

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Sounds that Shaped the American Landscape

Cultural voices tapped for national registry

(AP) — From rare audio interviews of former slaves to recordings by Donna Summer and the Grateful Dead, 25 sounds that shaped the American cultural landscape are being inducted into the National Recording Registry.

Summer's 1977 hit "I Feel Love" is joining the Grateful Dead's famous 1977 Barton Hall concert as sounds



The Sugar Hill Gang's 1979 release 'Rapper's Delight,' was the first commercially available rap record. Recordings from the group have been inducted into the National Recording Registry.



Donna Summer

of cultural significance, among 25 additions that were announced last week by the Library of Congress as part of its registry.

The world's largest library has chosen a diverse array of songs and sounds from history to retain for permanent preservation in the Na-

tional Recording Registry. Among the new choices this year are Dolly Parton's "Coat of Many Colors," Prince's "Purple Rain" and more.

Some selections are truly historic and rarely heard. They include the only known audio of former American slaves who were interviewed in the 1930s, including one participant who had worked for Confederate President Jefferson Davis. There's also a cylinder from a talking doll created by Thomas Edison in 1888 that is the earliest known commercial sound recording. It was considered unplayable until last year, after new digital mapping tools were used to reveal its sound of a woman singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

The library also is saving Leonard Bernstein's conducting debut with the New York Philhar-

monic in 1943 and "A Charlie Brown Christmas" by the Vince Guaraldi Trio from 1970, which introduced millions of people to jazz through the TV soundtrack.

"America's sound heritage is an important part of the nation's history and culture, and this year's selections reflect the diversity and creativity of the American experience," said Librarian of Congress James Billington, in announcing his final selections.

"From the first time you heard it, it was just, 'Wow, this is very different,'" Barton said. "We hadn't heard this before. It was enormously influential."

The registry includes early sounds from hip-hop with Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight" from 1979 that is credited with launching a genre and inspiring future artists.

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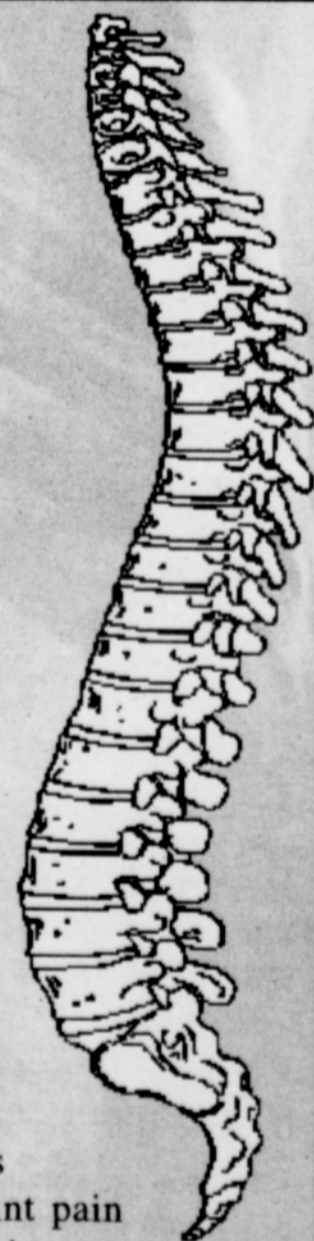
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