

APL VOLUMES

Season 2, Episode 4: VINYL VIBES

This episode was transcribed by APL volunteer Martha Ladyman.

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

LETICIA LEAL: Hey, y'all! Welcome to Season Two of APL Volumes, Austin Public Library's podcast about all the cool things at the library and the staff who are passionate about them. I'm Leticia Leal, your host for this season and a team program specialist at APL Central Library.

The theme of this season is Everything but the Books, where we explore parts of APL's collection and programming that you might not expect to find at a library.

This episode is all about music, and I'm talking to Anthony Mathis, Library Associate at Central, and Patrick Walz, Library Assistant at Spicewood Springs.

Let's get started.

MUSIC PLAYING

LETICIA: Hello and welcome back to Volumes. I'm here today with Anthony Mathis.

ANTHONY: Hello.

LETICIA: And Patrick Walz.

PATRICK: Hello.

LETICIA: And today we are talking about music! (singing) With my people!

ANTHONY: Oh my god.

PATRICK: Come together? Is that it?

LETICIA: Come together. That's a Beatles song. By the way, Madonna is having two shows here in Austin and one is completely sold out and the other one I can't afford. But I would see it because that is many decades of music.

PATRICK: Wow!

ANTHONY: You know, speaking of people having shows here but not really having shows, just downstairs I was working the circulation desk and we thought we saw Lana Del Ray. And we were all freaking out like ...

LETICIA: She wouldn't be here. She was just in Glastonbury.

ANTHONY: Exactly. Somebody called us out like ten minutes later when we were, "No, we think it was her, we need to go see if it was her." And then Sean comes up and he is like, "I think she is in Glastonbury. She's trending on Twitter for being late."

LETICIA: Yeah, because she was late.

ANTHONY: Did you hear her excuse?

LETICIA: No, what was the excuse?

ANTHONY: Her hair takes a long time to put together.

LETICIA: I can see that.

PATRICK: I can totally get that. I totally understand that.

LETICIA: For our listeners, Patrick has a shaved head.

PATRICK: It takes quite some time to get it perfect. But when you reach a certain level of stardom you actually are capable of being in more than one place at the same time.

ANTHONY: That's true.

LETICIA: So maybe it was a Lana Del Ray hologram here. We do have that technology here.

PATRICK: Now they can just add you like AI. So maybe her AI version was here in the library.

ANTHONY: That's reasonable.

LETICIA: That would be pointless.

LAUGHING

PATRICK: She needed a book!

ANTHONY: She wanted to see the rooftop garden. She heard about Cookbook.

LETICIA: But, let's bring this back to some sort of cohesive conversation. So we are talking about music and we all work at the library. So how do you feel music comes into play at the library?

ANTHONY: Wow, there's a few different ways aside from it being in the collection. We have tons of genres of music that we offer here which is great. And not only digital forms. I don't know if people remember that you can get music in physical forms?

LETICIA: What?

ANTHONY: Isn't that wild? I almost forget that they made music that way! But they still print music on physical things like CDs and vinyl.

LETICIA: And tape. I hear that cassette tapes are coming back.

PATRICK: I have no idea why cassettes are coming back. Because that was probably, in all of the years of obsolete media that I've gone through, that was the least interesting. LETICIA: Worse than 8 tracks? Too young for 8 tracks?

PATRICK: No, 8 track was bad. No, there were still 8 tracks going around. I remember vinyl for me was just the primary media resource for music. My dad had like a \$4000 reel to reel that played 100 minutes of music and you could record your favorite songs on there. The earliest version of that. But yeah, with cassettes they were just kind of clunky and the tape would come out and it was ruined, and you'd have to do the surgery.

LETICIA: Yeah, and you'd have to get the pencil and wind it back up.

PATRICK: Yup. Yup. And if it broke you could actually cut it and take a piece of Scotch tape and reattach it. You would hear it go over the top, but you could still replay the tape.

LETICIA: I never went that far.

PATRICK: And if you had a very favorite part of the song that you would listen to over and over and over again you could hear the warping from listening to it too many times.

ANTHONY: That's amazing.

LETICIA: I don't want to get into it, but I was gonna say that I don't know how tape cassettes work. But I realize that's it probably all written on that stretchy-out-thing that you can tape, the way the VHS works.

ANTHONY: The same way.

PATRICK: I remember as a kid we had a Commodore 64 and all of the computer programs were on cassette tapes.

LETICIA: What?

PATRICK: Yes. Computer programs were on cassette. You could get it on floppy disk or cassette. And so if somebody had a real cool game, like Bruce Lee was a really cool game at the time.

LETICIA: That sounds cool.

PATRICK: You could actually just get on your recorder and record the other person's, and that was like the early bootlegging.

ANTHONY: What?!

LETICIA: And then you put it into the computer? Into your Commodore?

PATRICK: Commodore, and it was like a disk drive.

ANTHONY: Ah, that's amazing!

PATRICK: And that was our early bootlegging.

LETICIA: Wow! I used to record songs off the radio for sure, and I do kind of miss that. Making the mix tapes and mix CD's for people, because you would make them for your crushes. You would put special songs on there. But you wouldn't want to be like too obvious.

PATRICK: Slow jamz with a Z.

ANTHONY: Exactly!

LETICIA: Do you remember the first piece of media music that you bought with your own money?

PATRICK: So I grew up in Germany and I lived in Germany for twenty-two years.

LETICIA: So it's David Hasselhoff?

PATRICK: Me and Hasselhoff are super tight!

LAUGHTER

PATRICK: I saw his records there and he sang in German and he's very, very popular there. There was a gas station across the street from the apartment complex where I lived on, an Erol Station, and the guy that ran that place sold 45's in a little bin and I think it was 50 pfennigs at the time? Which was an obsolete kind of money too, now it's the euro. And the very first album I went there with my best friend who I actually DJ'd with it at a club out there. It was *For the Love of Money* with the O'Jays. Right? (singing) Money, money, money, money!

LETICIA: That's very cool!

ANTHONY: That's a great one!

PATRICK: That was the first one that I bought, and I was so excited. The bass line had actually been used in a couple of rap songs at the time.

LETICIA: Ah, yes.

PATRICK: It was very recognizable, and this is the greatest thing ever!

ANTHONY: (SINGS A COUPLE OF NOTES)

LETICIA: You have the bass line memorized! The only bass line I have memorized is the base line from "Rio" by Duran Duran, because I listened to it (SINGS) because I listened to it, I listened to the isolated bass track just of "Rio" kind of often because I think it's really amazing.

ANTHONY: Really, just the isolated thing?

SINGING

ANTHONY: You don't remember the lyrics or anything?

PATRICK: Well, back in the days when you got a little single there would often be the original track on one side, and you would flip it over and there would be just the instrumental on the other. Set up the whole "oh, we're gonna rap over that," and it was super helpful.

AMTHONY: Ah, that makes sense.

LETICIA: Yeah, I forget, no I think it was, no, speaking of Duran Duran again, I saw them recently. This is the second podcast episode where we talked about Duran Duran. So you are going to be like, "Wow, she's the most devoted Duran Duran fan there is." But I saw them, and they played "Notorious." And I was like, "Oh, that's funny!" It's always nice to hear samples like the "Strawberry Letter 23" and you think, "Oh I've heard that somewhere else." I think that's very cool.

ANTHONY: Yeah, it's iconic for those of us growing up in a later generation than when it came out. And you hear the original and you think, "Oh my god, this was already a thing before I knew of it."

LETICIA: Yes, another one is "Footsteps in the Dark."

ANTHONY: Yes! The Isley Brothers?

LETICIA: Yes, the Isley Brothers!

PATRICK: I didn't know that one.

LETICIA: When you hear it you will know it.

PATRICK: I'm sure I will.

LETICIA: I love the Isley Brothers. They have a really cool element, you've probably heard of it, called "giving it back," where they do covers of, I guess, white musicians' art, so they have a cover of "Fire and Rain" and the Neil Young song (singing).

PATRICK: "Summer Breeze"?

LETICIA: "Summer Breeze." And they have the "Lay Lady Lay," they have a version of "Lay Lady Lay" that is incredible.

PATRICK: That is awesome. I didn't realize that was a whole album cover. I have heard the "Summer Breeze" cover.

LETICIA: Yeah, I love it. My favorite music genre is yacht rock. But I try not to be as limiting so my favorite music genre is soft rock.

ANTHONY: They came out in specific years?

LETICIA: There are a lot of rules, apparently. There's a whole other thing called "Is that yacht or not?" And they are like, "No, that's not yacht."

PATRICK: That sounds like a podcast in itself.

LETICIA: I think it is!

ANTHONY: Yacht or not?

LETICIA: For a little while I did TikToks called Letty's Soft Rock Corner, where I would talk about my favorite yacht rock songs. The first one I did was a Rupert Holmes song. And it was not the piña colada song. It was not "Escape." I did it on "Answering Machine." Y'all will have to go look at that Rupert Holmes song.

ANTHONY: OK!

PATRICK: Will someone come and add all these bits on here so we can ...

LETICIA: Maybe! Yes!

ANTHONY: Absolutely!

LETICIA: I'll just sing the whole thing.

PATRICK: "Answering Machine" by Rupert Holmes.

LETICIA: Yes. And the funny thing about Rupert Holmes. He doesn't even like piña coladas! But people always try to buy them for him.

PATRICK: Oh, I bet. Oh, wow.

LETICIA: All the time.

ANTHONY: He's like, "No, this is too sweet!"

LETICIA: Yes! That song is crazy, by the way. The piña colada song? It's about, so he places this personal ad in the paper, "Do you like piña coladas and getting caught in the rain" and all that. And then come to meet in a bar and the person who answers the personal ad is his wife? Or girlfriend? And they're just, there's not a follow-up to it. Like we want to know what happened after that! They're like, it's OK. I don't care!

PATRICK: It's a typical tender story way before Tinder.

LETICIA: Yes! And that's funny because there is another Rupert Holmes song, and this is now a Rupert Holmes podcast. I hope you are listening. Duran Duran and Rupert Holmes. No, that actually tracks. He has another one called "Him," that is also about cheating. But he's being cheated against.

ANTHONY: So he's nuanced.

LETICIA: He is nuanced. He's very clever.

PATRICK: Like sheetrock?

ANTHONY: Sheetrock!

LETICIA: Sheetrock?

LAUGHING

ANTHONY: I want to answer your original question.

LETICIA: Oh, yes, about the...

ANTHONY: The first thing I bought with my own money, which is probably some birthday money or something, I was ten years old, and I got the TLC album *Fanmail*.

LETICIA: That's an excellent choice.

ANTHONY: *Fanmail* was, I loved that album, that CD. I listened to it on my Walkman, while I was in fifth grade, all the time, on the bus, like every day. I loved that album for some reason. And I really liked the third song, "Silly Young Lady." That's not what it's called.

LETICIA: Edited for content.

ANTHONY: Yes. So that was a really good CD. That was the first thing I bought with my own money. But I got gifted a lot of stuff before that, because my dad was a DJ.

LETICIA: Oh, nice!

ANTHONY: So he had plenty of vinyl sitting around.

LETICIA: So you are just carrying on the tradition.

ANTHONY: I guess so. In a different way. My dad was a radio DJ.

LETITIA: Oh my gosh. That's a dream job. Did he have like a cool handle, like Johnny Fly? Timmy Fresh, or Shotgun?

ANTHONY: You know what, you are so close. It was Slick Vic! You are so close! Johnny Fly. No, it was Slick Vic.

LETICIA: That's from *WKRP Cincinnati*.

ANTHONY: Yeah, Slick Vic.

LETICIA: That's cool. That's why you are so cool!

ANTHONY: Exactly.

LETICIA: But you are not a radio DJ now. You're a party DJ?

ANTHONY: I'm like a performance DJ?

LETICIA: Yeah, that's what they call it.

PATRICK: Club DJ?

LETICIA: And you are also a DJ?

PATRICK: I was a DJ many, many years ago. I actually did the college radio about thirty-plus years ago for WIDB of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. Salukis!

LETICIA: Shut up!

PATRICK: Yes, they are called the Salukis. For those of you who don't know, a saluki is an Egyptian racing dog. And for some reason that was our mascot. But yeah, I did radio for them for about, this was in 1992, and for about three months and I got unceremoniously let go. Because I had way too much fun on that show. I had a partner, and his name was Brad, but he was Phantome on the radio station. He made the mistake of early on, our show started at midnight on a Saturday and went until three o'clock in the morning. We played college radio before it was called

alternative. And we kind of made it a point that we didn't want to play a lot of what people would call grunge because we were like, "That Seattle sound is going to dry up Cleveland." But he made the mistake of telling us, "This is a cable news station," so we could kind of get away with a lot of stuff that's not that regulated.

LETICIA: So they gave you a bit and you took a lot.

PATRICK: Yeah. And both of us went with it. And we would actually go downtown, to Carbondale, and we would pick people up at pubs and take them back to the radio station and have impromptu AA. This was not a talk radio show. When they appear on radio they have green label, yellow label, and red label, which means you have to play so many green labels in an hour and probably a couple of yellow and maybe one or two red. And we would play entire sides of albums.

I remember *Mother's Milk* and Red Hot Chili Peppers. We were having a conversation about George Clinton and we were like, 'Yeah, he produced this album.' And we were like, 'Let's check out a couple of songs.' And we'd play the entire album. Expletives not deleted. And we found out the hard way the FCC actually does regulate cable stations. Surprise! Surprise!

And the station manager called me. He actually was going to suspend both of us and I was like, "Yeah, no, I'm getting out of here."

LETICIA: Yeah, I'll just go.

PATRICK: I just looked it up, and WIDB just celebrated their fiftieth anniversary.

LETICIA: You didn't ruin them!

PATRICK: Because they got rid of me quicker than they had to. But I had so much fun. And it was all vinyl.

LETICIA: That's amazing.

PATRICK: Everything was vinyl except for the commercials. They were these big clunky cassette tapes that you put in.

ANTHONY: OK, OK, I remember my dad doing this!

PATRICK: These were the spots that you put in.

LETICIA: I've always wanted to be like a radio DJ. I think it's all about forcing people to listen to what I want to listen to. When I work in Teen Central we play music in there. I connect to the Bluetooth with my phone. Yeah, these kids are listening to Seals and Croft. These teens are going to learn today.

ANTHONY: Y'all are going to listen to this.

LETICIA: I hope you like Kenny Loggins. There is also a display on the TV and it has my coworkers Frida and Heath and one of our teen volunteers Charlie that says, "What music are you into?" We got to choose three or four and I did put Kenny Loggins's Heart to Heart on there for sure. Because I don't want to lie to the teens.

ANTHONY: No. Definitely not. Absolutely. And you do want them to become Kenny Loggins fans.

PATRICK: Gotta put them in the danger zone.

LETICIA: Yes, he's coming here in August. And I am going to see him for my birthday. And I am because many people doubt my truth when I say this, when I say that he is one of my favorite male vocalists. Someone was like, "Do you think he sings better than Michael Jackson?" And I said, "Yes, I do. I do."

PATRICK: What about Prince?

ANTHONY: Controversial.

LETICIA: I feel like Kenny Loggins could sing, because Kenny Loggins is not very sexy though he is one of the most talented vocalists, in my opinion.

PATRICK: Can he hit the high notes though?

LETICIA: Hell yeah, he can. I feel like Kenny Loggins would do a good "Man in the Mirror."

ANTHONY: Wow. I need to listen to some more Kenny Loggins so I can offer a true assessment of this.

PATRICK: Let me open my Spotify.

LETICIA: Right now, let's all listen.

ANTHONY: So I can offer a true assessment of this. At the moment, I don't know. Michael Jackson...

LETICIA: You've got to log in! No, I do love Michael Jackson. Of course. Obviously.

ANTHONY: He's like, right up there with Freddie Mercury.

PATRICK: Did Bobbie McFerrin play the audience during the TED Talk or something like a TED Talk where he actually has them sing the different notes? If you ever get the chance, check it out. He literally plays the audience and has each of them singing certain notes. And he does it everywhere he goes to show that people have a natural ability.

LETICIA: That is so cool. He should come to Austin Public Library and do a program. Bobbie McFerrin, if you are listening, we would love for you to come to Austin Public Library and do a program.

PATRICK: And I promise we won't ask you to sing "Don't Worry, Be Happy." Because he hates that song.

LETICIA: Don't worry, we won't ask you to sing that! And you can be happy. And since I did bring up the place of our occupation, our work, how has music come into play with your work at the library?

ANTHONY: Well, me personally, recently we did this program where we invited a few people to come and learn how to make lo-fi hip-hop beats with GarageBand, since that's kind of the most accessible software for people to use. Lo fi beats, I think everybody is kind of into that right now. Who hasn't spent some time with the lo fi beats to study to?

LETICIA: It's true. When I'm not making the teens listen to Michael McDonald, I do put on lo-fi.

ANTHONY: So yeah, we did a program where we had a few people come and just showed them some basic things to do on GarageBand and how to kind of take all the highs out, or excuse me, the lows out. Or I guess it depends on which way you are trying to go. To just muddy it up and make it sound old. You're really just breaking up the quality of it and making it sound like it was made at a time before now.

LETICIA: Nice!

ANTHONY: So that was pretty fun.

PATRICK: So you got the old 808 and 909 and everything? That's so cool.

ANTHONY: Yeah, GarageBand actually does have different drum kits on there that are based on 808 or 909 or MPC.

PATRICK: Wow.

ANTHONY: So it's pretty cool how they just emulate those sounds.

LETICIA: So you used GarageBand. What other tools did y'all use for that? Like a drum pad?

ANTHONY: For that, yes, we used, there's a few MIDI controllers here. There are these little keyboards that have sample pads connected to them.

LETICIA: And our Innovation Lab!

ANTHONY: And the Innovation Lab up here at the Central location of the Austin Public Library. So yeah, those are open to the public. And so we used a few of those. For the most part I was trying to stay away from using those so that it would be more accessible to everybody because not everybody has a keyboard. But a lot of people have a Mac computer or an iPhone or an iPad. And GarageBand is on all of those. So if you have an iPhone you can get right on your phone and start making music that sounds great.

PATRICK: And you can mouse click it and do everything.

ANTHONY: Exactly. And then once you kind of figure your way around the software then you can start using music controllers and stuff. Or you can do it immediately. Whatever you want to do.

PATRICK: And there are a lot of free apps that you can download and practice with and then when you want to step up to the real stuff you can always come here and actually play around with the real thing.

ANTHONY: Definitely.

LETICIA: Nice! So, Patrick, you work at Spicewood Springs. Do you get to bring any music to the branches?

PATRICK: Pretty much the only thing we can do is we are allowed to listen to music while we're sitting in the back doing returns. And when I'm at the desk and I'm doing the finances and I'm on AIMS or whatever I've got it blasting in the ear and all that. The cool thing at the branches is you get to see who the real music customers are. We have the Fishers, and the Fishers come in and they have an entire row all to themselves. It's a couple and the two of them will listen to music. And they usually have fifteen to twenty waiting any time. And when they come up we talk music because they usually have it stuck in my head.

ANTHONY: That's amazing.

LETICIA: Yeah, I had a patron at Howson where he would come with his notebook and he would flip and ask me to put different things on hold for him. And I'd go, "I've never even heard of these artists. This is great. Thank you for introducing me to these things."

PATRICK: And you learn from them.

LETICIA: And I've also learned about so many different musical artists from people I work with. Do you remember Kay? Kay was our co-worker. He moved back to Denmark. But he was just a fount of knowledge about all different kinds of music, like international music, and he really got me turned on to, like, Nigerian music from the '70's. Otherwise I probably wouldn't...

ANTHONY: Ah, like Fela Kuti?

LETICIA: Yes. And otherwise I probably would not have stumbled across that. Yeah, there's a lot of people here at the library that are very into it.

ANTHONY: Kay used to build instruments too. Like, he would build guitars out of just crazy random things.

PATRICK: Like a gearhead? He would just assemble keyboards and put it all together?

ANTHONY: Yeah, exactly, it was amazing.

LETICIA: Yeah, he would tell me, "I just took this and took that and then it made this terrible screeching sound. And then I added that." He was really, really enjoyable to speak with. And that's one of the great things about working at APL. There are a lot of musicians and a lot of people. We don't have an APL band yet. We used to.

PATRICK: We should.

LETICIA: I know.

PATRICK: Absolutely. For a stretch when Anthony and I were working together at Spicewood, it was during the curbside days, the COVID days. And so it was he and I and Jorge Harada who is in a rockabilly band here in Austin, he moved out to Brooklyn. He's doing quite well in Brooklyn.

ANTHONY: Nice!

LETICIA: Brooklyn loves rockabilly. Known for their rockabilly.

PATRICK: He was with one heck of a band. I actually watched them with my partner.

ANTHONY: With his wife.

PATRICK: With his wife, yeah. Ruby. And the three of us would just sit together because when we're inside, there's no customers inside, we could just talk music all day. Plug each other. And you and Jorge arguing because Jorge was not a huge rap fan. He was like, "You know the rap I like? I like the good old days of Sugarhill Gang." And I was like, "That was like, the beginning. Nothing after that? There's nothing good? You didn't like Run DMC?"

LETICIA: Just right to the hip hop hippity. And that's it.

ANTHONY: The hippity hip hop. You don't stop.

LETICIA: I think that is always going to be the case. Somebody will always be like, "The rap was better in the old days. I don't like these mumble rappers."

PATRICK: Mumble core guys.

LETICIA: I kind of like them.

ANTHONY: I try my best whenever I think about them, I remember whenever MG, what's his name? MGK came out with this pop punk album.

LETICIA: I did not like that.

ANTHONY: Is this actually garbage, or does everybody just think it and I'm just... I listened to it and I think it is actually garbage.

PATRICK: Benzino has something to do with it and that's why. Benzino produced it.

LETICIA: Who's that? Who is Benzino? Is that two names, like Benjamin Zino?

PATRICK: *The Source* magazine. Tried to come after Eminem. Did not turn out great for him.

LETICIA: Oh, that's right. Eminem and MGK have a rivalry.

ANTHONY: Benzino is in Eminem's graveyard.

PATRICK: And I actually think the Eminem and MGK thing was fabricated because it blew up MGK's career and Eminem was kind of on a downswing at that point. We'll see.

ANTHONY: I don't know if it blew it. I think he had to change genres because of it. He kind of fully just stopped rap. Why don't I try this pop punk thing?

LETICIA: To be fair, I was not very much of a big pop punk fan. I liked a little bit of punk. I used to buy the Fat Wreck Chords compilations. That was as far as I would go. Very much like dipping my toe.

ANTHONY: I would say the same. I liked, well, I guess it all kind of runs together in what is now considered emo. If you go to an emo night somewhere they will also probably play maybe Blink-182 or Sum 41.

PATRICK: My Chemical Romance.

LETICIA: I don't know. I guess we'll have to show up to one. No, I think they would play something like Taking Back Sunday or Promise Ring.

ANTHONY: It bleeds together. It's like whatever kind of punk from the 2000s is now considered emo. I don't really consider Jimmy Eat World emo, but I guess most people do now. I dunno. That's maybe a different conversation.

LETICIA: Yeah, I don't know what I was listening to around the time emo was popular.

ANTHONY: I think I was listening to mostly older stuff.

LETICIA: I know I listened to the Dashboard Confessional. (singing) "Your hair is everywhere." I know I listened to a little bit of that. But I didn't own the album. When was this popular? Like early 2000s?

ANTHONY: You are talking like pop punk? Blink-182?

PATRICK: *Alternative Press* stuff. Is that the magazine? *Alternative Press*?

ANTHONY: Sum 41 was really popular.

PATRICK: My Chemical Romance.

LETICIA: Sum 41 is coming here to Austin.

ANTHONY: Really? I thought they broke up.

LETICIA: I don't know. No, they didn't break up. You didn't have to cry. I know you will send me those 3:00 AM texts about Sum 41 breaking up, sobbing.

PATRICK: You heard it here first! On Volumes. Sum 41 is no more!

ANTHONY: No more. They're done.

LETICIA: Oh, and I just realized, in my head that song that was playing in my head that I thought was Sum 41 I really think it was Good Charlotte.

ANTHONY: What song was playing in your head?

LETICIA: I don't know. I'm not going to try to vocalize it. Was it "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous"?

ANTHONY: Yes, that's Good Charlotte.

LETICIA: What a difficult time for everyone's lives. Early 2000s. Late 1999. There's some good stuff too.

PATRICK: Which is just like yesterday to me. I turn fifty next month, so I feel...

LETICIA: Ah, "Yesterday Once More."

PATRICK: That is kind of cool. Because growing up in the seventies, when I was a kid, that's when I first listened to punk and when I first listened to hip hop and when I first listened to craft work and a lot of the EDM and that's kind of cool. I've always taken the Vonnegut approach to music, which is no matter how bad things are in the world, the music is always great.

And if you don't think so, then you are missing something. You are not looking hard enough. There might be some of the top 40 stuff that is not necessarily the best, but there is always good music being made. And so I've always thought like, well maybe I don't like the mumblecore, but then Lil Yachty dropped something and his last album is amazing.

LETICIA: It was good, yes. This kind of reminds me when Mystikal put out that album, it was a while ago now, with Mark Ronson and that album was amazing.

ANTHONY: Yeah, like Mystikal.

LETICIA: Oh, I said it wrong. They are going to know I'm not a fan. Mr. Cal.

LAUGHING

LETICIA: Everyone's going to know I'm a phony.

ANTHONY: Like a Cali rapper. It's Mr. Cal!

LETICIA: Hey! How! I'm Mr. Cal! I'm here to be your very best pal! Rapping is my game. And I'm going to rock it to pain, fame.

PATRICK: So Letty will not sing on here but she'll spit some bars.

LETICIA: Hey, I bet Jorge would like that rap! Mr. Cal. Where is Mr. Cal?

ANTHONY: Mr. Cal. There's no way I'm saying Mystikal ever again.

LETICIA: Oh, I'm crushed. I don't want him ever to listen! I don't want him to hear this!

PATRICK: "Shake It Fast" by Mr. Cal.

LETICIA: Can you play "Key Thief, Key Crook" by Mr. Cal?

LAUGHING

LETICIA: Mystikal, if you are listening, I'm sorry.

ANTHONY: Probably not. You don't know they are.

PATRICK: They are right outside the door.

LETICIA: You don't know. Mystikal and Bobbie McFerrin are both going to tune in. They google themselves.

So how are you excited to see, there's so much potential obviously. It's the Live Music Capital of the World. How are you excited to see this being implemented at the library? And how do you think it can grow?

ANTHONY: I think that Electric Ladybird has such great potential.

LETICIA: And what is that?

ANTHONY: So basically it is Austin Public Library's curated selection of different local artists that live and record in Austin. It has a lot of potential. I just don't see a lot of people talking about it. And I wish more people would talk about it. I know that they do little festivals and stuff like that and I think that's a really good tool. Especially if

somebody that moved here, like eleven, twelve years ago specifically to be a part of the music scene out here. It's fun, but it does get kind of tough whenever, it doesn't seem to be that there is a lot of independent support for local artists anymore. I know that there have been many attempts but they all seem to fade away.

There was that health insurance for artists....

LETICIA: The HAAM, yes.

ANTHONY: I'm not sure if that is still going on.

LETICIA: It's still going on. You should sign up for HAAM, artists.

ANTHONY: Nice! Excellent! Excellent! There are tools. I just don't see them promoted a lot.

LETICIA: I agree. I do feel like, and yes I did say it in a mocking tone, the Live Music Capital of the World, because unfortunately it does seem to maybe be shifting away from that. And of course there are shows every night.

ANTHONY: All the time.

LETICIA: There are shows all the time, everywhere.

ANTHONY: Right. Probably not as much as there were five years ago.

PATRICK: It's a good example of overexposure with SXSW and ACL blowing up the way they do. Independent music, the more popular it gets, people kind of step back from that. We are a long way from the garage sound and the noise sound and the spoon days and all that. We're kind of far removed from that. There's virtually no hip hop scene here and we really need someone to step up. Maybe no 1important?

LAUGHING

ANTHONY: Who dat?

PATRICK: Which is Mr. Anthony's moniker. He's a musician and he's a pretty great rapper. You had made a record and it actually was stuck in my head for about a month and that is saying a lot. Because I'm at work singing this song over and over in my head, and I'm like, "Golly."

LETICIA: I've got to listen to that.

PATRICK: He's good stuff. He's figured it out. He's square and the whole crew.

ANTHONY: Well, thank you. I appreciate that.

LETICIA: Unfortunately the only time I've heard you perform was when you sang "Take on Me" at the staff development day.

PATRICK: Which I heard a lot about.

ANTHONY: That's right up your alley. Some good old yacht rock.

LETICIA: Hey! That's "nyacht rock."

ANTHONY: That's like new wave. Kind of.

PATRICK: It's been played on a yacht before, I'm sure. I've never been on a yacht, so I have no idea.

LETICIA: Yes. I bet it's been played on a yacht. There's an eleven-year difference between me and my middle sisters. They were teenagers when I was a toddler. And I just watched so much MTV that yes, "Take on Me" is very much

imbedded in my brain. And I used to listen to "She Bop" by Cyndi Lauper all the time. And I didn't learn until I was older that it was about pleasuring yourself.

ANTHONY: Oh!

PATRICK: I did not know that.

LETICIA: It is.

PATRICK: I'm going to listen to it now.

LETICIA: Listen to it right now. So when I put it on the record player, what is it when you play it slow on the 45 and it sounds like demonic sludge core, and that was also very cool.

LETICIA: One thing that I'm excited about is we're going to be having a teen music showcase. And it's being planned by our teen volunteers. It's kind of going to be an open mike situation. And they can do whatever they like, actually. But it's mostly focused on music. We have a lot of awesome resources for our teens here at Teen Central, at Central.

We have instruments, and we have a synth lab as well. We take out modular synthesizers as well. And someone comes and teaches kids how to use them. Because I don't know how to use them. I saw them and they were just knobs and I was like, "What is that?"

ANTHONY: When I was growing up it was acoustic guitar lessons and typing lessons. Now kids are learning modular synth and how to code. What is going on, man? I'm all the way left behind.

PATRICK: So can the kids use the MIDI controllers and all that?

ANTHONY: There's some of those in the Teen Center.

LETICIA: Yes, we do have two computers with MIDI controllers and GarageBand, and I see kids, I see teens play and make stuff there all day. In the back we have keyboards, drums, electric drums, and bass, electric guitar. And yeah, they play and they jam all day. It is not a quiet room in the library.

ANTHONY: But the Teen Room is definitely the best room. I'm retroactively jealous. I am, oh man!

PATRICK: Amazing label collection!

ANTHONY: What kind of person would I be if I grew up coming to this library? The coolest kid.

LETICIA: Yeah, I wish I had that when I was a kid too. But now I get to hang out there every day.

PATRICK: You foster that kind of creativity and eventually somebody's going to blow up. And then we're going to get all the props. We want a blurb on an album.

LETICIA: Thank you, APL!

ANTHONY: Somebody's acceptance speech whenever they are winning their Grammy.

LETICIA: And there's a little bulletin board in the back by the instruments, for teen bands. And they are like, looking for a bassist. Looking for a drummer. And I'm like, Awww!

ANTHONY: That's awesome! Oh my god. That's nostalgic in itself.

LETICIA: I recently read an article about a mini-mart, the real market is having shows near campus, all ages shows, and I think that would be cool. There aren't many all ages shows here in Austin. So I think it would be cool, maybe we could do some more shows here for the youth.

ANTHONY: Absolutely. Things that are affordable. Things that are sponsored. I think one thing is, there's a huge economic divide in this city. Stuff costs money. It's hard to get people out to things that cost money. That's just the truth. So maybe if there were more, I don't know, more sponsors for shows or some way to keep it so where the customers don't have to pay up front and they could just come and enjoy themselves and maybe buy merchandise. You know, stuff like that.

LETICIA: I agree.

ANTHONY: And that would bring people out to shows.

LETICIA: Maybe we could have a library band showcase. Our people in bands, no1important also.

PATRICK: And if these teens come in and they are working with the stuff, there's going to be bands coming through, little teen bands from high school. And if they put together some good stuff and they want to do it and have that be part of the show, and a huge showcase, we have the venues downstairs.

LETICIA: Exactly.

ANTHONY: That's a great idea.

LETICIA: We do have artists come for SXSW, especially we have some from our Electric Ladybird like you brought up earlier. And I also forgot that I have a program, a music program, called Niche to Meet You, where we talk about very particular niche, well not that niche, but different music genres. The first one I did was on Afropunk.

ANTHONY: Yeah, that was fantastic.

LETICIA: And then my manager at Cepeda at the time, and then my manager did one on Kraut [mispronounced] rock. But then it got cancelled unfortunately.

ANTHONY: What's that?

LETICIA: Kraut rock? German rock. Kraut rock.

PATRICK: Like Kraut rock?

LETICIA: Yes, Kraut rock. I can't pronounce anything.

PATRICK: Einstein! Too haus!

LETICIA: (SPEAKS GERMAN) Is that fair? I can't pronounce anything. So that was fun. And I would like to bring that back. Maybe. Because there are many different music genres. The afro punk one was cool. We watched different videos of groups like Death. I actually didn't know that much about afro punk. I chose it as a tie in for our Mayor's Book Club. I learned a lot and it was amazing. It was really cool to just learn. It was fun to present that to different people and give like a little history about it, and play different bands.

ANTHONY: Didn't you lead a silent disco program or something?

LETICIA: Yes, and we did have a silent disco.

ANTHONY: Over at Spicewood, right?

LETICIA: Right. We did one at Cepeda and at Spicewood, and there was one this past weekend at the Manchaca branch.

ANTHONY: Oh, really?

LETICIA: The DJs were the Queer Vinyl Collective, and they are so awesome. At the silent disco, I had a hard time choosing between the channels. The way it worked was, there were three DJs, and with the headphones you can

switch between the channels. So they were all playing something different. And I had the hardest time choosing. They were all playing such good music.

Like, one was playing '60's soul, and the other one was playing funk, and the other one was playing like current music like Harry Styles.

PATRICK: One was playing Kenny Loggins. One was playing Duran Duran.

LETICIA: Yes! I was like, "I can't choose!"

PATRICK: That's how you get mash-ups.

LETICIA: Oh, I would love a Loggins/Duran mash-up.

PATRICK: There you go. Make it happen.

LETICIA: Maybe I will! Anthony, you're a DJ. Do it in the club. Confuse people in the club! Confused in the club.

LAUGHING

PATRICK: Can you do, like, you're limited to thirty second spots of music, in order to play without any kind of copyright issue?

LETICIA: I don't know.

PATRICK: Can you do like a straight mash up of thirty seconds and then thirty seconds and then thirty seconds and then thirty seconds? And do all their songs? I'm just wondering.

LETICIA: I don't know the copyright rules. I just hope that anything that I sang here on this podcast today sounded so unrelated to the actual song....

ANTHONY: Well, we do have the technology to sample what you sang on here today.

LETICIA: Oh, yes, I can do my Mr. Cal rap.

So have y'all come across any interesting or weird things in our collection here?

PATRICK: I was looking today, because I don't get down here or to Carver, unfortunately. Carver has the huge collection there.

LETICIA: Big vinyl collection, yes. The only library branch in Austin that has vinyl. But you can place it on hold and get it sent to any branch. And it's always like such a surprise when it shows up and "An album?"

PATRICK: Well, it's unfortunate that the first thing I saw in there that made me perk up was Fat Albert. Fat Albert came out when I was a kid and first of all was my favorite cartoon. But a lot of people don't know that before the cartoon Fat Albert was unfortunately Bill Cosby's stand-up routine. And so I loved him so much but now I look at it I'm just, "Oh, I can't even enjoy Fat Albert anymore."

LETICIA: I am sorry that Fat Albert was taken away from you.

PATRICK: Yes.

ANTHONY: Yeah, that's how I feel about "Remix to Ignition."

LETICIA: Oh my gosh, yeah. So much as been taken away from us by terrible actions of terrible people.

ANTHONY: Very true.

LETICIA: But Mushroom lives on in our hearts.

PATRICK (imitating Mushmouth): He will always live in my heart.

LAUGHING

LETICIA: I also liked Fat Albert, and I think the theme song was really jamming.

PATRICK: No doubt. And Weird Harold and Rudy and all the smack talking. Yeah, it was good stuff. And relevant at the time. Unfortunately. Yeah.

ANTHONY: I'm trying to think. I know I took a picture to send my dad, but it's been a minute. Let me see.

PATRICK: Well, I found one thing on the website. It was the Uranium Savages? Which is a parody band here? I couldn't believe this existed. It is a parody of the song, "My Future's So Bright, I've Gotta Wear Shades." It is "My Future's So Bleak I Think I Got AIDS."

LETICIA: Oh my god. And that's in our library catalog? Available to check out.

PATRICK: I believe it's a single.

LETICIA: Because Timbuk 3 is like an Austin band. Are they Electric Ladybird? I'm just kidding.

PATRICK: No. Because it was in 1987. I don't think you can do something about AIDS in 2023.

LETICIA: I think you are correct in that. It's not Weird AI, that's for sure. Dark AI?

ANTHONY: Normal AI?

PATRICK: Well, they had, like, Dead Milkmen did a lot of stuff back in the days that was like funny rock, funny punk. Ween, a little bit of Ween was always fun. They always did stuff like that. So I imagine these guys are in the vein of that kind of stuff that was coming out.

Another reason why I got in trouble at my radio station was playing "Bitchin' Camaro" by the Dead Milkmen. And it was not because of the bitchin' part. There one word that was in their little dialogue that they had that they pointed that out.

ANTHONY: OK, I remember going through the collection. I pulled out this CD that looked interesting to me. It's called *Purple Snow, Forecasting the Minneapolis Sound*.

PATRICK: I know this box set.

LETICIA: I bet that's actually pretty good. It's like Morris Day?

ANTHONY: Not them.

PATRICK: It's everybody but them.

LETICIA: Oh, that's even better. That's bands you would not have heard of then.

ANTHONY: I couldn't tell if this was like pre-Prince or post?

PATRICK: I think maybe it was around the same time that he was coming up? It looked like early '70's. There's a spectacular picture if you look through the book.

LETICIA: I will never be as cool as the people in the picture.

PATRICK: There's this one band. And this is in the days of Ohio Players and Kool and the Gang and the Commodores and all that. There's one band where the entire band, and I think it is four or five Black dudes and one white guy. And all the dudes are shirtless and oiled up. And all the five Black dudes are very muscular and

ripped and the one white dude is not. And he does not look comfortable at all. When I saw it I showed everyone. "OMG, look at this." I can't even remember their name.

LETICIA: He was like, excuse me, pardon me, I have some qualms with this photo shoot.

PATRICK: Can we get another bottle of bay oil over here? Our muscles are too big to cover all that.

LAUGHING

LETICIA: But that was inside of the *Purple Snow*?

PATRICK: The *Purple Snow* booklet, yes.

ANTHONY: Forecasting The Minneapolis Sound. So where does the purple thing come from? I thought it was always Prince. Is that a Minneapolis thing?

LETICIA: Yeah, there's lots of purple things.

PATRICK: I was in Minneapolis a week and a half ago visiting family up there, I have family in Minnesota, and the entire airport is just Prince everything. Huge murals of Prince. Everything is purple, and it's like, there's a lot of love for him in Minneapolis. And you just played a set in Minneapolis.

ANTHONY: Yeah, last year, where they filmed *Purple Rain*. So it was pretty cool to be in that venue.

PATRICK: Standing on that stage!

ANTHONY: I didn't get to play on that specific stage. We got the smaller stage.

LETICIA: But you got to look at it. It was there.

ANTHONY: I was like oh my god, that's where *Purple Rain* was shot.

PATRICK: You go up and like touch it, get a little of that rub-a-dub?

ANTHONY: Uh huh, get some of that Prince on you.

LETICIA: *Purple Snow*, that's like more extreme than *Rain*?

PATRICK: No doubt. No.

ANTHONY: So true.

PATRICK: And more relevant because it's always snowing.

ANTHONY: It was definitely snowing when we were there. And it was like May, it was four inches or so.

LETICIA: What? Honestly, I think I might trade that for what's happening right now where it's 117 degrees.

PATRICK: I lived in Minnesota for two years, and I was very close to, actually Fargo was the closest city. And when I felt seventy-five below zero with the wind chill and everything

LETICIA: Oh no!

PATRICK: I would never want to be this cold again. It was about thirty degrees below zero for about, I'm thinking in 2010 they had ninety days in a row where it was over 100 degrees here and that was a record. It was like over twenty-five below for months at a time while we were there. The whole place turns grey and nobody does anything and it is just ruined. At least you've got AC here. You can go out to the lake and jump in the water when you are too hot. Over there you can go to the lake and you just walk across it.

LETICIA: What kind of music did you listen to, to keep you warm? What kind of question is that?

PATRICK: In maybe 1992? Public Enemy? Public Enemy kept me warm!

ANTHONY: Fight the powder?

LETICIA: Fight the powder!

LAUGHING

PATRICK: Yeah, pretty much Wishbone?

ANTHONY: Yeah, that works.

PATRICK: That's what I was listening to.

LETICIA: This has been a very pleasurable conversation. The pleasure principle conversation. A very pleasurable conversation. But I think we do have to wrap things up, unfortunately.

PATRICK: We could go another three hours.

LETICIA: I could talk nonsense about music for hours and hours on end and have more freestyle raps. So, to close, why don't you give us a freestyle rap about the library? No, I'm just kidding. I'll drop the beat. Y'all will have to teach me.

PATRICK: I'll try not to spit all over the mike!

LETICIA: But to close, do you have anything you'd like to say to us about the library and Austin and music in general? A closing statement?

ANTHONY: Yes. Austin Public Library is a wonderful place that is continuing to grow. We have some work that we can do to cater towards the live music scene here. And I think that we can help to continue, to help that continue to grow, and cultivating some fresh faces. Getting new artists in and letting them come here to hone their craft in whatever way they need to. I think this is a good place for that. And I hope that we can continue to keep Austin the Live Music Capital.

LETICIA: Yes, the library is the place to learn, grow and create.

PATRICK: And I think that this Innovation Lab is a big part of that. Right now it is in renovation. Maybe by the time this airs it will be open and ready.

LETICIA: So many jams will have come out of it.

PATRICK: And if you are out there and you are listening and you are a musician or you are interested in making music you can come down here and you can learn and you can play around with this stuff. It's all there for you. The software, the controllers. I think you've got some Technics hiding somewhere?

ANTHONY: Right.

PATRICK: Some turntables I saw the last time I was here. I did a little touching of them, a little bit. But yeah, this is the spot. If you don't have it, if you can't afford it, it's here and you can do it here. So come on down to the Central Library or up to the Central Library and check it out.

LETICIA: Thank you so much for talking. Or Spicewood. Or any of your branches. All of the branches have really wonderful programs. Thank you again for talking to me and laughing with me.

MUSIC

LETICIA: Thanks for listening to this episode of APL Volumes, Season Two. You can find vinyl at Carver or check out our Electric Ladybird library online. An extra special thanks to my guest Anthony Mathis and Patrick Walz for such a noteworthy conversation.

APL Volumes is recorded and produced in the library's Innovation Lab, a part of the APL Innovate Digital Makerspace. Come visit this Makerspace at Central Library and explore our recording equipment and hardware, and all kinds of audio-visual software for 3D modeling, graphic design, animation and more.

Many thanks to the APL Innovate team for their help behind the scenes on this podcast. A huge thank you to Christen Hong, our editor; to Peter Hofstad for being our marketing captain; Michael Wheat for the insanely cool logo; and to Stephen Plail for our jaunty theme song.

This podcast is all library, all the time.

Our next episode will be about crafts. Thanks for listening and for supporting your local public library.

MUSIC

[END TRANSCRIPT]