

Recording of the week: Steve Reich at the ICA

This week's selection comes from Stephen Cleary, Lead Curator of Literary & Creative Recordings. Anyone who enjoyed BBC Four's recent two-part documentary on American minimalism Tones, Drones and Arpeggios: The Magic of Minimalism might also like this recording of composer Steve Reich discussing his life and work. Reich was joined...

Linguistics at the Library – Episode 6

PhD placement students, Andrew Booth and Rowan Campbell write: Are there any words your family use that no one else has heard of? Can you guess what fruckle, woga, elpit and pivoeed mean? This week, Andrew and Rowan look into this phenomenon, with lots of examples from visitors who donated...

An Elegant Sufficiency, or the Curious Case of a Victorian Meme

PhD placement student Rowan Campbell writes: It sometimes strikes me just how much chance and canny timing have to do with the way we experience the world. While cataloguing audio files, I came across the following speaker (born 1944, London) who tells us that her great-grandmother used to say "I've...

Recording of the week: anyone for tig/it/tag?

This week's selection comes from Jonnie Robinson, Lead Curator of Spoken English. The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren (Peter and Iona Opie, 1959) lists numerous regional variants for 'truce terms' – the code word used to withdraw briefly from a playground chasing game or to seek immunity from

Recording of the week: the four rooms of creativity

This week's selection comes from David Govier, Oral History Archivist. Why do a corporate oral history? The late Wally Olins, co-founder of Wolff Olins, explains his mixed motivations in wanting to set up an oral history of the company – from an urge for immortality, to the representative nature of...