

# **GHT Rundschrift**

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Gesellschaft für Historische Tonträger und Sammlung Alfred Seiser



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Rossauerlände 23 A/2, A-1090 Wien [office@phonomuseum.at](mailto:office@phonomuseum.at)

[www.phonomuseum.at](http://www.phonomuseum.at)

## 17<sup>th</sup> GHT Diskografentag in Barcelona

This year, the 17<sup>th</sup> Diskografentag of the GHT took place in Barcelona from 27 to 29 May and was organized by the Biblioteca de Catalunya. 39 GHT members and Spanish discographic experts participated at the scientific conference and the social events.

A first welcome for the participants was given in a traditional Spanish Tapas Bar on the evening before the official start of the conference. This was a nice opportunity to meet again old friends and also to get to know new members of the GHT community.



First evening in a Tapas Bar (Photo: Suresh Chandvankar)

The conference was held in the premises of the Biblioteca de Catalunya which had been installed in the buildings of a former medieval hospital in the centre of Barcelona. At the start, the participants were welcomed by Christiane Hofer, President of the GHT, and Sra. Eugenia Serra, Director of the Biblioteca de Catalunya. Eugenia Serra shortly explained the history and importance of the library and of its collection of sound recordings.



Welcome of the conference participants by Eugènia Serra (left) and Christiane Hofer (Photo: E. Pigorsch)

After that, we could discover the rich collection and its presentation at a guided visit of the library. The highlight of this short tour was a life music presentation on an old pianola built by Melvin Clark in Chicago in 1913.



Visit of the library which was guided by Margarida Ullate-Estanyol (centre) (Photo: E. Pigorsch)



Presentation of the old pianola from 1913 (Photo: B. Kretschmann)



The experts are examining the piano roll (Photo: C.P. Gallenmiller)



After a short coffee break the packed conference program continued with an underground trip to the Museu de la Música de Barcelona. There, the conference participants were welcomed by the Director of the museum Prof. Dr. Jaume Ayats. He guided us through the wonderful collection of musical instruments and historical sound recordings.

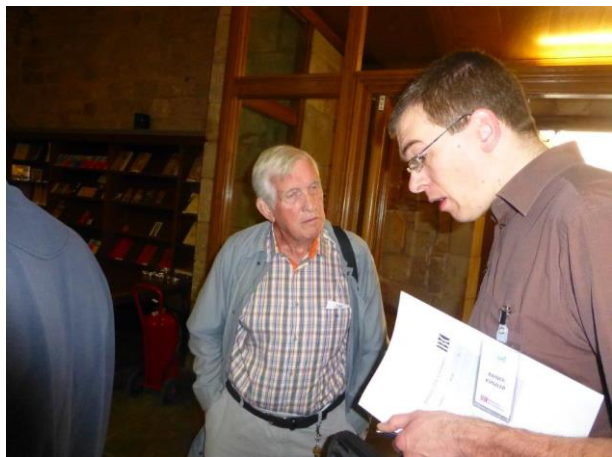


Visit of the Music Museum guided by its director Prof. Dr. Jaume Ayats (centre) (Photo: E. Pigorsch)

Friday afternoon, the main program of presentations began at the library which was further continued on Saturday and Sunday morning. Altogether, 20 speakers from 9 different countries presented their research projects and results. Only a few of the interesting subjects can be mentioned here. First of all, there are the presentations of the experts from our host country. They gave an interesting overview over the sound recording collections, their preservation and the other discographic activities in Spain.

Kushal Gopalka and Suresh Chandvankar from Mumbai, India presented record labels from India, among them the “Young India” label (1935-1955). Another insight in Asian record productions gave the Australian James Mitchell who lives in Bangkok (Thailand) in his presentation “The Rabbit Record Brand of Siam/Thailand, 1925-1970”.

The European record history was the subject of the presentations of Bill Dean Myatt about the Edison Bell Record Company and Rainer Künzler about the singers The Two Jazzers who made recordings in Hungary and Germany in the twenties and thirties. A special subject at the conference was the Ultraphon project of GHT. Information about these presentations is given further below.



Discussions during the coffee breaks of the conference (Photo: B. Kretzschmann)

At the last Diskografentag in Lisbon, GHT had received guests from the German Club Teutonia in Istanbul (Turkey). This social and cultural club has a long tradition and serves the German Community in Istanbul as a social meeting point since 1847. The club member asked the GHT to help them in analyzing and cataloguing their collection of old records which were mainly from the 30ies and 40ies. In the meantime, this work was done and Claus Peter Gallenmiller presented the results at this year's conference. It appeared that beside German popular music recordings, this collection contained a lot of German propaganda recordings from the time between 1933 and 1945. These recordings were mainly destined to German communities abroad and for broadcasting. Despite their Nazi propaganda content, these records have today a historical and discographic interest and should be preserved. Beate Kretzschmann, the Director of Archive of the Club Teutonia, thanked the GHT, especially Claus Peter Gallenmiller and Christiane Hofer, for its help and effort and declared the agreement that this record collection could be integrated in the GHT Archive.

This last presentation was held in Girona in the Museu del Cinema where the conference participants had went on Sunday morning. After a guided visit of the museum the last trip lead us to a famous private collection of historical technical instruments, including cinematographic and phonographic equipment. The owner of the collection Antoni Escubedo personally welcomed our group and guided us through his museum.



The entrance and part of the collection of Museu del Cinema in Girona (Photos: E. Pigorsch and C.P. Gallenmiller)

The 17<sup>th</sup> Diskografentag ended with a very nice and pleasant farewell dinner. The location was a restaurant on the Tibidado mountain which gave us a very beautiful view over Barcelona at night. All participants enjoyed this wonderful evening.

The next 18<sup>th</sup> Diskografentag will be held from 12 to 14 May 2017 in Hanover (Germany).



Farewell dinner on the top of Barcelona (Photo: B. Kretzschmann)



## GHT Ultraphon Research Project is Progressing

The Czech Supraphon has a big historic heritage of the former the Ultraphon company in their archive. At the GHT excursion 2014 we had the great chance to visit some parts of their archive at Prague, where they are holding thousands of historical metal masters just from the beginning of Ultraphon at 1929 up to the end of the 40's. As well, there are many written documents available from these times. Both the metal masters and the documents are not catalogued yet and thus nobody has an overview of its content. This visit at the Supraphon archive and the discovery of these unique historical important materials has been the motivation to start the GHT Ultraphon Research Project.



Metal masters from German Ultraphon recordings in the Supraphon archive in Prague

At February, 5th, 2016 there has been an important meeting at the National Music Museum in Prague with the Director of the Supraphon Archive, Mr. Tomas Rulf. Together with Gabriel Gössel, Filip Sir, Christiane Hofer and Claus Peter Gallenmiller we have agreed the next steps of cooperation between GHT and Supraphon. In a memorandum of understanding we have agreed that the GHT will be granted access to this historical archive for research projects related to the record history. All contacts towards Supraphon will be coordinated by Gabriel Gössel.



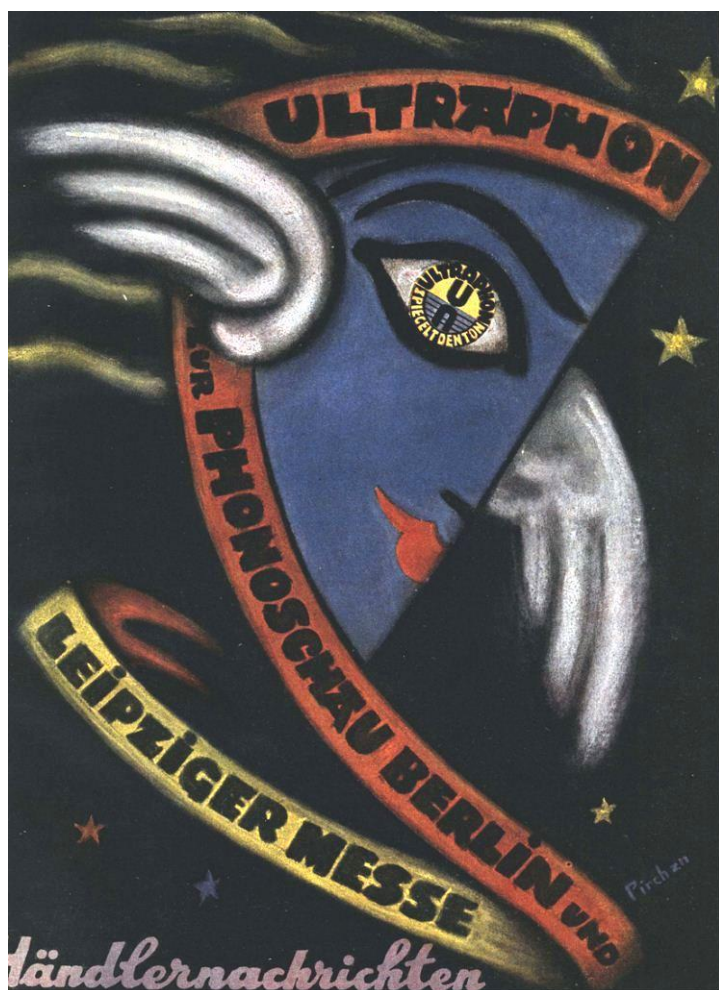
Tomas Rulf (left), the Director of the Supraphon Archive, Christiane Hofer and Gabriel Gössel

The next important step of this project is the complete documentation of the German Ultraphon matrices found in the Supraphon archive in Prague what will be done during summer/autumn 2016 organized by Gabriel and Filip. All relevant discographic information will be entered in our GHT data base system. With this, we will gain a valuable overview over the existing matrices which will be essential basic information for further activities.

In parallel to this, Gabriel has visited the document archive of Supraphon several times and has got as well a great overview about the available documents there. The content is, by nature, very much focused on Czech Ultraphon history. There are only a few documents related to other countries.

Gabriel Gössel will coordinate further next steps for the Ultraphon Research Project, assisted by Filip Sir and students from Library Information Science. The next goals are to define the content and plan for the Ultraphon project.

Claus Peter will organize the digitalization of all German Ultraphon catalogues and the "Händler-nachrichten des Küchenmeister-Konzerns" (12 issues from January 1930 – December 1930).



Issue of the „Küchenmeister Händler-nachrichten“ (August/September 1930)

Further results of the project work had been presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> GHT Diskografentag in Barcelona in May. Frans Jansen reported about the general progress of the project and presented information about Ultraphon needle tins. Gabriel Gössel gave an overview of the different Czech Ultraphon labels from 1929 to 1947.

Within the project, the history of the French subsidiary of Ultraphon will be investigated by Enrico Pigorsch. In Barcelona he presented the starting points of his research on the Société Ultraphone Française (1931-1939) and explained his further working steps. Almost immediately after the Diskografentag he went for a week to Paris to work at the French National Library and examined contemporary journals, magazines and books. The search in these secondary sources was very successful and gave a lot of hints on important primary sources which contain interesting documents about the company. The research on these sources will be continued during the next months.

The further progress of the work of all researchers on the Ultraphon project will be presented at the next Diskografentag in Hanover 2017. Any contribution about the Ultraphon history in the different countries is appreciated.



The very first headquarter of the Société Ultraphone Française in Paris, 1, rue du Général Foy



## **International Bibliography of Discographies – A Project of the IASA Discography Committee**

by Filip Sir and Peter Laurence

Dear colleagues from GHT, we are reaching out to the GHT members to let you know what's been happening with the IASA Discography Committee since last year! As you know, at the 2015 IASA meeting in Paris, the Discography Committee first put forward the idea of bringing institutions and collectors together in a collaborative project. The newly re-formed Discography Committee - Filip Sir (president) and Peter Laurence (secretary) – settled on the goal of creating an online International Bibliography of Discographies.

We are very pleased that we can cooperate with GHT and their members. We hope that together we can do our international project strong and useful for colleagues all around world.

Description of the Project: Collaboration is the key in building the Bibliography, and in order to be successful, we seek to create a network of partners who share our goals for such a resource. These will include representatives from peer associations, memory institutions, and individual collectors and discographers. Realizing that institutions and private collectors are both passionate about their collections, but don't always share the same goals, we see connecting these two groups as the essential first step in an ambitious project of this scale. We have already reached out for cooperation from a number of individuals and organizations around the world, and "connect, collect and collaborate" has become the guiding principle of the committee and our project. We absolutely need the expertise of others who have studied and worked closely with the recorded output of specific labels, genres, artists, regions or countries.

Our plan is to publish the bibliography on the IASA website and make it freely available to everyone. Once complete, it will include information about all current and out-of-print discographies published worldwide in print and electronic formats, including unpublished work in progress. We also plan to create a stored archive of full digital (pdf) versions of discographies, including those which have thus far only been available in print. These pdf versions will be linked to their corresponding entries in the bibliography.

We begin with a bibliography in order to accomplish the first truly international survey of discographic work done to date. But we also envision this work as the first phase of a projected, long-range plan to create a collaborative international online discography of sound recordings.

All this information and more can be found within the project page on the IASA website: <http://www.iasa-web.org/international-bibliography-discographies-worldwide-collaborative-project>

We'll say a lot more about how to participate at this year's IASA conference in Washington, but if you already have a discography you'd like to add to the bibliography, please use the link below: <http://goo.gl/forms/7CSLvQCKYI>

Our vision is to bring institutions and collectors from many countries together in a network that can collectively build this resource. If you know others who might like to help or become active in the work of our committee, please forward this information along.

## New Publications

### 2000 Jahre Musik auf der Schallplatte – Two Thousand Years of Music Volume 8 of the Lindström Project Series

by Martin Elste

The Gesellschaft für Historische Tonträger, in conjunction with the National Institute for Music Research (Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz), announces the forthcoming publication of volume 8 of the Lindström Project series:

*2000 Jahre Musik auf der Schallplatte – Two Thousand Years of Music. Alte Musik anno 1930. Eine diskologische Dokumentation zur Interpretationsgeschichte Alter Musik* (ISBN 978-3-95022906-3-9)

edited by the undersigned and Carsten Schmidt. This book is accompanied by a CD. This publication will be devoted to a famous project which the company released in 1930. With this set of – merely – 12 double-sided 10-inch records, its editor Curt Sachs, a well-known German musicological authority, intended to present the history of art music in little more than 60 minutes of sound, starting with Greek songs and ending with keyboard music by Bach.

To us nowadays, such an undertaking appears either naïve or presumptuous. Yet almost ninety years back, the approach towards a history of music was determined by an urge to summarize and by the limited technical and economic means of the still modern medium of sound recording.



One can easily compare those historic recordings with modern recordings of the same repertoire. The aural contrast in itself would make fascinating listening. Yet this would not do justice to the old recordings. In order to value them within their historical context, it is important to search for historical documents that are connected with them in one way or another. Only by doing this, we can determine the musical and scholarly quality within these performances and their impact on the historiography of music. Such additional historical documents are, e. g. articles accompanying the recordings and introducing to the repertoire recorded as well as contemporary record reviews. The most tricky yet most important additional media are the performing editions used. One will be able to evaluate the originality of the performance only by carefully comparing the sound with those editions. Tricky, as these music editions are usually not identified. When listening to these recordings with modern scholarly editions at hand, one is surprised by the discrepancies. Thus, the musicians, most of them then teaching at the Berlin Academy of Church and School Music, must have used editions which we nowadays consider corrupt. We have identified most of the editions than used. Many of them are extremely scarce nowadays. Therefore they are reprinted in this volume.

Since the original set of records was internationally marketed, there were also editions in English and Spanish. As consequence, our publication contains several English texts (the English booklet in facsimile plus reviews in English journals). The discophile aspect of the release is encountered by a bibliophile attitude that is prevalent in the production of this project.

The actual transfers (extremely well done by Christian Zwarg) are not just digital transfers. They come with a critical report that describes the technical and aesthetic approach applied to these transfers. In addition, three record sides have been reproduced with alternative tracks using a reduced playback-speed as suggested by Curt Sachs in his notes to these recordings. One additional record side (Erwin Bodky performing »La Poule« by Rameau) has been transferred twice: as the first, rejected yet erroneously published take (of which only one surviving copy is known), and as the second take which is the generally known rendering.

To sum up: This is the first time that a historical set of recordings has been edited in analogy to the critical edition of a composition. It is, in a way, the equivalent to an »Urtext«-edition.