Guide to the Jam Handy Collection ARS.0027

Finding aid prepared by Franz Kunst
Archive of Recorded Sound
Braun Music Center
541 Lasuen Mall
Stanford University
Stanford, California, 94305-3076
650-723-9312
soundarchive@stanford.edu
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Jam Handy Collection
Dates: 1940-1970
Collection number: ARS.0027
creator: Jam Handy Organization, inc.
Collection size: 92 boxes: 3656 rolls of 35mm film; 14 open reel tapes (13 5" reels; 1 7" reel); 1 folder
Repository: Archive of Recorded Sound
Abstract: Seventy linear feet of magnetic and optical sound recordings on 35mm film stock, featuring production music and sound effects produced by the Jam Handy Organization of Detroit, Michigan for industrial, educational and promotional films.
Access
Open for research; material must be requested at least two business days in advance of intended use. Contact the Archive for assistance.
Publication Rights
Property rights reside with repository. Publication and reproduction rights reside with the creators or their heirs. To obtain permission to publish or reproduce, please contact the Head Librarian of the Archive of Recorded Sound.
Preferred Citation
Source
The Jam Handy Collection was donated to the Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound by Rick Prelinger in 2008.
Sponsor
This finding aid was produced with generous financial support from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.
Background
The Jam Handy Organization, founded in the late 1930s by Henry Jamison "Jam" Handy in Detroit, Michigan, was an industrial film production firm which made thousands of movies never theatrically released to the general public. These films were typically of an educational, training or advertising nature, although it may be said that most were a combination. Clients such as General Motors (who was a neighbor, as well as their largest account), AT&T, Coca-Cola, U.S. Steel, and Alcoa Aluminum sought the services of Jam Handy for their optimistic, uncomplicated, and highly professional production values.
Scope and Contents
The Jam Handy Collection consists of the company's stock sound library, stored as sound-on-film (i.e. no visual component is present). The collection includes sound effects, themes, background and incidental music, and dramatic cues. These tracks could then be edited along with the footage to create a soundtrack. According to the collection's donor (and industrial film scholar) Rick Prelinger, Jam Handy "probably printed next-generation optical tracks from these elements and cut the resulting tracks into their negatives or positives." Many sounds were employed in more than one film, although some music was specific to a particular production. Library music (generic and used in other productions) was also employed. The original music tracks were likely dubbed from discs and later tape, although there is a possibility that some live sessions were recorded in-house straight to optical tracks. It is also thought that Jam Handy may have at one point had its own orchestras.
Perhaps the most iconic Jam Handy film is the 1952 extended commercial "See the U.S.A. in Your New Chevrolet," which features singer Dinah Shore. The collection contains music from this film. A few of the other songs present: "I'm in the Mood for Love," "In My Merry Oldsmobile," "The Caissons Go Rolling Along," "Bunny Hop Mambo," "Hindu Woogie," "March of Aluminum" (available in B flat, D flat, F and G), "Parade of the Zulus," "Progressive Jazz Combo From Hi-Q Music Library" (Hi-Q was a Capitol-distributed library label), and "Twisting in Tokyo." Rights agencies (i.e. Harry Fox) are noted for a few musical works. Some musical cues are labeled for their specific use: "Mysterious (Semi) and Pleasant," "Bright and Cheerful," "Fanfare," "Inspirational," "Pastoral," "Bugle Call," "Harp Glissando," "Chords-Diminished," "Dawn of Triumph," "Light Neutral/Comedy," and "Mechanical/Industrial Underscore."
The majority of this library is devoted to various sound effects. Considering Jam Handy's close affiliation with the automobile industry, it is no surprise that car and truck sounds dominate. There are also effects for traffic, airplanes, railroads, fog horns, machines and factories, war sounds, animals, trees falling, crying (at four different ages), bowling, and
countless others. Of course, many standard foley sounds such as crowd noise, telephones dialing and ringing, pouring liquids, footsteps, doors opening and closing, and ticking clocks are present. Interestingly, many effects are of a fairly violent nature, such as "Thud - Body Falling on Floor," "Glass Breaking - by Brick," "Bricks-Falling on Head," "Fighting-Grunting and Scuffling," "Breaking of Potted Plant," "Falling Down Stairs," "Furious Attack," and five types of gunshots.

While it does span the majority of the years the company was producing films, the collection is likely incomplete, as some early film soundtracks were on fragile and dangerous nitrate stock. The collection was originally stored in about two hundred steel vault cans, each containing from two to twenty related rolls of 35mm film, totaling 3656 rolls. The soundtracks are in both magnetic and optical formats. In addition to the film elements, there are fourteen open reel tapes of sound effects from a 1970 film titled "Prospecting for Profits."

A computer database printed out in paper form and dated 1987 accompanied the donation. Not all film elements are listed in the printout. However, a detailed spreadsheet listing all tracks has been created. Please contact the Archive for access to this database. Also in the folder were a small stack of forms titled "M.P. Library Negative Withdrawals" from between 1965 and 1967. Many of the films produced by the Jam Handy Organization were collected by the Prelinger Archives and may be seen at the Internet Archive.

Indexing Terms
Film soundtracks
Sound effects
Sound on film
Sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boxes 1-91</th>
<th>1. Films</th>
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<th>Box 92</th>
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| Open reel tapes originally in unnumbered film box labelled "M-4849-1 Chev. "Prospecting for Profit."

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