

Letter from the Director



This issue of the *Journal of Texas Music History* marks another important milestone in our history. As you probably have noticed, we have changed our name from the Institute for the History of Texas Music to the Center for Texas Music History. This new name is not only more succinct and easier to remember, but it also reflects our tremendous success and rapid growth into a larger,

more comprehensive Center, which sponsors a variety of exciting and unique programs.

Under this new name, we continue to develop our many important and innovative educational and preservational activities. Our graduate and undergraduate courses on the musical history of the Southwest are growing in popularity. *The Handbook of Texas Music*, the definitive encyclopedia of Texas music history, which we are publishing jointly with the Texas State Historical Association and the Texas Music Office, will be available in 2003. The online bibliography of books, articles, and other publications relating to the history of Texas and Southwestern music, which our students developed in cooperation with the Texas Music Office, remains a very useful tool for researchers and scholars.

This year, our "Texas Music History Unplugged" concert series featured remarkable performances by Ray Benson, Joe Ely, Tish Hinojosa, Ponty Bone, Ruthie Foster, and Cyd Cassone. Through their music, these artists have helped students and others better understand the rich history and tremendous cultural diversity of the southwestern United States.

We continue to work with Rosetta Wills and a variety of prominent people in the music and business communities to establish a "Bob Wills Foundation," which will fund scholarships and research and publishing opportunities related to the study of Southwestern music history.

Our community outreach programs, through which we give educational presentations at public schools, community centers, and other venues, are going strong. Our newest community outreach program, *Swan Songs*, in which we work with musicians and health-care professionals to organize musical performances for critically-ill patients, is brand new, yet it has already received its first \$500 sponsorship. Our thanks to Balie Griffith and Christine Albert for helping get this program off to a such a great start.

Our second compilation CD, *Travelin' Texas, Volume 2*, which includes nineteen songs from Delbert McClinton, Eliza Gilkyson, the Ace in the Hole Band featuring George Strait, Billy Joe Shaver, Sara Hickman, Ray Wiley Hubbard, and a variety of other great Texas musicians, has been very successful. Proceeds from the CD have been vital in helping fund our ongoing educational projects. We are very grateful to the musicians and everyone else who helped with this project.

Several new and exciting projects are on the horizon, including a collaborative project with the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin and KLRU and *Austin City Limits* to develop an exhibit on the history of Texas country music.

With this third issue of *The Journal of Texas Music History*, we continue to provide solid scholarly research on American music history in a way that is accessible to both academic and non-academic audiences alike. As the first academic journal to focus on the entire spectrum of Texas and Southwestern music history, the *Journal* continues to earn national praise for its high academic standards and its innovative format.

I am deeply indebted to Kathryn Ledbetter, Gregg Andrews, Vikki Bynum, Jenni Finlay, Ann Marie Ellis, Gene Bourgeois, the entire SWT History Department, Gerald Hill, T.Cay Rowe, Diana Harrell, César Limón, Rick and Laurie Baish, Lucky and Becky Tomblin, Kim and Robert Richey, Jo and Paul Snider, Margie First, Darrell and Barbara Piersol, Dennis and Margaret Dunn, John Kunz, Mandy York, Tracie Ferguson, Kent Finlay, and everyone else who has contributed to the success of the *Journal* and the Center for Texas Music History. I'm especially grateful to the Joan and Herb Kelleher Charitable Foundation for helping underwrite publication of this journal. We believe the work we're doing is very important, and we need the ongoing support of others to continue our success.

I invite you to contact us for more information or to become involved in this unique and exciting educational and preservational program.

Sincerely,

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