

James Weldon Newton Jr. Collection



John F. Kennedy Memorial Library
California State University, Los Angeles

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James Weldon Newton Jr. was born on May 1, 1953 in Los Angeles, California. His father was a career Army soldier, and James traveled with his family. As a child, he spent five years in Germany where his father was stationed. Newton's early musical experiences were of African-American gospel music as a member of a Baptist Church. He listened to the urban blues, R & B, and gospel recordings his parents played. Newton, at 10 years old, began listening to the Beatles and Marvin Gaye. In 1965 at the age of 12, Newton sang and played electric bass guitar in a seven piece R & B band located in San Pedro. In 1968, he founded together with a guitarist a trio to play Jimi Hendrix and other rock music. He attended San Pedro High School which is now part of the Los Angeles Unified School District. At this time, Newton also learned to play Alto and tenor saxophone. In high school at the age of 16, he started to learn the flute by taking classical lessons. Within a year, Newton fell in love with the flute and also began taking lessons from jazz great Buddy Collette. Collette is a hero in the jazz world and his talent with the tenor saxophone, flute, and clarinet is almost unparalleled.

After high school, Newton enrolled at Mt. San Antonio College where he majored in music. Around this same time, he played flute and saxophone in a funk band. From 1973-75, he was a member of Stanley Crouch's group Black Music Infinity that played in and around Pomona, California. In addition to Crouch, the group included Arthur Blythe and David Murray as well as other young free jazz musicians. From Mt. SAC, Newton enrolled at California State University, Los Angeles and studied music there 1975 through 77. From 1977 forward, Mr. Newton focused his attention to the flute. After playing with Black Music Infinity, David Murray moved to New York in about 1976. A few years later in 1978, James Newton joined Murray in New York City where he lived on and off until 1980. In the late 1970s, Newton toured and recorded in Europe with David Murray. In New York, Newton played in a trio with Anthony Davis and Abdul Wadud. At this same time, he also played with Lester Bowie and Cecil Taylor. In the trio with Davis and Wadud, the group played contemporary jazz as well as compositions by Newton and David Murray.

After some interruptions, Mr. Newton earned his Bachelor of Music degree from California State University, Los Angeles on June 13, 1980. In 1982, Newton won his first *Downbeat* critics poll. For the next 22 consecutive years, he was voted top flutist in *Downbeat's* International Critic's poll. The year 1983 saw the release of his self titled album. Recorded by Gramavision, the album was noted in *Newsweek* as one of the best of 1983. In December of that year, James Newton performed at the Carnegie Recital Hall. First opened in 1891, Carnegie Hall is considered the premier classical music performance space in the United States. In 1985, James Newton began teaching at the California Institute of the Arts located in Valencia. At Cal Arts, he taught Jazz history, music composition, and jazz ensemble for seven school years.

He has made recordings not only as a soloist and composer but also as a group leader. In 1989, Mr. Newton toured as the leader of a quartet consisting of Michael Cain, Anthony Cox, and Billy Hart. In Germany, the quartet made a recording which was given the title If Love. Jon Jang, a Los Angeles native, and James Newton began playing together soon after the Germany recording session. This same year Mr. Newton released his first collection of transcriptions called The Improvising Flute. This book gives insight into improvisation; jazz rhythms and structure; and important chordal concepts. In addition, the music illustrates the contrasting rhythm and structure of classical and jazz flute. To give Newton more time to compose, the highly prestigious Guggenheim fellowship was awarded to him in 1992. Among the most notable past fellows have been Ansel Adams, Aaron Copland, Langston Hughes, Henry Kissinger, and Martha Graham. From 1992 to 2000, Newton was a Professor of Music at the University of California, Irvine. In the year 2000, James Newton returned to his alma mater. At the present, Mr. Newton is a Professor of Music at California State University, Los Angeles.

In February of 2001, Newton made international news when he sued the Beastie Boys in U.S. District court for copyright infringement. The Beastie Boys are a pioneering American punk rap band that started in 1981. The case worked its way through the courts and the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in 2004. The court found that the Beastie Boys did not appropriate “the overall essence or structure” of the composition such that the average audience would recognize Newton’s work. In February of 2001, James Newton was also named Musical Director and Conductor of the Luckman Jazz Orchestra at California State University, Los Angeles. Don Heckman, of the Los Angeles Times, describes the LJO as “one of the country’s finest musical organization.” In addition also in 2001, Newton collaborated with choreographer Donald McKayle on “Cross Roads,” a ballet performed by the Limón Dance Company. “Cross Roads,” which was tri-commissioned by the Luckman Fine Arts Complex, the University of Texas at Austin, and Jacob’s Pillow, where the work premiered, was also performed at the 2002 Winter Olympic Arts Festival in Utah, and subsequently had its West Coast première at the Luckman.

Newton’s composition “Wheel-Like Beryl Stone” for flute soloist, jazz orchestra and electronics, commissioned by Musica Oggi 2001, enjoyed a world première at Teatro Strehler in Milan, Italy in 2002, where Newton conducted and played as a flute soloist with the Orchestra Sinfonica D’Italia. The Italian festival tour also included performances with the Civica Big Band in Florence and Pescara. In 2002, Newton visited Cuba, where he participated in the IX Internacional de Musica Electroacustica at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes La Habana. With James Newton, the Luckman Jazz Orchestra has performed worldwide including concerts in São Paulo and Salvador, Brazil (December 2003). He is often described as a contemporary artist making elegant albums that reflect a wide variety of jazz and classical influences. Newton tries to push his instrument in new directions, making use of flutter-tonguing, birdlike effects, and parallel vocal-flute lines. James Newton is currently composing a Latin Mass for four soloists and chamber orchestra to be premiered in Austria at the Festwochen Gmunden. The scheduled premier for this work is the summer of 2006. Mr. Newton’s web site can be found at <http://www.jamesnewtonmusic.com>. James Newton currently lives in Covina, California with his family. This short biography was compiled from a wide variety of sources by David Sigler.

James Weldon Newton Jr. Collection

In cooperation with the College of Arts and Letters, the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library acquired the James Weldon Newton Jr. Collection in the spring of 2003. Through an agreement reached with Mr. Newton, the collection will to be housed in the Library for a period of 4 years. If need arises, this agreement can be shortened or lengthened. Researchers are welcome to study the more than 700 items in this rich collection. This collection includes photographs, concert programs, periodicals, original musical scores, sound recordings, and video recordings. This collection documents the life and work of one of today's most influential jazz musicians.

Part 1 Photographs

Section 1	Mamar Kassey	Items	
		1-19	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 2	Buddy Collette 2002 oral history project		
		20-26	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 3	Luckman Jazz Orchestra with James Weldon Newton Jr. conducting "Mainly Mingus" April 20, 2002		
		27-36	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 4	Jose Limon Dance Company welcome dinner April 2002		
		37-47	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 5	Internacional De Musica Electro -Acoustica March 2002		
		48-56	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 6	Orchestra Sinfonica D'Italia 2002		
		57-68	6 x 4 inch color photographs

Part 1 Photographs Continued

Section 7	Gao Hong and friends around the world 2002	Items 69-80	6 x 4 inch color photographs
Section 8	James Weldon Newton Jr. publicity photographs	81-85	8 x 10 inch black and white photographs
Section 9	James Weldon Newton Jr. performance photographs	86-103	5 1/4 x 3 5/8 inch 5 x 3 1/2 inch 5 x 7 inch 8 x 10 inch black and white photographs
Section 10	James Weldon Newton Jr. color concert photographs	104-162	3 1/2 x 5 inch 4 1/2 x 3 inch 6 x 4 inch 5 3/4 x 4 1/4 inch 7 1/4 x 5 inch 7 1/2 x 5 inch 8 x 10 inch color photographs

Part 2 Photographs

Section 11	Cuba March 2002	162.1-162.8 162.9-162.49	35 mm color negatives 4 x 6 inch color photographs
Section 12	Cuba March 2002	162.50-162.56 162.57-162.84	35 mm color negatives 4 x 6 inch color photographs

Part 2 Photographs Continued

Section 13	Gao Hong & Friends 2002	Items	
		162.85-162.92	35 mm color negatives
		162.93-162.136	4 x 6 inch color photographs
Section 14	James Weldon Newton Jr. 2002		
		162.137-162.144	4 x 6 inch color photographs
Section 15	James Weldon Newton Jr. 2002	Items	
		162.145-162.157	4 x 6 color photographs
Section 16	Kalan Tour L'orchestra Sintonica D' Italia 2002		
		162.158-162.165	35 mm color negatives
		162.166-162.217	4 x 6 inch color photographs
Section 17	Limon Ballet concert rehearsal		
		162.218-162.224	35 mm color negatives
		162.225-162.250	4 x 6 color photographs
Section 18	Limon Dance Company 2002 dinner		
		162.251-162.257	35 mm color negatives
		162.258-162.270	4 x 6 color photographs

Part 2 Photographs Continued

Section 19	Various Photographs	Items
	162.271	Large format color negative
	162.272-162.426	3 3/8 x 2 1/2 inch 8 x 10 inch 5 7/8 x 4 inch 4 7/8 x 3 1/2 inch 6 x 4 inch 5 x 3 1/2 inch 7 1/4 x 5 inch 4 1/2 x 3 1/2 inch 3 1/2 x 2 1/2 inch 6 1/2 x 4 1/2 inch 6 7/8 x 5 inch 7 x 3 1/2 inch 5 7/8 x 4 1/8 inch 8 1/4 x 3 15/16 inch Driver's license Color photographs Black and white photographs Post Cards
	162.427-162.428	Business Cards

Part 3 Photographs

Section 20	W/Mammar Kassey	Items
	162.429-162.435	35 mm color negatives
	162.436-162.451	4 x 6 inch color photographs
Section 21	W/Mammar Kassey	162.452-162.458 162.459-162.481
		35 mm color negatives 4 x 6 inch color photographs

Part 4 Concert Programs

160A	Cleveland Chamber Symphony 1998-99
161A	Le centre culturel franco nigéien de Niamey March 2000
162A	New York Flute Club March 29, 1992
163	Amérique: homage à Mr. Ellington 1997
164	Jazz notes de programme May 2000
165	James Newton Ensemble September 1996
166	Edward Wilkerson's shadow vignettes 1994
167	David Murray Big Band featuring James Weldon Newton Jr. 199?

Part 4 Concert Programs Continued

Items

- 168 San Francisco Contemporary Music
Players performs with amazing jazz flutist
James Newton January 19, 1999
- 169 Brown Bag Concerts 1998-99
- 170 Oberlin Jazz Ensemble December 12,
1998
- 171 Gospel Meets Jazz at the Brooklyn
Museum August 4-25, 1991
- 172 James Newton's tribute to Duke Ellington
June 19, 1990
- 173 Duke Ellington Centennial Celebration
April 29-30, 1999
- 174 Center for the Arts Yerba Buena Gardens.
December 1995
- 175 Luckman Fine Arts Complex 1997-98
- 176 New music for a new LA: Music from the
African-American heritage. July 21, 1996.
- 177 Contemporary Chamber Players.
May 30, 1996.
- 178 Beijing International Jazz Festival.
November 18-23, 1997.
- 179 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 180 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 181 Asian Improv Arts Awards Dinner
June 4, 1993
- 182 James Newton Jazz Club
at the Center.
May 5-6, 2000
- 183 James Newton Auditorio Blas Galindo.
August 23, 1997
- 184 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 185 Mainly Mingus. Luckman Jazz Orchestra.
April 20, 2002
- 186 Limón Dance Company. April 5-6, 2002.
- 186A Jazz Impressionism-Dances, Blues,
Ballads. Luckman Jazz Orchestra.
May 10, 2003.

Part 5 Concert Programs

- CP179 Guimarães Jazz 97
- CP180 Cité Musiques. Journal de la cite
musiques. April-May 2000.
- CP184 Vendredi. Juillet 1988.

Part 6 Publications

Items

- 187 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 188 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 189 Down Beat August 1981.
- 190 Coda Magazine Issue 185 1982
- 191 Hot House Volume 1 Issue 15 May 1983
- 192 Be-Bop and beyond July-August 1984
- 193 Musician Issue 76 February 1985
- 194 North Sea Jazz Festival July 1985
- 195 Be-Bop and beyond January-February 1985
- 196 Down beat December 1985
- 197 Musician March 1987
- 198 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 199 Glendale Symphony Orchestra May 1985
- 200 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 201 Empty Avery sheet protector.

Part 7 Publications

Items

- 202 Where New York July 1990
- 203 Down beat November 1991
- 204 Down beat December 1991
- 205 Down beat May 1992
- 206 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 207 Down beat August 1992
- 208 Down beat August 1994
- 209 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 210 Down beat February 1995
- 211 Windplayer Issue 58 July 1998
- 212 Reproduction of Musica Jazz April 1997
- 213 Photocopy of "Stretching the flute's boundaries" by Dan Quellette from Down beat June 1997
- 214 Photocopy of Cité Musiques October-November 1997
- 215 Photocopy of "Quel flauto magico di Newton" from IL Messaggero March 1, 1997
- 216 Photocopy of "A flute and Freedom" by Gene Seymour from Emerge November 1997.
- 217 Photocopy of "IL convegno annuale della S.I.S.M.A." by Antonio Berini

Part 7 Publications Continued

Items	
218	Photocopy of page 76-77 from Pulse! March 1995
219	Photocopy of Coda Magazine Issue 263 September-October 1995
220	Photocopy of "James Weldon Newton Jr.'s Suite Sounds" from Jazz Times May 1994
221	Photocopy of "Albums that were magic" from the Los Angeles Times December 31, 1994
222	Photocopy of "Fervor-filled flutist celebrates koncepts gallery anniversary" from the Oakland Tribune November 7, 1988
223	Photocopy of promotional handout for James Weldon Newton Jr. Concert at Carnegie Recital Hall December 3, 1983
224	Photocopy of a page from Jazziz annual collegiate guide
225	Photocopy of Jazz Times December 1997
226	Photocopy of the press release for the Compact Disk "Above is above all" by James Weldon Newton Jr. from Contour Records 1997
227	Photocopy of "A tribute to legacy of Mingus" by Don Heckman from the Los Angeles Times November 25, 2002
227.5	Cal State L.A. Today Winter 2003

Part 8 Publications

P187	Jazz Nu Issue 8 May 1979
P188	Jazz Journal International Volume 34 Issue 1 January 1981
P198	Jazz Podium Volume 36 issue 7 July 1987
P200	Jazz Times May 1990
P201	Jazz Times June 1990
P206	Jazz Fest '92 Berlin
P209	Pulse! Issue 129 August 1994

Part 9 Resume of James Weldon Newton Jr.

Part 10 Musical Scores

Items

- 228 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 229 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 230 "Après Rouenet Caen" by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 231 Bartok Dream by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 232 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 233 The Change by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 234 Choir by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 235 Crystal Text by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 236 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 237 Feeling by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 239 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 240 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 241 J.S. Esque by James Weldon Newton Jr. for solo flute
- 245 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 246 Luckman Fanfare by James Weldon Newton Jr.

Part 10 Musical Scores continued

Items

- 247 Nelson Mandela by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 247A Nelson Mandela by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 249 Olmecas by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 250 San Pedro Sketches Flute Quartet by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 251 Paul's Dream of Freedom by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 252 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 258 Today at midnight by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 260 Empty Avery sheet protector.
- 263 Forever Charles by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 264 Inbetwixt (Las Dos Fridas) by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- 265 Jessie and Nelson by James Weldon Newton Jr.

Part 11 Musical Scores

Items

- SC227 Across the river Jordan by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC236 Cross Roads Ballet by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC257 Symphony no. 1 1993-4 by James Weldon Newton Jr.

Part 12 Musical Scores

- SC235 Crystal Text by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC238 Gihon for solo violin by James Weldon Newton Jr. 1995 revised in 1999
- SC244 The line of immortality by James Weldon Newton Jr. May 1992
- SC 253 The song of freedom by James Weldon Newton Jr. 1998
- SC256 Symphony #1 for orchestra by James Weldon Newton Jr. 1993-94
- SC261 Violet by James Weldon Newton Jr. 1995

Part 13 Musical Scores

Items

- SC228 After you said yes by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC229 Vibraphone-Allessandra by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC232 Budapest by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC239 Intersection Fl. Quartet by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC240 Invisible Island by James Weldon Newton 1987
- SC243 Lake of Resolution by James Weldon Newton 1990
- SC245 Lone Hill by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC248 91ST Psalm by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC252 The preacher and the musician by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC255 The suffering servant II for tenor and Bassoon soloists with chamber orchestra 1998-99
- SC260 The Verdict by James Weldon Newton Jr.
- SC262 Across the river Jordan. Flute with Chamber orchestra. 1991
- SC266 String Quartet & flute by James Weldon Newton Jr.

Part 14 Sound Recordings

Items

- SR276 Luella by James Weldon Newton Jr. 1983
33 1/3 Lp recording
- SR277 Water mystery by James Weldon Newton
Jr. 1986 33 1/3 Lp recording
- SR278 Paseo Del Mar by James Weldon Newton
Jr. 1978 33 1/3 Lp recording
- SR279 The mystery school: music for wind
quintet. 1980 33 1/3 Lp recording
- SR282 James Newton Quintet. November 1983
1 sound tape reel , 7 1/2 ips, 2 track, stereo
part 1
- SR282.5 James Newton Quintet. November 1983
1 sound tape reel, 7 1/2 ips, 2 track, stereo
part 2

Part 15 Sound Recordings

Items

- 267 David Murray/James Newton Quintet.
By David Murray; James Weldon Newton
Jr. John Hicks; Fred Hopkins; Billy Hart;
and Andrew Cyrille. 1996.
1 digital recordable compact disk
- 268 Flutistry by Frank Wright. 1997.
1 digital compact disk.
- 269 Good to go with a tribute to Bu.
by Andrew Cyrille; James Weldon
Newton Jr. and Lisle Atkinson. 1997.
1 digital compact disk
- 270 Hidden Voices by Anthony Davis; James
Weldon Newton Jr. Rick Rozie;
Pheeroan Aklaff; and George Lewis.
1996. 1 digital compact disk.
- 271 Two flowers on a stem. By Jon Jang;
James Weldon Newton Jr, David Murray;
Chen Jiebing; Santi W Debriano; and
Billy Hart 1996. 1 digital compact disk.
- 272 Tiananmen! by Jon Jang. 1993.
1 digital compact disk

Part 15 Sound Recordings Continued

Items

- 280 Suite for Frida Kahlo by James Weldon Newton Jr.; George Lewis; George McMullen, trombonist.; Julie Febes; Pedro Eustache; Kei Akagi; Darek Oleszkiewickz; Son Ship Theus 1994. 1 digital compact disk.
- 281 BASF Chrome Extra II 90 minute recordable sound cassette tape. Side one ZMF 30 010790 Dolby B Moskaair Virtuoston. Side two ZMF 30 010730 Dolby B Moskaair Virtaasin
- 285 AMPEX 489 recordable ADAT (Alesis digital audio) tape S-VHS cassette tape August 8, 1997 Jon Jang & James Newton & company performance 2nd set

Part 16 Video Recordings.

Items

- 284 Maxell T-120 recordable VHS videocassette tape. James Newton Quintet. Suite for Frida Kahlo. San Pedro, California. September 1997.
- 286 Recordable VHS videocassette tape James Weldon Newton Jr. & Jon Jang interview Jo' Berg. September 19, 1994
- 287 TDK HS recordable VHS videocassette tape. Jon Jang and James Weldon Newton Jr. An African experience.
- 288 TDK EHG recordable VHS videocassette tape Eddie Moore '95 from Hi 8 master. James Weldon Newton Jr. Zaker Hussain, Dino Sawzzzi trio, Pws 2nd camera shots, interviews, and handler. Recorded in extended play. 2 hours 30 minutes. August 4, 1995
- 289 Sony T-120 recordable VHS videocassette tape. Archie Shepp and Kahil El'Zabars ritual trio. Southern Brothers.
- 290 3M T-30 recordable VHS videocassette tape with TDK paper cover. Jazz Set West: James Newton Quartet. 27 minutes.

Part 16 Video Recordings continued

Items

- 291 Recordable VHS videocassette tape with Kodak paper cover. Mt. Fuji Jazz Festival. First tow songs only. Capitol Records. Devlin Videoservice. August 16, 1989.
- 292 TDK HG L-750 recordable Beta Videocassette tape James Weldon Newton Jr. recorded on a Sony 501 PAL (Phase Alternating Line) machine.
- 293 Recordable DVD. Crossroads by James Weldon Newton Jr. April 2002 on loan to Mr. Newton

June 29, 2005