



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of the American Indian*

## Jim Pepper Sheet Music Collection

Rachel Menyuk

September 2013

National Museum of the American Indian  
4220 Silver Hill Rd  
Suitland 20746-2863  
nmaiarchives@si.edu  
<http://nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/archive/>

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Biographical note.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	3

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Museum of the American Indian
<b>Title:</b>	Jim Pepper Sheet Music Collection
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAI.AC.062
<b>Date:</b>	1983-1984 1990
<b>Extent:</b>	0.5 Linear feet
<b>Creator:</b>	Pepper, Jim
<b>Language:</b>	In addition to English, the lyrics of two of Pepper's songs are written in two Siouan languages. Kansa in "Witchi-Tia-To" and Lakota in "Lakota Song".
<b>Summary:</b>	This collection includes a selection of handwritten and original sheet music written by Native jazz musician Jim Pepper (Kaw/Oklahoma Muskogee [Creek]).
<b>Container:</b>	Box 1

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The Jim Pepper sheet music collection was donated to NMAI in 2007 by Jim Pepper's mother, Floy Childers Pepper, his sister, Suzie Pepper Henry, and Suzie's son James Pepper Henry.

### Related Materials Note

Along with the original sheet music sent to the Archive Center, the National Museum of the American Indian received several objects from the Pepper family related to Jim Pepper's music career. These objects include Pepper's saxophone and can be found in NMAI's Modern and Contemporary Arts collection with object numbers 26/6293 through 26/6302. For more information on these objects please contact [NMAICollection@si.edu](mailto:NMAICollection@si.edu).

### Processing Information

Processed by Rachel Menyuk, Archives Technician in 2013.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Jim Pepper Sheet Music Collection, Box and Folder Number; National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions

Access to NMAI Archive Center collections is by appointment only, Monday - Friday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment (phone: 301-238-1400, email: [nmaiarchives@si.edu](mailto:nmaiarchives@si.edu)).

## Conditions Governing Use

Single photocopies may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish or broadcast materials from the collection must be requested from National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center. Please submit a written request to [nmaiarchives@si.edu](mailto:nmaiarchives@si.edu).

---

## Biographical

Jim Pepper was born in 1941 to an Oklahoma Muskogee (Creek) mother and Kaw father in Salem, Oregon. Early influences from his grandfather Ralph Pepper and his father Gilbert led Jim Pepper to learn traditional Kaw music at a young age. However, being raised in Portland exposed Pepper to the jazz of musicians like Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane leading to a fusion of jazz and traditional Native American music in Pepper's compositions. Pepper started playing saxophone at age 15 and moved to New York City in 1964 and played in the jazz rock group "Free Spirits." Pepper album, "Pepper's Pow-Wow" was produced in 1971 and included his first singing effort "Witchi-Tai-To" a peyote chant his grandfather used to sing. After spending several year in Alaska and San Francisco away from the music business, Pepper returned to New York City in 1982 and toured the United States and Europe with several groups including the Charlie Haden Liberation Music Orchestra, The Paul Motian Quintet and the Don Cherry Ensemble. Pepper also served as the Music Director for "Night of the First Americans" a benefit concert at the Kennedy Center that included both Native American performers and celebrity entertainers. In 1990 Pepper was the recipient of the "Mary Flagler Charitable Trust" grant. Under this grant Pepper composed 2 jazz songs, 2 scores for Symphony Orchestra and 2 scores for dance in the idiom of Native American music. Pepper died in 1992 of lymphoma in Portland Oregon. Pepper was posthumously granted the *Lifetime Musical Achievement Award* by First Americans in the Arts in 1999, and in 2000 he was inducted into the Native American Music Awards Hall of Fame.

---

## Scope and Contents

The Jim Pepper sheet music collection contains a selection of music composed and arranged by native American jazz musician Jim Pepper. This includes five out of the six compositions Jim Pepper was commissioned to create by the Fund for the Borough of Brooklyn through a grant awarded by the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust. These include jazz song "Reflections of Monk", orchestral arrangements "Remembrance" and "Four Winds" and dance scores "Dance #1" and "Feather Dance" all of which were written in 1990. Also included are handwritten copies two earlier compositions "Lakota Song", written in 1984, and a revised composition of "Witchi-Tai-To" from 1983. Additionally there is an undated orchestral arrangement of "Witchi-Tai-To" written by Pepper and orchestrated by Gordon Lee. Several copies of Pepper's business cards from his time touring Europe are also in this collection.

---

## Arrangement

The music in this collection is arranged alphabetically by song title.

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Arrangement (Music)  
Jazz  
Kaw (Kansa)  
Oklahoma Muskogee (Creek)

Cultures:

Kaw (Kansa)  
Oklahoma Muskogee (Creek)

Types of Materials:

Sheet music

Names:

Fund for the Borough of Brooklyn  
Lee, Gordon, 1953-