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INSTITUTE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA STUDIES IN BRIEF

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The institute of Papua New Guinea Studies was established in 1974, one year before Papua New Guinea got its independence on 16th of September 1975. The Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies is a government institute concerned with cultural research, administratively under the National Cultural Commission.

In its 30 years history of existence, the institute has done all can to the best of its ability through its dedicated staff to do research and collect as much information about more than one thousand different cultures, particularly traditional music, dance and folklore of the country.

Its main objective is to do research and collect as much information on music, dance and folklore and deposit the finding in the institutes archive for future usages.

Because of urban drift and with impact of overseas cultures so many local cultures and languages are dying out at a very alarming rate.

One can imagine how difficult it is for a country with so many cultures and languages exist as a nation of its own. We play an important role in documenting and understanding the diversity of Papua New Guinea musics.

The institute of Papua New Guinea Studies Music Archive has about 10,060 tapes, discs, cassettes, and tapes comprising 5652 collections. These are catalogued in a database of over 15,000 items, providing information on cataloguing Number, the year institute received the materials and archival number ie,(06-001), collectors name, (J Cook year, the material was recorded,(1945), Province, East Sepik), language, (Iatmul) and so forth. To access the database, we log in name of the collector or province and or language to locate the desire material. This database is now being transferred to Microsoft Access.

The collection contains recordings of traditional, popular, Christian, and stringband music, dating from 1898 to the present. Original recording been made by IPNGS staff



or other researchers in Papua New Guinea.

Historical recordings been copied from overseas archives, including important collections previously obtained through Paradisec. We also hold an almost complete collection of commercial recordings of PNG music.

2. RECORDING AND ARCHIVING:

In addition to our recorded materials, we have large collection of printed books, articles, theses and papers on PNG music and dance.

Music archive materials are used for research on all type of PNG music and have provided the source materials for a number of publications widely used in secondary and tertiary schools. The collection of commercial recordings has become an important resource for many people interested in the early recordings of stringbands responsible for the development of popular music in the country during the last forty years.

Recordings are mostly in analog form, not having been digitised at all, due to lack of equipment, funding, and expertise.

The institute has been planning to digitised all the recorded media material and to copy them to CD if and when we ever get enough resources, we might also create a website to allow wider access to some of these materials.

It is the institute's vision to one day increase access of these materials in the music archives to the outside world. The institute believes Papua New Guinea has a lot to offer to the world with its cultural and traditional values in music and also in dance.

3. FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

The Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies has ups and downs in carrying out its daily activities fully because of inavailability of funds, resources, and workforce.

The IPNGS has planned to do videos for music and dance research, and has kept an planning and requesting for funds each year for the last ten years to purchase the necessary equipment, but to date nothing has taken place. With our present government funding, we are scarcely able to pay out utility bills.

So, presently, the institute can not do videos for music and dance research and also can not digitise and format its present recorded media materials into other format due to lack of funds. The institute needs funds, equipment and specialised personnel to assist.

Institute has written to donor agencies for funding to purchase such much needed equipment to provide personnel to assist and train institute staff responsible in the field of information technology, and for assistance with publications. We have had only limited success. In particular, almost all our audio equipment is out of date or in need of servicing, and our storage facilities are no longer adequate.

The institute staff are eager to learn new things but without having necessary funds, equipment and specialised personnel, the institute can not participate more meaningfully in the areas of video, digitisation, media presentation and accessibility. This a great concern to us.

4. CONCLUSION:

The institute with its limited resources will try its best to secure funding to help in its goals. But this is not an easy task.

With the current trend in Papua New Guinea, Many young people are coming back to our archive to look for tradition music. Today's young generation are focussing on overseas music with less interest in their own cultural/traditional music.

Traditional music has been over-looked by young Papua New Guineans in the last 30 years. Some musicians have tried to blend Papua New Guinea traditional music with modern equipment, however this has not brought much of an impact to Papua New Guinea contemporary music.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

I would like to acknowledge those whom I have not mentioned on this paper, those who have written and published articles, publication and books relating to the music and made recording of its wealth.

With great respect I am taking this opportunity to acknowledge those who have the best interest of archiving of music recording of Papua New Guinea, Melanesia, Pacific, Australia and the world.

I would like to thank the organisers of this conference for their support in enabling me to participate. We look forward to future collaboration as well.

Em tasol,

Sangi wei (Thank you for your attention).