



BEAR FAMILY RECORDS of Germany, considered to be a leading specialist in the highest quality compilations (incl. profusely illustrated books) of historic sound documents, presents:

BLACK EUROPE

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENTATION OF THE SOUNDS AND IMAGES OF BLACK PEOPLE IN EUROPE PRE-1927

Recordings on phonograph cylinders, gramophone discs and films, with both still and moving images, feature people of African descent in Europe from the earliest years of the recording industry and continued after the First World War. The contribution of these pioneering personalities on the modern mass media has not been noticed – recognition is overdue. Music, spoken word and dance, from all styles, categories, languages and natal lands provide a lost but rich resource. Many artefacts may be lost forever, but this project traces the surviving evidence.

Collected in a 12 x 12 inch coffee table book with 500 full-colour pages, here is a multitude of documents, artefacts and curiosities, from passport applications, personal memorabilia and letters, to sheet music, newspaper ads and fabulous poster art, complemented by contemporary postcards and images of wax cylinders and disc records. In more than 100 chapters the life and times of these pioneering entertainers, musicians and linguists comes to life, from early film and sound examples to best-selling 78 rpm records, from 'human zoos' and minstrel shows to ethnological documentation and portraits of the (sometimes dubious) movers and shakers in European showbusiness of the time.

The team of internationally recognized experts, compilers and authors responsible for this project includes biographer **Horst J.P. Bergmeier** of the Netherlands, historian **Jeffrey Green** from the United Kingdom, discographer **Dr. Rainer E. Lotz** from Germany, researcher **Howard Rye** from the United Kingdom and sound engineer **Christian Zwarg** from Germany.

From African-Americans comes an aural kaleidoscope of entertainers and music from the last days of minstrelsy through ragtime and music hall artists to string bands, spirituals, and the early days of jazz in Europe, including the earliest examples of stride piano and rhythm scat singing, and some of the first records made anywhere of African-American folk music practices. From Africans come recordings of African languages and folk tales, religious music on both African and European models, and recordings of the popular music of the 1920s. Also documented is the involvement of those born in Europe of African descent in the wider culture of the African diaspora.



Black Europe, a boxed set comprising a hardbound, LP-sized book and 40 CDs of music and sound documents, will be released in 2013.

Register now at no cost for news, updates and subscription details by e-mail to black-europe@bear-family.com stating 'I want to be kept informed of the BLACK EUROPE project'.

"Everything this singular company puts out is superlative and packaged with arts, smarts, and love." Michael Simmons (L.A. WEEKLY)



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