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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros Papers
Identifier: NMAH.AC.1430
Date: 1920 - 2016
undated
Extent: 2 Cubic feet (3 boxes, 2 oversize map folders)
Language: English
Some materials in Spanish.
Collection is in English.
Summary: The collection documents the life and musical career of Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The collection was donated to the Museum by Armenteros's son in 2017.

Materials in the Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Archives Center, National Museum of American History Collections:
Graciela Papers, 1915-2010, undated
Mongo Santamaria, 1950s-1996, undated
Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program Collection, 1992-2014

Processing Information
Collection processed by Vanessa Broussard Simmons, archivist, 2017.

Preferred Citation
Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros Papers, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions
Collection is open for research.
Biographical / Historical

Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros was a trumpeter, composer, arranger, and producer known for his Afro-Cuban musical style. He was born on April 4, 1928, in Ranchuelo, in the Villa Clara province of central Cuba. In 1949, Armenteros moved to Havana to begin his musical career, which spanned almost seven decades. He acquired his nickname in the mid-1950s because of his resemblance to the Cuban boxer Kid Chocolate. Armenteros worked with many New York-based Latin artists and bands including Mongo Santamaría, Graciela, Johnny Pacheco, Charlie Palmieri, Larry Harlow, Osvaldo "Chi Hua Hua" Martínez, Lou Pérez, Roberto Torres, Ismael Rivera, Bobby Capó, Israel "Cachao" López, and Wynton Marsalis. He died on January 6, 2016 in a nursing home in Mohegan Lake, New York at the age of eighty-seven.

Scope and Contents

Collection documents the life and musical career of Alfredo "Chocolate" Armenteros. The materials consist primarily of black-and-white and color photographs of Armenteros, his family and friends. There is some correspondence which include both incoming and outgoing letters, postcards and greeting cards. Throughout his career Armenteros is recognized by the Latin American community and this is best reflected by awards and citations. Music manuscripts, performance agreements and promotional materials for concerts can also be found among these materials. The collection is arranged into two series. Series one is Armenteros's personal papers. Series two contains materials relating to Armenteros's performances.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged into two series.

Series 1, Personal Papers, circa 1920-2016, undated

Series 2, Performance Materials, 1949-2000, undated

General

The Division of Music holds six passes, one parade ribbon, three awards, two framed records, and one trumpet made by Holton and engraved "A. A. Chocolate", Accession Number: 2017.0214
Series 1: Personal Papers, circa 1920-2016, undated, undated

Consists primarily of photographs but also includes greeting cards, postcards, magazine articles, correspondence, awards and obituaries of friends. There are some early black-and-white prints of Armenteros and members of his family. In addition, there are a number of black-and-white and color prints of Armenteros performing with other well-known Latin bands and artists. A few of the photographs are of Armenteros in social settings and on travel. Very little information exists relating to Armenteros's personal life other than his obituary. Armenteros received a number of awards which is also found among these materials. The materials are arranged in chronological order.

Box 1, Folder 1 Photographs, 1920-1939
Box 1, Folder 2 Photographs, 1940-1949
Box 1, Folder 3 Photographs, 1950-1959
Box 1, Folder 4 Photographs, 1960-1969
Box 1, Folder 5 Photographs, 1970-1979
Box 1, Folder 6 Photographs, 1980-1989
Box 1, Folder 7 Greeting cards and postcards, 1990-1998, undated
Box 1, Folder 8 Photographs, 1990-1999
Box 2, Folder 2 Photographs, 1990-1999
Box 1, Folder 9 Article, 1991
Box 1, Folder 10 Award, 1991
Box 1, Folder 11 Obituaries of friends, 1993-2001
Box 1, Folder 12 Council of City of New York citation, 1996
Box 1, Folder 13 Correspondence, 2000-2004
Box 1, Folder 14 Photographs, 2000-2016
Box 1, Folder 15 International Salsa Museum charter, 2001
Box 2, Folder 3 Awards, 2001
Box 1, Folder 16 La Asociacion Amigos De La Musica Afroantillana award, 2007
Box 1, Folder 17 New York State Assembly Citation, 2014
Box 1, Folder 18  Obituary, 2016
Includes

Box 1, Folder 19  Photographs, undated

Box 2, Folder 4  Articles, undated

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Consists primarily of music manuscripts and lyrics; record company agreements; posters, programs and flyers for concerts; and Library of Congress copyright application materials. Most of these materials relate to concert performances. In addition, there is some information relating to Armenteros's work with Andy Gracia on the film "The Lost City", an Infiniti television commercial and Bill Crosby's daughter Evin's wedding. The materials are arranged in chronological order.

Box 2, Folder 1  Photograph (copies), 1949, undated
Box 1, Folder 20 Music and lyrics for "Choco's Gujira", 1975
Box 1, Folder 29 Music and lyrics, 1975-2000
Box 1, Folder 38 Passport (copy) and touring information, 1979-1985, undated
Box 1, Folder 21 Programs and flyers, 1980-1989
Box 2, Folder 5 Posters, 1980-1989
Box 1, Folder 22 Machito Orchestra , 1984
Map-folder 1 Posters, 1988, undated
Map-folder 2 Poster, 1988
Box 1, Folder 23 Programs and flyers for concerts, 1990-1999
Box 2, Folder 6 Posters, 1990-1999
Box 3, Folder 1 Posters, 1993, undated
Box 1, Folder 24 Descarga Cachao, 1994
Box 1, Folder 25 Library of Congress, Copyright Registration Application, 1994
Box 1, Folder 26 Agreement between Armenteros and Caiman Records, Incorporated, 1997
Box 1, Folder 27 Armstrong Curriculum Project, 2000
Box 2, Folder 7 Posters, 2000-2010
Box 1, Folder 28 Programs and flyers for concerts, 2000-2016
Box 1, Folder 30 Chesky Records, Incorporated, publishing agreement, 2001
Box 1, Folder 31 Performance agreement for Evin Crosby wedding, 2002
Box 1, Folder 32 Lost City film materials, 2004
Box 1, Folder 33 Infiniti Automobile television commercial script, 2007
Box 1, Folder 34  Badge, National Puerto Rican Day Parade, undated
Box 1, Folder 35  Music manuscript, undated
Box 1, Folder 36  Music manuscripts and lyrics, undated
Box 1, Folder 37  Programs and flyers for concerts, undated

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