



Research > MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... seeks to break through to unearth and reveal private collections of music and sound *memorabilia*. It is a historiography of sound collecting that reveals the unseen and passionate work of the amateur collector while reconstructing multiple parallel histories such as the evolution of recording formats, archiving issues, the collecting market and the evolution of musical styles beyond the marketplace.

Each episode in the series is accompanied by an additional programme featuring an exclusive music selection by each of the collectors.

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Produced by Matias Rossi.

Matias Rossi studied Journalism the National University of La Plata (UNLP), Argentina. In 2000 he settled in Barcelona, where he set up his current base of operations. Rossi was a regular collaborator with the label Ooze.bâp and co-director of the online magazine *Acetone* and the Fanzinoteca Ambulant. In 2005 he founded the instrumental group Bradien, which has released several works and collaborated with Bill Wells, John Giorno and Catalan poet Eduard Escoffet. www.bradien.net

Mark Gergis is a sound artist, collector of cultural oddities and regular collaborator of the record label Sublime Frequencies, from which he has carried out important musical research since 2003. His work includes dozens of documentary collages and compilations that bring to light unusual audio and video from Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian countries. www.porestsound.net

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...

Mark Gergis

Over the past twenty years, this North American of Iraqi origins has immersed himself in popular and folk music scenes and subgenres from Syria, Iraq, Sumatra, Cambodia, Thailand and other places, in order to rescue what he calls 'sound anomalies' from oblivion: records, songs, artists and productions that stand out for their singularity in relation to the mass.

01. Summary

In some episodes of *Over the Edge* and *The Chopping Channel*, the surreal radio shows by Californian collective Negativland, Mark Gergis played The Man of the World, a completely fictional character who nonetheless shared certain similarities with Gergis and his activities as a collector and a compiler of record label Sublime Frequencies. In the radio programs, The Man of the World brought in and discussed sound objects he had come across on his travels around the globe. The musical instruments and pseudo archaeological finds he brought to the show seem to be a clear reference to the musical documents that Gergis regularly salvages on his trips to the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Over the past twenty years, this North American of Iraqi origins has immersed himself in popular and folk music scenes and subgenres from Syria, Iraq, Sumatra, Cambodia, Thailand and other places, in order to rescue what he calls 'sound anomalies' from oblivion: records, songs, artists and productions that stand out for their singularity in relation to the mass. Gergis does not approach collecting as an indiscriminate accumulation or an attempt to reconstruct the musical history of a particular country or region down to the last detail with an academic's rigour. His interest lies in the originality and extravagance of musical products gestated on the margins of the mainstream, or in everything that seems to possess these qualities from an outsider's perspective. Because in his untiring process of research and discovery, Gergis is fully aware that his work lies in a grey area in which the model archivist's neutrality and objectivity are replaced by aesthetic criteria/prejudices. An unusual process of filtering and assimilation that celebrates the clash of civilisations, even beyond idiomatic, chronological, cultural and sociogeographic barriers.

02. Playlist

Part I

Unknown artist 'Blue Basket (Instrumental Version)'. From the CD *Cambodian Cassette Archives* (SF011).

Unknown artist 'Segue Bezikh'. From the CD *Folk and Pop Songs from Iraq* (SF025).

Unknown artist 'Instrumental'. From the CD *Cambodian Cassette Archives* (SF011).

P. Promdan 'Keng Ma (Dog Races)'. From the CD *Thai Pop Spectacular 60s – 80s* (SF032).

Johnny Guitar 'Bangkok by Night'. From the LP *Shadow Music of Thailand* (SF042).

'Tourism Past the Medium Wave'. From the CD *Radio Thailand* (SF028). Compiled and edited by Mark Gergis.

Al Thawra Street. From the CD *I remember Syria* (SF009). Recorded by Porest.

Man City Lion 'Nah Anad'. From the CD *Siamese Soul – Thai Pop Spectacular vol. 2* (SF050).

Ubun Pattana with Surin Paksiri 'Lam Sarawan'. From the CD *Siamese Soul – Thai Pop Spectacular vol. 2* (SF050).

PM 7_Jupiter 'Sawan Bangkok'. From the LP *Shadow Music of Thailand* (SF042).



[Mark Gergis during the recording of MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH...]

Thongmark Leacha 'Now She Loves Every Man Except Me'. From the CD *Molam Thai vol. 2* (SF033).
Omar Souleyman 'Atabat'. From the double LP *Highway To Hassake (Folk and Pop Sounds of Syria)* (SF031).
'Old City Wedding and Souk'. From the CD *I remember Syria* (SF009). Recorded by Porest.
'Radwan Satellite – The Bedouin Lobby'. From the CD *I remember Syria* (SF009). Recorded by Porest.
Unknown artist 'Pleng Keh Sam Sip Sam Natee'. From the CD *Molam-thai Country Groove* (SF019).
Khong Khao Noi Mea Ka 99 'Ahn Nai'. From the CD *Molam-thai Country Groove* (SF019).
Carol Kim 'Cái Trâm Em Cài (Your Hair Clip)'. From the double LP *Saigon Rock & Soul 1968 – 1974* (SF060).
The Son of P.M. 'Plaeng Yiepoun'. From the LP *Shadow Music of Thailand* (SF042).

03. Related links

Sublime Frequencies
www.sublimefrequencies.com

Porest
www.porestsound.net

Porest blog
<http://porest-report.blogspot.com>

MEMORABILIA. COLLECTING SOUNDS WITH... lecture series, Spring 2011
www.macba.cat/controller.php?p_action=show_page&pagina_id=33&inst_id=30547

Conversation with Mark Gergis, Spring 2011
http://rwm.macba.cat/es/extra/memorabilia_mark_gergis/capsula

Interview with Mark Gergis at Fecal Face
www.fecalface.com/SF/index.php?Itemid=100&id=1346&option=com_content&task=view

04. Acknowledgements

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05. Copyright note

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