



Back issues of and single articles published in *New York Folklore Quarterly*, *New York Folklore*, and *Voices* are available for purchase. Check the tables of contents for availability and titles. To request an article for purchase, contact us at info@nyfolklore.org. Please be aware that some issues are sold out, but most articles are still available.

Copyright of NEW YORK FOLKLORE. Further reproduction prohibited without permission of copyright holder. This PDF or any part of its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv or website without the copyright holder's express permission. Users may print or download article for individual use.

NEW YORK FOLKLORE
129 Jay Street
Schenectady, NY 12305
518/346-7008
Fax 518/346-6617
Email: info@nyfolklore.org
<http://www.nyfolklore.org>

From the Director



We are pleased and honored to introduce Rasel Ahmed, our Fall-Winter 2023 special issue editor. Rasel holds a Master's degree in Folkloristics and Applied

Heritage Studies from the University of Tartu, Estonia. Originally from Bangladesh, Rasel worked in Estonia as an editor and proofreader.

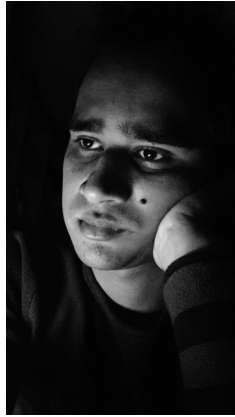
In early 2023, New York Folklore (NYF) issued a Call for Proposals for guest editors and identified two talented emerging folklorists. Each proposed a specific theme or focus, with Rasel Ahmed's issue focusing on folklore in a transnational context.

I also acknowledge mentoring and editorial assistance provided by Associate Editor Patti Mason, who worked with Rasel, and Spring 2023 guest editor, Sarah Shultz, to help them develop their volumes—as they learned to manage solicitation of potential articles and the peer review process for an academic journal. Some authors were non-Native English speakers, writing for an English language journal. This mentoring experiment with new folklore scholars benefitted NYF, expanding our networks, introducing us and our readers to folklore studies beyond our borders and to a wider array of folklore scholars.

NYF celebrates its 80th anniversaries in 2024 and 2025. Founded in 1944, our original purpose of supporting the maintenance, cultivation, and nurturing of diverse cultural heritages of New York State continues. Our second anniversary is dedicated to our journal's founding in 1945. Originally conceived as *New York Folklore Quarterly*, it has consistently “plowed back” folklore of New York's diverse communities to our readers in accessible, non-academic language. Our readership extends beyond national boundaries, as *Voices* is mailed to North America and Europe and available at www.nyfolklore.org. Please celebrate with us!

Ellen McHale, PhD, Executive Director
New York Folklore
info@nyfolklore.org
www.nyfolklore.org

From the Editor



Time, as an underpinning concept, plays a critical role in how folklore is studied and perceived. Historically, the discipline has concentrated on preserving artifacts of the past—songs, narratives, rituals, and traditions—as if static entities—or focused

on (re)defining folks, viewing performances as defining factors of identity. Such approaches are rooted in a sense of loss, a longing to protect cultural forms from the encroachment of modernity, rationalism, and Enlightenment ideals that often marginalized nondominant cultures. Yet, this institutional framework inadvertently positions folklore at the disposal of politics and philosophy of those who define and design folk and folklore, keeping folklore in existential crisis in transitional moments.

We now witness a transformative moment as the dominance of literacy (with modernity, rationalism, Enlightenment, and secularism as components) gives way to the virtual era, reshaping how traditions are practiced, shared, and understood. Folklore, not confined to boundaries of nationalism, homogeneity, and diversity, manifests across digital platforms, like TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook, shaping how people navigate in the virtual era. These platforms enable rapid dissemination of cultural expressions, transcending geographical and temporal boundaries. The shift challenges the approach to studying and defining folklore.

In this context, folkloristics must grapple with temporality of expressive forms. The past, present, and future are interconnected, each influencing the others in a continuous cycle. For example, preservation of folk traditions in digital archives does not ensure their sustenance, unless archives are actively used and reinterpreted in contemporary contexts, influencing new forms of cultural expression. Similarly, narratives and past practices

often resurface in the virtual landscape, reimagined and repurposed for contemporary needs. This dynamic interplay underscores the need for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship among folk, folklore, and temporality within the discipline.

Consider the philosophical dimensions of folklore as related to temporality. Folklore, with its particularist approach, offers a worldview distinct from universalist claims of dominant philosophical traditions. While these traditions often construct linear, progress-oriented narratives of history and culture, emphasizing the creative faculties of humans, folklore emphasizes the cyclical, iterative, and lived experiences of communities (see “Tradition, Social Media and Community: Viewing the Virtual from a Folkloric Perspective” in this issue). The emphasis on lived experience challenges the notion that folklore belongs solely to the past. Instead, it positions folklore as a critical lens through which to understand the present and imagine alternative futures.

The tension between nostalgia and innovation is particularly evident in the digital era. The tendency to romanticize and politicize the past idealizes folk traditions as pure, untainted by modern influences, and radicalizes people of the present as expressing a “mass lack of taste.” Yet, digital platforms enable unprecedented creativity and reinterpretation, allowing individuals to engage with folklore in ways deeply rooted in the present. This duality reflects the complex relationship between tradition and modernity, as well as the role of time in shaping cultural practices.

Fairy tales of agrarian times illustrate the temporality of perceptions in the face of changing material and metaphorical reality. Fairy tales, deeply embedded in local cultural and spiritual life, ensured that they flourished; similar scenarios dictate the appearance of such tales based on the longing of people (see “Fairy Tales for the Queer Desi: The Shifting Paradigms of Indian Storytelling Traditions in the Virtual Era”). Today, these traditions are often celebrated as independent art forms,

continued on page 2

“The past does not just emerge of its own accord; it is the result of a cultural process of construction and representation.”

—Jan Assmann (*Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, p. 71, Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Join or Renew your New York Folklore Membership to Receive *Voices* and other Member Benefits

For the General Public

Voices is a peer-reviewed scholarly journal, published twice annually. Join New York Folklore and become part of a community that will deepen your involvement with folklore, folklife, the traditional arts, and contemporary culture. As a member, you'll have early notice of Gallery special exhibits and NYF-sponsored key events. Members receive a discount on NYF Gallery items.

For Artists and Professionals

Become a member and learn about technical assistance programs that will get you the help you may need in your work:

Mentoring and Professional Development

Folk Artists Self-Management Project

Folk Archives Project

Consulting and Referral

Advocacy

A Public Voice

Membership Levels

Individual

\$ 50.00	Basic Membership
\$100.00	Harold W. Thompson Circle
\$150.00	Edith Cutting Folklore in Education

Organizations/Institutions

\$ 75.00	Subscriber
\$100.00	Partner
\$150.00	Edith Cutting Folklore in Education

Please add \$20.00 for non-US addresses.

For payment, choose the option that works best for you:

Use our website, www.nyfolklore.org

or mail a check to us at 129 Jay St., Schenectady NY 12305;

or call the NYF business office, 518-346-7008, to pay with a credit card over the phone.