



Digitizing Dance Heritage: Community-Driven Innovations at the Cross- Cultural Dance Resources Collections

Shan Chuah

Land Acknowledgement

CCDR Collections at Arizona State University acknowledges that our institution's Tempe campus is situated on the ancestral lands of Indigenous people past, present, and future. We thank and honor the Native American tribes and sovereign nations of the Salt River Valley—including the Akimel O'odham, Onk Akimel O'odham, and Piipaash nations—whose knowledge and stewardship of the land and waterways allow us to be here now. In addition, we honor all 23 tribes in Arizona and their continued and many contributions today.

CCDR Collections History

From a Personal Collection to an Institutional Archive

Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts

ASU School of Music,
Dance and Theatre
Arizona State University

1981

Founding of CCDR in
Flagstaff, Arizona.

2000

National Recognition
as an 'American
Treasure'

2008

Transfer to Arizona
State University Begins

2015

New Curatorship and
Consolidation

2016

Completion of Transfer
to ASU

2024

New Leadership and
Expansion of Vision

Mission of CCCR

Promote holistic understanding and appreciation of the diversity and **significance of dance in cultural contexts**, through research, consultation, and public presentations that incorporate both humanities and arts

Provide a **“living museum”** where people may explore and discuss dance cultures in a welcoming atmosphere

Maintain a **library and archives** that support the mission

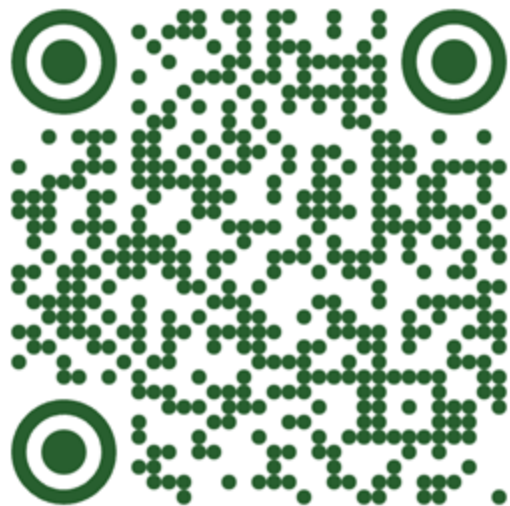
CCDR Collections at ASU

CCDR Special Collections
Library Catalog:

<https://hida.kohacatalog.com>

Digitized CCDR Collections
Media:

<https://ccdrcollections.omeka.net>



Curatorial Framework

1. **Ethical Stewardship** – Engaging source communities in decisions.
2. **Embodied Access** – Supporting movement-based engagement with collections.
3. **Relational curation**—Recognizing that the archive's value lies in its relationships with communities, artists, and scholars.



Women who shaped a Living Dance Archive

Foundational Collections

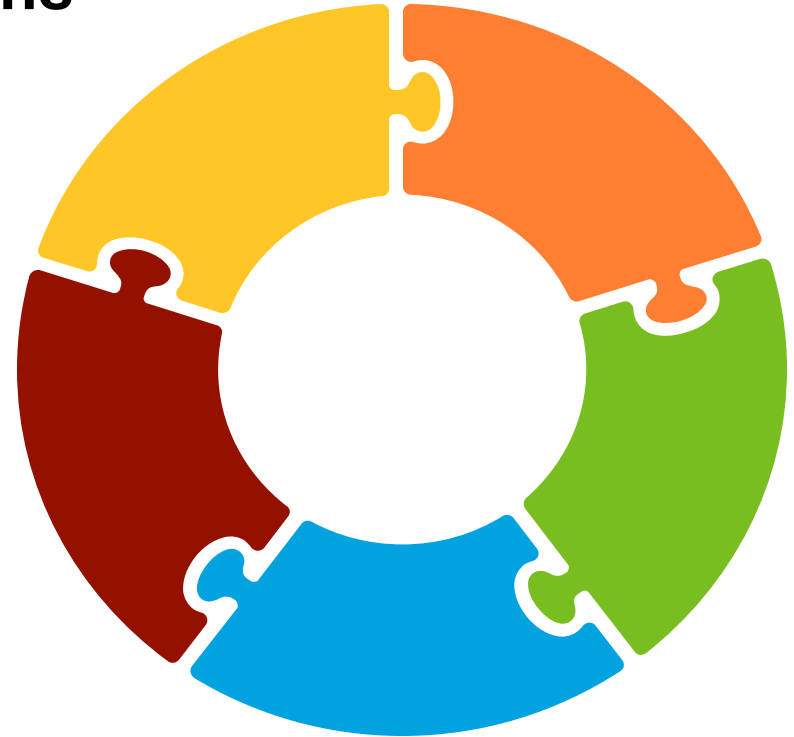
Gertrude Kurath

Eleanor King

Joann Keali'inohomoku

Allegra Fuller Snyder

Elsie Ivancich Dunin



Gertrude Kurath Collection



**Scan here for Kurath's
finding aid**

Field of Research: Ethnomusicology and
Ethnochoreology

Contributions:

- Co-authored with Indigenous collaborators
- Combined ethnomusicology and dance analysis
- Founded Dance Research Center in Michigan

Legacy: Pioneer of Indigenous dance research;
interdisciplinarity in dance and music

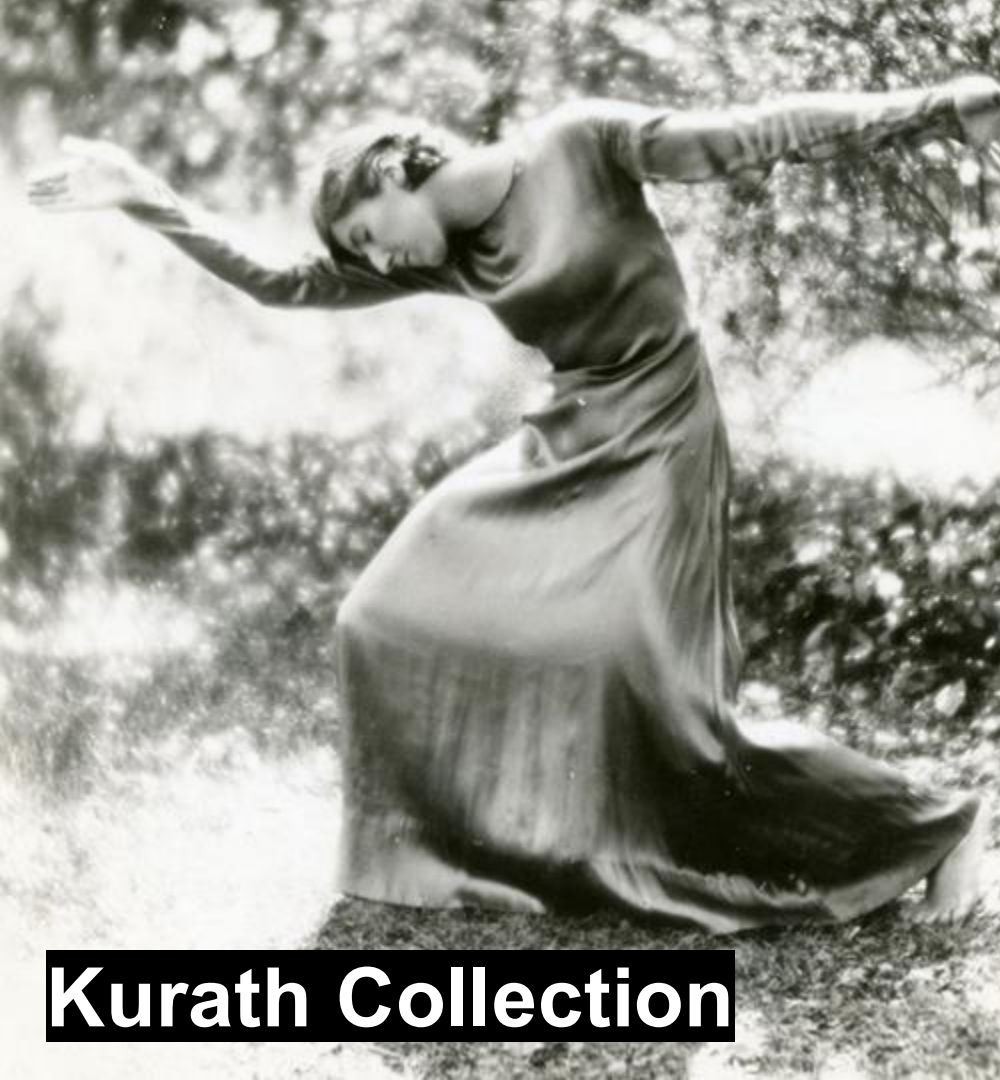
Key Publication:

Kurath, G. P. (1960). Panorama of Dance Ethnology.
Current Anthropology, 1(3), 233–254.



Source: Gertrude Kurath Collection
© CCDR Collections at ASU

**Gertrude Kurath (1903-
1992)**



Kurath Collection



Source: Gertrude Kurath Collection
© CCDC Collections at ASU

Ethical Stewardship

Rematriation of the Kurath Collection

In Fall 2024, CCCR welcomed Stephen Henhawk and Troy Richardson, both Indigenous scholars from Cornell University. Henhawk initiated a **rematriation process** in an act, described as “bringing the songs and dances home”.



TUTELO RITUALS ON SIX NATIONS RESERVE, ONTARIO

Gertrude Prokosch Kurath, G.P.



Special Series Editor: Stephen A. Wild

The Society for Ethnomusicology, Inc.
Special Series No. 5

1981

Source: Gertrude Kurath Collection
© CCDR Collections at ASU

Loquois Dances

i'du's

yo ne yo'one q de hp go'ne

ostowe'gowe'

ga'da'ot

ga'yo'wani no -

two'oeng

han yo ho

1: A A B C B (D B) C B 1



“Gertrude was looking at us as if we were people. She wasn’t there just to research and extract from us...she took different care in her notes...way more care to be so precise,” Stephen Henhawk.

Kurath Collection



Source: Gertrude Kurath Collection
© CCDD Collections at ASU



35. Gertrude Kurath (left)
with Carrie Logan
Hill (right) and
3 of Carrie's 13
female children
(2 boys not in photo)

Six Nations Reserve

Kathleen Victoria Eliza Hattie Veronica Betty Susan
Shagonaby Francis Kishigo Sagataw Kishigo Lou Shagon-
Seaman aby



Kurath Collection

Source: Gertrude Kurath Collection
© CCDD Collections at ASU



...The Place of Dance in Human Life

“Any dichotomy between ethnic dance and art dance dissolves if one regards dance ethnology, not as a description or reproduction of a particular kind of dance, but as **an approach toward**, and a **method of**, eliciting **the place of dance in human life** – in a word, as a branch of anthropology.”

Gertrude Prokosch Kurath, “Panorama of Dance Ethnology,”
Current Anthropology 1,3:233-254

Thank you! Questions?

E-mail: ccdrcollections@asu.edu

