




smithsonian
folkways
american
roots
collection



 Smithsonian/Folkways

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Folkways

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600
Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC 20560 © 1996 Smithsonian Folkways Records

smithsonian folkways american roots collection

Twenty-six tracks from outstanding Smithsonian Folkways recordings present a panorama of American roots music. Blues, bluegrass, ballads, topical songs and jazz are performed by master musicians. If you have never heard of Smithsonian Folkways or Folkways before, this collection will take you on a trip through American music; if you have heard some already, you will still be delighted by the breadth and variety of this collection. *Please note: this collection does not include children's music, Native American music, or music from outside the United States, since these will be subjects of future collections.*

- 1 Lightnin' Hopkins *Penitentiary Blues* 2:53
- 2 Roosevelt Sykes *Sweet Old Chicago* 2:56
- 3 Bill Monroe *Blue Moon of Kentucky* 2:00
- 4 Pete Seeger *If I Had A Hammer* 2:10
- 5 Lucinda Williams *Lafayette* 3:41
- 6 Allie Young, Bessyl Duhon, and Rodney Balfa *Bosco Stomp* 3:02
- 7 Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry *Better Day* 3:01
- 8 Lonnie Johnson *Long Road to Travel* 2:19
- 9 Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley *The Coo-Coo Bird* 2:33
- 10 Doug and Jack Wallin *Pretty Saro* 2:29
- 11 Elizabeth Cotten *Freight Train* 2:43
- 12 The New Lost City Ramblers *Old Joe Bone* 1:59
- 13 Bill Monroe and Doc Watson *Have a Feast Here Tonight* 2:28
- 14 Josh White *Freedom Road* 2:18
- 15 Woody Guthrie *This Land Is Your Land* 2:16
- 16 Woody Guthrie *Two Good Men* 3:45
- 17 Lead Belly *In the Pines* 2:07
- 18 Lead Belly *Irene* 2:16
- 19 Big Joe Williams *Somebody's Been Fooling #1* 2:49
- 20 Dave Van Ronk *Hesitation Blues* 2:31
- 21 Peggy Seeger *Gonna Be An Engineer* 4:28
- 22 Mercedes López *Delgadina* 2:11
- 23 Michele Lanchester with Sweet Honey *In The Rock I was Standing by the Bedside of a Neighbor (If You See My Saviour)* 3:19
- 24 Mary Lou Williams *Virgo* 2:26
- 25 Mary Lou Williams *Syl-O-Gism* 3:27
- 26 The SNCC Freedom Singers with Dorothy Cotton and Pete Seeger *We Shall Overcome* 2:42

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smithsonian folkways american roots collection

- 1 Lightnin' Hopkins *Penitentiary Blues* 2:53
(HOPKINS) from *Lightnin' Hopkins* SF 40019
- 2 Roosevelt Sykes *Sweet Old Chicago* 2:56
from *Blues by Roosevelt "The Honeydripper"*
Sykes SF 40051
- 3 Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys
Blue Moon of Kentucky 2:00 (B. MONROE/APRS, BMI)
from *Live Duet Recordings 1956-1969,*
Off the Record, Vol. 1 SF 40063
- 4 Pete Seeger *If I Had a Hammer* 2:10
(LEE HAYS-PETE SEEGER/TRO-LUDLOW MUSIC, INC.,
BMI) from *Singalong Live at Sanders Theatre*
SF 40027/28
- 5 Lucinda Williams *Lafayette* 3:41 (LUCINDA
WILLIAMS) from *Happy Woman Blues* SF 40003
- 6 Allie Young, Bessyl Duhon, Rodney Balfa
Bosco Stomp 3:02 from *Cajun Social Dance*
Music SF 40006
- 7 Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry
Better Day 3:01 from *Brownie McGhee and*
Sonny Terry Sing SF 40011
- 8 Lonnie Johnson *Long Road to Travel* 2:19 from
The Complete Folkways Recordings SF 40067
- 9 Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley
The Coo-Coo Bird 2:33 from *The Original*
Recordings, 1960-1962 SF 40029/30
- 10 Doug and Jack Wallin *Pretty Saro* 2:29
(TRAD. ARR. AND ADAPT. BY D. WALLIN/SMITHSONIAN
FOLKWAYS PUB., BMI) from *Family Songs and Stories*
from the North Carolina Mountains SF 40013
- 11 Elizabeth Cotten *Freight Train* 2:43
(ELIZABETH COTTEN) from *Freight Train and Other*
North Carolina Folksongs and Tunes SF 40009
- 12 The New Lost City Ramblers *Old Joe Bone* 1:59
from *New Lost City Ramblers Vol. II (1963-
1973) Out Standing in Their Field* SF 40040
- 13 Bill Monroe and Doc Watson
Have a Feast Here Tonight 2:28
(C. MONROE/ BERWICK MUSIC CORP., BMI)
from *Live Duet Recordings 1963-1980:*
Off the Record Vol. 2 SF 40064
- 14 Josh White *Freedom Road* 2:18
(WORDS BY LANGSTON HUGHES, MUSIC BY EMERSON
HARPER/ MUSETTE PUBLISHERS) from *That's Why*
We're Marching: World War II and the American
Folk Song Movement SF 40021
- 15 Woody Guthrie *This Land Is Your Land* 2:16
(WORDS AND MUSIC BY WOODY GUTHRIE/
TRO-LUDLOW MUSIC, INC.) from *Folkways:*
The Original Vision SF 40001
- 16 Woody Guthrie *Two Good Men* 3:45
(WORDS AND MUSIC BY WOODY GUTHRIE/ WOODY
GUTHRIE PUBLICATIONS, BMI) from *Ballads of*
Sacco & Vanzetti SF 40060
- 17 Lead Belly *In the Pines* 2:07
(ARR. BY H. LEDBETTER) from *Where Did You*
Sleep Last Night, Lead Belly Legacy, Vol. 1
SF 40044
- 18 Lead Belly *Irene* 2:16
(H. LEDBETTER, A. LOMAX & J. LOMAX/LUDLOW
MUSIC INC., BMI) from *Lead Belly's Last Sessions*
(disc #4) SF 40068/71
- 19 Big Joe Williams *Somebody's Been Fooling*
#1 2:49 (BIG JOE WILLIAMS) from *Mississippi's*
Big Joe Williams and His Nine-String Guitar
SF 40052
- 20 Dave Van Ronk *Hesitation Blues* 2:31
(REV. GARY DAVIS/CHANDOS MUSIC, ASCAP) from
The Folkways Years 1959-1961 SF 40041
- 21 Peggy Seeger *Gonna Be an Engineer* 4:28
(PEGGY SEEGER/STORMKING MUSIC, BMI) from
Songs of Love and Politics, The Folkways
Years 1955-1992 SF 40048
- 22 Mercedes López *Delgadina* 2:11
from *Music of New Mexico, Hispanic*
Traditions SF 40409
- 23 Michele Lanchester with Sweet Honey In
The Rock *I Was Standing by the Bedside*
of a Neighbor (If You See My Saviour) 3:19
(THOMAS A. DORSEY/UNICHAPPELL MUSIC, BMI) from
Wade in the Water, Vol. 3: African American
Gospel: The Pioneering Composers SF 40074
- 24 Mary Lou Williams *Virgo* 2:26
(MARY LOU WILLIAMS/CECILIA MUSIC, ASCAP)
from *Zodiac Suite* SF 40810
- 25 Mary Lou Williams *Syl-O-Gism* 3:27
(MARY LOU WILLIAMS-L. GALES/CECILIA MUSIC,
ASCAP) from *Zoning* SF 40811
- 26 The SNCC Freedom Singers with
Dorothy Cotton and Pete Seeger
We Shall Overcome 2:42 (LUDLOW MUSIC/BMI)
from *Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil*
Rights Movement through its Songs SF 40032

introduction

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings carries on the traditions of the great independent record label, Folkways Records. Founded in 1948 and acquired by the Smithsonian in 1987, Folkways Records captured the music and events of the twentieth century on over 2,000 long play record albums. Since 1988 Smithsonian Folkways has released approximately 140 titles, including reissues of some of the outstanding Folkways recordings. The Smithsonian also keeps all the original Folkways albums in print on CD and cassette through mail order.

Folkways was famous for ignoring the popular music trends of the moment in favor of documenting enduring artists and traditions. It was also known for providing long notes that helped listeners discover new musical styles, learn about them, and stimulate them to perform themselves. As a result, the music influenced many kinds of people. A generation of popular musicians grew up hearing Folkways Records—Bob Dylan heard Woody Guthrie; Jerry Garcia was inspired by a Folkways anthology; Bernice Johnson Reagon heard Lead Belly. The list is very long. Avant-garde composers also lis-

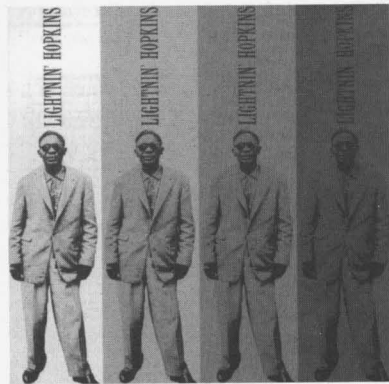
tened to Folkways recordings of traditional music from around the world, which influenced their creations.

For those of you who are not familiar with Folkways, this collection is the tip of the iceberg—a selection of some of the finest American roots music found on Smithsonian Folkways and Folkways records. If you like a track, try the rest of that album. We still have long liner notes, which provide a broad background and suggestions for additional listening and reading. If you like a certain kind of music, ask for other recordings by Smithsonian Folkways at your local record store. Or send for our catalogue (write to the address on the back of this booklet), phone 202/287-3262, or e-mail folkways@aol.com. Investigate our World Wide Web page (and associated 35,000 song database) at <http://www.si.edu/folkways>

This *American Roots Collection* does not include music from other parts of the world, Native American music, or children's music. The Folkways collection is huge, and very rich in those subjects. We will prepare separate collections of those in the future.

In the meantime, put this recording on and discover the wonderful variety and beauty of American roots music on Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

about the songs



I. Lightnin' Hopkins *Penitentiary Blues* 2:53
from *Lightnin' Hopkins* SF 40019

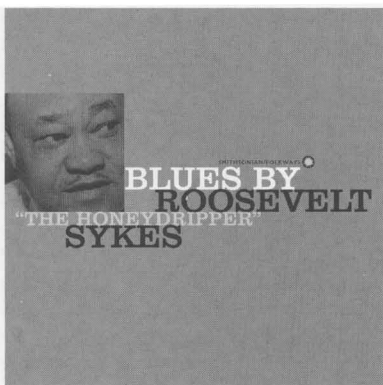
Lightnin' Hopkins (1912–1982) began his musical career as a young man, and began recording after World War II. A prolific artist, he recorded for many labels and became an important figure in the folk music and blues revival of the 1960s.

“Penitentiary Blues” is a fine example of a traditional acoustic blues. It was recorded in 1959 by Samuel B. Charters in Hopkins’ room in a Texas boarding house. Recommended reading: *Country Blues* by Sam Charters (New York 1959).

2. Roosevelt Sykes Sweet Old Chicago 2:54
from *Blues by Roosevelt "The Honeydrinker"*
Sykes SF 40051

If the blues is the music that tells of life and living, then Roosevelt Sykes is the blues. Few men were endowed with greater perception of life than he. Roosevelt Sykes (1906–1983) was a consummate blues pianist. Born in Helena, Arkansas, he later moved with his family to St. Louis. He made his first recording in 1929, and enjoyed a long career as a soloist and accompanist. Few blues artists could match his powerful voice, original and riveting piano style, and songwriting abilities.

"Sweet Old Chicago" is a song made famous by Robert Johnson and others. Further listening: *Raining in My Heart*, Delmark 642; and *Urban Blues*, Fantasy 24717.

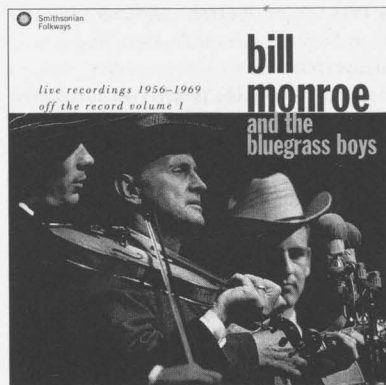


3. Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys
Blue Moon of Kentucky 2:00

Bill Monroe, mandolin and vocals; Yetes Green, guitar and lead vocals; Bobby Hicks and Joe Stuart, fiddles; Rudy Lyle, banjo; Chick Stripling or Bessie Lee Mauldin, bass from *Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, Live Recordings 1956–1969, Off the Record, Volume 1* SF 40063.

Bill Monroe (b. 1911) was raised on an isolated family farm, and his earliest musical influences derived from church and social traditions. In the 1930s he began to perform professionally with his brothers Charlie and Birch. In 1938 Bill organized his own band, the Blue Grass Boys, and soon appeared on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, which served as his base from that time forward. A brilliant mandolin player with a distinctive high, tense, vocal style, Bill Monroe forged the style later called "Bluegrass," named after his group.

"Blue Moon of Kentucky" is often considered an old standard, but here Bill sings it with unusual lyrical yet dynamic energy. He incorporates some unusual staccato word rhythms in the speeded-up portion of the song, which add a measure of excitement to the poetic line.



For further listening, consult this album and its companion *Bill Monroe and Doc Watson, Live Duet Recordings 1963–1980, Off the Record, Volume 2* SF 40064, (see track 14) and *The Essential Bill Monroe and His Bluegrass Boys*, Columbia 52478.

Recommended reading: the liner notes by Ralph Rinzler, and *Stars of Country Music* by Bill Malone and Judith McCulloh (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

4. Pete Seeger *If I Had a Hammer* 2:10
from *Singalong Live at Sanders Theatre*
SF 40027/28

Pete Seeger (b. 1919) is an influential singer, songwriter, and song leader. He was a central figure in the development of Folkways Records from its early days through its transfer to the Smithsonian Institution. Son of a musicologist and a concert violinist, Seeger learned to play the banjo from recordings at the Library of Congress, and later sang with Woody Guthrie, Lead Belly, and others in New York City in the 1940s. A political activist who uses songs to mobilize people to action, Seeger was a member of the Almanac Singers and the Weavers, one of the founders of *Sing Out! Magazine*, and author of songs on many subjects.

"If I Had a Hammer" was the first song recorded by the Weavers. Written by Pete Seeger and Lee Hays in 1949, the song was popularized a decade later by Peter, Paul and Mary. This version was recorded live at a concert at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre in 1980, with a large and enthusiastic audience singing along—a type of perfor-



mance for which Seeger is justly famous.

Pete Seeger appears on over 55 different Folkways albums for adults and children, including *American Industrial Ballads* SF 40058, *Abiyayo and Other Songs for Children* SF 45001, *Darling Corey and Goofing Off Suite* SF 40018, and others. Recommended reading: Pete Seeger, *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* (Bethlehem PA: Sing Out! Publications, 1993).

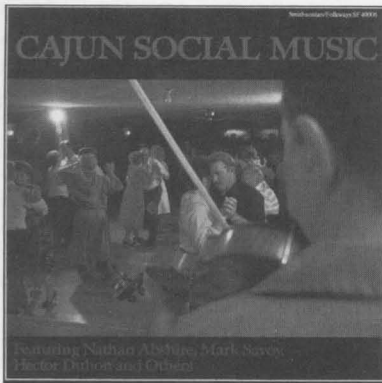


5. Lucinda Williams *Lafayette* 3:41
from *Happy Woman Blues* SF 40003

Lucinda Williams, lead vocals and acoustic guitars; Mickey White, acoustic rhythm and lead guitar, harmony vocals; Rex Bell, electric bass and harmony vocals; Andre Matthews, electric rhythm, lead and slide guitars; Mickey Modey, pedal steel guitar; Malcolm Smith, fiddle and viola

Lucinda Williams was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and moved to Texas, where she began to develop her own style. She recorded her first two albums for Folkways in 1978 and 1980, and then moved to larger record labels that could give greater exposure to her mixture of regional Southern/country/popular music.

"Lafayette" was written by Lucinda Williams, and addresses the theme of a lost home, in Lafayette, Louisiana, using a country music string band (fiddle, guitar) with the addition of percussion and bass. Other Folkways recordings: *Lucinda Williams, Ramblin'* SF 40042.



6. Allie Young, Bessyl Duhon, Rodney Balfa
Bosco Stomp 3:02
 Allie Young, accordion; Bessyl Duhon, fiddle; Rodney Balfa, guitar and vocal from *Cajun Social Music* SF 40006

When the English exiled the Acadians from Canada in 1755, a large number of settlers moved to southwestern Louisiana (then under French rule). Their descendants, who call themselves Cajuns, maintain a strong regional tradition expressed in language, cuisine, and music.

“Bosco Stomp” features a classic Cajun ensemble of accordion, fiddle, and guitar. The

song has been adopted by musicians in other traditions as well. A rough translation of the text is: Hey, dear tout-tou [my all-in-all]/I miss you/Dear tout-tou/(It’s not my fault)/Hey, dear tout-tou/You left your dear home/To go away.//Hey, dear tout-tou/I miss you/Dear tout-tou/Hey, dear tout-tou/You left your dear home/To go away.//Hey, dear tout-tou/You know that I don’t deserve/ What you are doing/Hey, dear tout-tou/You listened to all the advice/Of all the others, babe.



7. Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry
Better Day 3:01

Brownie McGhee, guitar and vocal; Sonny Terry, harmonica and vocal; Gene Moore, drums from *Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry Sing* SF 40011

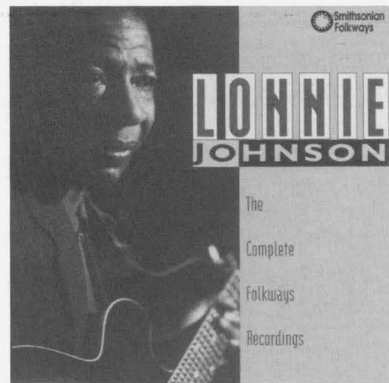
Brownie McGhee (1915–1996) and Sonny Terry (1911–1986) were a very important blues duo during the folk music revival of the 1950s and 1960s, as well as talented solo artists. Brownie McGhee’s versatile guitar and smooth voice were complemented by Sonny Terry’s virtuoso harmonica.

“Better Day” is a fine example of classic blues in content, verse structure, and musical style. Sonny Terry’s remarkable dexterity and breathing technique provide a stunning backdrop to McGhee’s vocal delivery of these traditional blues.

Further listening: Brownie McGhee, *The Folkways Years 1945–1959* SF 40034, and Sonny Terry, *The Folkways Years 1944–1963* SF 40033.

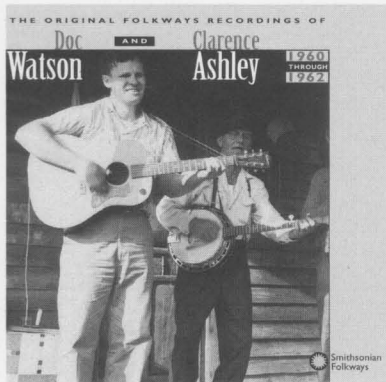
8. Lonnie Johnson *Long Road to Travel* 2:19
 from *Lonnie Johnson, The Complete Folkways Recordings* SF 40067

Although Lonnie Johnson (1889–1970) was one of the most brilliant and influential blues guitarists, his rare Folkways recordings



reveal a powerfully emotive vocalist. His solo performances are marked by superb guitar accompaniment, but it is Lonnie Johnson, the singer, who commands attention here. In addition to his work with the blues, Lonnie Johnson also performed with jazz groups including the Duke Ellington Orchestra and Louis Armstrong’s Hot Five.

Additional reading: *The Jazz Guitar* by Maurice Summerfield (Ashley-Mark Publishing Company, 1970).



9. Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley
The Coo-Coo Bird 2:33

from *Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley, The Original Recordings 1960–1962* SF 40029/30

In 1960, when these recordings were made, Doc Watson was a young man playing honky-tonk music on electric guitar in a local bar, and Clarence Ashley was an aging musician whose 1930s recordings were being rediscovered by a young, urban audience. These two musicians, and other members of their community in rural North Carolina, proved to be masters of traditional mountain music. Since these first recordings, Doc Wat-

son has enjoyed a long and successful musical career. He is best known for his flat-picking guitar style and his fine vocal style.

“The Coo-Coo Bird” is a good example of an old song that may have originated in England, greatly modified by Southern American musicians, who adapted it to the banjo. This version, with Clarence Ashley on vocals and banjo and Doc Watson on guitar, was recorded in 1962.

Recordings of Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley on Smithsonian Folkways include *The Original Folkways Recordings 1960–1962* SF 40029/30—double CD/cassette, *The Doc Watson Family* SF 40012, *Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson at Folk City* SF 40005. Recommended reading: liner notes to SF 40029/30.

10. Doug Wallin *Pretty Saro* 2:29
from *Doug and Jack Wallin, Family Songs and Stories from the North Carolina Mountains* SF 40013

Doug Wallin (b. 1919) comes from a highly talented family in a community and region long recognized for music making. He is a fine performer whose extensive repertory includes many traditional ballads and folk songs. In the 1980s and 1990s he often performed with his brother Jack Wallin (b. 1932).

WALLIN
DOUG AND JACK
FAMILY SONGS AND STORIES FROM
THE NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS



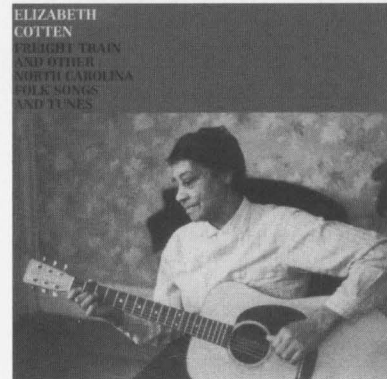
“Pretty Saro” is an old song that Doug’s great-aunt Mary Sands sang for Cecil Sharp early in the 20th century. It remains one of Doug’s favorites, and is sung in a traditional unaccompanied vocal style.

11. Elizabeth Cotten *Freight Train* 2:43
from *Freight Train and Other North Carolina Folksongs and Folk Tunes* SF 40009

Elizabeth Cotten (1895–1987) was born in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She was a self-taught left-handed guitarist and banjo player who spent most of her life working as a domestic and at other non-musical jobs. After

this recording appeared, in 1958, she—then a grandmother—began to give concerts. Her unique style had a great influence in the folk music revival of the 1960s.

“Freight Train” is one of Elizabeth Cotten’s own compositions, inspired by the train running near her home. It is her best-known song, due to its popularization by other performers.



12. The New Lost City Ramblers

Old Joe Bone 1:59

John Cohen, voice and guitar; Mike Seeger and Tracy Schwarz, fiddles

from *New Lost City Ramblers Vol. II (1963-1973): Out Standing in Their Field* SF 40040

The New Lost City Ramblers specialized in the performance of “pre-Bluegrass” old-time music from the Appalachian region—reviving songs that had been recorded in the 1920s and 1930s on major record labels. From 1958 to 1962 the trio included musicians John Cohen, Tom Paley, and Mike Seeger. In 1963 Tracy Schwarz replaced Tom Paley, and the three continue to perform in the 1990s. The New Lost City Ramblers have recorded many albums for Folkways.

“Old Joe Bone” is a recreation of the style of the Mississippi band called The Carter Brothers and Son, recorded on the Okeh label, number 45289. The Carters attacked their tunes so exuberantly that the fiddles occasionally went out of phase and the singer sounded incoherent. The Ramblers customarily closed their sets with a rousing performance of a Carter Brothers and Son tune, occasions that John Cohen described as “an exercise in improvisation within the limits of great consistency and madness.”



13. Bill Monroe and Doc Watson

Have a Feast Here Tonight 2:28

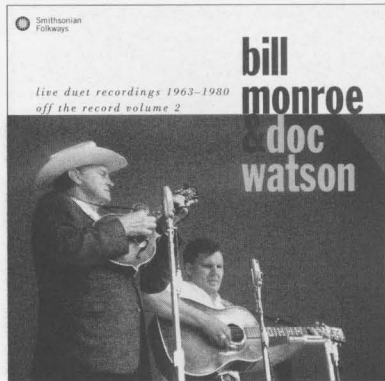
Bill Monroe, mandolin and high tenor;

Doc Watson, guitar and baritone

from *Bill Monroe and Doc Watson, Live Duet Recordings 1963-1980: Off The Record Volume 2* SF 40064

Bill Monroe (b. 1911), in track 3, and Arthel “Doc” Watson (b. 1923), described in track 6, played together at a series of concerts during a critical period in both of their careers. Their genius lies in their ability to infuse traditional American music with their distinctive musical personalities. Their unparalleled vocal and instrumental skills complement one another on these concert recordings.

“Have a Feast Here Tonight,” also known as “Rabbit in a Log,” was undoubtedly one of the Monroe Brothers’ most popular recordings. Doc Watson and Bill Monroe chose it as one of the songs for their first rehearsal together, and hardly ever did a performance without including it. See descriptions of tracks 6 and 13 for further listening and recommended reading.

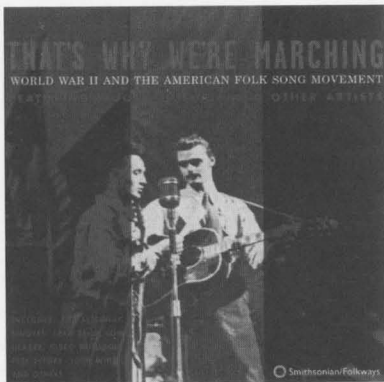


14. Josh White Freedom Road 2:18
from *Woody Guthrie and other artists, That's Why We're Marching: World War II and the American Folk Song Movement* SF 40031

Josh White (1914–1968) was born in Greenville, South Carolina. He developed a distinctive guitar style and had a fine vocal style. His first recordings were made in 1932, and he had a long and active professional career.

“That’s Why I’m Marching” was written by Langston Hughes as a song supporting the war effort in World War II. Like many songs written to support the war, it expressed a hope that the United States would be a better place after the war—specifically, a place without segregation and racism.

Further reading: *The Josh White Song Book* by Robert Shelton (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1963).



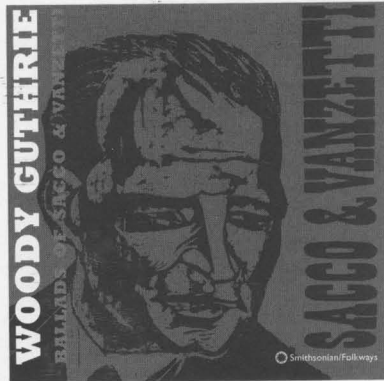
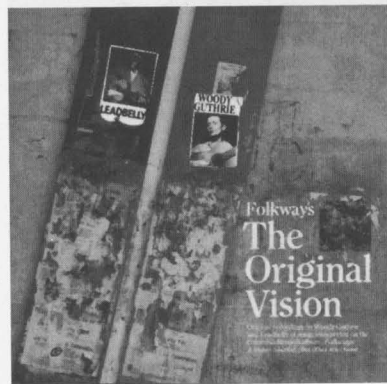
15. Woody Guthrie
This Land Is Your Land 2:16
from *Folkways: The Original Vision* SF 40001

Woody Guthrie (1912–1967) was one of the great songwriters and singers of the 20th century. Many of his songs are still widely sung, and he had a strong influence on many other artists, including Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and U2.

“This Land Is Your Land” is probably Guthrie’s best-known song. The poetic images of its verses and its memorable chorus have made it a kind of unofficial national

anthem. Guthrie himself made up other verses with a more political slant, which reveal his creativity with topical songs.

There are 12 albums by Woody Guthrie on Folkways. To hear how some of Guthrie’s songs have been interpreted by contemporary musicians, see *Folkways: A Vision Shared*, Columbia Records, 1988, and the video *A Vision Shared*.



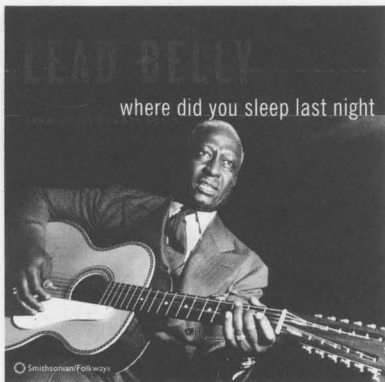
16. Woody Guthrie *Two Good Men* 3:45
from *Woody Guthrie, Ballads of Sacco & Vanzetti* SF 40060

“Two Good Men” is one of a suite of songs Woody Guthrie wrote about the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, two Italian immigrants executed for the murder of a payroll guard in 1920. The trial was highly controversial, with clear evidence of bias against the defendants, who were posthumously pardoned in 1977. This is a fine example of Woody Guthrie’s ability to research a topic, even in the past, and write good songs about it.

17. Lead Belly *In the Pines* 2:07
from *Where Did You Sleep Last Night*,
Lead Belly Legacy Volume 1 SF 40044.

Huddie Ledbetter (1888–1949), better known as Lead Belly (or by an alternative spelling, Leadbelly), grew up on a farm in Louisiana. He soon left the farm to perform in bars, dance halls, and at private parties. A brilliant musician, billed as the “King of the 12-String Guitar,” Lead Belly sang from a huge repertory of songs he gathered throughout his life. He moved to New York City in the 1930s and began his recording career, and like Guthrie had a tremendous influence on later musicians.

“In the Pines” is a good example of the influence Lead Belly has had on later musicians. In 1995 Kurt Cobain of Nirvana sang this song and credited it to Lead Belly. The Lead Belly Legacy series provides countless examples of seminal songs the singer introduced to later generations.

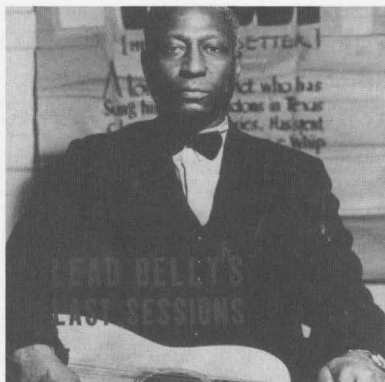


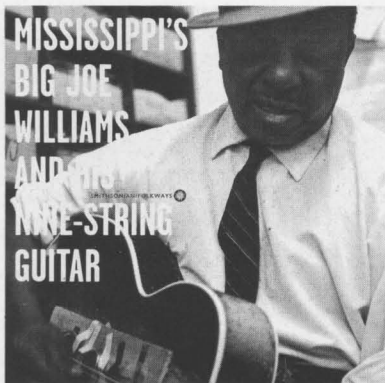
18. Lead Belly *Irene* 2:16
from *Lead Belly's Last Sessions* SF 40068-71

“Irene” was a one of Lead Belly’s best-known songs. He used it as a signature song on all his radio shows. Lead Belly died two years before the song made it to the hit parade charts in 1951, performed by some of his friends in a new group called the Weavers. Pete Seeger and the Weavers brought many of Lead Belly’s songs to a wider audience, as have many artists since.

Recordings by Lead Belly on Smithsonian Folkways: *Cowboy Songs on Folkways* SF 40043; *Folkways: The Original Vision, With Woody Guthrie* SF 40001; *Lead Belly Sings Folk Songs* SF 40010; and *Where Did You Sleep Last Night, Lead Belly Legacy, Vol. 1*, SF 40044.

To hear how some of Lead Belly’s songs have been interpreted by contemporary musicians, see *Folkways: A Vision Shared*, Columbia 44034, 1988, and the video *A Vision Shared*. Recommended reading: Charles Wolfe and Kip Lornell: *The Life and Legend Of Lead Belly* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).





19. Big Joe Williams

Somebody's Been Fooling #1 2:49

Big Joe Williams, guitar and vocal; Ransom Knowling, bass

from *Mississippi's Big Joe Williams and His Nine-String Guitar* SF 40051

Big Joe Williams (1903–1982) was a blues singer who regularly recorded in the 1930s and 1940s, and was later reintroduced to new, urban audiences in the folk music revival of the 1960s. He performed a traditional Mississippi blues style, and was in fact, one of the major figures of the urban blues revival—a popular audience favorite of the

coffeehouses, folk music clubs, and festival stages. This album presents Big Joe at his best—fiercely and authentically individualistic, singing lustily and playing with real fire.

“Somebody’s Been Fooling #1” reveals the characteristic heavy chordal structure of the Mississippi blues, with a wonderful interaction of guitar and acoustic bass.

Recommended listening: *Shake Your Boogie*, Arhoolie c/CD 315; *Big Joe Williams and Sonny Boy Williamson*, Blues Classics 21; and *Piney Woods Blues*, Delmark 602.



20. Dave Van Ronk Hesitation Blues 2:31
from *Dave Van Ronk, The Folkways Years 1959–1961*

Dave Van Ronk (b. 1911) is a versatile musician who began his career as a jazz musician, and then moved to Greenwich Village, New York City, where he studied the blues guitar and vocal styles of older musicians and became an important figure in the folk music revival of the 1960s. His first recordings were for Folkways Records. On this recording, the strong influence of early blues singers is evident.

“Hesitation Blues” is a song Dave Van Ronk learned from Reverend Gary Davis (see *Pure Religion and Bad Company* SF 40035). In addition to his Folkways recordings Dave Van Ronk also recorded *Going Back to Brooklyn*, Gazell 2006; and *Chrestomathy*, Gazell 2007/8.

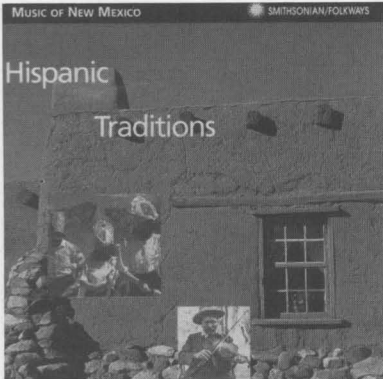
21. Peggy Seeger Gonna Be an Engineer 4:28
from *Peggy Seeger, The Folkways Years 1955–1992, Songs of Love and Politics* SF 40048

Peggy Seeger, daughter of musicologist Charles Seeger and Ruth Crawford Seeger, sister of Mike Seeger and half-sister to Pete Seeger, began her musical career listening to Library of Congress recordings and learning traditional performance styles. Later she



moved to England, teamed up with writer/singer Ewan MacColl, and became a fine topical songwriter and prolific recording artist. She now lives in Virginia.

“Gonna Be an Engineer” is one of Peggy Seeger’s best-known topical songs, addressing the plight of professional women in the family and job market. A pioneering feminist song, the story has enormous appeal to women in all walks of life. Further listening: “Wonderful World” from *An Odd Collection*, Rounder 4031.



22. Mercedes López *Delgadina* 2:11
from *Music of New Mexico, Hispanic Traditions* SF 40409

The Spanish settled in large territories that eventually became part of the United States. They brought with them distinctive cultural traditions that evolved and were nourished by new influences to form a strong regional culture in states such as New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Texas. One of the oldest Hispanic traditions in the Americas is the unaccompanied ballad, or romance; many of which can be traced to variants reported in Spain in the 17th century or earlier.

"Delgadina" is a classic *romance* story, with its origins in 16th century Spain. It describes the tragic consequences of the incestuous desire of a king for his daughter. Mercedes López learned this and many other songs as a child. In her version, the story takes place in Durango, Mexico.

Translation: Delgadina paced around/
Her very square room,/With her golden
threaded veil/That illumined her breast.//
"Get up, Delgadina,/Dress in purest white/
For us to go to Mass/In the city of Duran-
go"//Delgadina got up,/Dressed in purest
white/And they went to mass/In the city of
Durango.//Delgadina was kneeling/Praying
her prayers/Without knowing that her
father/Already had bad intentions.//When
they left Mass/Her father told her/"Delgadi-
na, my daughter,/I want you as a woman."//
"My God will not permit it,/Nor the
Sovereign Queen,/Offenses for my God,
Disgrace for my mother."//"
Come my eleven maids,/Shut Delgadina up,
Fasten well the locks/So no Christian voice
be heard.//"
"Dear father of my life,/One favor I will
ask of you,/Send me a glass of water/
Because I'm dying of thirst."//"
Come my eleven maids,/Take water to
Delgadina,/In those gilded cups/
Of crystal and purest china."//When

the water was taken/Delgadina was dead,
/With her little arms crossed,/And her little
mouth dry.//Delgadina's bed/Is surrounded
by angels;/The bed of her father the king/
Stank of devils.

Further listening: *New Mexico, Hispanic Traditions* SF 40409; *Borderlands, From Con-
junto to Chickenscratch, Music of the Rio
Grande Valley of Texas and Southern Arizona*
SF 40418; *Puerto Rican Music in Hawai'i:
Kachi-kachi Sound* SF 40014.

23. Michele Lanchester, with Sweet Honey
In The Rock *I Was Standing by the Bedside
of a Neighbor* 3:19

Michele Lanchester, lead vocals; Sweet
Honey in the Rock, backup vocals; Toshi
Reagon, guitar; from *Wade in the Water, Vol-
ume 3; African American Gospel: The Pioneer-
ing Composers* SF 40074

Michele Lanchester is a singer, songwriter,
practicing attorney in Washington, D.C.,
and the former musical co-director of In Pro-
cess, a Washington D.C. based African
American women's *capella* group. In Process
grew out of a workshop led by Sweet Honey
In The Rock.

"I Was Standing by the Bedside of a
Neighbor" also known as "If You See My
Saviour," was written by eminent gospel com-



poser Thomas Andrew Dorsey after a long
illness. Published in 1929, it was Dorsey's first
major success as a gospel composer.

Ms. Lanchester is accompanied by Sweet
Honey In The Rock—an ensemble of African
American women singers whose repertoire is
rooted in the tradition of African American
congregational choral style but branches to
embrace its many extensions. The group was
founded by Bernice Johnson Reagon, who
also conceived and compiled the *Wade in the
Water* Series.

Further listening: *Wade in the Water, Vol-
umes 1-4* SF 40072-75.

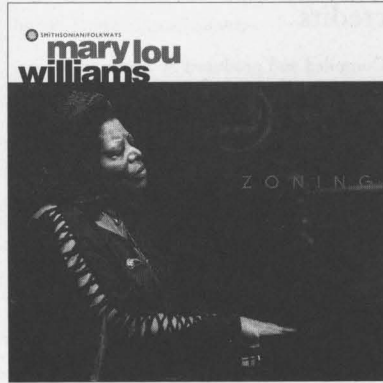
Recommended reading: Bernice Johnson Reagon *We'll Understand It Better By and By: Pioneering African American Gospel Composers*. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992).

24. Mary Lou Williams *Virgo* 2:26

Mary Lou Williams, piano; Al Lucas, bass from *Zodiac Suite* SF 40810

Mary Lou Williams (1910–1981) was a pianist, arranger, and composer who occupied a unique place in jazz history and who always seemed to be up-to-date throughout her long career. She played with a number of famous bands, and recorded several albums for Folkways Records.

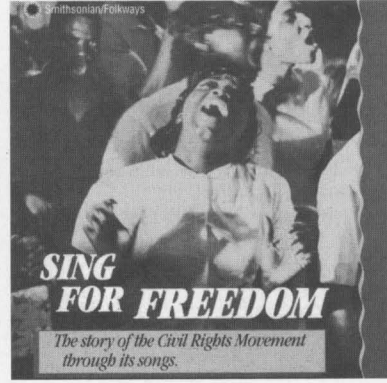
“Virgo” and the rest of “Zodiac Suite” was Mary Lou Williams’ first extended work, composed in 1945 at the age of 35. She wrote the suite based on the zodiac signs of some of her favorite musicians. “Virgo” was dedicated to Leonard Feather, “who loves the blues.”



25. Mary Lou Williams *Syl-O-Gism* 3:27

Mary Lou Williams, piano; Zita Carno, piano; Bob Cranshaw, bass; Mickey Roker, drums from *Zoning* SF 40811

The artist is described briefly in the notes to the preceding track. “Syl-O-Gism” is the opening track of *Zoning*, which appeared in 1974 on her own Mary label. In *Zoning*, Mary Lou Williams stretches the jazz boundaries with harmonic, rhythmic, and formal notions that border on the avant-garde. This is a soulful 16-bar pattern with an 8-bar main phrase and an 8-bar release.



26. The SNCC Freedom Singers with Dorothy Cotton and Pete Seeger

We Shall Overcome 2:42

from *Sing For Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement through its Songs*, SF 40032

The Civil Rights Movement was the greatest singing movement this country has experienced. Versions of “We Shall Overcome” are part of the African American traditional sacred repertory, found especially in Baptist churches throughout the South. The song was first used for political struggle in the 1940s. By the 1960s it had become the musical symbol of the Civil Rights Move-

ment. The song spread hope across the United States and around the world, and is today an international anthem of people's determination to overcome fear and oppression. This performance was recorded live in Washington, D.C., and captures the emotion of the moment in a way typical of many Folkways documentary recordings.

For further listening: Folkways has an extensive collection of recordings documenting the Civil Rights Movement.

For further reading: *Parting the Water, America in the King Years 1954-63* by Taylor Branch (Simon & Schuster, NY 1988).

credits

Compiled and produced by Anthony Seeger and Amy Horowitz

Mastered by David Glasser and LeaAnne Sonenstein at Airshow, Springfield, VA
Audio and technical coordination by Pete Reiniger

Production coordinated by Mary Monseur and Michael Maloney

Design by Visual Dialogue

Cover photo credits (clockwise from upper left): Doc Watson, photo courtesy of Ralph Rinzler; Lead Belly, photo courtesy of Folkways Archives, Smithsonian Institution; Woody Guthrie, photo courtesy of Woody Guthrie Publications; Elizabeth Cotten, photo by Joshel Namkung; Clarence Ashley, photo by Robert Yellin

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Editing by Jeff Place and Carla Borden

About Smithsonian Folkways

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are now available on high-quality audio cassettes, each packed in a special box along with the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes, recordings to accompany published books, and a variety of other educational projects.

The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer, Bennet, and Paredon recordings are all available through:

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