

Recording of the week: Rabindranath Tagore's 'Songs of Patriotism'

This week's selection comes from Dr Janet Topp Fargion, Lead Curator of World and Traditional Music.

Born in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a writer, poet, artist and teacher. He was the first Indian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, in 1913, for his poetry collection *Gitanjali*. Tagore wrote over 2,000 songs during his life, referred to as *Rabindra Sangeet*, in which he expressed his world view commenting on politics, progress and education. This song is taken from an album of patriotic songs, and is sung by Hemanta Mukherjee (1920-1989), popularly known as Hemant Kumar, a respected Indian singer, composer and film producer.

[Nai Nai Bhoy](#)



Tagore's work was hugely influential on European writers and thinkers. A part of his life narrative is highlighted in the [Connecting Stories: Our British Asian Heritage](#) exhibition at the Library of Birmingham in collaboration with the British Library running until 4 November, 2017.

Nai Nai Bhoy is taken from *Songs of Patriotism* – Rabindranath Tagore.
Label/catalogue: His Master's Voice ECLP 2280, 1962. BL shelfmark: 1LP0156677

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Recording of the week: not on period instruments

This week's selection comes from Jonathan Summers, Curator of Classical Music Recordings.

Those of us brought up in the 1980s and 1990s only hearing Haydn performed on period instruments missed a lot. While these were innovative and fascinating, older recordings of symphony orchestras – with large string sections performing Classical repertoire on contemporary instruments – became outmoded. This recording from 1953 of the Oxford Symphony by Geroge Szell and his Cleveland Orchestra is a delight, full of elegance, wit, virility and humour – all the best traits of Haydn's genius.

[Haydn Symphony no. 92 G major \(Oxford\)](#)



A collection of Haydn's symphonies can be found on [British Library Sounds](#).

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[Recording of the week: soul midwives](#)

This week's selection comes from Holly Gilbert, Cataloguer of Digital Multimedia Collections.

Friends, Vanessa and Felicity, talk about their work as soul midwives which involves working with people who are dying to ensure that their death is personal and dignified. They describe the different ways that people approach and experience death and how their work has changed the way that they view life and think about their own death. They discuss at length the mysteries that surround death, how other people react to what they do and the gift of insights that they feel are given to them by the people they work with. They also describe the experiences of death that made them want to do this job, they talk about how much they enjoy what they do and say that, contrary to what people might think, it actually involves a lot of joy and laughter.

[The Listening Project_soul midwives \(excerpt\)](#)



This recording is part of [The Listening Project](#), an audio archive of conversations recorded by the BBC and archived at the British Library. The full conversation between Vanessa and Felicity can be found [here](#).

Follow [@CollectingSound](#) and [@soundarchive](#) for all the latest news.

[Recording of the week: computer](#)

programming and motherhood in the 1960s

This week's selection comes from Tom Lean, Project Interviewer for An Oral History of British Science.

Like many women in the 1960s, Stephanie Shirley left her job in the computer industry after becoming a mother. At the time, women were expected to cut short their professional careers and stay at home to raise the family, but this was not quite what Stephanie Shirley had in mind. In 1963 she started a company named Freelance Programmers, to allow women who had left the computer industry when they had children to continue working as programmers from home. In time, Stephanie Shirley's company grew to a major business employing thousands of people. However, at the start, with sexism rife, Stephanie Shirley had to go to rather unusual lengths to create a professional image, not least calling herself "Steve", as she recalls in this interview from [An Oral History of British Science](#).

[Stephanie Shirley_Programming at home \(BL ref C1379/28\)](#)



This clip is part of [Voices of Science](#), an online resource which uses oral history interviews with prominent British scientists and engineers to tell the stories of some of the most remarkable scientific and engineering discoveries of the past century.

Follow [@BL_OralHistory](#) and [@soundarchive](#) for all the latest news.

Tom Lean will speak about the related [An Oral History of Electricity Supply Industry](#) project at 'The Life Electric', a British Library event on Thursday 19 October. Book your tickets here <https://www.bl.uk/events/the-life-electric-oral-histories-from-the-uk-electricity-supply-industry>

[Recording of the week: Chantal Akerman](#)

This week's selection comes from Stephen Cleary, Lead Curator of Literary & Creative Recordings.

Pioneering Belgian film director [Chantal Akerman](#) (1950-2015) features in this week's recording from the archive. Here she is interviewed by Simon Field at the ICA, London, in 1990, on the occasion of a season of her films.

[ICA Talk_Chantal Akerman](#)



This recording comes from a [substantial collection](#) of talks and discussions held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London between 1982-1993.

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