

THE SOUND ARCHIVIST



FEBRUARY 2019 | ISSUE 16 | VOL 1

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

STUDENT \$10
PROFESSIONAL \$15

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY



Thanks to your contributions, SeArch is able to host community events and foster a space for our local archivists!

Last year, your membership dues went to:

- Hosting a community archival event with Puget Sound Artist Brom Wikstrom.
- The first ever annual speed networking event.
- A tour of the Woodinville Historical Center,
- Social media hosting spaces and integration applications.
- Supporting the Digital Archives Specialist Workshop with the Labor Archives.

IN THIS ISSUE

Membership Renewal Campaign, page 1

Upcoming Steering Committee Elections, page 2

Search Spotlight: 45 Years of Digitized "Catholic Northwest Progressed", page 3

MIPoPs, Wing Luke, and the Northwest Asian American Theater Collection, page 4-7

Commemorating the Seattle General Strike of 1919, page 8-9

Upcoming Conferences, page 10

Get in Touch, page 10

Community Content

MIPOPS, WING LUKE, AND THE NORTHWEST ASIAN AMERICAN THEATER COLLECTION **BY ARI LAVIGNE, MIPOPS**

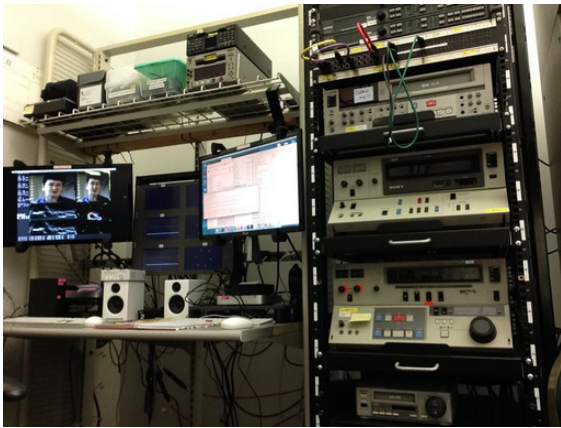
MIPoPS is excited to begin work digitizing the Northwest Asian American Theatre Collection in partnership with the Wing Luke Museum. This work is part of a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The project will see the digitization of around 100 videotapes related to the Northwest Asian American Theatre (NWAAT). Founded on the campus of the University of Washington by a group of Asian Pacific American (APA) students in 1974, NWAAT began as the Theatrical Ensemble of Asians, led by Stan Asisa, and a year later became an affiliation of the Asian Multi-Media Center, changing their name to Asian Exclusion Act. They presented plays throughout venues in King County, showcasing noted APA playwrights like Frank Chin and Wakako Yamauchi. (1)



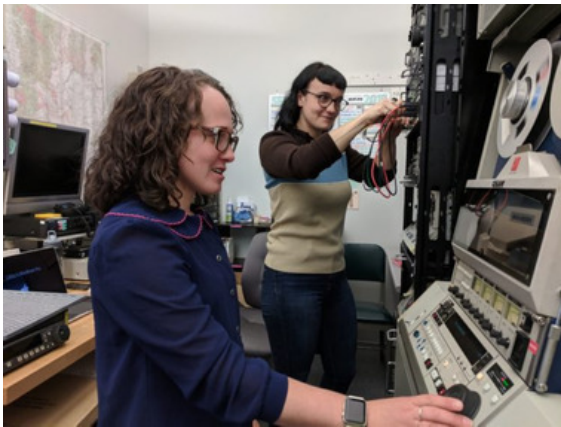
Kathy Hsieh and Tracey Fugami in "And the Soul Shall Dance", one of the performances being digitized by MIPoPS. From the Wing Luke Museum collection. Object ID 2008.002.090.019

(1) University of Washington, School of Drama. "Northwest Asian American Theatre" Seattle Theatres Lost and Founded. 8 Feb. 2016. Web. Retrieved from: <https://drama.washington.edu/events/20160208/seattletheatreslostfounded>

MIPOPS, WING LUKE, AND NWAAT, CONT.



The digitization station at MIPoPS, complete with a stack of video players for obsolete formats like U-Matic, Betacam, and more!



Libby Hopfauf, left, and Ari Lavigne are audiovisual archivists with Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound, or MIPoPS. (GeekWire Photo / Lisa Stiffler)



MIPoPS program manager Libby Hopfauf making adjustments to a tape during digitization. (GeekWire Photo / Lisa Stiffler)

To better reflect their APA identity and their community in the Pacific Northwest, in 1981 the theatre group became the Northwest Asian American Theatre. In 1987, they found their permanent home in Seattle's Chinatown International District at Theatre Off Jackson, attracting talent like David Henry Hwang and Elizabeth Wong. Considered to be "the godfather of Asian American theatre," former NWAAT board member and development director Roger W. Tang was "instrumental" in establishing Theatre Off Jackson. (2)

With a permanent stage, NWAAT was able to produce full seasons that included well established plays such as "The Wash" by Philip Kan Gotanda and children's theatre such as "Please Choose One" by Nancy Calos Nakano and Maria Decaney, which depicted conflicts multiracial youth often face. NWAAT was at the center of the performing world for APAs with support and appearances from stage actors like Leslie Ishii, Larry Wong, and Maria Batayola; writers like Carlos Bulosan, Frank Chin, and Gary Iwamoto; and technicians and designers like Silas Morse, Gilbert Wong, and Jan Locke.

Kathy Hsieh, playwright and founder of the Seattle-based Asian American women's production company, SIS Productions, got her start at NWAAT. NWAAT became an important cultural center for the large population of Asian Americans who called Seattle home. In May 1998, the "Asian American Theatre 16 Convening" conference was held in Seattle. At this conference, NWAAT invited Asian American writers, directors, playwrights, actors, and fans from across the country to discuss the legacy and future of Asian American theatre.

Unfortunately, after thirty years, dwindling resources forced the NWAAT to shut its doors in 2004.

(2) Hong, Terry. "What a Site!" A Magazine (August 1999). Retrieved from: <http://www.aatrevue.com/Old/AMag.html> 16
<http://www.bssve.in/StudyMaterials/MME014.pdf> (page 103) 17 Le, C.N. "Writers, Artists, & Entertainers" AsianNation: The Landscape of Asian American (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.asiannation.org/artist.shtml>

MIPOPS, WING LUKE, AND NWAAT, CONT.

The Northwest Asian American Theatre Collection will contribute to scholarship in the humanities in a multiplicity of disciplines. C.N. Lee, writing in 2016, describes the importance of Asian American theatre:

"When it comes to culture for any ethnic group, some of the most recognizable elements come in the form of art, literature, and entertainment. Asian American writers, artists, and entertainers have flourished over the years as they expressed their identity, creativity, talent and [their] community's experiences...Together, their works represent the interrelations, intricacies, and contradictions that make up Asian American culture." (3)



Screenshot from "Eye of the Coconut", written by Jeannie Barroga, directed by Bea Kiyohara, 1986. From the Wing Luke Museum's collection. Object ID 2008.002.091.019



Screenshot from "And The Soul Shall Dance", written by Wakako Yamauchi, 1993. From the Wing Luke Museum's collection. Object ID 2008.002.091.008

The plays recorded on the videotapes in this collection are valuable for the insight they provide into the history of the Pan Asian American experience in the Pacific Northwest. The performances contribute to scholarship on a multitude of topics including the International District in Seattle, immigration, race, class, and politics. Many publications document the study of Asian American art and the significant role Seattle has played in the Asian American art scene, historically and currently.



Screenshot from "To Drift", performed at A-Fest 1999, by Yoko Murao. From the Wing Luke Museum's collection. Object ID 2008.002.091.004

(3) Le, C.N. "Writers, Artists, & Entertainers" AsianNation: The Landscape of Asian American (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.asiannation.org/artist.shtml>

MIPOPS, WING LUKE, AND NWAAT, CONT.

Two prominent Seattle museums focus on its curation, preservation and exhibition—the Seattle Asian Art Museum and the Wing Luke Museum—and many others host exhibits featuring art by and about Asian Americans, including the Frye Museum, the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle Art Museum, and the Bellevue Art Museum. Seattle was the first to host the Asian American Spoken Word & Poetry Summit in 2001. The interest in this subject, coupled with the lack of resources, has created a high demand for materials to be made accessible.

Roger W. Tang (former board member of NWAAT) is the creator of Asian American Theatre Revue (www.aatrevue.com), the first online directory exclusively dedicated to documenting resources on Asian American theatre. Upon hearing about this grant proposal, Tang remarked (in an email): “I am tremendously pleased that a valuable piece of our history and heritage has a chance to be preserved to be handed down to generations coming after us. In talking with younger artists across the country, I constantly am told that it’s too bad that a lot of our early work is not available. If there’s a fighting chance that this can get done, there’ll be a lot of excitement not just in Seattle, but across the country, as NWAAT was, for the longest times, one of just five Asian American theatres keeping the flame alive.”



Screenshot from "A Peel", performed at A-Fest 1999, by Mew Chang Tsing. From the Wing Luke Museum's collection. Object ID 2008.002.091.005



Screenshot from "To Drift", performed at A-Fest 1999, by Yoko Murao. From the Wing Luke Museum's collection. Object ID 2008.002.091.004

ABOUT MIPOPS

Moving Image Preservation of Puget Sound is a non-profit formed in 2014 that enables archives, libraries, and museums, as well as arts, science and heritage organizations, to convert their legacy video recordings to digital formats, allowing new access to our region's cultural heritage. MIPoPS assists organizations that have documentaries, oral histories, art and dance video, public works video, industrial and educational video, "orphaned" films and other material on videotape.