

University of California, Santa Barbara  
Davidson Library  
Department of Special Collections  
Californian Ethnic and Multicultural Archives

**GUIDE TO THE  
GENNY LIM PAPERS  
1982-1997**

**Collection Number:** CEMA 34.

**Size Collection:** .83 linear feet (2 hollinger boxes).

**Acquisition Information:** Donated by Genny Lim, March 20, 1995.

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**Processing Information:** Principle processor Alexander Hauschild, 2007.

**Location:** Del Norte.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born into a Chinese-American family in 1946, Genny Lim has lived most of her life in San Francisco, with the exception of four years in New York City. Her diverse education began in 1974 with a certificate in broadcast journalism from Columbia University. In 1977 she received her B.A. in creative writing (and minor in theater arts) from San Francisco State University, and in 1988, her M.A. in English.

Lim has worked extensively in broadcast journalism, as a writer, reporter, producer and commentator. While in New York, she worked for CBS News as a broadcast associate (1972-73). Since then, Lim's work has expanded to include playwriting, poetry, music and teaching.

Growing up in the multicultural environment of San Francisco exposed Lim to many diverse issues and artistic styles. In addition, her family (in which she is the last of seven children) influenced her multifaceted interests. Living in Chinatown kept her rooted in Chinese culture, although her brothers and sisters introduced her to everything from Beatnik poetry to country and jazz music.

In the 1970's Lim's work began to focus on portraying Asian-American history and experience in the United States. Sparked by the discovery of historic calligraphic poems written by Chinese immigrants awaiting processing at the Angel Island immigrant detention center in San Francisco Bay, Lim and her fellow scholars published *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940*. The publication was an inspiration for Lim to venture into playwriting and her most famous play, *Paper Angels* premiered in 1980 at the Asian American Theater Company. In 1982, the New Federal Theatre in New York produced the play. That same year, Lim founded her own production company, Paper Angels Productions, and brought the play to the Chinese Cultural Center in San Francisco. *Paper Angels* was later filmed and appeared on PBS's AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE in July of 1985.

Lim is known for her two streams of theatre work, which have followed two extreme modes of production. Various theatrical institutions have produced her traditional scripts, however, her experimental work has been developed and produced mostly by Lim herself. Paper Angels Productions has since evolved into Theatre XX (the female chromosome), a small production-oriented company devoted to new concepts and seeking alternative ways to approach theatre. Lim's additional works include plays, multimedia and interdisciplinary performances, poetry, prose and music.

Lim currently continues to teach, and is the co-chair and core faculty of the Humanities Program at New College of California. She also continues her work as the commissioner of performance studies at New College, and of the San Francisco Arts board.

## SCOPE NOTE

The Genny Lim Papers are primarily arranged according to subject matter and date. **SERIES I: Personal and Biographical**, contains published interviews that have been arranged chronologically, press reviews for *Paper Angels* that have been removed from their original binding but left according to their primary arrangement, and a photograph of the artist. **SERIES II: Artist's Work** has been divided into two sub-series: Literary Work and Audio Visual Work. The first sub-series contain two manuscripts that have been removed from their original bindings and a contact list for the 1982 cast of *Paper Angels*. The second sub-series includes a photograph and program from *Paper Angels*, a poster announcing *La China Poblana* (a multimedia performance written and performed by Lim), video of *Paper Angels*, five audiocassettes of the artist's music, and one compact disc of music.

## CONTAINER LIST

### SERIES I: Personal and Biographical

Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	<i>Paper Angels</i> script version for New Federal Theatre, 1982
1	2	Interview with Genny Lim 1982
1	3	Her Story and History, Lydia Lowe, 1983
1	4	Re write, the Playwrights Foundation Newsletter, 1989
1	5	An Interview with Genny Lim by Nikki Louis, 1989
1	6	Koncepts Cultural Gallery, Inc. <i>Konceptualizations</i> . Oakland, CA:Koncepts
	7	Cultural Gallery, Inc. v.8 no. 3 1992

### SERIES II: Artist's Work

#### Literary Work

1	9-18	KCET production of <i>Paper Angels</i> final script 1985
1	19	<i>Paper Angels</i> for American Playhouse, 1985

#### Audio Visual Work

1		Publicity, Programs, and Photograph, 1982
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#### Video

VM0054/UM		
VM0055/UM		
VM0056/UM		
VM0057/UM		
VM0058/UM		<i>Paper Angels</i> , Departmental view copy

#### A4615/CS Mob Ecstasy, KPFA Radio, 02/01/1993, Part One

##### Side A

1. Tongue-Tied
2. The Light
3. Changing Woman
4. Song of A-Li Mountain

##### Side B

- (4. Continued Ali Mountain)
5. Winter Place
6. A Hip Invention
7. Only Language She Knows
8. Ark-chaology
9. Two Little Hands

#### A4616/CS: Mob Ecstasy, KPFA Radio, 02/01/1993, Part Two

##### Side A

1. Interview Part II
2. Mary, Mary
3. Empty Street
4. Who Are You?
5. Wildness of Women

##### Side B

- (5. Continued Wildness of Women)
6. Three Ships
7. Big Bang

8. Annunciation
9. Wonder Woman

**A4617/CS:** Mob Ecstasy, KPFA Radio, Genny Lim with Francis Wong and Herbie Lewis, 02/01/1993

Side A

1. Tonguetied
2. The Light
3. Changing Woman
4. Song of A-li Mountain
5. Winter Place
6. A Hip Invention
7. Only Language She Knows
8. Arkaeology
9. Two Little Hands

Side B

10. Mary, Mary
11. Empty Street
12. Who Are You?
13. Wildness of Women
14. Three Ships
15. Big Bang
16. Annunciation
17. Wonder Woman

**A4618/CS:** Sweet and Sour Shorts: KALW Broadcast, Genny Lim/Duc Nguyen, 01/20/1992  
30 minutes

**A4619/CS:** Sense Us (n.d.)  
Side A Only

**A4645/CD** **Compact Disc:** *Devotee*, Genny Lim, Francis Wong, Glen Horiuchi and Elliot Humberto  
Kavee

(1997).

1. La Chine Africaine
2. Devotee
3. Echo
4. Lament
5. Moon Over the Ganges
6. Life on the Ganges
7. Diaspora Tale