

## Attic Tapes

A collection of 267 tapes, originally kept in Delia Derbyshire's loft, have now been passed onto University Of Manchester's Dr. David Butler by Mark Ayres, the BBC Radiophonic Workshop archivist. Much of this archive has never been heard before and has languished for 30 years until it was passed to the University's School of Art, Histories and Culture to catalogue and preserve. The material, in poor condition, had to be played on a tape machine lent by the BBC's Manchester studios before it could be digitised.

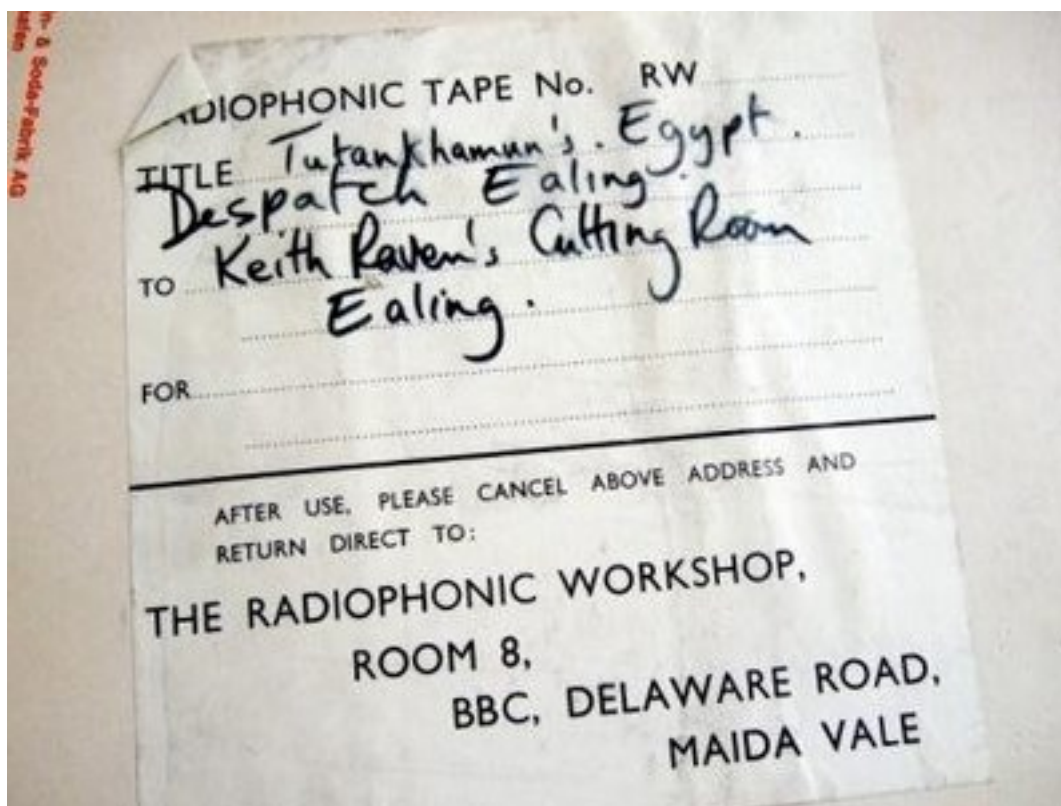


BBC Radio 4's PM programme carried a feature on this archival work on Thursday 17th July.

They discuss, among other things, the Doctor Who theme, a prototype dance track made long before the advent of hard core dance music, the making of her celebrated 'Blue Veils and Golden Sands' track and the Radiophonic special sounds she created for Nicol Williamson's performance of Hamlet at The Roundhouse.

Dr David Butler said: "Delia Derbyshire never really received the recognition she deserved as one of our most influential composers of the past 30 or so years.

“Though brilliant, the Doctor Who theme is just one small example of her genius which was held in high esteem by figures across music, television, theatre and film, including Paul McCartney and John Peel, the disc jockey”.



Louis Niebur, a visiting professor of musicology from Nevada University, has overseen the digital transfer of the tapes from between 1962 and 1973. Dr Butler said: “Many of the tapes have no labels so it is a case of using detective work to find out what they are. We cannot even be certain Delia composed all the music.

“But it has proved to be an Aladdin’s cave and we have just started to scratch the surface. The collection includes her freelance work and really does give us a better sense of her range as a composer.

“It is fitting that we are doing this almost exactly 50 years after the BBC Radiophonic Workshop was launched in 1958”.

Here's hoping that those of us outside of academia that appreciate Delia's pioneering work will eventually get to hear it and I'm gratified that the University has so rightly recognised her status and is preserving her work.

Quotes are courtesy of The Times Online and images are courtesy of the BBC's Radio 4 PM Blog.