Welcome to Online Office Hours!

We’ll get started at 2PM ET
Welcome! We’re glad you’re here! Use the chat box to introduce yourselves. Let us know:

- Your first name
- Where you’re joining us from
- Grade level(s) and subject(s) you teach
Using the Library of Congress Ragtime Collection and Other Digital Music Resources in Your Classroom

James Wintle
Reference Specialist
Library of Congress, Music Division
Danielle Allen Is Recipient of 2020 Kluge Prize

Author & political theorist to work with the Library to share expertise on justice and democracy with wide audience.
Digital Collections

Refine your results

Subject
Performing Arts
Local History & Folklife
Correspondence
Photographs
Photographic Prints
Interviews
Clippings (Information Artifacts)
Field Recordings
Oral Histories
Manuscripts
More Subjects

Part of
Digital Collections
Music Division
American Folklife Center
Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division

Collection Items: View 55 Items
COLLECTION
10th-16th Century Liturgical Chants

Collection Items: View 333 Items
COLLECTION
Aaron Copland Collection
The Aaron Copland collection consists of published and unpublished music by Copland and other composers, correspondence, writings, biographical material, datebooks, journals, professional papers, including legal and

COLLECTION
African-American Band Music & Recordings, 1883-1923
Collection comprises manuscripts, sound recordings, photographs, film, and videorecordings created and collected by Alan Lomax in his work documenting song, music, dance, and body movement from many cultures. Includes field recordings and

COLLECTION
Alan Lomax Collection

View Gallery Go Sort By Select Go
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Format</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recording</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notated Music</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo, Print, Drawing</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript/Mixed Material</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film, Video</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book/Printed Material</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archived Web Site</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COLLECTION**

**Alan Lomax Collection of Michigan and Wisconsin Recordings**

Collection of field recordings with related color film documenting instrumental music, songs, stories, and interviews recorded primarily in Michigan and Wisconsin by Alan Lomax, August 1-November 1, 1938 for the Archive of...

**Collection Items:** View 444 Items

**COLLECTION**

**Albert Schatz Collection**

**Collection Items:** View 12,255 Items

**COLLECTION**

**Amazing Grace**

**Collection Items:** View 47 Items

**COLLECTION**

**America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets**

Collection of 4,291 song sheets for popular music from the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress. Consisting of lyrics produced between the turn of the nineteenth century...

**Collection Items:** View 4,293 Items
COLLECTION
An American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals, ca. 1490-1920
Presents over two hundred social dance manuals, pocket-sized books with diagrams used by itinerant dancing masters to teach the American gentry the latest dance steps. Includes anti-dance manuals as well as treatises...
Collection Items: View 333 Items

COLLECTION
American Choral Music Collection
Collection Items: View 100 Items

COLLECTION
American English Dialect Recordings: The Center for Applied Linguistics Collection
Collection of American English dialect recordings of speech samples, linguistic interviews, oral histories, conversations, and excerpts from public speeches submitted by various participants recorded at various locations and compiled by the Center...
Collection Items: View 505 Items

COLLECTION
American Music Creators Web Archive
The American Music Creators Web Archive is a collection of websites of musicians, performers, and composers contributing to the American music scene. The collection strives to be representative of all genres of...
Collection Items: View 51 Items
COLLECTION
Ballets Russes de Serge Diaghilev
Collection Items: View 175 Items

COLLECTION
Band Music from the Civil War Era
Makes available examples of a brilliant style of brass band music that flourished in the 1850s in the United States and remained popular through the nineteenth century. Bands of this kind served...
Collection Items: View 54 Items

COLLECTION
Baseball Sheet Music
Collection Items: View 296 Items

COLLECTION
Bess Lomax Hawes Collection
Papers and audiovisual materials relating to the career and personal life of folk arts administrator, folklorist, ethnomusicologist, filmmaker, musician, and teacher Bess Lomax Hawes, most from 1960-2001. Includes work produced by Hawes...
Collection Items: View 365 Items
COLLECTION
Now What a Time: Blues, Gospel, and the Fort Valley Music Festivals, 1938-1943
Collection of disc copies of field recordings of gospel quartets; Negro sacred harp singers recorded in Ozark, Alabama in September 1938; blues, instrumentals on guitar, banjo, harmonica, bass fiddle, and piano, recorded...
Collection Items: View 182 Items

COLLECTION
Omaha Indian Music
Ethnographic field collection of traditional Omaha music from the 1890s through the 1980s. Contains recordings from wax cylinders, songs, speeches, interviews, photographs, field notes, and tape logs. Features material from the 1983...
Collection Items: View 873 Items

COLLECTION
Patriotic Melodies
This collection consists of sheet music and sound recordings of patriotic music. The WWW site tells the stories behind many of the songs that have now become part of the American national...
Collection Items: View 148 Items

COLLECTION
Performing Arts Web Archive
The Performing Arts Web Archive contains web-based content related to the Music Division's current special collections and rare material holdings. The goal of this web archive collection is to reflect, enhance, and...
Collection Items: View 69 Items
COLLECTION
Voices from the Dust Bowl: the Charles L. Todd and Robert Sonkin Migrant Worker Collection, 1940-1941
Multi-format ethnographic field collection documenting the everyday life of residents of Farm Security Administration (FSA) migrant work camps in central California in 1940 and 1941. Consists of audio recordings, photographs, manuscript materials,...
Collection Items: View 533 Items

COLLECTION
William P. Gottlieb Collection
Photographs made by writer-photographer William P. Gottlieb, from 1938 to 1948, often on assignment for the Washington Post, Down Beat magazine, and Record Changer. Images document jazz musicians and venues, primarily in...
Collection Items: View 1,804 Items

COLLECTION
Women's Suffrage in Sheet Music
Collection Items: View 214 Items

COLLECTION
Woody Guthrie and the Archive of American Folk Song: Correspondence, 1940-1950
American Memory website that highlights letters between Woody Guthrie and staff of the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center) at the Library of...
Collection Items: View 59 Items
ethnographic field collection documenting the everyday life of residents of Farm Security Administration (FSA) migrant work camps in central California in 1940 and 1941. Consists of audio recordings, photographs, manuscript materials,...

**Collection Items:** View 533 Items

assignment for the Washington Post, Down Beat magazine, and Record Changer. Images document jazz musicians and venues, primarily in...

**Collection Items:** View 1,804 Items

site that highlights letters between Woody Guthrie and staff of the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center) at the Library of...

**Collection Items:** View 59 Items

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**COLLECTION**

**World War I Sheet Music**

**Collection Items:** View 13,518 Items

**COLLECTION**

**Yiddish American Popular Sheet Music**

**Collection Items:** View 1,342 Items
www.loc.gov/collections/ragtime/about-this-collection/
www.loc.gov/collections/ragtime
NOTATED MUSIC

School of ragtime: six exercises for piano
Sheet music | Sheet Music (Form). Sheet Music (Form).
Contributor: Joplin, Scott - Scott Joplin
Date: 1908
Resource:
View 4 Images

NOTATED MUSIC

Blue ribbon rag
sheet music | Sheet Music (Form). Sheet Music (Form).
Contributor: J.F. Aufderheide - Aufderheide, May
Date: 1910
Resource:
View 6 Images

NOTATED MUSIC

Dusty rag
SCHOOL OF RAGTIME

BY

SCOTT JOPLIN

Composer of “Maple Leaf Rag.”

REMARKS—What is scurrilously called ragtime is an invention that is here to stay. That is now conceded by all classes of musicians. That all publications masquerading under the name of ragtime are not the genuine article will be better known when these exercises are studied. That real ragtime of the higher class is rather difficult to play is a painful truth which most pianists have discovered. Syncopations are no indication of light or trashy music, and to shy bricks at “hateful ragtime” no longer passes for musical culture. To assist amateur players in giving the “Joplin Rags” that weird and intoxicating effect intended by the composer is the object of this work.

Exercise No.1.
Articles and Essays

Articles, essays, and examples of sheet music which all provide insight into the times and performance of ragtime.

Bob Milne at the Library of Congress an oral history with Larry Appelbaum

FILM, VIDEO


Date: 2004
FILM, VIDEO

[Joshua Rifkin in an interview with David Sager]

In an interview with David Sager and Loras Schissel, Library of Congress, pianist/conductor Joshua Rifkin discusses and demonstrates ragtime piano music performance practice. Interview videorecording | 1 digital video file (1 hr., 24 min., 35 sec.): sd., col. | Title supplied by cataloger. Interviewers: David Sager, Loras Schissel; pianist: Joshua Rifkin. Recorded in the Recording Laboratory, Motion Picture Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division...

Contributor: Library of Congress - Sager, David - Schissel, Loras J. - Rifkin, Joshua

Date: 2006

FILM, VIDEO

[Patricia Lamb Conn in an interview with David Sager]

 Videorecording | 1 digital video file (1 hr., 11 min., 51 sec.): sd., col. | Videorecording | Title supplied by cataloger. Interviewers: David Sager, Loras Schissel; interviewee: Patricia Lamb Conn. Recorded in the Recording Laboratory, Motion Picture Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress, 2006 (Venue). Courtesy of Pat Lamb Conn. (Copyright Notice). In an interview with David Sager and Loras Schissel,...


Date: 2006

FILM, VIDEO

[Bob Milne in concert at the Library of Congress]


Contributor: Library of Congress - Milne, Bob

Date: 2006
ARTICLE

History of Ragtime

Ragtime, a uniquely American, syncopated musical phenomenon, has been a strong presence in musical composition, entertainment, and scholarship for over a century. It emerged in its published form during the mid-1890s and quickly spread across the continent via published compositions. By the early 1900s ragtime flooded the music publishing industry. The popularity and demand for ragtime also boosted sale of pianos and greatly swelled...

ARTICLE

Treemonisha

Scott Joplin composed three works for the stage. The first, The Ragtime Dance, depicted a typical African-American dance gathering; it was performed in 1899 at the Black 400 Club in Sedalia, Missouri. The second work, A Guest of Honor, about Booker T. Washington's dinner with Teddy Roosevelt at the White House, premiered in East St. Louis, Illinois, in 1903. Joplin took the production on...

ARTICLE

Classic Rag

Ragtime music adapted to the unique style and invention of each composer and musician. Certain rags, however, particularly those by Scott Joplin and the composers who published with John Stark & Son, can be categorized as "classic." These instrumental rags fit a certain musical structure.

ARTICLE

Sit Down, Shut Up, and Listen to Ragtime: Bob Milne and the Occupational Folklore of the Traveling Piano Player

Every group, from the smallest family to the largest ethnicity, has a repertoire of informally learned stories, sayings, customs, techniques, and successful traditions. This material is called folklore. Folklore allows group members to recognize one another...
History of Ragtime

Ragtime, a uniquely American, syncopated musical phenomenon, has been a strong presence in musical composition, entertainment, and scholarship for over a century. It emerged in its published form during the mid-1890s and quickly spread across the continent via published compositions. By the early 1900s ragtime flooded the music publishing industry. The popularity and demand for ragtime also boosted sale of pianos and greatly swelled the ranks of the recording industry. Ragtime seemed to emanate primarily from the southern and midwestern states with the majority of activity occurring in Missouri — although the East and West coasts also had their share of composers and performers. Ragtime’s popularity promptly spread to Europe and there, as in America, soon became a fad.

It is not easy to define ragtime. Like jazz, another distinctly American musical art form, ragtime’s composers, practitioners, and admirers each see its boundaries differently. However, these groups are distinguished by subgroups of purists who generally agree on, and stand by, a precise definition:

Ragtime -- A genre of musical composition for the piano, generally in duple meter and containing a highly syncopated treble lead over a rhythmically steady bass. A ragtime composition is usually composed three or four contrasting sections or strains, each one being 16 or 32 measures in length.

This definition describes much of the music of the itinerant pianists who traversed the South and Midwest and eventually congregated in Missouri to produce an oeuvre of core ragtime compositions. These roving composers include Scott Joplin, Charles Hunter, Thomas Turpin, Louis Chauvin, Charles L. Johnson, and many others.

Some ragtime scholars point out that ragtime is composed chiefly for an audience -- a pianistic work not meant for dancing. It is a genre distinct from other types of syncopated musical compositions from about the same period -- for example, “coon songs” and cakewalks -- the latter especially composed for dancing.

But our definition cannot be cut and dried. For “ragtime” once described the pneumatic syncopated treatment of almost any type of music — that is how it was known to the public.
BIOGRAPHY

Scott Joplin, 1868-1917

Biography. Scott Joplin's is the name perhaps most associated with ragtime. Born sometime between the summer of 1867 and mid-January 1868, Joplin's career took him from a modest homestead on the Texas-Arkansas border to New York's Tin Pan Alley New York City, where he would eventually try his luck with composers like a young Irving Berlin. Although he continued composing until just before...

BIOGRAPHY

Ben Harney, 1872-1938

Biography. Ben R. Harney has been credited as the musician who did the most to introduce ragtime to audiences throughout the world. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1871, Harney's racial origins have long been debated. Some people, among them Eubie Blake, claimed that he was a black man passing as white. Others maintained that Harney was a white man so thoroughly inspired by...

BIOGRAPHY

John Stark, 1841-1927

Biography. John Stillwell Stark was born in Kentucky in 1841. His family moved to Indiana, where he grew up on a farm.

BIOGRAPHY

Joseph Lamb, 1887-1960

Biography. Joseph Lamb was born in Montclair, New Jersey, in December 1877. A family man who was an anomaly in the contemporary music world, Lamb shunned the ups and downs of show business for a steady job in business. Nevertheless, Lamb is remembered alongside Scott Joplin and James Scott as one of the three great ragtime proponents.
Scott Joplin, 1868-1917

Scott Joplin's is the name perhaps most associated with ragtime. Born sometime between the summer of 1867 and mid-January 1868, Joplin's career took him from a modest homestead on the Texas-Arkansas border to New York's Tin Pan Alley New York City, where he would eventually try his luck with composers like a young Irving Berlin. Although he continued composing until just before his death in April 1917, Joplin's greatest fame came from his years in the Midwest where he was acknowledged as the "King of Ragtime."

Joplin enjoyed his greatest success in Sedalia, Missouri, where he studied music at George R. Smith College and played with several ensembles, among them the Queen City Cornet Band. He opened his own piano studio and taught and encouraged other composers whose names eventually joined his in ragtime history. These young talents included Arthur Marshall and Scott Hayden; Joplin collaborated with the former on the cakewalk "Swipesy" (1900) and the latter on the two-step "Sunflower Slow Drag" (1901). (Years later in New York, Joplin met and mentored another future ragtime great, Joseph Lamb.) Joplin's musical activities in Sedalia brought him in contact with the source of ragtime--piano playing in African-American social establishments. In fact, Joplin's engagements at the popular Maple Leaf Club inspired his most famous tune, "The Maple Leaf Rag" (1899).

Joplin's life spanned the unsettled post-Civil War years through much of World War I. His music embraced aspects of African-American popular heritage that thrived during that critical period; however, it also embraces elements from his formal musical training. For example, he found it perfectly reasonable to combine the syncopated rhythms of ragtime with the larger structures and forms of art music genres such as ballet and opera. For example, the form of the rag in Joplin's compositions was strict enough to be dubbed "classic," an epithet that both he and John Stark, his major publisher, employed to market their sheet music. Not only did the term imply an accepted structure (see the essay on "The Classic Rag"), but it also helped ragtime to migrate from its earthy origins to the parlors of the respectable middle class.

Joplin's theories about ragtime are stated eloquently in his self-published School of Ragtime (1908). Written in the style of an art music treatise, School demonstrates how serious
Scott Joplin’s opera “Treemonisha” (1911)

Treemonisha, an 18 year old African-American girl, is the only literate person in her community and encourages them to turn their back on superstition and embrace formal education.

Questions: 1. How can education benefit communities that have been historically excluded from that system?  
2. What problems can’t be solved through education and why?

www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200033526
TREEMONISHA.

No. 27. A REAL SLOW DRAG.

By SCOTT JOPLIN.

Directions for The Slow Drag.
1. The Slow Drag must begin on the first beat of each measure.
2. When moving forward, drag the left foot; when moving backward, drag the right foot.
3. When moving sideways to right, drag left foot; when moving sideways to left, drag right foot.
4. When prancing, your steps must come on each beat of the measure.
5. When marching and when sliding, your steps must come on the first and the third beat of each measure.
6. Hop and skip on second beat of measure. Double the Schottische step to fit the slow music. SCOTT JOPLIN.

INTRO. Larghetto. \(\text{s=100}\)

(Treemonisha and Lucy stand on bench in rear of room.)
218

(All stop, put right hand to ear and listen to music.)

slid - ing on - ward, listen to --------- that rag.

slid - ing on - ward, listen .... that rag.

(All hop.)

Hop and skip; now do that slow.
“Maple Leaf Rag” (1899) by Scott Joplin

1. What does 2/4 mean? Hint: It is not a fraction. However, fractions are used to understand how notes relate to each other within the parameters set by the 2 and the 4. (arrows show syncopation, a fundamental concept in ragtime music)

2. Without trying to read the notes, look at shapes and identify patterns. Patterns can help you understand the form of the piece. Where are patterns repeated and when do they change?

3. When are both “hands” playing together and when are they playing alone? Changes in texture often indicate a transition.

4. Where is there contrary motion? Where is the motion static? What mood is created by each?

5. Listen to a recording of the “Maple Leaf Rag” and discover whether or not your observations are audible. (audio available at www.freemusicarchive.org)
Thank you!

Questions? Post them in the chat box!