

Recording of the week: Friction drum song from Botswana

This week's selection comes from Dr. Janet Topp Fargion, Head of Sound and Vision. This song, based on the lyric 'The children of the traditional doctor can kill the medical doctor', is performed by Sebata on the sevuikivuiki friction drum and other Mbukushu villagers in the Tsodilo Hills, in the...

Recording of the week: Happy New Year!

This week's selection comes from Andrea Zarza Canova, Curator of World and Traditional Music. 'Bonne Année' was released on the album African Acoustic Vol.1 – Guitar Songs From Tanzania, Zambia & Zaire by record label Original Music In this recording made by John Low, three boys in their late teens...

Banned in South Africa: Dr Martin Luther King Jr.

It is hard to imagine a set of circumstances in which the possession of a vinyl record of a Christian minister would be illegal. But this did happen, and not so long ago. The year was 1966; the country was South Africa; and the speaker was Dr Martin Luther King...

Recording of the week: The Kankurang or how to enforce a lockdown

This week's selection comes from Michele Banal, Audio Project Cataloguer for Unlocking our Sound Heritage. The Kankurang is a Mandinka masked figure from the Senegambia region, associated with male societies and more specifically with boys' initiation ceremonies. It is a protective figure and an enforcer of rules, but, as masked...

In search of the ramkie in the Karoo and the Olifants River Valley

Jose Manuel de Prada-Samper is a researcher and writer with an expertise in mythology and folklore. Since 2011, he has been recording and investigating the culture of Afrikaans-speaking Khoisan descendants living in rural areas in the Western Cape and the Northern Cape provinces of South Africa. In March 2018 he...