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**MEDIA MECHANICS AND LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
TEAM WITH STUDIO 360 WITH KURT ANDERSEN**

**"THE SOUNDS OF AMERICAN CULTURE" RETURNS
TO SPOTLIGHT HISTORIC RECORDINGS**

*Classic Recording by John Lee Hooker Launches Series on Dec. 5,
carried on public radio stations nationwide*

San Francisco, CA – “The Sounds of American Culture,” the award winning radio series produced by Ben Manilla and Media Mechanics, returns to draw attention to the Library of Congress’ National Recording Registry.

Since 2002, the Librarian of Congress, James H. Billington, with advice from the Library of Congress’ National Recording Preservation Board, has named a limited number of recordings each year to the National Recording Registry for preservation. These recordings are considered “culturally, historically or aesthetically significant.” This is the fourth year Media Mechanics has produced a radio series about these selections. The first three years won the Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals at the International Radio Programming Festival.

Selections from the seventh annual registry exemplify the rich diversity of the nation's aural history. The series begins the weekend of December 5/6, 2009 and will be available as podcasts at a later date.

"Boogie Chillen" John Lee Hooker (1948) - Airing December 5-6.

This first hit for the largely self-taught John Lee Hooker showcases his take on the Delta blues. Hooker was born in Coahoma County, Mississippi, spent his early years in Memphis and eventually moved to Detroit. The R&B label Modern released the infectious rhythmic track after Hooker’s manager presented them with a demo. While the song’s instrumentation is simple, featuring only vocal, guitar and the tapping of Hooker’s foot, the driving rhythm and confessional lyrics have guaranteed its place as an influential and enduring blues classic.

This week’s featured guests include: Charlie Musselwhite a celebrated Blues musician and Peter Guralnick, author of several books relating to the American rock and roll scene of the 20th century.



“O Que é Que a Bahiana Tem” Carmen Miranda (1939) - Airing December 12- 13.

This recording, with its lively exchange between the singer and dancer Carmen Miranda and her band, embodies the merriment of Brazilian Carnival songs. “Que é Que a Bahiana Tem?” (“What does the Bahian girl have?”) was an enormously successful recording in Brazil that celebrated Bahia culture at its roots and solidified samba's hold on Brazilian popular music. The recording introduced both the samba rhythm and Carmen Miranda to American audiences. It was also the first recording of a song by Dorival Caymmi, who went on to become a major composer and performer.

This week's featured guests include: Martha Gil-Montero, author of the [Brazilian Bombshell](#) an extensive biography of Carmen Miranda, and Dori Caymmi, a composer and singer who has worked with artists worldwide.

"2000 Years with Carl Reiner and Mel Brooks” Carl Reiner and Mel Brooks (1961)

The secret to living 2000 years? “Never touch fried foods!” In their party routine first performed for friends, Mel Brooks played a 2000-year-old man, while Carl Reiner, as the straight man, interviewed him. After much convincing, the two writers for Sid Caesar’s “Your Show of Shows,” recorded their ad-libbed dialogue for a 1961 album. Interview subjects ranged from marriage (“I was married over 200 times!”) and children (“I have over 1500 children and not one of them ever comes to visit!”) to transportation (“What was the means of transportation? Fear.”).

This radio feature’s guests include: Rob Reiner, a successful Hollywood director, actor, producer, Billy Crystal, famed comedian and actor, and Janet Coleman, author of [The Compass](#), a history of America’s first improvisational theatre company.

"He Stopped Loving Her Today” George Jones (1980)

George Jones has said that he initially thought “He Stopped Loving Her Today” was too sad to be very popular, but, at one of the lowest points of his career and personal life, he made it one of country music’s defining and most enduring songs. Billy Sherrill’s restrained production highlighted the plaintive yet highly nuanced vocals that were the hallmark of Jones’ mature style, a style that stretched back to his days singing for tips in the streets of his hometown, Beaumont, Texas, in the 1940s.

This show's featured guests include: George Jones and Bobby Braddock, the song’s co-author.

“Rumble” Link Wray (1958)

Asked for a tune that kids could dance “The Stroll” to, Link Wray came up with this powerfully menacing guitar instrumental on the spot, and the crowd went wild, demanding encores. When he couldn’t recreate the distorted sound of his live version in a studio, Wray poked holes in his amp speakers, cranked up the tremolo, and was then able to capture what he wanted in three takes -- for a cost of \$57. Originally titled “Oddball,” it was renamed after the gang fights in “West Side Story” by a record producer’s daughter. Wray’s primal guitar influenced a generation of rockers including Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck, the Kinks, Jimmy Page and Neil Young. Bob Dylan called “Rumble” the “greatest instrumental ever.” Pete Townshend said, “... if it hadn’t been for Link Wray and ‘Rumble,’ I would have never picked up a guitar.”



This show's featured guests include: Dave Davies founder and lead guitarist for The Kinks and Brian Wright McLeod author of [The Encyclopedia of Native Music: More than A Century of Recordings from Wax Cylinder To The Internet](#)

Award Winning Series produced by Ben Manilla and Media Mechanics:

2009 New York Festival Bronze World Medal for "The Sounds of American Culture" in the Culture & the Arts category. Featuring T-Bone Walker, "Call It Stormy Monday", Roy Orbison, "Oh, Pretty Woman," and Kitty Wells, "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels".

2008 New York Festival Gold World award for "The Sounds of American Culture" in the Culture and the Arts category: Featuring Sam Cooke's song "A Change is Gonna Come," The Wailer's "Burnin'" and "The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart".

2007 New York Festival Silver World award for "The Sounds of American Culture" in the Culture and the Arts category: Featuring the recordings of Jerry Lee Lewis, "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On," The Jimi Hendrix Experience, "Are You Experienced," and Arturo Toscanin's recording of Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings."

The Library of Congress, the nation's oldest federal cultural institution, is the world's preeminent reservoir of knowledge, providing unparalleled integrated resources to Congress and the American people. Founded in 1800, the Library seeks to further human understanding and wisdom by providing access to knowledge through its magnificent collections, which bring to bear the world's knowledge in almost all of the world's languages and America's private-sector intellectual and cultural creativity in almost all formats. Many of the Library's rich resources and treasures may also be accessed through the Library's award-winning Web site at www.loc.gov and via interactive exhibitions on a new, personalized Web site at www.myLOC.gov.

Studio 360 delve deep into the ever-changing cultural landscape with novelist and co-founder of legendary "Spy" magazine, Kurt Andersen. "Studio 360" is public radio's only national program devoted to arts and culture, co-produced by PRI and WNYC. Streaming audio, podcasts, and airtimes are available at www.studio360.org

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