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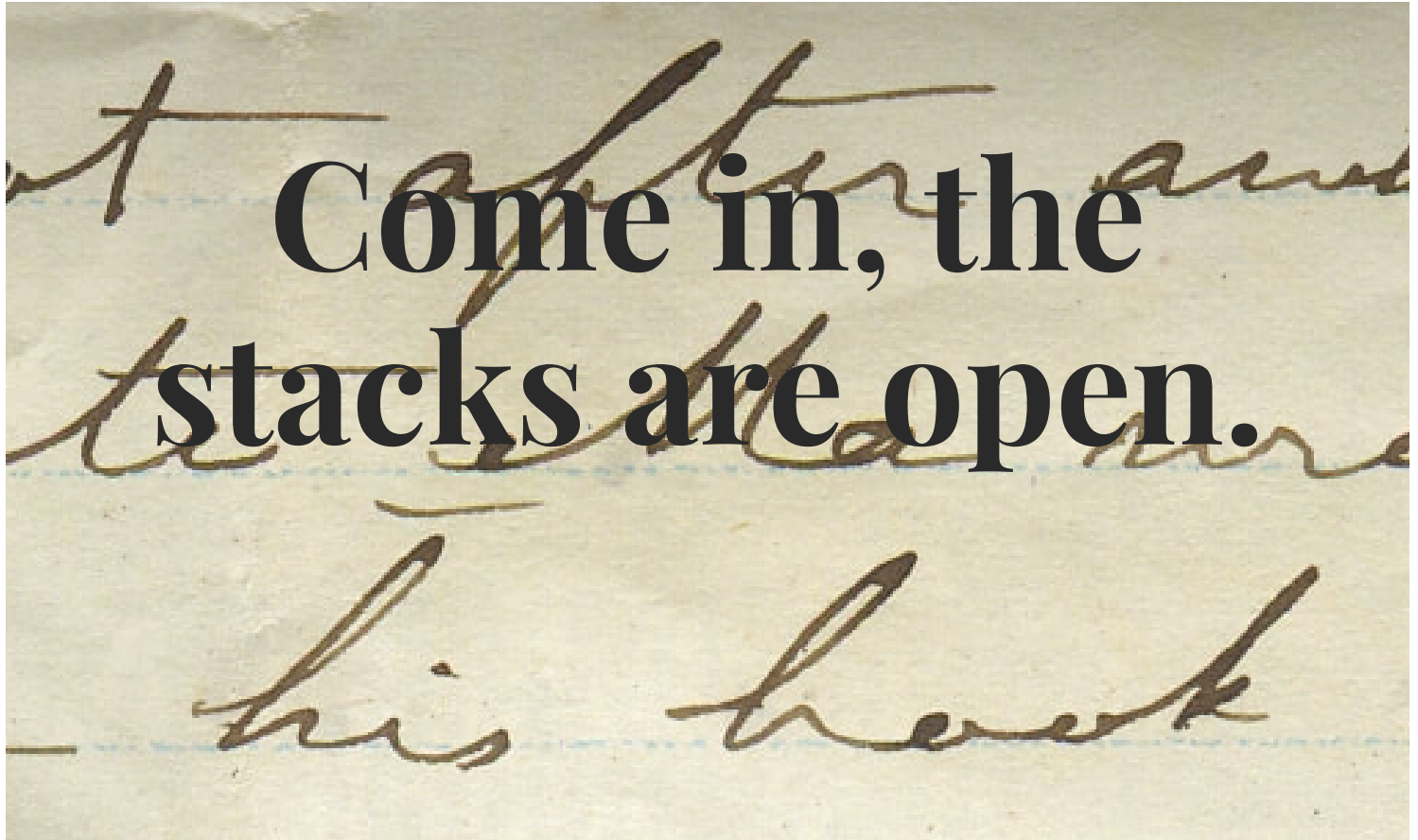
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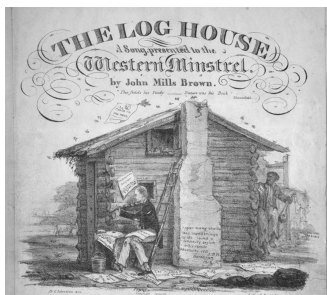
CART 



Music in Well of Souls: Uncovering the Banjo's Hidden History

9/26/2022

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Unfortunately, all of the music illustrations got cut from *Well of Souls: Uncovering the Banjo's Hidden History*. Here are some of the songs referenced, musical examples of early American music, and other musical

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Away from prying eyes, damaging light, and pilfering hands, the most special collections are kept in closed

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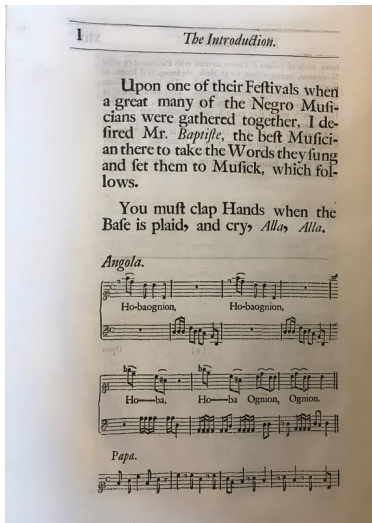
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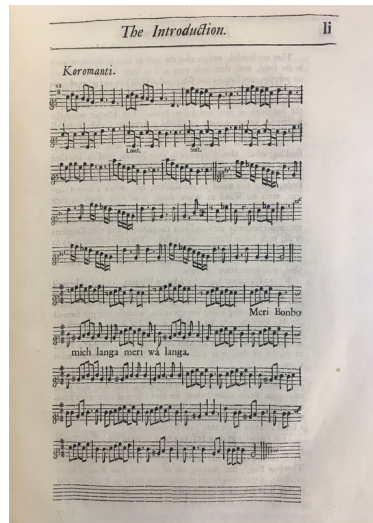
Three musical selections transcribed by Mr. Baptiste for Sir Hans Sloane, Jamaica, 1687.



James Ford Bell Library/
University of Minnesota
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Papa on gourd banjo:

Rhiannon Giddens's song "Build A House" (0:00 to 1:31 in this video) begins with the second part of the Koromanti tune (starting on the third line above), adapted for



are examined in the light. The stacks are open. Read the stories behind objects and ephemera found in private collections, archives, and museums.

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scholars Mary Caton Lingold and Laurent Dubois have made this music come to life.

The Maroon ranger song transcribed by John Gabriel Stedman in his original manuscript.



James Ford Bell Library/ University of Minnesota Libraries.

Ranger Song on fiddle:



Stedman's transcription isn't broken up into measures (I count 21 beats in the first part, which might be 4 4/4 measures with a pickup and 25 beats in the second part, which might be 5 4/4 measures with a pickup). This may be a reflection of syncopation that he had a hard time writing in Western musical notation, because although he was a musician, he wasn't a professional or African American like Mr. Baptiste. The triple pattern in the second part reminds me of the first part of

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A ai bombia bombé song he heard in Haiti before 1814.

Allegro agitato.

A - ia bom - baia bom - bé. a - ia, bombaia bombé; lam - ma, samana. qua na lamma, samana, qua na. E van, vanta, vana, docki. a ia, bombaia bombé, a - ia, bombaia bom - hé, lam - ma, sama - na, qua na lam - ma, samana qua na.

Archive.org

A ai bombia bombé on fiddle:



The song is in a major key and very lively, which makes it feel a bit militaristic. Jackey Quakenboss, one of the drummers at the Pinkster festival in New York, was said to have sung a song with similar lyrics.

One of the Banja songs transcribed by H.C. Focke

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Arabi na Pambo on fiddle:

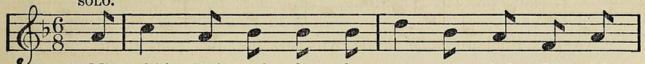


Arabi na Pambo is the banja song I reference in *Well of Souls*, but H.C. Focke transcribed others as well. Many are in a minor key. [Click here to see more of the music.](#)

Calinda

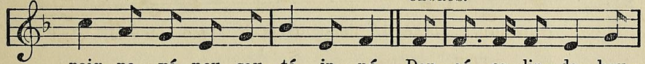
134. CALINDA.

SOLO.

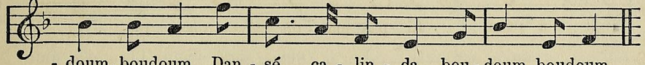


1. Mi - chié Pré - val li don - nin gran bal, Li fait

CHORUS.



naig pa - yé pou sau - té in - pé. Dan - sé ca - lin - da, bou -



- doum, boudoum, Dan - sé ca - lin - da, bou - doum, boudoum.

2 Michié Préval li té capitaine bal,
So cocher Louis té maite cérémonie.

3 Dans lequirie la yavé gran gala,
Mo cré choual layé té bien étonné.

4 Yavé des négresse belle passé maitresse,
Yé volé bébéelle dans l'ormoire mamzelle.

Calinda adapted for gourd banjo:



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passed entirely out of use. Beschereille describes the two lines as “avancant et reculant en cadence, et faisant des contorsions fort singulieres et des gestes fort lascifs” (“advancing and retreating in cadence, and making very singular contortions and very lascivious gestures”).

When I was working on *Well of Souls*, I came across the record of the de Paur Chorus (already in our possession, somehow), where Danse Calinda is the title track.

There's also the [more adapted version by the Lost Bayou Ramblers](#) that I love.

Gottschalk's *Le Banjo*

Although Gottschalk was white and he took some of his melodies from Blackface Minstrel tunes, I do want to include

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music ever commercially recorded and published, asserting that a unique place in music history,' says Henri Georges Polgar." Throughout his life, he continued to promote and support African American music and art, and became involved in humanitarian causes around the world. He passed away in 2016 and you can read more about him in his obituary [here](#). Pritchard also adapted some Haitian folksongs for piano on this album, which is also a [great piece](#) (listen here).

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There are also a few musical examples that I don't reference in the book.

An African Work Song, Barbados, ca. 1770s-1780s

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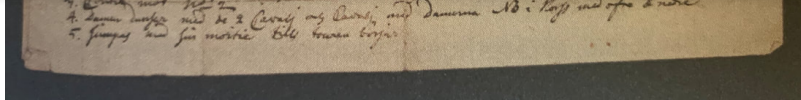
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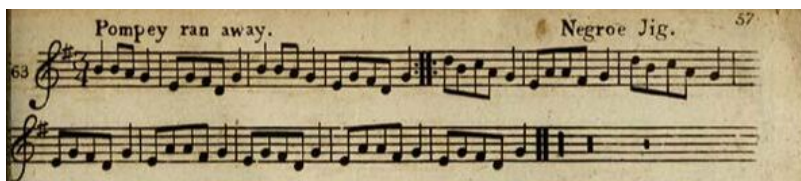
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In 1787 Swedish doctor Christopher Carlander traveled to the Swedish colony of St. Barthelemy (St. Bartholomew), which before and after was a French colony. According to Frederick Thomasson in *Svarta St: Barthelemy: Människoöden i en Svensk Koloni 1785-1847* (Black St. Bartholomew: Human Destinies in a Swedish Colony from 1785 to 1847), "Carlander valued seeing the Black populations music and dance and took it seriously, demonstrated by the fact that he wrote down their music and described their dances" (my translation, 132). These images are from Thomasson's book, and I still would like to see the originals (at Rikssarkivet in Stockholm) and look more into music in St. Bartholomew. (Oh, and my final note for now on this: endless gratitude to my dad, who read about Thomasson's book, got me a copy, and found me a copy of the published version of Carlander's diary, knowing I'd be interested in this transcription and the descriptions).

Pompey Ran Away - Negroe Jig



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*danjo:*

Congo Prince Jig



Congo Prince Jig *on gourd banjo:*



Although it comes from the book [Brigg's banjo instructor](#) (which was a product of the explosion in popularity of the banjo because of Blackface Minstrel troupes), the name of this as "Congo Prince Jig" evokes the King of Kongo and King Charles, the Pinkster King of Albany, who was said to have been from Kongo.

If you are aware of other early (1600s-1820s) transcriptions of Black or African American music, please let me know! I'd love to add it here.

This is part of [Banya Obligato](#), a series of blog posts relating to my book [Well of Souls: Uncovering the Banjo's Hidden History](#). While integrally related to *Well of Souls*, these posts are editorially and financially separate from the book (i.e., I'm

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CASEY HENRY

9/29/2022 06:42:25 am

The "Congo Prince Jig" on gourd banjo doesn't show up for me on two different browsers...though all the other music players work. (Just thought you'd like to know.) Excellent to be able to hear all this music!

REPLY

KRISTINA R. GADDY

9/29/2022 12:17:34 pm

Oops! I forgot to upload it. It is there now! Thanks!

REPLY

ED BETTEGA

2/6/2023 01:33:02 am

Timothy Twiss has a nice recording of this tune played on a 19th century banjo, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psO0xJEWHsQ>

REPLY

TONY THOMAS MFA

8/5/2023 01:56:34 pm

The Calenda is pretty much a permanent part of especially Francophone (one might say creoleophone) music and dance throughout the New World, and has successively revived in various forms of where Zydeco or other especially Black creoleophone music that I know about, The Late Clifton Chenier who was KING OF THE ZYDECO had several versions of the tunes that were hits. Because a big part of the San Francisco and East Bay Black population are descended from Louisiana and East Texas African Americans who came out for jobs during and after WWII, at least in the late 70s and 80s when I lived in the Bay area, Chenier came out 2-3 times a year to perform not just for concerts for the blues and ethnic revivalist enthusiasts, but for the working class Tex/Louisiana Diaspora in the East Bay, and even in Sf before it was gentrified. He always did his version of Calinda which had been transformed

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