole
Technical Metadata

- **NISO Metadata for Images in XML Schema (MIX)**
  - Used to capture the technical metadata for all the album images using JHOVE. This includes not only the access files (JPEG2000) but also the preservation files (TIFF)

- **Audio object structures for preservation and restoration (AES-X098B)**
  - Used to capture the technical metadata for the audio files using JHOVE. This includes not only the access files (MP3) but also the preservation files (WAV) and the 30 second samplers (MP3)
Digital Provenance Metadata

- **NISO Metadata for Images in XML Schema (MIX)**
  - Used to capture the digital provenance metadata for all the album images using JHOVE. This includes not only the access files (JPEG2000) but also the preservation files (TIFF)

- **Administrative metadata for audio objects – Process history schema (AES-X098C)**
  - Used to capture the digital provenance metadata for the audio files. This includes not only the access files (MP3) but also the preservation files (WAV) and the 30 second samplers (MP3)
Rights Metadata

- Baylor Copyright Metadata Schema (BCMD)
  - Used to document copyright information for album songs, cover art, and the album itself.
  - This schema is locally written and specific to the copyright needs of Baylor University Libraries’ digital projects.
Structural Metadata

- Metadata Encoding & Transmission Standard (METS)
  - Used to contain all relevant metadata about a digital gospel album (descriptive, technical, rights, provenance, structural) for digital preservation
Cataloging/Describing Digital Gospel Albums

- Normally digital objects are cataloged as reproductions since they are usually a digitized version of the physical item owned by the institution who digitized it.
- Since Baylor does not own the physical gospel album for the majority of the albums that have been digitized, we decided to catalog the digitized albums as a digital object with a 534 note referencing the physical album.
- We also decided to use a 791 field (local added entry – corporate name) for the collection title of this digital project and a 990 field (local field) for the unique identifier for each digital album.
Emotions (Musical group) - Peace be still [sound recording] ; Runnin back (and forth). [2007]

2 sound files (6 min) : digital preservation master, WAV files (96 kHz, 24 bit)

The Emotions, vocals ; with instrumental accompaniment.

Digital preservation master recorded from source recording by the Resources/Collection Management unit of the Electronic Library in 2007.

For many recordings in this digital collection there are images of album jackets, sleeves, inserts, and disc labels that can be found on the Baylor Digital Collections web site under Royce-Darden Gospel Music Collection.


"Peace be still" is taken from album (STS 2-3018), "The living word"; live performance.


Due to copyright or other restrictions, online playback of audio files may be limited to authorized access.

Gospel music.

Royce-Darden Gospel Music Collection (Baylor University)

Runnin back (and forth)

Running back (and forth)
Transforming MARC Bib Records to DC & MODS records

- Since MARC is not an accepted descriptive metadata schema for CONTENTdm (Baylor’s digital management system), we had to figure out a way to transform the MARC records into DC records for CONTENTdm and MODS records for digital preservation.

- Since creating a program to run this type of transformation was not possible, we turned to already existing software programs that could do this type of transformation from MARC to DC and MARC to MODS.
One software program that could do this and was also free was MarcEdit, and since we were already familiar with it we decided to use it for this process.

MarcEdit provides Extensible Stylesheet Language Transformation (XSLT) stylesheets for various types of transformations. For our purpose we tweaked the already existing XSLT style sheet in MarcEdit for MARC to DC and MARC to MODS to meet our needs for the digital gospel project.
Transforming MARC Bib Records to DC & MODS records, cont’d

- To make sure that we captured all the essential descriptive information we wanted from the MARC records, we had to make the MARC records more specific in terms of removing ambiguous fields and adding specific fields for local purposes. For example, we
  - Added local information in the 796 (local added entry – personal name) and 797 (local added entry – corporate name) fields to find specific contributors and their role in each album
  - Added local information in the 990 (local) field for the unique identifier of each digital gospel album
  - Removed information in the 500 (generic note) field if it could be placed in a more specific MARC field (e.g. publisher numbers)
- All these changes made the transformation from MARC to DC and MARC to MODS easier.
Transforming MARC Bib Records to DC & MODS records, cont’d

- Lastly we created mapping documents to specify which MARC field went with what DC field and vice versa
- This documentation was very important, because it gave us a map of what the transformation would be like, but more importantly a map to go to when we needed to edit things in the XSLT style sheet in MarcEdit.
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Copyright

- **Cover Art/Design**
  - Design of album jacket and the photographs and art contained in that design are covered by copyright

- **Music**
  - Music of each song is covered by copyright

- **Sound Recording**
  - The production of an album is covered by state law for pre-1972 recordings and recordings produced after 1972 by federal copyright
Copyright - Low Risk

- Albums being digitized are considered the most at-risk from the black gospel music tradition
- No effort on the part of the copyright holder has been seen in re-releasing these albums
- Project’s main focus is preservation and research not access
- 30 second sound bites are provided through a streaming service so that the music cannot be downloaded
Lessons Learned

- Writing a mapping document should be one of the first guidelines written at the start of a digital project.
- Write documentation about the metadata procedures as you go through the process of doing a digital project.
- Audio access files should have been mp4s rather than mp3s for purposes of upgrading and compatibility with streaming programs.
- File naming and directory structure needed to be independent from the digital asset management system, CONTENTdm.
- Underestimated personnel hours it would take to manage this project; had to shuffle some library personnel around to meet this need.
Audio Digitization Basics and Workflow for the BGMRP

- Creation of our preservation master files
- Creation of our Access files
- How we were able to increase our productivity
Preservation Audio Files

- 24 bit / 96kHz PCM encoded Broadcast Wave files (.wav)
- Unaltered Wave files
- One file per side
- Implementing `<codinghistory>` of the Broadcast Audio Extension
  - Technical metadata regarding preservation transfer saved in the WAVE file.
BWF Metadata

• EBU Specifications
  – Based on the Microsoft WAVE audio file format

Figure 1
Broadcast Wave File format.

Image courtesy of the European Broadcasting Union – EBU Broadcast Wave Format, Tech. 3285
Digitization Studio

- PC Based file capture
- Setup to capture the source recording as accurately as possible
Digitization Studio, cont’d

- Turntable able to play back disk up to 16-inches
- Disk preamp which supports many historical reproduction curves
- External analog-to-digital converter
- Digital input card
- Streamlined computer
Digitization Studio, cont’d

- Wavelab 6 – audio software
- Accurate monitoring system
Access Audio Files

- 192k Mp3 files.
- Full length file per song (On-campus)
- 30 sec clip per song (Off-campus)
Challenge

- We needed a low risk way to create derivative access files from our preservation files.

- Is there a way to free up Audio Specialist to focus on digitization of new items.
Solution

- .ADL files
- Student workers!
.ADL

- Audio Decision List
- Non-Destructive editing
- The file contains no audio but refers to audio files
- XML readable file
- Supported by the Audio Engineering Society
  - Outlined in document AES-31
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    001007157117*0410 "22-1-1-3_Ive Got To Live The Life I Sing About In My Songs[t-splice]"
    0011211014*1760 "22-1-1-4_Gravy Blues[t-splice]"
    00115137123*0080 "22-1-1-5_Swing Low, Sweet Chariot[t-splice]"
    00118124111*2776 "22-1-1-6_What Kind Of Fool I Am[t-splice]"
    00122132105*0709 "22-1-1-7_Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child[t-splice]"
    00126107010*0640 "22-1-1-8 Just For A Thrill[t-splice]"
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    2 R f
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How this process has evolved

- At first we were giving the students too much information
- Now just the basics
- The ones who are interested will learn more as they go along
Links

- EBU tech 3285 -

- Coding History -

- Audio Engineering Society – [www.aes.org](http://www.aes.org)
Contact Information

Interest form (http://www.baylor.edu/lib/gospel/index.php?id=57352)
Have questions? Do you have materials that might fit in the collection? Would you like to support the project? Use the BGMRP Interest form to get in contact with the project staff.

Project Weblog (http://homepages.baylor.edu/gospel)
Watch our Blog for project updates and feel free to leave us a comment!

Website (http://www.baylor.edu/lib/gospel/)

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