

# THE 2018 SONG COLLECTORS COLLECTIVE GATHERING

## Programme

9.45am REGISTRATION

### Opening Address

10am **Sam Lee** The 2018 SCC Trip to Ireland

### Presentations

10.30am **Steve Roud** Interests, Obsessions and Agendas: the Early Folk Song Collectors

All collectors, past and present, have their own interests and agendas, their passions and their blind-spots; and it seems traditional in the folk world to criticise our forbears for what we see as their shortcomings. But instead of whingeing about what they should have done, or not done, we only need to understand their motivations, to make the most of the wonderful treasure trove they have bequeathed us.

10.45am **Dr Julia Bishop** Forty Thousand Miles for Folk Song: The James Madison Carpenter Collection

James Madison Carpenter (1888-1983) was an American folk song scholar who collected extensively in Britain during the 1920s and '30s. At a time when many native collectors saw their fieldwork as done, he gathered some 3000 songs and 300 mummings plays, as well as a handful of folk tales, childrens' games, and customs. Driving around the country in his Austin Seven, he later reckoned to have travelled 40,000 miles over a 6 year period in his quest for songs, and encountered some 800 contributors. This talk follows in Carpenter's footsteps, looking at what motivated him, how he collected, and what we know of his contributors, together with examples which illustrate the riches and scope of this remarkable collection.

11am **Dr Janet Topp Fargion** Safe & Sound? Preserving At-risk Sounds For the Future

The British Library's 'Unlocking our Sound Heritage' project will digitally preserve around half a million sound recordings from the BL and other collections around the UK and make them available for listening. This paper will describe the methods and explain the urgency and significance of safeguarding audio content for future generations.

### Panel

11.15am The Burden of Expectation - a chaired discussion with **Sam Lee, Steve Roud, Dr Julia Bishop, Dr Janet Topp Fargion**

11.45am Q&A

12noon TEA BREAK

### Keynotes

12:15pm **Patrick Jasper Lee** In Sanity: The Importance of Reintroducing Folklore, Animism and the Otherworld

In just a couple of hundred years our folk beliefs have disappeared entirely from our communities, which means we are losing our intuition, the otherworld, and an age-old way relating to one another. Our social, emotional and mental wellbeing may well be suffering as a result; how much could these old ways of thinking come to our aid?

1pm LUNCH BREAK

2pm **Margaret Bennett** “This one is from the Old Country”– In Search of Songs Among the English, Irish and Scottish-Newfoundlanders

In 1949 Newfoundland became part of Canada, ending trans-Atlantic governance that dated back to 1497 when Henry VII claimed it for England. With a heritage of more than five centuries of songs, Newfoundland claims one of the richest stores of British Isles tradition in the world. This session gives an insight into the work of earlier song collectors then shares examples recorded during fieldwork between 1968 and 2017.

2.45pm TEA BREAK

3pm **Kadialy Kouyate** ‘The voice of my environment: Songs inspired by current political and social issues around me’

Kadialy will be performing playing Kora and singing, with some talking between songs.

3.45pm Closing words

4pm EVENT ENDS/DRINKS @ TRAVELLING THROUGH... BOOKSHOP

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*Evening events at the Southbank Centre*

6pm Sam Lee in conversation with Shirley Collins

10pm Sam Lee’s Singing With Nightingales Live

# Speakers

## MARGARET BENNETT

**Margaret Bennett** is a folklorist, writer, singer and broadcaster. She was brought up in a family of tradition bearers, Gaelic on her mother's side (from Skye) and Lowland Scots on her father's. School years were spent in Skye, Lewis and Shetland before studying in Glasgow. In the mid-sixties, the legendary Hamish Henderson, singer, poet, folklorist and political activist inspired her career choice. In 1968 she emigrated to Canada to study Folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland, after which she spent a year in Quebec as a folklorist for Canada's Museum of Civilization. From 1984 to 1996 she lectured at The University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies and now teaches part-time at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. A prize-winning author, she has written ten books, contributed to over 40 others, featured on media productions and several musical collaborations with her son, Martyn Bennett (1971–2005). She is widely regarded as 'Scotland's foremost folklorist' and was made an Honorary Professor of the Royal Scottish Academy in 2012. [www.margaretbennett.co.uk](http://www.margaretbennett.co.uk)

## DR JULIA BISHOP

**Dr Julia Bishop** gained her PhD in Folklore from Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1993, having previously gained an MA in Folk Life Studies at the University of Leeds in 1983, and a BA in Music at the University of Cambridge (1982). Her interests have come together in two main areas of research – traditional music and children's folklore. As a part-time research fellow of the Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, she leads the James Madison Carpenter Collection Project which aims to make this extensive and fascinating body of traditional song and drama available online and in a critical edition. She also studies children's play and folklore, past and present, and has edited the final and hitherto unpublished volume by the Edinburgh teacher, James T. R. Ritchie, based on play he collected in the 1950s and '60s.

## KADIALY KOUYATE

**Kodialy Kouyate** is a musician, a singer songwriter inspired by the West African Griot repertoire. Born into the great line of Kouyate Griot in Southern Senegal, Kodialy's mesmerising kora playing and singing style have been appreciated in many prestigious venues as both a soloist and in different ensembles. Since his arrival in the UK Kodialy has played a significant part in enriching the London musical scene with his griot legacy. He has been teaching the Kora at SOAS university of London for the last decade and he has also been involved in countless musical projects both as a collaborator and a session musician. [kodialykouyate.com](http://kodialykouyate.com)

## PATRICK JASPER LEE

**Patrick Jasper Lee** comes from a Romani Gypsy background, and he brings the folklore, mythology and traditions of the ancient Romani people to his books. He also has Asperger's syndrome, and advocates autistic thinking as a means of assisting self-awareness and developing observation skills. His fiction/non-fiction books on Romani Gypsy themes are unique to his indigenous culture. His first book *We Borrow the Earth* was published by Thorsons, HarperCollins; his current works (including the second edition of *We Borrow the Earth*) are now published by Ravine Press. He is keen to portray the contrasting realms of invincibility and vulnerability within human nature in his books, and campaigns to reintroduce people to the benefits of primitive psychology as a means of seeing the world and nature in their original forms.

[www.patrickjasperlee.com](http://www.patrickjasperlee.com)

## STEVE ROUD

**Steve Roud** is the creator of the [Roud Folk Song Index](#), an expert on folklore and an author of numerous books on the subject. He was formerly Local Studies Librarian for the London Borough of Croydon and Honorary Librarian of the Folklore Society.

## DR JANET TOPP FARGION

**Dr Janet Topp Fargion** is Lead Curator of World and Traditional Music at the British Library. Her general research interest is the discipline of Ethnomusicology, with a focus on the music of Africa, particularly of South Africa and the Swahili Coast in East Africa. Her research currently centres on ethnographic sound recordings as sources for ethnomusicological investigation. Janet is an active member of the British Forum for Ethnomusicology and the Archiving Committee of the Society for Ethnomusicology and is chair of the Research Archive Section of the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives. In 2015, she co-curated the British Library major exhibition *West Africa: Word, Symbol, Song*.



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A DAY OF SONGS & STORIES FROM FOLKLORENISTS,  
SINGERS, MUSICIANS AND STORYTELLERS FROM  
BRITAIN AND AROUND THE WORLD

Sat 15 April 2018, 10AM - 4PM  
(followed by drinks at Travelling Through...)

Waterloo Robin Centre, SW1 /AA  
E15/E18 Concessions

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