
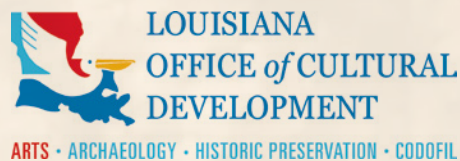


Louisiana  **INSTRUMENT**
MAKERS & REPAIRERS

Innovation • Tradition • Change

EXHIBITOR KIT



The Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program is mandated to identify, present, and preserve Louisiana's folk artists, practitioners, communities and landscapes.

Exhibitor Kit is provided by
Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program.

Welcome

Welcome to the exhibitor kit for the traveling exhibit, *Louisiana Instrument Makers & Repairers*. The goal is to help visitors understand the traditions of Louisiana's musical instrument makers and repairers. The activities help visitors consider tradition, innovation, and change in this genre.

The exhibitor kit informs someone wanting to book the exhibit about the size, space requirements, assembly instructions, loan agreement, evaluation, and other forms needed. The exhibitor kit also includes exhibit content, suggestions for activities and programming, and resources.

Produced by Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, the project was supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.

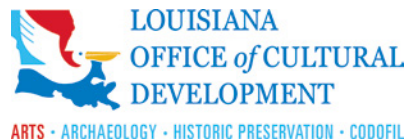


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Louisiana Instrument Makers & Repairers Website,

<http://www.louisianafolklife.org/lfp/instrumentsexhibit.html>

See the exhibit online here:

<http://www.louisianafolklife.org/lfp/instrumentsproject.html>

EXHIBIT INFORMATION

Synopsis:

This traveling exhibit from the Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program explores the state's musical instrument makers and repairers and their relationships with music stores and musicians. It is intended to travel to libraries and other small venues throughout Louisiana.

The exhibit draws upon the online essay, *Innovation, Tradition, and Change in Louisiana Musical Instrument Making and Repair* and previous documentation by the Folklife Program as part of the Louisiana Musical Instruments Project.

The traveling exhibit consists of three pull-up banners. The banner themes are Innovation, Tradition, and Change.

Statistics:

The exhibit consists of three one-sided pull-up banners that are free standing. The exhibit logo is on each banner as well as where to find additional information, so they can be used separately. Each banner is 85" tall x 33" wide x 7.5" deep. If the three banners are placed in a line, it requires approximately 9 feet x 2 feet of floor space.

The exhibition travels in 3 containers, each weighing 5 lbs in the soft case and 9.5 lbs in the hard case. Usually one person can transport the exhibit and set it up. The hard case for each pull-up banner is 41" long by 17" wide by 6" thick. The three hard cases require a space of approximately 18' by 31" by 24" to store.

Each institution must assemble and disassemble the exhibition in its location according to assembly instructions included below.

Requirements:

There is no fee required to display the exhibition. However, exhibitors are responsible for picking up and returning it to the Louisiana Division of the Arts in Baton Rouge. For other requirements see the loan agreement and transportation instructions in this kit.

Loan Agreement

Prior to the reservation, Borrower will provide photographs of the area where the exhibit will be placed to the Division of Arts Folklife Program (folklife@crt.la.gov) and a Division of the Arts staff member can make an onsite visit to the Borrower's facility in Louisiana.

When you reserve the exhibit, the Borrower agrees to:

1. Pick up and return the exhibit to the Division of the Arts in Baton Rouge (1051 North Third Street, Room 416)
2. Submit the Exhibit Arrival Evaluation upon receipt of the exhibit.
3. Follow instructions in the exhibit kit regarding handling, unpacking, packing, installing, and returning the exhibit. Allow only personnel who have read the loan agreement to unpack, set up, take down, and pack the exhibit.
4. Return the exhibit in the same condition in which it was received and not remove any tags, labels, or tape from any components of the exhibit.
5. Assume all risks and financial obligations incurred in shipping, moving, housing, and displaying the artifacts.
6. Display and store the exhibit only at the location(s) listed in the request form and not lend any part of the exhibit to any other organization or institution. The cases must be stored in a dry, secure location while the exhibition is on display.
7. Monitor the space during hours of operation by the Borrower's staff.
8. Provide adequate security from theft, loss, damage, or deterioration of the exhibit. In the event of any of the above, Borrower must notify Division of Arts Folklife Program immediately. After consultation with the Division of Arts Folklife Program, the Borrower will take appropriate measures as agreed upon to rectify the condition. The Borrower will pay all repair costs to items damaged while under its care.
9. Be responsible for adequately curating the artifact(s) under its control. If at any time the Division of Arts Folklife Program feels that the exhibit is not being adequately cared for, it will so notify the Borrower. If the Borrower is unwilling or unable to take appropriate measures to rectify the situation, the Division of Arts Folklife Program will revoke the loan agreement and the exhibit will be returned at the Borrower's expense within 15 days of notification.
10. Use the following credit line in any publicity: This project was produced by Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism and was supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.
11. Submit a Final Exhibit Evaluation.

Exhibit Arrival Evaluation

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE PROGRAM WITHIN 24 HOURS OF RECEIPT OF THE EXHIBIT IN YOUR LOCATION. This form is necessary so that the gradual wear and tear on the exhibit system caused by travel can be tracked. Complete this form even if the exhibit arrives in perfect condition.

EXHIBIT LOCATION:

DATE OF RECEIPT:

CONDITION OF THE CASES:
(note only noticeable minor damage)

CONDITION OF THE EXHIBIT PANELS, IMAGES, LABELS, ETC.:
(note only noticeable minor damage)

FORM COMPLETED BY:

In case of severe damage, loss, theft or vandalism, immediately notify the Folklife Program director at the Louisiana Division of the Arts by email at Folklife@crt.La.gov, 225.342-8178 or by fax at 225.342-8173.
Thank you for your help.

Final Exhibit Evaluation

Please assist us in evaluating this exhibit and in preparing future traveling exhibits by completing this form and mailing it to: Folklife Program Director, Louisiana Division of the Arts, PO Box 44247, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, emailing it to folklife@crt.la.gov, or faxing it to 225.342-8173.

1. How many people would you estimate viewed the exhibit?
2. What age group was the primary viewer of the exhibit?
3. Was the subject matter of the exhibit interesting and relevant? Yes No
If not, what changes would you suggest?
4. Was the exhibiter kit helpful? Yes No
If not, what changes would you suggest?
5. If you used any of the suggested activities, tell about your experience with them.
What worked? What didn't?
6. Were the comments by the public favorable? Yes No
Please note any particularly helpful or memorable comments.
7. Please comment on the ease of set-up of the exhibit.
8. Was the size of the exhibit appropriate or was it too large or small?
9. What other suggestions would you offer to make the exhibit better?

PLEASE SEND COPIES OF PRESS COVERAGE (newspaper clippings, etc.) with this evaluation. Please detail any television or radio coverage on the back of this sheet.

FORM COMPLETED BY: _____

EXHIBIT LOCATION: _____ **EXHIBIT DATES:** _____

Exhibiting Guidelines

If possible, the exhibit should be displayed in a secure common area where it is in view of staff members. If it is not possible to display the exhibit in such an area, staff members should frequently inspect the exhibit to make sure no damage is occurring to it. The exhibit must be displayed on a stable, level floor—hardwood, concrete, stone or commercial grade carpet.

The exhibit must not be assembled on plush carpet; this will cause it to be unstable and may cause the exhibit to fall over. Remember to handle the exhibit with great care. The schedule for the exhibit is very long, and if properly taken care of, it will be in good condition for all exhibitors.

You may display the entire exhibit together in close proximity. If you do not have sufficient space to display the three banners together, you may separate them.

Transportation Instructions

You may use a vehicle belonging to your institution or to a staff member to transport the 3 cases to the Folklife Program office. The cases are not weatherproof, so you are strongly discouraged from using an open-bed truck for transportation.

The cases require a space of approximately 18' by 31" by 24" to store.



THE ASSEMBLED EXHIBIT - 9 FEET BY 2 FEET

Innovation

The diversity of Louisiana music is reflected in the people who build and repair musical instruments throughout the state. These artisans keep tradition alive through innovation. Many are self-taught, some began as apprentices, and others received formal training.



Jason Harrington's Lullaby Sound reissues tube amplifiers emulated from a lore of sculpture and music. Building for longevity, he works in impetore.



ADAPTING AND IMPROVING
Some are musicians themselves, some are not. But they are all artists who pursue a calling that combines the love of sound and the rewards of craftsmanship.

Jay Steiner puts his own unique touches on traditional Cajun triangles. He enjoys focusing on the past, keeping tradition alive, but also updating it.

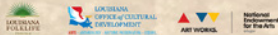


Jeff Richard, owner of The First Shack in Baton Rouge, makes or adapts his own back to suit his needs, bringing true art and creativity to the act of repairing electric guitar instruments.



At Orange Grove Studios, in New Orleans, James Youssouf does the majority of guitar building, while Benjamin George focuses largely on repair.

Louisiana artists maintain the old ways in the face of change but innovate upon them to better maintain the aesthetics of tradition, as their communities themselves define it. Longevity and repurposing existing materials is essential in building and repairing today's instruments.



Learn more: LouisianaFolkLife.org/Louisianainstruments

Tradition

These artisans bring the musician's tools to life: animal-skin drums, fiddles and accordions, analog amplifiers, and more. Some rely on the aesthetics and work processes of the classical European traditions. A central theme is longevity: in the face of technological development, modern-day makers and trusted repairers devote themselves to creating instruments that are built to last.



OLDER IS BETTER
Artists remain hopeful for the continuation and cultural maintenance of traditional music instruments. With instrument materials, older is usually better.

First Nation traditional drum maker Raymond Poyou uses skin and repurposed leathers to create this instrument. He passes on this drum-making craft to children in the area and at pop-ups.



Carla of New Orleans in Lafayette, sister Alexa Burgess prefers classic design and classical wood choices, maple and spruce.



Grady Miller has perfected the process of making barrels, a type of one-stringed keyboard, and now sells her instruments locally in central Louisiana and at music festivals.



"Dealing with reeds, the older they are, the better they sound... because as everything matures together, it just makes a better sound."

Dexter Austin, accordion builder, repairer and Zydeco/Cajun/Cape performer, learned the secrets of accordion making from the expert builder Larry Miller.



Junior Martin
Accordion



Learn more: LouisianaFolkLife.org/Louisianainstruments

Change

Two factors—the increasing rarity of traditional materials and the influence of the Internet—have brought change to Louisiana's music traditions. Artisans utilize alternative materials and often modify (or create) the tools they need to continue their work. And although music stores can no longer compete on price, they fulfill a central role as gathering places for the musical community.



Charles Lussier, bass player and repairer, focuses on educating the customer and flow of information for the community of bass players and their families.

PERSONAL SERVICE
By offering lessons, instrument rentals, and excellent personalized customer service, the small music store continues to be central to the careers of many independent instrument makers and repairers.



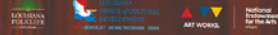
Michael Matthews, in Baton Rouge, likes a chord set to having a 60-watt grand piano. Once the digital tuning device goes a missing, the appropriate tuning pin is selected to pitch with a tuning hammer.



Don Teuch, piano repairer and Mississippi Music Store owner, began building his own parts when it became difficult to find parts for old and rare pianos.



The role of the music store now is more of a personal thing, a social thing... The music store is a more visceral experience than online retailers and people appreciate the ability to go in and actually talk to somebody. That's important in New Orleans.



Learn more: LouisianaFolkLife.org/Louisianainstruments

Assembly Instructions Checklist

BANNERS

1. Unlock the case by pulling up on each lock and then pulling out the silver bar.
2. Slide open the hard case and remove the banner in the soft case. (You do not need to use the strap in the card case.)
3. Remove the pole and banner from the soft case.
4. Store the soft case in the hard case.
5. Place the base near where it will be displayed.
6. Assemble the two sections of the pole.
7. Secure the pole in the base of the stand. Turn stabilizer at the top of the pole so that it is at a right angle to the base. Turn pole so that the clip open towards you.



8. While standing behind the base and before extending the pole, pull the banner up while tilting it back and attach the banner to top of pole where it says "Insert." The dots should face you.
9. Open the clip and extend the pole up to the circle marked so that all banners are the same height. If you cannot extend your arms high enough, gently lean the unit back while extending the pole.
10. Secure the clip.
11. If the banner is not level, use the leveling feet under the unit.

Dismantling and Packing Instructions Checklist

BANNERS

1. Open the clip while holding the pole.
2. Retract banner and the top portion of the pole slowly so it retracts evenly and does not touch the sides of the case. Close the clip.
3. Detach banner from pole and continue retracting the banner.
4. Remove the pole and fold.
5. Put pole and banner in the soft case. Put the soft case in the hard case.

Return the exhibit with the evaluation form to Folklife Program Director, Louisiana Division of the Arts, PO Box 44247, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, emailing it to folklife@crt.la.gov, or faxing it to 225.342-8173.

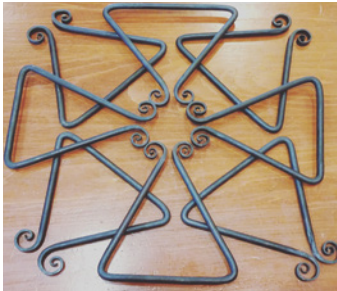
Exhibit Contents

PANEL 1

Louisiana INSTRUMENT MAKERS & REPAIRERS

Innovation

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Jay Steiner puts his own unique touches on traditional Cajun triangles. He enjoys focusing on the past, keeping tradition alive, but also updating it.

keep tradition alive through innovation. Many are self-taught, some began as apprentices, and others received formal training.

ADAPTING AND IMPROVING

Some are musicians themselves, some are not. But they are all artists who pursue a calling that combines the love of sound and the rewards of craftsmanship.



Jason Harrington's Lullaby Sound modern tube amplifiers emerged from a love of sculpture and music. Building for longevity, he says, is important.



Jeff Richard, owner of The Fret Shack in Baton Rouge, makes or adapts his own tools to suit his needs, bringing true art and creativity to the act of repairing electric fretted instruments.



At Strange GuitarWorks, in New Orleans, **Aaron Younce** does the majority of guitar building, while Benjamin Strange focuses largely on repair.

Louisiana artists maintain the old ways in the face of change but innovate upon them to better maintain the aesthetics of tradition, as their communities themselves define it. Longevity and repurposing existing materials is essential in building and repairing today's instruments.

To see the exhibit panels online, go to <http://www.louisianafolklife.org/lfp/instrumentsexhibit.html>

Louisiana INSTRUMENT MAKERS & REPAIRERS

Tradition

These artisans bring the musician's tools to life: animal-skin drums, fiddles and accordions, analog amplifiers, and more. Some rely on the aesthetics and work processes of the classical European traditions. A central theme is longevity: in the face of technological development, modern-day makers and trusted repairers devote themselves to creating instruments that are built to last.



First Nation traditional drum maker **Raymond Reyes** uses elk skin and repurposed feathers to create his instrument. He passes on the drum making craft to children in the area and at pow-wows.

OLDER IS BETTER

Artists remain hopeful for the continuation and cultural maintenance of traditional music instruments. With instrument materials, older is usually better.



Owner of Sola Violins in Lafayette, luthier **Anya Burgess** prefers classical design and classical wood choices; maple and spruce.



Gladys Miller has perfected the process of making canjos, a type of one-stringed lyre/banjo, and now sells her instruments locally in central Louisiana and at music festivals.



“Dealing with reeds, the older they are, the better they sound ... because as everything matures together, it just makes a better sound.”

Dexter Ardoin, accordion builder, repairer and Zydeco/Creole/Cajun performer, learned the details of accordion making from the expert builder Larry Miller.



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their work. And although music stores can no longer compete on price, they fulfill a central role as gathering places for the musical community.



Charles Lumar, bass player and repairer, believes in elevating the options and flow of information for the community of bass players and their families.

PERSONAL SERVICE

By offering lessons, instrument rentals, and excellent personalized customer service, the small music store continues to be central to the careers of many independent instrument makers and repairers.



Michael Mattison in Baton Rouge, strikes a chord while tuning a Bösendorfer grand piano. Once the digital tuning device gives a reading, the appropriate tuning pin is adjusted to pitch with a tuning hammer.



Don Teach piano repairer and Shreveport music store owner, began building his own parts when it became difficult to find parts for old and rare pianos.



Sal Giardina, often chooses old ways over modern approaches in building. His style and materials reflect this aesthetic.

The role of the music store now is more of a personal thing, a social thing ... The music store is a more visceral experience than online retailers and people appreciate the ability to go in and actually talk to somebody. That’s important in New Orleans.

Sample Press Release

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

YOUR ORGANIZATION will host the traveling exhibit, *Louisiana Instrument Makers & Repairers* from DATE to DATE. The exhibit can be viewed from TIME to TIME at ADDRESS.

Produced by the Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, the exhibit explores the traditional arts and practices of Louisiana's musical instrument makers and repairers.

The tradition bearers documented reveal the richness of traditional and more contemporary instruments made through the state.

The exhibit draws upon the online essay, *Innovation, Tradition, and Change in Louisiana Musical Instrument Making and Repair* by ethnomusicologist Holly Hobbs and previous documentation by the Folklife Program as part of the Louisiana Musical Instruments Project. In the essay, Hobbs explores the relationship between instrument makers/repairers, music stores, and musicians and shares insight gleaned from interviews of 20 artists throughout the state who make or repair pianos, stringed instruments, drums, accordions, brass and woodwinds, and musical triangles along with innovators in amplifiers.

Maida Owens, the Folklife Program director said, "By documenting Louisiana's musical instrument makers and repairers, I hoped to shine a light on these traditions that are integral to our numerous music traditions that are known around the world. Many of these are traditions are rapidly changing due to technology and the makers and repairers are adapting with them in order to support our musicians."

Learn more about the exhibit online:

<http://www.louisianafolklife.org/lfp/instrumentsexhibit.html>

Produced by Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, the project was supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.

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Background Information

Innovation, Tradition, and Change in Louisiana Musical Instrument Making and Repair

By Holly Hobbs

The entire essay with profiles with photographs and audio clips of 20 instrument makers and repairers throughout Louisiana is online here:

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/instruments1.html

INTRODUCTION

Musical instrument making and repair is a longstanding traditional occupation throughout Louisiana. Individuals, personal repair shops and music stores service instruments—from stringed to brass, woodwinds, drums, nontraditional instruments and more—for musicians performing in all musical genres and beyond. Some instrument building/repairing artisans and repair shops are narrowly focused on creating and/or repairing certain types of instruments—such as electric guitars or tube amplifiers—while others service a wider range of instruments and musical needs. Some artisans have learned through the apprenticeship tradition, while others are self-taught or more formally trained. While traditional instrument making and repair is indeed threatened, most artists remain hopeful about the continuation and cultural/musical maintenance of the tradition.

This essay profiles twenty instrumentally and demographically diverse makers and repairers from throughout the state of Louisiana, including a number of musicians who are less well documented in the existing ethnographic research. Certainly, there are many star builders and repairers in Louisiana, but thankfully, many of these have already been well documented. Represented in this essay are a few of the lesser-known voices, which contribute to a more well-rounded and broadly informative understanding of the topics at hand.

African American and Creole instrument makers and repairers are an unexpected minority among musical instrument makers today in Louisiana. The long tradition of African American/Creole piano repairers in New Orleans, for example, is now virtually gone, with Preservation Hall Jazz Band's pianist, Rickie Monie, stating that the last African American piano repairer he knew of left in New Orleans (besides himself) had moved to Texas after Hurricane Katrina. There are nonetheless numerous bright spots in this area, including the thirty-something African

American stringed instrument repairer and double bass builder, Charles Lumar. Another is the Creole artist Dexter Ardoin in the Lafayette area, who is one in a long line of Creole instrument makers and builders in that area and a member of the famed Ardoin family, which includes his grandfather, the Creole French musician Bois Sec and father Morris Ardoin. Both Lumar and Ardoin's words are included in this essay.

In contrast to the somewhat surprising decline of African American and Creole builders and repairers in Louisiana today, women are an expected minority. But as with all things in folklife and ethnography, difficulty locating female builders/repairers isn't necessarily a direct reflection of the lack of female involvement in the tradition, as much of the female experience still tends to be centered around and within the private home. Traditional female art is still often created and conducted in private, rather than in public. Nonetheless, the experiences of two female instrument makers and builders (Gladys Miller and Anya Burgess) are included in this essay, along with a bit from Junior Martin's daughter, Penny, who has learned accordion building and repair from her father.

There is a small but thriving community of First Nation instrument makers and builders in Louisiana, including Raymond Reyes, a traditional Native drum maker from Port Sulphur, Louisiana who offers his story here as well.

It was also important to include voices that could speak to all ranges of instrument making and repairing experience. Two artists—Frank D'Arcangelo and Max Theriot—are not owners of music stores, but rather workers or managers who speak to that unique experience. Ultimately, the group of artists highlighted attempts to be as representative and as broad as possible, offering unique voices and experiences that contribute to a heightened understanding of the state of musical instrument making and repair in Louisiana today.

In terms of guiding frameworks, the role of the music store in Louisiana today and the role of innovation in instrument making and repair became the focus over time. All artists whose stories are detailed in this essay speak to one or both of these themes, offering us a better understanding of the state of contemporary local music shops and the key importance of innovation as a way of maintaining tradition. As with all things, innovation and change are necessary components in keeping tradition alive and thriving. Tradition is not static: it is an ever-changing, dynamic, living process of maintaining the aesthetics of a community over time.

PROCESS AND THEMES

The majority of artists in this essay stated they felt their tradition was threatened. A small minority of others, like Steve Walden, a First Nation guitar maker, said that we were actually in a golden age precisely because the tradition was threatened, and that he felt more support for his art than at any other time in his career. Walden also noted that the Internet has been extremely helpful in seeking out and finding like-minded individuals with whom to share information, ask questions, and provide support. The majority of artists, however, contradicted this statement, saying that the Internet has been directly responsible for the loss of the tradition and it has been difficult for them (at least for those who had Internet access and technological fluency) to find a sense of community online. Frank D’Arcangelo, a drum repairer and builder at Ray Fransen’s Drum Center in New Orleans, stated that: “In the last 10 years or so, musical instruments have become disposable to people. People used to keep their instruments. Instruments are so cheap now, I can’t buy parts and build a drum to compete with people buying drums online from China. With the advent of the Internet, it has crushed local artisanship.” The impact of the Internet on instrument making/repair—and traditional music stores as a whole—is complex, and while it has indeed offered new forms of community and new sales opportunities (many of the guitar makers, in particular, sell a large portion of their work online), it is undeniable that the web has been a direct assault on the tradition. In what follows, artists flesh out these ideas, offering thoughts on changes they’ve witnessed over time and what it takes to operate a successful music store today.

In terms of learning processes, many of the artisans were nearly fully self-taught, augmenting self-teaching with books or tips from other makers. It would be a reasonable assumption that the classical tradition of apprenticeship might be the norm, but many musicians actually learned through the experience of working on their own instruments first, taking them apart and putting them back together, experimenting on different ways of creating different sounds with their first instruments, and so forth. It was knowledge gained through necessity: of being, in many cases, a young person and not having the money or ability to find an instrument repairer on their own and therefore experimenting to teach themselves how to do their own repairs.

The small music store continues to be central to many of the careers of independent instrument makers and repairers. If not directly involved with a local music store, many artists still use these stores as community spaces, to learn, share ideas, trade knowledge, etc. Many of those directly involved with music stores—as workers, owners, or builders/repairers working through a shop—stated that not only is it imperative to match the prices available online, but also find

that the key to their staying in business is to offer lessons, instrument rentals, and excellent personalized customer service to their clients: in effect, to do the things that are largely unavailable online. Of course, this means that certain things have suffered as a result. Many artists involved with music stores stated that they can no longer carry the amount of inventory they once did, as it is simply too costly to stock 40 different brands of guitars, for example. Instead, most music stores have narrowed their inventory greatly, streamlining what they carry and choosing their inventory strictly based on what sells the most. One sad reality is that piano sales over the last decades have tremendously declined. Shreveport Music, which opened in 1910 as a piano sales store, now no longer carries pianos at all—only digital keyboards.

Two central themes arose in this project. The first theme involves a passion for the work—a calling, in many cases—that developed organically but quickly became a life’s work. Many artists stated that they kept on with their art, even when it did not make financial sense or when it created hardships for their lives. Most stated that they began in their youth to take things apart and put them back together and began teaching themselves in this way. Most talked of a passion for putting things together and making them work better than they had before; of beautifying and improving upon existing instruments; of making things with their hands; and of the long process of teaching themselves to create the perfect sound, as they themselves defined it. Some artists had a background in woodworking or construction, as in the case of Junior Martin and Dexter Ardoin; others came to the art frustrated because they could not find what they were looking for in existing instruments, as in the case of Holger Notzel and Jeff Richard. All artists found joy in their work, finding deep satisfaction in creating, adapting, restoring, building, and improving.

The other central theme is that of the importance of repurposing existing materials. Most artists expressed sadness at today’s “throw-away culture.” Jeff Richard, a stringed instrument repairer in Baton Rouge, said, “I try to make things that last 100 years, not three years.” The importance of longevity was a central theme across all artists’ stories, along with the importance of maintaining the old ways in the face of what many saw as unsustainable technological development. This is not limited to the instruments themselves: many artists creatively adapt or transform existing tools into original pieces that aid them in their development of unique or uniquely adapted instruments. All artists found pride in small things and small details.

Suggestions for Exhibit Activities and Programming

ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

Included here are on-site ideas for engaging exhibit visitors and for augmenting the exhibit at each site. The goal is to help visitors understand the traditions of Louisiana's musical instrument makers and repairers. The activities help visitors consider tradition, innovation, and change in this genre.

Community Art Piece

Create a space for a community-generated art piece. Ask people to draw or write about their favorite musical instrument and post them on a bulletin board. Provide post-it notes or paper and Crayons.

Access to Musical Instruments Essay at the Exhibit

Where possible, provide access to the musical instruments essay for people to hear the voices of the makers and repairers and see more photographs, right at the exhibit without needing a smart phone.

Artifacts Display / Community Presentations

If there is a secure display area, like a closed case, etc., invite community members to loan instruments or other artifacts or photos that relate to the traditions in the exhibit. Display books about or including the cultures and instruments presented in the exhibit. Have community members/community scholars contributing to the display come to talk about their artifact.

Traditional Arts Performances or Demonstrations

Where funds are available, hire makers and/or repairers in your community to give presentations about their work. Leave time for a Q&A or talkback session in which visitors can ask questions and take part in a conversation with the artist(s). A folklorist could facilitate this type of dialogue. A folklorist-researcher could present their work. Contact the Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program, folklife@crt.la.gov to locate instrument makers, repairers, and folklorists.

Community Writing Workshop

Hold a creative writing program in which participants focus particularly on the theme of innovation and tradition. The exhibit could be used as a writing prompt—i.e., the photos or themes could be a springboard for creative writing. Where possible, create a public forum for people to share their writing, either through a binder displayed with the exhibit, a blog or even a reading to which the public is invited.

ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

Students can interact with the physical or virtual exhibit in multiple ways. Below are activities that can be done with students in or out of the classroom in conjunction with a visit to the exhibit to help students understand their family’s and community’s traditions. Through these activities, they become aware of their sense of place. The Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide, (www.LouisianaVoices.org) an online folk arts in education resource, has many links for the K-12 classroom. Some connections are offered below.

Cultural Show and Tell

Hold a “cultural show and tell.” Following a visit to the exhibit, ask students to bring something from home that represents their family’s culture(s)—a photograph, a piece of artwork (handwork or woodcarving, etc.), a recipe, a dance costume, a musical recording, a video, etc. and have them tell their classmates about it. If students don’t have anything like this from their own family, they could ask a friend or neighbor or “share” a classmate’s family/item to help with this project. Take photos of the students and their items and post them in the classroom.

EDUCATORS: Consult Louisiana Voices, Unit VII, Lesson 1, on reading artifacts:

http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit7/edu_unit7_lesson1.html

Louisiana Voices, Unit III, Lesson 3, Activity 2 on working with family photos:

http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit3/edu_unit3_lesson3_act2.html

Parents as Teachers

Invite parents or other community members to come to class or meet the class at the exhibit site to talk about a musical instrument in their family musical traditions. Parents could bring instruments, photos, or other artifacts. Leave time for a Q&A session in which students can learn more. Have students write or draw about their impressions of this experience. Where parents don’t speak English, consider working with an interpreter.

EDUCATORS: Consult Louisiana Voices, Unit II Lesson 3, Interviewing a Community Guest. http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit2/edu_unit2_lesson3.html

In-Class Discussions and Activities Based on Exhibit and Above Ideas

Use any of the above activities or simply a visit to the exhibit as a springboard for in-class exercises to help students give deeper thought to what makes their own community unique, what their “sense of place” is, especially concerning musical traditions. Not only are our communities and neighborhoods unique, so are our perspectives of where we live. Sense of place is a major theme in literature, writing, and social studies. Helping students gain a sense of place in their own community and region deepens their connection to community and opens them to the notion that everyone has a unique sense of place. We all experience a place differently. If any students are new to your community, their sense of place may be strongly associated with another place. While they will get to know your community well during this lesson and the others in this unit, allowing them to reflect on another place for some activities below will enrich the lesson for all.

Ask students to reflect on their experience, either through a drawing or writing assignment. Have each student share his/her assignment and hold a classroom discussion. Here are some sample questions:

Prior to visiting the exhibit, ask students to pick out one photograph or story from the exhibit that is especially interesting, beautiful or meaningful to them. Either at the exhibit site or in the classroom, ask the students: What did you choose and why? What was beautiful or interesting to you about this photo or story? What did you learn about the artist or his or her artwork? Why do you think the artist made or performed this art form? Does this artwork remind you of anything in your home, family, neighborhood or community? What surprised you about the artist or artwork?

EDUCATORS: Consult Louisiana Voices, Unit IV Lesson 3, Sense of Place.
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit4/edu_unit4_lesson3.html

Back in the classroom, ask students to bring artifacts or photos to class to analyze the story of the objects. They improve their fieldwork research skills by looking at artifacts as cultural outsiders would. Learning to “read culture,” students hone decoding skills that improve reading and writing.

EDUCATORS: Louisiana Voices, Unit VII Lesson 1, Reading Artifacts

http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit7/edu_unit7_lesson1.html

Folklife Bingo

To help students or visitors understand traditions, use the Folklife Bingo forms in the Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide to better understand their own traditions and those of others in their community or the state. You can choose one of the North Louisiana, South Louisiana or New Orleans Folklife Bingo sheets or make your own with the Blank Bingo form with suggested traditions. Folklife Bingo can be played by an individual or it can be played with a group by asking everyone to find someone else who has had the experience.

EDUCATORS: Consult Louisiana Voices, Unit I Lesson 3, Defining Terms.

http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit1/edu_unit1_lesson3.html

Exhibit Scavenger Hunt

Use the scavenger hunt worksheet for students to use during a visit to the exhibit to help them find traditions and cultures featured in the exhibit.

Scavenger Hunt

LOCATE THE FOLLOWING TRADITIONS IN THE EXHIBIT

Cajun triangle

guitar repair

drumstick

double bass

First Nation drum

violin bow

canjo

tools

luthier

grand piano

craftsmanship

tube amplifier

tuning device

trumpet

Resources

Resources

Louisiana Voices Educator's Guide, www.louisianavoices.org, offers 44 lessons that can be used in or out of k-12 classrooms. Some activities in this exhibitor kit draw upon the lessons, but there are many more possibilities.

Bibliography

Below are essays on the Folklife in Louisiana website and other sources that address musical instruments in Louisiana.

Innovation, Tradition, and Change in Louisiana Musical Instrument Making and Repair - Holly Hobbs http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/instruments1.html

Reminiscences of a Cajun Accordion Builder - Marc Savoy
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/lfmsavoymusic.html

Introduction and Use of Accordions in Cajun Music - Malcolm Comeaux
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/intro_and_use_of_accordions.html

Keeping It Alive: Marc Savoy and Ward Lormand - Accordion Making - Sheri Dunbar and Maida Owens
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Virtual_Books/Keeping_It/creole_book_keep_acc.html

Delta Pieces: Instrument Builder Hilton Lytle: "I've Always Worked with Wood" - Susan Roach
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Yule, Ron. 2007. *My Fiddling' Grounds*. Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Pp. 327-338.

Sounds of A Culture - Allons by LafayetteTravel (Cajun and Creole instruments)
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Steven "Ses-I Ras" Sheard: Wood Carver, Drum Maker - Daniel Atkinson
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/BRnarrative3.html#Sheard

Mike Mattison, Professional Piano Tuner - Douglas Manger

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/brocc-Manger.html#tab7

Zeagler's Music Store, Instrument Repair - Jocelyn and Jon Donlon

http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/brrepair.html#tab8

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