

Recording of the week: John Blackwood McEwen

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

Scottish composer Sir John Blackwood McEwen (1868-1948) had a distinguished career producing a large amount of music, little of which is heard today. He was Principal of the Royal Academy of Music from 1924-1936 and was knighted in 1931. His String Quartet No. 6, 'Biscay', written in 1913 (and confusingly published as No. 8), consists of three movements. The second and third were recorded in 1916 by the London String Quartet and a live recording from 1951 of the complete work exists from the Library of Congress. Here is the delightful third movement, [La racleuse](#) (The Oyster-Raker) from 1916.

[String Quartet No. 6 \(Biscay\)_La racleuse](#)



Portrait of Sir John Blackwood McEwan by Reginald Grenville Eves (Royal College of Music, CC BY-SA 4.0) via Wikimedia Commons

Visit [Chamber Music](#) on British Library Sounds to listen to more performances by the London String Quartet.

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

[Recording of the week: Linton Kwesi Johnson on dub poet Michael Smith](#)

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

In this recording, poet and reggae artist Linton Kwesi Johnson gives a lecture on the late Jamaican performance poet Mikey Smith (1954-1983), author of 'Me Cyaan Believe It'. The talk is based on his personal knowledge of the poet and the obscure circumstances of his death.

[Remembering Michael Smith_Linton Kwesi Johnson](#)



The recording was made live in Cambridge in 2012, at the conference '[The Power of Caribbean Poetry: Word & Sound](#)'. [Linton Kwesi Johnson's oral history interview](#), made for the British Library project 'Authors' Lives' 2014-2015, is available to listen to at the Library by [appointment](#).

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

[Recording of the week: let it snow!](#)

This week's selection comes from Cheryl Tipp, Curator of Wildlife and Environmental Sounds

There's nothing quite like the sound of walking through freshly fallen snow. This particular recording was made in the Kentish village of Knockholt, just after midnight on the 3rd February 2009. This signalled the start of a prolonged period of heavy snowfall that was to see most of the British Isles grind to a halt, forcing schools, railway lines and even airports to close because of the treacherous conditions.

[Footsteps in the snow, 3 Feb 2009, Kent, United Kingdom, Phil Riddett](#)



Visit [British Library Sounds](#) to listen to more recordings of weather from around the world.

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

[PhD Placement Opportunity: Developing Access to the Evolving English VoiceBank](#)

The *Evolving English VoiceBank* is an audio archive of approximately 15,000 voices created by visitors to the Library's *Evolving English* exhibition in 2010/11. This collection is only partly catalogued and a new placement opportunity at the British Library offers a PhD student the chance to work on this unique and so-far unexplored archive.

During the three-month placement (or part-time equivalent) the student will audit [VoiceBank](#) and [WordBank](#) audio files and prepare cataloguing metadata for about 500 to 750 files for the Sound and Moving Image catalogue. The student will receive training in audio editing software and in preparing cataloguing records, and will also be able to use the collection for original research or potentially to support their own doctoral project. The content will be particularly relevant for students of dialectology, sociolinguistics, phonetics or language variation and change.

The placement student will be a full member of the Spoken English team, which sits within the British Library's Sound & Vision team, and participate in the department's core activities. This may involve taking part in workshops or conferences, writing blog posts, and preparing content for online resources. The placement will support the development of transferrable skills in areas such as public engagement, team-working, and project planning and delivery. It will be an opportunity to engage in the work of a world-class research Library and to understand its content, structure and remit.

The placement would suit someone studying for a PhD in linguistics or English Language. They would be expected to have a thorough grounding in dialectology, sociolinguistics and/or phonetics. Familiarity with British accents would also be desirable. View a detailed [placement profile](#).

Application guidelines

For full application guidelines and profiles of the other placements offered under this scheme, visit the Library's [Research Collaboration webpages](#).

The application deadline is **20 February 2017**.

For any queries about this placement opportunity, please contact Research.Development@bl.uk

A note to interested applicants

This is an unpaid professional development opportunity, which is open to current (or very recent) PhD researchers only. To apply, you need to have the approval of your PhD supervisor and your department's Graduate Tutor (or equivalent senior academic manager).

Our PhD placement scheme has been developed in consultation with Higher Education partners and stakeholders to provide opportunities for PhD students to develop and apply their research skills outside the university sector. Please note that the Library itself is not able to provide payment to placement students, nor can it provide costs for daily commuting or relocation to the site of the placement. Anyone applying for a placement at the Library is expected to consult their university or Doctoral Training Partnership/Doctoral Training Centre to ascertain what funding is available to support them. The Library strongly recommends to universities that a PhD student given approval to undertake a placement is in receipt of a stipend for the duration of the placement.

Recording of the week: Exotic food?

Exotic through whose perspective?

This week's selection comes from Niamh Dillon, National Life Stories Project Interviewer.

Rosamund Grant was born in Guyana and moved to London as a young woman in the 1960s. Here she discusses challenging European stereotypes of Caribbean food and how she defines herself through her cooking.

[Rosamund Grant_Not just Caribbean Stew](#)



The recording is part of the [Food: from Source to Salespoint](#) collection which documents changes in the production, manufacture, retail and consumption of food in Britain in the twentieth and twenty first century.

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