

NOTES AND NEWS

THE INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF AFRICAN MUSIC

On the 30th May 1986, Article No. 10253 in the Government Gazette stated that the Section 21 non-profit company known as International Library of African Music (ILAM) had been deregistered. At that moment the long months of negotiation between ILAM and Rhodes University came to an end and ILAM found a permanent home. The ILAM, founded at Roodepoort in 1954 by Hugh Tracey, was a private institution depending mainly on the support of overseas benefactors such as the Nuffield and the Ford Foundation. By the 1970s political conditions in South Africa had already begun to deter overseas donations and the ILAM's work, indeed its existence, became increasingly precarious. Dr Jeffrey Opland, whose work on Xhosa oral literature is well known, and who had had contact with ILAM through his research, was aware of this and suggested an affiliation of ILAM to Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Then Dennis Etheredge who, as Secretary of the Chairman's Fund of Anglo-American Corporation, and then as Chairman of the Chamber of Mines, had frequently been asked to tide the ILAM over to better times, proposed that the long-term answer to the continuity of both ILAM and African music studies in South Africa was to bring it permanently under the wing of a university. The ILAM finally moved to Grahamstown in 1978, after the death of Dr. Hugh Tracey the previous year, and the building was officially opened by Dennis Etheredge to the sound of a full Chopi xylophone orchestra directed by Venancio Mbande.

The core of the archive is the recordings made from 1929 to the mid 70s by pioneer recordist Hugh Tracey, most of which have been published in the several ILAM record series, both 78 and 33 rpm, notably the 213-record *Sound of Africa* series which can be found in African studies departments at many universities worldwide. These recordings cover an area from South Africa to northern Zaire and Uganda, with their greatest strength in southern Africa. Now with the appointment of a librarian, Ms Gege Kekana, it is hoped that the entire ILAM collection including previously unpublished 78s, and recordings of black urban music, will be brought into the University's library system and then computerised according to an accepted international library system, thus making our holdings immediately accessible worldwide.

What future can the International Library of African Music have in South Africa and what role can it play? The function of the library is to spread knowledge of African music. It is a means both for Africans to get to know their culture better and for white people to gain a better understanding of black values. There is an increasing demand among black people in South Africa, in education, the church, cultural groups and the entertainment world for example, for a more informed approach to their traditional and popular music. The ILAM aims to teach methods of musical analysis which will allow students to do their own research. It provides a home and an inspiration for students and university fellows, the most notable of late being Fr. Dave Dargie of the Lumko Missiological Institute whose Ph.D thesis, "Techniques of Xhosa music, a study based on the music of the Lumko district", should contribute greatly to our understanding of traditional Xhosa music.

ANDREW TRACEY

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African music activities of the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Ethnographical Museum of Berlin (West) by Prof. Dr. Artur Simon

The highlights of our concert activities in June 1984 were the second invitation to three former Buganda court musicians, Evaristo Muyinda, Ludvico Sserwanga and Hadisoni Kiyaga, and the first performance of the famous jali and kora-player, Jali Nyama Suso from Gambia. Additional