Improving access to Europe's digital audio archives

Richard Ranft, Coordinator, Europeana Sounds

BAAC conference 18 September 2014, Riga
Current scope of Europeana

→ a single access point in 32 languages to Europe’s cultural heritage…
→ …aggregates metadata records contributed by 2,300 cultural heritage institutions from all over Europe…
→ … link to 32 million objects (books, paintings, sound recordings, videos, etc)
Europeana 1989 - now live
Journey through the fall of the Iron Curtain.

From the blog

Become Wikipedia’s Best Fashion Editor
From 12 November-12 December, Europeana Fashion is hosting the online Europeana Fashion Challenge on Wikipedia. During this month-long challenge, participants are invited to edit the fashion articles on Wikipedia for its...
Europeana content

→ From galleries, libraries, archives, museums, AV collections
→ From all 28 EU member states, plus 7 other countries
  → 18m images
  → 11m texts
  → 0.5m sounds
  → 0.24m videos
  → 15,000 3-D objects
  • Note: video, sound = 2.5% of total, but x10 accesses
Europeana Sounds project

“Europe’s Sound Heritage at your fingertips”

Started Feb 2014

Will represent the fifth aggregation domain, alongside EFG, EUscreen, APEX, TEL
Significance of audio recordings

I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to see realised, but my lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.
Dictabelt recordings
Which digital objects?

Sounds, images, photographs, sheet music, etc.
Uniting cultural items

BWV 870 JS Bach Well-Tempered Clavier - Prelude and Fugue in C major

*Manuscript score (Source: The British Library. Add.MS 35021)*

*Audio recording (Source: recorded example from Europeana Helsinki City Library).*
Objectives

→ **Double** the number of audio items on Europeana, to >1m; additional 0.2m related items: scores, texts, images, videos

→ Improve discovery and use by **enriching** and cross-linking metadata for 2m audio and related items

→ work with **rights** holders to unlock access to Europe’s audio heritage

→ Improve usability by creating **Europeana channels** for audio and other content

→ improve Europeana’s technical **infrastructure** for aggregating time-based content

→ **Promote** among end-users and other content providers

→ build a **sustainable** network of content providers with IASA
Animal sounds
Whales compose, bullfrogs chorus, and songbirds greet the dawn.
Learn how different animals sound in this Europeana channel in partnership with the British Library.

Search channel

Featured searches

Tawny Owl

Polecat

Mallard

Mole

Guess the animal!
Play our animal sounds game - test what you have learned, and challenge your friends in our classroom quiz.

Play the animal sounds game

@M_Western Class 9 had fun with the @EuropeanaSounds animal sounds game - Tim came top with 9! [http://bitly.com/xxxxx]

@EuropeanaSounds Check out our Beethoven sounds channel today - lots of newly digitised music sheets! [http://bitly.com/xxxxx]

RT "[@Wi11a] What did the fox say?" @EuropeanaSounds You can find out here! [http://bitly.com/xxxxx]
Project outline

→ 3 years: Feb 2014 – Jan 2017
→ €6.1m total budget, 80% EC funded (€4.9m EC contribution)
→ funded by European Union’s ICT Policy Support Programme as part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme
Project partners

24 organisations from 12 countries

7 National Libraries
5 Archive & Research Centres
2 other Public Bodies
4 Non-profit Organisations
3 Universities
3 Companies

+ work with SoundCloud, Spotify, HistoryPin, IASA…
Get involved

https://www.facebook.com/soundseuropeana

@eu_sounds
The world’s oldest Mozart recording
Published September 15, 2014
In a climate controlled section in the basement of Statsbiblioteket, you can find a couple of old solid wooden boxes. These boxes used to contain some of the world’s oldest sound recordings on wax cylinders, called the “Ruben collection”. One of the cylinders contains what might be the oldest existing Mozart recording in the world: the famous Danish opera tenor Peter Schram (1819-1895) sings Leporello’s aria from Mozart’s opera Don Giovanni. Read more →

Tweet 16
Example

English Conversation: *At the Tobacconist's*. 1929 Linguaphone Company 78rpm shellac disc, on British Library Sounds website:

http://sounds.bl.uk/Arts-literature-and-performance/Early-spoken-word-recordings/024M-1CS0011556XX-0200V0
Stay tuned!
and thanks for listening!

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