

PACIFICA RADIO ARCHIVES:  
REPORT TO THE PACIFICA NATIONAL BOARD

**Submitted to Greg Guma, Executive Director**  
**By Brian DeShazor, Archives Director     January 12, 2007**

### Overall Summary

In the first quarter of FY2007 the Pacifica Radio Archives (PRA) leapt to the forefront of national and international news with its promotion of its November 28, 29 fund drive broadcast, (\$266K in pledges) and testimony before the National Recorded Sound Preservation Board of the Library of Congress. These events coincided, bringing awareness of the archives and the Pacifica Foundation to millions of people. In December, 2006 PRA successfully completed the 2 year preservation and access grant project, "Protests, Rallies, Demonstrations" funded in part by the Ford Foundation and received the fourth preservation grant award from the National Endowment for the Arts. PRA continued to serve the Pacifica stations and affiliate stations with several programs uploaded to audioport.org for broadcast and premiums. PRA produced and distributed the weekly radio series, *From the Vault*, completed various licensing projects, and developed relationships with other non-profit organizations.

### Collection, Preservation & Access:

Phase Three of PRA's long-term Preservation and Access project is on-going with a recent award from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and proposed funds from the GRAMMY Foundation (announced March, 2007) and pending funds from the Pacifica Foundation (per PNB motion passed September, 2006).

The PRA website has added the outcomes of the completed Ford Foundation grant project, "Protests, Rallies, Demonstrations" including a list of preserved recordings, transcripts, audio streams, and technical reports that include a completed inventory.  
<http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org>

The approved NEA grant project will enable restoration of 30 historic radio art programs, and publicly searchable web access to 5 digitized editions of the Folio, illustrated station program guides from 1949-1970's, and improve access to public catalog database.

The pending proposal to the GRAMMY Foundation requests funds to continue PRA's Preservation and Access Project will enable us to preserve, digitize and make publicly accessible, three hundred (300) Pacifica Radio station broadcasts of exceptional cultural, social and artistic value. Reel-to-reel masters will be restored and digitized by Safe Sound Archives. Twenty (20) hours will be freely available on the PRA website (stream and podcast). Content descriptions, catalog database and copyright status will be researched. In-house transfer will be analyzed and improved.

## Programming

The PRA staff and production team produced the November 28, 29, 2006 fund drive marathon simulcast, *Voices for Peace and Non-Violence*, this year 42 hours, that included the premier of *Studs Terkel: the Spoken Century*, and *The Ballad of Pete Seeger*, as well as broadcasting newly restored programs devoted to Voices for Peace and Non-violence, Women in Film, Women's History, Music, Texas humorist Jim Hightower, Global Warming, and Pacifica broadcaster Dorothy Healy.

PRA continues production and distribution of its new weekly radio series, *From the Vault*, to Pacifica stations and affiliates to promote the broadcast history of Pacifica stations. Plans to meet with Pacifica's National Program Coordinator, Nathan Moore will begin the process to make the program a national Pacifica series funded partially from the National Programming budget. Recent programs have included the subjects: Gerald Ford's Pardon of Nixon, a Halloween special, John Lithgow's WBAI radio productions, Alice Walker and the Color Purple, two holiday specials, and two programs devoted to PRA's "peace" recordings.

Several programs digitized and provided for Pacifica network stations include Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday programming, Tillie Olsen literary readings, Madeline Murray O'hare, Che Guevara, Shirley Chisolm, and many Civil Rights and Black History programs.

## Affiliate Services

PRA services to Pacifica-affiliated community radio stations include: providing programs for broadcast and premium use, fulfillment of premium orders, archives research, and administration of contract fees. In October PRA Director PRA joined affiliate station KGNU on a special PRA fund drive program increasing awareness of the Pacifica collection to the Boulder, Denver audience and raising funds for KGNU. In January, PRA distributed a list of premiums packaged for Black History month to assist with local affiliate fund drives and a comprehensive list of Black History month programs for broadcast. PRA is revising the PRA affiliate program for launch at the April NFCB conference.

## Funding & Budget

In December, 2006, PRA received notification from the National Endowment for the Arts that PRA is the recipient of a 2006 Access to Artistic Excellence Preservation grant in the amount of \$15,000 to "enable the preservation, restoration and digitization of thirty (30) additional hours of original cultural heritage tapes (including examples of innovative "radio art" unique to Pacifica); the preparation of digitized editions of five (5) historic "Folio" program guides of artistic and cultural value posted on the PRA website; and the improvement of public awareness of the collection via a redesigned bibliographic catalog freely available on the worldwide web." (see attached proposal in detail)

Following the September, 2006 PNB meeting and the motion passed to assess the Foundation and stations emergency funds to transfer deteriorating tape to digital format, PRA director and PRA Preservation and Access Project Coordinator, Adi Gevins met with preservation specialist George Blood (<http://www.georgebloodaudio.com>), and developed a strategy for the project. PRA is aware of PNB director's LaVarn Williams' and Phil Jackson's plans to develop a fund raising event to offset some of the impact the motion presents to the local Pacifica stations. PRA director is committed to working with all parties willing to spend their time and energies to promoting and fundraising for the preservation of Pacifica's broadcast history.

## Fundraising

The PRA National Fund drive marathon (November 28, 29, 2006) simulcast on all five Pacifica stations ended successfully raising \$257,000 in pledges raising more funds for the archives than any other previous year. Following the drive PRA continued to receive pledges and donations in the amount of approximately \$18,000 bringing the pledge estimate to \$275,000. To date \$210,000 has been collected. Tape sales to the public have dropped below past years projection creating a challenge to find the funds to balance. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, during Black History Month, Grammy winning and Tony/Emmy nominated songwriter Allee Willis will host a major donor fund raiser for PRA to focus attention on the African American studies collection.

## Board relations

Since the last PNB meeting, the Archives Committee has failed to meet with quorum and to date there is no meeting scheduled. This has been discouraging and ultimately counter-productive to PRA's goals and objectives. Meetings with Pacifica National Management has improved, yet more direct participation from Pacifica Network staff is required to fully realize PRA's potential to further support Pacifica's mission.

## Challenges

PRA has had numerous assessments of the physical plant which have resulted in recommendations highlighting the need for more storage space for the tapes in addition to appropriate studio space for preservation and workspace for tape processing and offices. KPFA tapes rescued in May, 2006 have been included in the pending Grammy Foundation grant proposal. Approximately 1500 master reel-to-reel tapes were received by PRA from KPFT and KPFK. KPFT tapes (1970's-1990's) were received via USArt shipping. The PRA staff and volunteers inventoried, reviewed, and boxed tapes from KPFK (1950's-current) for storage and processing. With no storage space available in-house, PRA transferred these tapes to off-site climate controlled storage to wait future processing. *The PNB is therefore encouraged to include this critical issue on the next PNB agenda.*

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.

## General Admin

Archives Staff:

Brian DeShazor – Archives Director (FT)

Marianna Berkovich – Business Manager (FT)

Mark Torres – Operations Director and Senior Producer (FT)

Edgar Toledo – Production Coordinator (FT)

Shawn Dellis – Office Administrator and Marketing Coordinator (FT)

Arline Chang – Sales Administrator (PT)

Christopher Sprinkle – Producer (Temp -FT)

Cataloger – (FT-open position)

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## ATTACHMENT:

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### National Endowment for the Arts

### 2006 Access to Artistic Excellence Preservation grant proposal

### Pacifica Foundation / Pacifica Radio Archives

### Details of Project

Pacifica Radio Archives (PRA) in North Hollywood, CA. is one of the oldest and largest repositories of radio media art in the nation. We estimate that 1/4 of the approximately 40,500 audio tapes housed at PRA are unique cultural heritage / arts documents (that is: the subject is arts-related, or the program itself embodies the art of radio). Ranging from the inception of Pacifica Radio in 1949 to the present day, they include original radio dramas, poetry, interviews with (and discussions amongst) artists, poets, dramatists, musicians, and literary figures, as well as readings, analyses, reviews, and live performances. In addition, Pacifica radio stations KPFA (Berkeley, CA), WBAI (NYC), KPFA (Los Angeles), WPFW (Washington, D.C.) and KPFT (Houston, TX) have originated and fostered producers who are the founders of decades of new forms of radio art. "Free-form" radio, modern documentary formats, the listener "call-in", sound sculpture, open-mic, and environmental sound collages are among the many radio art forms developed at Pacifica radio. This precious national heritage is in dire danger. The fragile tapes are degrading, many subject to "sticky shed syndrome". Many tapes of artistic / historic value remain entirely unprocessed, off-site. Previous National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grants have allowed us to assess a portion of our

collection, and preserve many invaluable recordings.

This proposal will enable the preservation, restoration and digitization of thirty (30) additional hours of original cultural heritage tapes (including examples of innovative “radio art” unique to Pacifica); the preparation of digitized editions of five (5) historic “Folio” program guides of artistic and cultural value posted on the PRA website; and the improvement of public awareness of the collection via a redesigned bibliographic catalog freely available on the worldwide web.

**Major Project Activities:**

**Audio Master Tape Preservation & Access:** Selection of 30 hours of cultural heritage arts reel-to-reel audio recordings to go to SafeSound Archives in Philadelphia for preservation, restoration and digitization. Promotion of existence of restored tapes to educational, scholarly, and cultural institutions, as well as to Pacifica Radio network program producers, and other broadcasters.

The PRA Preservation and Access Project (PRA P&A) has preserved over 290 taped programs since its beginning in 2003, thanks to an initial grant from the National Endowment for the Arts [NEA Grant# 03-3400-6106, July 2003 - June, 2004], and continuing through NEA grants from October 2004 - April 2006. The investment from NEA has enabled us to secure funds from the Grammy Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the University of California, Berkeley Libraries, as well as matching funds from its parent Pacifica foundation. At this time, funds from NEA are critical for continuing the Preservation and Access Project.

Tapes restored as a result of previous NEA grants include the voices of Lillian Hellman, John Coltrane, Audre Lorde, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Dylan Thomas, and Allen Ginsberg [see list: <http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/archives/report2.html#recordings>]. These recordings are now available to scholars, journalists, authors, artists, documentarians and the general public. Transcripts of select programs, available online, increase their value as objects of scholarship, and to the aurally impaired.  
[<http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/archives/preservation.html>]

The funds requested here would extend these activities to 30 additional hours of historically valuable tapes. We will also preserve programs which are emblematic of the development of radio art forms in the latter 20th century, i.e. “The Salton Sea Disaster”; 1958 documentary, and “Experiment: An Audio Impression of New York”; 1962 sound sculpture by Chris Koch.

**Expanded Access via Improved Database/Catalog:** As important as salvage and preservation is the problem of access -- we're determined to make this documentation of the cultural heritage known to the widest possible public. Although the catalog database is publicly accessible on-line, it is archaic: entries are fraught with errors dating from origin, and the "search" function does not fulfill contemporary user expectations. With funds from earlier NEA grants we've made records corrections of target programs, and commissioned an expert assessment and a development plan for the public access

catalog/database. The “Analysis of PRA catalog database” report is included in this proposal as attachment and is accessible on our website at [http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/analysis.html]

We request funds to upgrade our public access catalog, allowing a worldwide population of users easy access to our collection. Based on prior experience we project increased use of PRA materials by scholars from many disciplines, artists working in a variety of media, authors and documentarians, among others. This rich audio history would be invaluable to scholars, artists, researchers, program producers, university students of media and liberal arts and others around the world, if only they knew of its existence.

“Folio” Preservation: Unique Cultural / Contextual Asset & Finding Aid. The historic station program guides (*Folios*) create another significant access point to the collection. Mailed to station subscribers, the monthly *Folios* included station schedules, program descriptions and credits, as well as visual art and essays by prominent political and cultural figures. Our last NEA grant allowed us to test the digitization of sample *Folios*. These files (accessible on the PRA website – url <http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/folios.html>) create rich context, original contemporary documents, and an unrivaled “finding aid” for the reel-to-reel tapes preserved by the PRA P&A project. *Folios* include often cited essays such as Virgil Tomson on "The World of Lou Harrison," and David Gans on The Grateful Dead, as well as original poetry by author Ishmael Reed and original artwork by David Goines, Bill Dempster, and many others. In this proposal we are asking the NEA to fund the preservation, digitization, upload, and access to an additional 5 historic *Folios*.

**Goals:**

1. PRESERVATION AND ACCESS. Preserve 30 hours of previously identified cultural heritage and radio arts tapes and 5 historic “Folio” program guides. Programs targeted by our expert advisors during the last phase of the project, but which could not be preserved due to limited funds.[see attachment: tape examples]. *Folios* serve as invaluable "finding aids", providing the only extant listings of all programs scheduled for broadcast on a Pacifica station during those time periods. [<http://www.pacificaradioarchives.org/folios.html>]
2. PUBLIC ACCESS. Activate plan to upgrade online database and correction and enhancement of program descriptions. [See: Analysis of PRA Catalog Database].
3. PROMOTION. Undertake a promotional and educational campaign to reach new audiences and users, and serve existing users. [See: Riptide Communications plan & estimate].

**Schedule of Key Project Dates:**

Months 1-3: Final selection of tapes and *Folios* for preservation, inventory, preparation for processing; Select & prepare new Database Software.

Months 3-6: Send tapes to Philadelphia; database beta & usability tests; digitize Folios.  
Months 7-9: Beta & user test database & digitized Folios; master tapes returned.  
Months 8-11: Respond to feedback, make corrections, migrate data, inventory tapes.  
Months 10-12: Digitized Folios and new database available on web; promotion.

**Key Individuals and Organizations:** PRA: Brian DeShazor, Director, Mariana Berkovich, Business Manager, Mark Torres, Operations, Edgar Toledo, Production Coordinator. Expert Consultants: Ginna Allison, web, Karen Coyle, database / catalog, Adi Gevins, archives, George Blood, audio preservation, Mahdis Keshavarz, public relations.

**Target Population:** Broadcasters, documentarians, scholars, librarians, educators, students, artists, authors, musicians, radio audiences, worldwide general public.

**Plans for promoting, publicizing and / or disseminating the project:** Logo will be designed identifying the project. Media consultants will develop a plan to identify and target local and national press, donors, broadcasters, and academia. Media advisories and presentation kit will be produced for release. [See: Riptide Communications plan & estimate].

**Monitor, Assess and Measure Success:** To date the PRA Preservation & Access Project has preserved over 290 cultural and arts heritage radio programs. These materials have been used in radio documentaries and other media, donated to academic institutions and libraries, purchased by Pacifica Radio listeners, and requested by authors, artists and scholars for research and inspiration. [see: PRA User Examples]. We will monitor, assess, measure and report on web usage, as well as orders for copies of programs for broadcast, scholarly and personal use.

**Making Project Accessible:** Typed program transcriptions have made preserved programs available to the deaf and aurally impaired. This project phase will enable us to post more transcripts on our website, and to promote them to target users. Improving the website database will result in access to the collection of a worldwide population, including the home-bound.

**Budget:** If we are granted less than 50% of the requested amount, we'll seek to adjust the project goals (scope of promotions and immediate universal access) to accommodate the true budget. We will continue to seek additional funds.

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