

John Townley – Music CV

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Brief music bio:

John began his musical career with a **year-long thesis** on the history and development of the folk ballad in 1962. He subsequently studied guitar with **the Rev. Gary Davis**, later becoming his driver and road manager, and eventually producing his final album. After a stint as a solo folk performer, he joined Columbia's pop group The Magicians and subsequently designed and built the **first 12-track recording studio** in New York, know for its **Frank Zappa** recordings, and the **first 16-track studio** in San Francisco. After inking label deals there with Vanguard and Atlantic, followed by a **top-ten hit** with Apostolic's production of "**Witchi-Tai-To**", he became **staff songwriter** for MCA, CBS, and Buddha publishing divisions.

Returning to his folk and music history roots thereafter, he produced, arranged, and performed with a variety of maritime groups in New York and Virginia. He produced records for the **National Geographic Society** and **The Smithsonian Institution**, and worked as program developer for both the **South St. Seaport Museum** and **The Mariners' Museum**, in addition to recording and concert production with his own company Maritime Music International in the U.S., Canada, UK, and Poland. He has been a member of AFM locals #47 and #802, AFTRA, and ASCAP, and is an elected member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA).

In addition to his musical accomplishments, John is also a:

- * **author** and **journalist** www.astrococktail.com/john.html,
- * **historical preservation activist** www.astrococktail.com/maritimemattersinternational.html,
- * **world-class astrologer** www.astrococktail.com/news.html

For more biographical details, see in-depth background interview:

<http://www.houseplantpicturestudio.com/johntownley.html>

Staff:

- * **President** Apostolic Studios, 10th St. Productions, Epiphany Publishing, Vanguard/Apostolic Records, New York (1966-70), Pacific High Recording Studios (1968-70), San Francisco
<http://www.astrococktail.com/Apostolic.html>
 - * **Staff songwriter**, MCA, Buddha, CBS Publishing (1971-72) – All ASCAP
 - * **Music program specialist** (schools), weekly programs (general public), South St. Seaport Museum (1972-80)
 - * **Music teacher**, K-7, Chesapeake Academy, Irvington, VA (1982-1987)
 - * **Editor**, *Concertina and Squeezebox* magazine (1983-1989)
 - * **Education program developer**, The Mariners' Museum, Hampton, VA (1984-90)
- Most notable and copied program: <http://www.astrococktail.com/seachest.html>

* **Director**, Maritime Music International, recording and concert production (1990-present)

Live Performances:

Too many to list, from the earliest at folk and rock venues like Greenwich Village's Gaslight Café and The Night Owl through, pop music TV such as *Upbeat* and *Shindig*, festivals across America (Seattle, Newport, Boston, and Philadelphia Tall Ships Festivals) and Europe (yearly across England, Germany, Poland) to a combination as performer and producer of a seven-city tour of bands accompanying 20 tall ships across the Great Lakes in the U.S. and Canada. Most recent solo appearances at the Chicago Maritime Festival and New York's Soho Gallery for Digital Art. Outside of solo work, singer/songwriter/instrumentalist in: The Magicians, The Apostolic Family, Ocean, The X Seamen's Institute, The Press Gang, and The Southern Cross.

Media (interviews, documentaries, appearances):

BBC, CBC, PBS, NBC, CBS, ABC, and Granada (England) radio & TV, Polish National Radio/TV, Voice of America, Armed Forces Radio, various local and cable TV, CNET Radio

Instruments:

Vocals, acoustic and electric guitar, mandolin, fiddle, banjo, Anglo concertina, pennywhistle, bones, with a little moutharp, keyboard, sax, flute, clarinet, dumbek, whatever comes to hand...

Live Festival Production, Promotion, Marketing:

Producer/director, 1994 Great Lakes Tall Ship Maritime Festival Series (7 cities)

Public relations officer, Polish tall ship *Zawisza Czarny*, 1992 Atlantic Tall Ship Races

Instructional DVDs:

Seaman's Concertina Tutor: <http://larkininthemorning.com/products/dvd058>

Seaman's Fantasy: <http://larkininthemorning.com/products/dvd106>

Concertina and Accordion Repair: <http://larkininthemorning.com/products/dvd107>

Music Papers:

"Songwriter Charles Dibdin & 18-19th Century Maritime Music" (Mystic Seaport Museum)

"The Influence of 19th Century Popular Song On Maritime Music" (Mystic Seaport Museum)

"Music in the Confederate Navy" (Mystic Seaport Museum)

<http://www.astrococktail.com/CSNmusic.html>

"Life's Stormy Sea: Maritime Images in 19th Century Hymnody" (Mystic Seaport Museum)

<http://www.astrococktail.com/hymnody.html>

Discography (production &/or performance, 1964-2004):

Pop and Folk:

1964 – *I Shall Wander* (with Jane Chatfield) – Blue Ridge Records

1965-66 – Four singles with The Magicians, Columbia Records

1968 - *The Family Of Apostolic*, Vanguard Records

1969 - *O Glory: The Rev. Gary Davis Apostolic Studio Sessions*, Vanguard Records

1971 - *Just Another Day*, Vanguard Records (single)

- 1975 - *Songs of 1776, and Songs Of The Civil War*, National Geographic Society
- 1976 - *The Top Hits Of 1776*, Adelphi Records
- 1978 - *The Flying Cloud*, Adelphi Records
- 1999 - *The Best Of The Magicians*, Sony/Sundazed Records

Maritime recordings:

- 1972 - *The X Seamen's Institute Sings Sea Songs At South Street Seaport*, Folkways Records
- 1975 - *Heart Of Oak!* (X Seamen's Institute), Folkways Records
- 1976 - *Songs Of The Tall Ships* (The Starboard List), Adelphi Records
- 1977 - *Sea Songs Seattle* (festival album), Folkways Records
- 1978 - *Cruising Round Yarmouth* (The Starboard List), Adelphi Records
- 1978 - *Newport Tall Ships Shanty Festival*, Folkways Records
- 1980 - *Sea Song Favorites* (X Seamen's Institute), Folkways Records
- 1985 - *A Chesapeake Sailor's Companion* (The Press Gang), Mariner Records
- 1989 - *"The Old Bells (Stare Dzwony)" At The Albert Dock*, Maritime Culture Fnd., Poland
- 1991 - *Sailor!* (John Townley), Maritime Music International
- 1993 - *From The Baltic To The Bahamas* (Townley/Siurawski), Maritime Culture Fnd., Poland
- 1995 - *The Warsaw Mermaid* (Townley/Siurawski), Maritime Culture Foundation, Poland
- 2001 - *A Chesapeake Sailor's Companion* (The Press Gang), Adelphi Records CD reissue
- 2004 - *Classic Maritime Music* (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings)