

2010 PUBLIC SEMINAR SERIES

Returning Tiwi Songs to the Community: Using Archived Song Recordings to Rediscover Language, History and Art Practice

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In November 2009, a group of senior Tiwi songmen and women and I travelled to Canberra with the primary purpose of gaining access to ethnographic Tiwi song recordings, film and art pieces archived at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, the National Museum of Australia and the National Film and Sound Archive.

I am now part way through three months at Nguuiu, Bathurst Island, working with the elders to properly identify and document the recently repatriated material. In this seminar I will give a report on the Canberra visit and the findings from our research into the archives so far, focussing on the 1912 field-recordings of Baldwin Spencer and those taken by Charles Mountford in 1954.

Examples of social and historical record that have been documented in this strong song tradition will be presented as well as elements of language and performance practice that had been lost.

I will also discuss issues of ownership, copyright and bureaucracy from the point of view of my Tiwi colleagues.

Wednesday 10 March 2010, 12.15pm

The Seminar Room, NARU, 23 Ellengowan Drive, Brinkin
This seminar is free and open to the public.

The views expressed in this lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the view of ANU.