

Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection

Guides to Special Collections in the Music Division of the Library of Congress



Music Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2016

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/perform.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014572557>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.music/eadmus.mu016012>

Processed by the Music Division of the Library of Congress

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Music Division, 2016

Collection Summary

Title: Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection

Span Dates: 1983-1989

Call No.: ML31.H55.GV1794

Creator: Hill, Joan Armstrong

Extent: 11 items

Extent: 1 container

Extent: 0.5 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2014572557>

Summary: Joan Armstrong Hill, pianist for tap master Leon Collins (1922-1985), developed a notation system to record Collins's tap routines. The 11 self-published booklets explain the notation symbols and provide exercises and complete tap routines.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Banacos, Charlie, 1946-2009.

Collins, Leon.

Collins, Leon.

Hill, Joan Armstrong.

Hill, Joan Armstrong.

Subjects

Dance notation.

Dance--United States.

Jazz tap.

Tap dancing--Handbooks, manuals, etc.

Tap dancing.

Form/Genre

Scores.

Provenance

Gift; Rochelle S. Arkin; 1990.

Custodial History

This set of booklets was purchased from Joan Armstrong Hill by Rochelle S. Arkin and donated to the Library of Congress. Hill mailed the set of booklets directly to the Library of Congress Music Division on Apr. 13, 1990.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

The Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection was processed, and a finding aid was created and coded for EAD format by Libby Smigel in October 2016.

Other Repositories

The major source for archival information on tap dancing is the Gregory Hines Collection of American Tap Dance at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

For other systems of tap notation, nine notation scores for tap dance were discovered among the papers of American bandleader Ted Lewis, housed at the Ted Lewis Museum in Circleville, Ohio.

Related Material

Additional material relating to tap dancing can be found in the following collections in the Library of Congress Music Division: International Tap Association Archive; Alan M. and Sali Ann Kriegsman Collection. The Music Division created a searchable online resource on tap dancing titled [*Tap Dance in America: A Twentieth-Century Chronology of Tap Performance on Stage, Film, and Media*](#), based on research provided by Constance Valis Hill.

Copyright Status

Materials from the Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection are governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.) and other applicable international copyright laws.

Access and Restrictions

The Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection is open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Music Division prior to visiting in order to determine whether the desired materials will be available at that time.

Certain restrictions to use or copying of materials may apply.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Joan Armstrong Hill, a classically trained pianist, relocated from California to Boston to study jazz with pianist-composer-educator Charlie Banacos (1946-2009). In Boston, she became accompanist for the Star Steps Studio and dance company of master tap dancer Leon Collins (1922-1985), who is credited with developing a bebop-influenced jazz tap style. The Joan Hill notation system for tap dancing was devised by her to record Collins's tap routines, many of which are notated in the booklets of this collection. The Chicago Human Rhythm Project honored her with the JUBA Award in 2008.

Scope and Content Note

The Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection is composed of 11 self-published manuals titled "Jazz Tap: The Great American Art." Volume 1 introduces the notation system and provides the scores for introductory tap exercises. Volumes 2-11 record progressively more difficult tap sequences in complete routines.

Organization of the Joan Hill Tap Notation Collection

The Collection is organized in one series:

- [Handbooks and Manuals, 1983-1989](#)

Description of Series

Container

BOX 1

Series

Handbooks and Manuals, 1983-1989

“Jazz Tap: The Great American Art,” dated between 1983 and 1989. 11 self-published tap dance manuals, which notate dance routines with symbols on a music staff.

Arranged sequentially by volume number.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Handbooks and Manuals, 1983-1989 “Jazz Tap: The Great American Art,” dated between 1983 and 1989. 11 self-published tap dance manuals, which notate dance routines with symbols on a music staff. Arranged sequentially by volume number.
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Vol. 1, introductory explanations of notation system and exercises
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Vol. 2, Leon Collins Routine #1
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Vol. 3, “Harvard Special” by Leon Collins
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Vol. 4, “We Are Going to Harvard Now” and “Harvard Shim-Sham” by Leon Collins
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Vol. 5, Leon Collins Routine #2
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Vol. 6, Leon Collins Routine #3
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Vol. 7, Leon Collins Routine #1 and glossary
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Vol. 8, Leon Collins Routine #4
BOX-FOLDER 1/9	Vol. 9, Leon Collins Routine #2
BOX-FOLDER 1/10	Vol. 10, Leon Collins Routine #3
BOX-FOLDER 1/11	Vol. 11, “Tapapella” by Leon Collins and glossary