Building World Music Collections: Mexico & the Southwestern U.S.

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Mexico

- Rich musical heritage
- Includes elements from other Latin American countries, including Colombia’s cumbia & Cuba’s danzón
- Styles include the son & ranchera
- Numerous regional variations exist for many genres
Mariachi

- Ensemble with violins, guitars, guitarrón, and harp
- Golden age was 1950s, with mariachi groups accompanying films (rancheros)
- Repertoire began with sones from Jalisco, but now includes ballads, polkas, cumbias, popular songs, and waltzes
Tex-Mex/Conjunto/Tejano Conjunto

- Accordian-driven dance music, with polka beat
- Incorporates rancheros, boleros, & polkas
- Also influenced by late 19th century immigration of German, Czech and Polish into south Texas
- *Tejano* is similar, but more pop oriented with synthesizers/keyboards in place of accordian
Prominent Conjunto Artists

Flaco Jiménez – from San Antonio, began recording in the 1930s

Santiago Jiménez Jr.

Steve Jordan
Specializes in vernacular music of the Americas
Founded in 1960
Chris Strachwitz
Offers modern and historic recordings of Tejano and Mariachi reissues
Sell CDs, digital downloads, LPs, and DVDs
Website: www.arhoolie.com
Other Important Labels

Corasón – based in Mexico City: catalog includes contemporary traditional music from various regions of Mexico (in addition to other world musics)

http://corason.com
Fonovisa

Part of Universal Music’s Latin Entertainment division

www.universalmusica.com/fonovisa
Smithsonian Folkways offers several dozen excellent recordings, both as CDs and digital download

http://www.folkways.si.edu
Rounder

www.rounder.com

Include the Conjunto releases
For libraries, ASP’s Smithsonian Global Sound over 50 CD recordings related to Mexico.

ASP’s Contemporary World Music includes CDs of Mexican music from Rounder Records, Frontera, and Arhoolie Records.
• Offers a small sampling of music of Mexico
• 30 titles
• Not the cream of the crop, but is something
Recommended Resources

The Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Mexican and Mexican American Recordings, by Agustín Gurza (Chicano Archives Series; UCLA) ; $20.

Appendixes are a goldmine of lists, including top 50 performers and songwriters, top 20 genres, favorite recordings, and “notable” mariachi recordings.
Not So Good Starting Point:

- Good news:
  - Includes a 14-page entry
  - Lists a few recordings (all on Arhoolie)
- Bad news:
  - There are only a few (4) recordings listed
Mexican-influenced coverage:

“Hispanic California” (Steven Loza).

“Música Nuevomexicana” (James K. Leger).

“Tejano Music” (José R. Reyna).
Garland Encyclopedia, Vol. 2: South America, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean

- 78 pages on Mexico, w/ 10 chapters
- Focus is on indigenous music & groups
- Six contributors, some with several chapter
- Most authors include recommended recordings/resources
Popular Music


40 pages of history, commentary, bibliographies, discographies, and filmographies. Regional musics, with six contributors.
Rough Guides

Mexico - 10 pages of commentary and context. 4 page discography. 1999.

Tex-Mex & Conjunto – 8 pages of history and 3 page discography.
Mariachi Music in America

• By Daniel Sheehy, 2006.

• Part of the Global Music Series from Oxford University Press.

• Offers several pages of resources, including CDs, DVDs.
Music in Mexico

- Part of the Global Music Series from Oxford University Press.
- Includes 8-track CD, and instructions to repeated instructions to “search the internet for ... ”
Sources for Finding CDs

• www.worldmusicstore.com

• www.amazon.com

• www.bn.com
The JVC/Smithsonian Folkways Video Anthology of Music and Dance (Multicultural Media; available at www.worldmusicstore.com)
General Thoughts on Developing World Music Collections

- Focus on unique institutional needs
- Build through cooperative collection development
- Developing centers of focus
Addition Considerations

- DVDs – Region 4 and region-free
- Prices are friendly (esp. compared to other countries)
- The proximity and cultural openness make purchases easy
- Let the programs you support and the faculty that you work with help determine what you purchase.
What Was Left Out?

Popular musics:
- Rock
- Pop
- Electronic
- Ska

Art Musics: Classical, jazz and opera

Regional traditions and musics

And much more...
Thank you!

Please save questions/discussion until the presentations are complete.