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AES Audio Engineering Society - Pacific Northwest Section

Around the Puget Sound, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

NOTE: anyone can attend this meeting regardless of their status as an AES member.

AES MEMBERSHIP IS NOT REQUIRED.

**Seeing Voices
Using Light to Restore and Preserve Early Recorded
Sound**

**Presented By
Dr. Carl Haber**

**Lawrence Berkeley National Library
sponsored by**

**UW Department of Physics
and co-sponsored by**

**The Pacific Northwest Section of the AES, Bill Holm
Center, Burke Museum, DXArts
Tuesday, March 20st, 2018, 7:30pm
University of Washington, Kane Hall 120**

[Directions to UW. You want Gate 4.](#)

This lecture is free and open to all, however [advance registration is required.](#)

Sound was first recorded and reproduced by Thomas Edison in 1877. Until about 1950, when magnetic tape use became common, most recordings were made on mechanical media such as wax, foil, shellac, lacquer, and plastic. Some of these older recordings contain material of great historical interest, but may be in obsolete formats, and are damaged, decaying, or are now considered too delicate to play. Unlike print and latent image scanning, the playback of mechanical sound carriers has been inherently invasive. Recently, techniques, based upon non-contact optical metrology and data analysis, have been applied to create and analyze high resolution digital images, and to restore the audio content, of these materials.

This lecture will discuss the characteristics of early sound recordings and the use of this new technology as applied to a number of notable collections: field recordings of Native Americans and Canadians from the early 20th Century, the experimental sound recordings of Alexander Graham Bell, from the 1880s, and ethnographic recordings collected by Milman Parry in Yugoslavia in 1930, which led to the oral-formulaic theory of epic poetry.

The technology and restoration of historic audio recordings will be illustrated with sounds and images. Additional information can be found at irene.lbl.gov

Presenter

Dr. Carl Haber is an experimental physicist. He received his Ph.D. in Physics from Columbia University and is a Senior Scientist in the Physics Division of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory at the University of California. He is a recipient of a 2013 MacArthur genius grant, and a Fellow of the American Physical Society and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. While primarily a particle physicist, with a focus on instrumentation development for high energy colliders, since 2002 he, and his colleagues, have also been involved in cultural preservation science. They have applied methods of precision optical metrology and data analysis to early recorded sound restoration. Methods invented by him have been credited with restoring the earliest known recording of a human voice, as well as early recordings of Alexander Graham Bell's voice.

Registration

Register to attend (with guests) via this [link. There is a place where you can say that you're affiliated with PNW AES Section. Please do so.](#)

Dan Mortensen

AES PNW 2017-2018 Section Chair

n.b. *The material presented at our meetings is the opinion of the presenter and not necessarily that of the Society. You are encouraged to conduct your own research and to form your own opinions before adopting the presented material as Truth.*

Our meetings are open to anyone interested in Audio. AES membership is NOT required for you to attend our meetings.

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