

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Celebrates American Music Month  
October 17 - December 3, 2009**

**Exhibitions**

***Beyond the Home: Women Redefining American Musical Life***, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, October 1, 2009 – July 9, 2010.

By the final decade of the nineteenth century a few notable women musicians emerged from the kitchens and parlors of America's homes to become leading professional soloists and they did this through extensive concert touring schedules that took them far from the cosmopolitan cities of the East Coast. Oscar G. Sonneck (1873-1928), first chief of the Music Division of the Library of Congress, wrote in 1916, "many western cities, barely out of the backwoods of civilization...are pushing forward musically with such rapidity and energy that they have already changed the ways of musical America...and...such advances resulted in large part from...such remarkable female performers as the violinists Camilla Urso and Maud Powell and the masterful pianist Frannie Bloomfield-Zeisler." Maud Powell once remarked that "of course women should play in symphony and other orchestras, if they want the work....but if they accept the work they should be prepared to expect no privileges because of their sex." This special exhibition in the Center's renovated museum space combines historical documents, photographs, music manuscripts, sound recordings and artifacts from the Carl Busch Music Instrument Collection, John Philip Sousa Music and Personal Papers, Martha Awkerman WAF and Long Beach Band Papers, Virginia Root Collection, Roslyn Rensch Papers, University Bands Collection, as well as other newly acquired collections of the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music. In addition this exhibition will include documents and photographs loaned from the Smithsonian Institution's Helen May Butler Collection. Join the staff of the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music as we uncover some of the stories of America's creative and innovative women musicians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

***The Women of the Marching Orange and Blue***, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, August 1, 2009 – April 15, 2010.

The University of Illinois Marching Illini is the nation's premiere college marching band whose unique performance style on and off the field is derived from time-honored traditions and exciting innovations. This unique ensemble has always been a very select and close-knit organization which annually includes nearly 350 students from virtually every college, discipline and major on the University's diverse Urbana-Champaign campus. With the exception of the years during World War II when female students were allowed to perform with the marching band because of the shortage of male students, women were not permitted to join the Marching Illini until 1971. The University of Illinois became the first Big Ten school music organization, under the leadership of Harry Begian as director of University Bands, to admit women to its marching ranks. Discover some of the stories of the challenges and triumphs that these pioneering students faced as the first ladies of the Marching Orange and Blue.

***On the Road with the Women's Air Force Band***, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, August 15, 2009 – June 15, 2010.

Martha J. "Martye" Awkerman (1928-2008), cornet soloist with the Women in the Air Force Band (WAF Band), the Long Beach Municipal Band, and the Hormel Girls Band, grew up in Pennsylvania and received trumpet performance degrees from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music in the early 1950s, where she studied with Frank Simon and Harold Mitchell. From 1955 to 1961 she played lead cornet and

trumpet with the 543rd Air Force Band under the leadership of Captain Marybelle J. Nissley. During her tenure with this ensemble she traveled around the world on USO tours and invitational engagements performing for both military and civilian audiences. Following the deactivation of the WAF Band in 1961 she became the first woman to be accepted into the famed Long Beach Municipal Band, where she played with many former members of the John Phillip Sousa Band until her retirement in 1983. Discover the behind-the-scenes touring life of the members of the Women's Air Force Band through the eyes of the Martha Awkerman.

***Lady in White: the Virginia Root Story***, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, September 16, 2009 – August 15, 2010.

Eleanor Virginia Root (1884-1980) was the featured soprano soloist with John Philip Sousa's Band between 1910 and 1916, and performed throughout Sousa's extensive 1910-1911 World Tour. Root's musical artistry captivated both Sousa and his audiences, winning her critical acclaim wherever she performed. While she trained as an operatic singer, much of her performance repertoire during her years with the Sousa Band consisted of popular parlor songs and Sousa operetta arias. Root's career followed in the nineteenth century singing tradition of Jenny Lind (1820-1887), the "Swedish Nightingale" who toured throughout Europe and the United States. Toward the end of her professional career Root witnessed the gradual decline of the "Golden Age" of concert singing as the American opera tradition became the predominant form of vocal performance. Explore the private and public life of one of Sousa's most recognized "nightingales."

***Helen May Butler and Her Ladies: the New American Brass Band***, Sousa Archives and Center for American Music, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, October 15, 2009 – July 9, 2010.

Helen May Butler (1867-1957) was a virtuoso cornetist, violinist, and renowned bandleader who performed many summer concerts in Willow Grove along side Conway, Creatore, Clarke and John Philip Sousa. In 1891, she formed and conducted the Talma Ladies Orchestra, but in 1898 began conducting a smaller group of musicians from within the orchestra who later became the U.S. Talma Ladies Military Band. Better known as the Helen May Butler's Ladies Band, this unique all-women brass band's reputation for musical excellence earned them coveted performances at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition, the 1902 Women's Exposition held at Madison Square Gardens, and the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. In addition her Cosmopolitan America March became the official march of the National Republican Party during the 1904 Presidential Campaign for Theodore Roosevelt. As a result she was frequently referred to as the Female Sousa until her band broke up in 1912. Learn more about this overlooked band leader and her impact on the role of women band musicians during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Exhibition made possible with a generous gift from David Kamm, Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering, University of Illinois, 1958. Artifacts on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center.

***Roslyn Rensch: Harp Carvings and Irish Crosses***, University Library Marshall Gallery, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, November 1-December 31, 2009

Roslyn Maria Rensch-Erbes (1923 - ) is considered one of America's leading scholars and writers of the history of the harp and representations of harps in historic monuments, manuscript illuminations and medieval art. She received her bachelors and masters degrees in music performance from Northwestern University (1945 and 1946), studied musicology at Indiana University under Willi Apel and Paul Nettl (1953-1955), earned a master of art history from the University of Illinois (1959), and a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Wisconsin in 1964. Rensch served as an instructor of harp for the University of Illinois between 1955 and 1958, and later as professor of humanities, art history and harp for Indiana State University between 1965 and 1988. Discover the intricate story of this

leading Illinois educator, performer, and historian of the harp.

## Concerts

October 25

### ***America's Musical Women***

A recital featuring Carol Jantsch on tuba and members of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony and the School of Music's Tuba/Euphonium Studio

3:00pm Concert

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

Foellinger Great Hall

Tickets: \$10 adults and \$5 for students/children

Carol Jantsch, the youngest member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and first woman to hold a principal tuba chair in one of the nation's top orchestras, will join members of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra and the School of Music's Tuba and Euphonium Ensemble in a special solo and chamber music recital of Armand Russell's *Suite Concertante*, John Steven's *Suite for Two*, PDQ Bach's "*Dutch*" *Suite*, Camille Saint-Saëns's *Cello Concerto no. 1 in A minor*, and John Steven's *Liberation of Sisyphus*. This unique program explores one woman musician's contributions to America's musical landscape today. For further information call 217-244-9309 or e-mail [sousa@illinois.edu](mailto:sousa@illinois.edu).

November 20

### ***Spare Some Change? Granny's Porch Looks at the 1930s Through America's Music***

7:30pm

Virginia Theatre

Tickets: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors and groups (10 or more), and \$5 children

Experience a special blend of string, swing, and early jazz band sounds that bring together the melodies, words, stories, and images of "hard times" folk living through America's Great Depression. Travel back to the birth of America popular radio when the WLS Barn Dance (Chicago) and the WSM Barn Dance (Nashville) radio shows could be heard coast to coast every Saturday night, and the music of Jimmie Rodgers, Bob Wills, the Carter Family, the Boswell Sisters, and many others gave strength to their listeners as difficulties brought them together as a family, a community, and a nation. Gary O'Brien and Marlys Scarbrough, returning again to host this year's special program, will be joined by Ron Hedlund, Eric Dalheim, Jack Deremiah, Jordan Kaye and the State Street Strutters, the Flexible Flyers, Vintage Brass Band, Amasong, Schwartz Family Headin' Home, Bow-Dacious String Band, and many other favorite local artists in an evening tribute to the music of America's 1930s. It's the best of traditional family entertainment, and it's found only on Granny's Porch. For general information call 217-244-9309 and for ticket information, contact the Virginia Theater at 217-356-9063 or <http://www.thevirginia.org/tickets.htm>.

## Performance Lectures

October 24

### ***Striving for Perfect Tuba Chops A Master Class with Carol Jantsch***

3:00-4:30pm  
 Smith Hall  
 Main Auditorium  
 Free and open to the public and all music students

Praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as having "a sound as clear and sure as it [is] luxurious," Carol Jantsch, Principal Tuba of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2006, will provide a special hands-on master class for high school, undergraduate, and graduate music students interested in learning more about her technique and approach to mastering the tuba's full spectrum of sound and music possibilities. A special exhibition of new tubas from the Custom Music Company of Detroit will be made available immediately after the master class in room 25 of Smith Hall. All participants, young and old, will have the opportunity to test drive these exciting new instruments. For further information call 217-244-9309 or e-mail [sousa@illinois.edu](mailto:sousa@illinois.edu).

November  
 19-20

***If You Ain't Got the Do Re Mi: America's 1930s Through Music***

American String Festival 2009  
 9:00am-2:30pm  
 314A/B Illini Union  
 Admission Free  
 Reservations Required

This two-day music education program will utilize cross cultural instructional approaches created specifically for elementary, middle, high, and home school music students and their teachers. The November 19th session will focus on the needs of beginning and early intermediate string students with at least one year of playing experience, and on November 20th we will work with intermediate middle- and advanced string students. Each day's sessions will include hands-on instructional and informational clinics which will focus on the use of the fiddle in popular swing and swing-dance forms, and on the use of related melodic and rhythmic syncopation and improvisation techniques. Music for these clinics will include works by folksingers, big-band arrangers, and other musicians from the early heyday of recorded American popular music. There also will be discussions on the birth of commercial radio and its impact on listeners and performers during the 1930s, and the rise of the American folk revival movement. Special guest appearances by members of the Vintage Brass Band performing on historical instruments and members of the traditional string band, Flexible Flyers, will help illustrate the music that was commonly performed by America's territory string and brass bands during the first three decades of the twentieth century. For further information and reservations contact either Scott Schwartz at 217-244-9309 ([schwartzs@illinois.edu](mailto:schwartzs@illinois.edu)) or Robin Kearton at 217-384-2946 ([robin.k@bow-daciousstringband.com](mailto:robin.k@bow-daciousstringband.com)).

**Special  
 Events**

October 24

***University of Illinois Tuba Hurling Contest***

12:00-1:30pm  
 Freer Hall Swimming Pool  
 Admission Free

Join Carol Jantsch and members of the School of Music's Tuba and Euphonium Studio in the University's first spectacular "Tuba Toss" to

introduce children and adults from the community to the joys of being a low-brass musician. Carol is considered to be one of today's greatest tuba players in the country. She is also the only women to win a tuba hurling contest! She can hurl a full-size tuba farther than guys twice her size. So in the spirit of this special feat and the desire to show the community's young girls that there isn't anything that they can't do if they put their minds to it, we are kicking off Carol's master class and recital with a tuba hurling contest to see who can go the longest distance and make the biggest splash. The community's children, music students and the young at heart are invited to participate in this special fun-loving event. For further information contact either Scott Schwartz at 217-244-9309 ([schwartzs@illinois.edu](mailto:schwartzs@illinois.edu)).

November 21 ***Ballroom Boogie: Music and Dance from America's 1930s***  
Featuring the Tony Barron Orchestra under the direction of Barry Wagner  
7:00-11:00pm  
Alice Campbell Alumni Center  
Tickets: \$20 adults, \$10 children 12 and under

Relive the sights, sounds, and enchantment of dancing to the melodies of Fletcher Henderson, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Paul Whiteman, Benny Goodman, Guy Lombardo and the Casa Loma Orchestra that were played in some of America's grandest dance ballrooms -- Chicago's Trianon and Argon, Detroit's Graystone, Catalina Island's Avalon, Los Angeles' Palomar Night Club, New York's Cotton Club, and Robeson's Rooftop Garden in Champaign-Urbana -- during the 1930s. The Tony Barron Orchestra will take you back to the heyday of the 1930s when women, dressed in elegant ankle-length dresses that were molded to their bodies, and men, wearing black and white tuxedos, danced the foxtrot, lindy, big apple, and swing to the accompaniment of sweet-styled music. Aurora Villacorta, who taught ballroom dancing at the University of Illinois for many years, and several of her students also will provide basic tango, swing, and waltz instruction for those wanting to refresh their dance steps or learn some new moves. To enhance the evening's experience period refreshments will be provided as part of this special social event and guests are invited to attend in period dress, but this is not required. For further information and reservations contact either Scott Schwartz at 217-244-9309 or Vicki Retzolk at 217-265-0513.