

# A SECOND LIFE FOR MUSIC

Some long forgotten. Others precariously preserved on traditional wax cylinders, vinyls, and tapes. Still others hard to even identify. Here, priceless old works of music regain something they lost long ago: having someone find a moment to give them a listen.



## PHONOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS, PAS INSTITUTE OF ART

**Jacek Jackowski** – section head

**Piotr Dorosz** – senior documentalist (doctoral program, PAS Institute of Art)

**Ewelina Grygier** – contractor (doctoral program, PAS Institute of Art)

in collaboration with **Dr. Weronika Grozdew-Kołacińska** (Polish songs and folk music)

Projects and grants carried out in collaboration with:

- Anastasia Niakrasava ■ Teresa Nowak ■ Anna Rutkowska
- Maria Szymańska-Ilnata (doctoral program, PAS Institute of Art) ■ Barbara Śnieżek
- Maciej Królikowski ■ Marta Kramicz ■ Agnieszka Nagnajewicz
- Kaja Maćko-Gieszcz ■ Anna Walkowiak ■ Bartosz Niedźwiecki ■ Paulina Książek

**P h o t o s   b y   J a k u b   O s t a ł o w s k i**



Fig. 1: Jacek Jackowski calibrating the reading head of a Nagra 4.2 tape player

Fig. 2: Piotr Dorosz at the digital recording studio

Fig. 3: The oldest recording of Polish folklore, on an Edison wax cylinder, dating from 1904

Fig. 4: Ewelina Grygier preparing a magnetic tape to be played

Fig. 5: Piotr Dorosz demonstrating a soft Decelith-type gramophone record, dating from 1945

Fig. 6: An incomplete Edison phonograph

Numerous treasures of traditional Polish music have been digitized, studied, and cataloged by the Phonographic Collections unit at the Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences in 2014-2015, during the first stage of the project “The Phonographic Heritage of Polish Folk Music – Current Status, Preservation, Dissemination.” These included the recording archives of the twentieth-century folklorist Franciszek Kotula now held by the Ethnographic Museum in Rzeszów, recordings from the Regional Society in Wola Osowińska, materials from the Southern Podlasie Museum, and one part of the contemporary recordings made in eastern Mazowsze by Wanda Księżopolska. Plans for 2016 include expanding the work to include the collections of the Musical Archives of Religious Folklore at the Musicology Institute at the Catholic University of Lublin, the “Ethnolinguistic Archives” of the Institute of Polish Philology at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, and the “Dom Ludowy” Cultural Center in Bukowina Tatrzańska. In parallel, work is underway on digital archives containing more than 150,000 records ([cadis.ispan.pl](http://cadis.ispan.pl)).

Oskar Kolberg, the eminent nineteenth-century anthropologist, ethnographer and documenter of Polish musical culture, once wrote: “I record notes in their unadulterated form (unless, that is, the singers are to blame for the adulteration), just as they emerged from the mouth of the folk people, without any decoration of harmony, because it is my conviction that they are at their best when in their genuine, undisturbed purity, as nature inspired them.” He has found worthy successors in the staff members and collaborators of the Phonographic Collections, PAS Institute of Art – the country’s own research unit working to preserve, study, and provide access to historical ethno-musical recordings.

For more information, see: [www.ispan.pl/pl/zbiory/zbiory-fonograficzne](http://www.ispan.pl/pl/zbiory/zbiory-fonograficzne)



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