



Kevin Locke (Lakota name: Țokéya Inážiŋ, meaning "The First to Arise"; born 1954) is Lakota (Hunkpapa band) and Anishinaabe. He is a preeminent player of the Native American flute, a traditional storyteller, cultural ambassador, recording artist, fluent Lakota language and sign language speaker, and educator. He is most known for his hoop dance, The Hoop of Life.

Website: [www.kevinlocke.com](http://www.kevinlocke.com)

Born in 1954 in Southern California, at the age of five years Locke moved north with his family, later to settle in South Dakota on the Standing Rock Reservation in 1966. It was from his mother, Patricia Locke, his uncle Abraham End-of-Horn, mentor Joe Rock Boy, and many other elders and relatives that Kevin received training in the values, traditions and language of his native Sioux culture. He is frequently cited as an ambassador of Native American culture to the United States and the world.

Mr. Locke attended the Institute of American Indian Arts in New Mexico for high school and earned a master's degree in educational administration from the University of South Dakota. He taught himself to speak Lakota, his ancestral language, as a young adult. Mr. Locke learned the hoop dance, which had nearly died out, from Arlo Good Bear, a Mandan Hidatsa Indian from North Dakota. Since 1978, he has traveled to more than 90 countries to perform and is continuing to perform abroad most recently as July 2018, Malaysia Rainforest Festival, 9<sup>th</sup> International Sefika Kutluer Festival: East Meets West in Ankara Turkey (December 2018) and Arte Dule Indigenous Festival in Panama City, Panama (February 2019).

Locke has served as cultural ambassador for the United States Information Service since 1980, was a delegate to the 1992 Earth Summit in Brazil and was a featured performer and speaker at the 1996 United Nations Habitat II Conference in Turkey. He has recorded albums beginning in 1982, and is an active member of the Bahá'í Faith. In 1990, he won a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, the highest award granted to such traditional artists. In 2009 he won the \$100,000 Bush Foundation Award. Mr. Locke is on the advisory board of the World Flute Society. In 2018, he founded the Patricia Locke Foundation named after his late mother Patricia Ann Locke with the mission to provide educational opportunities for underserved children and youth. Mr. Locke uses folk arts to emphasize universal themes that are integral to all peoples. Universality of human spirit, its inclination towards peace, balance, harmony, and a longing that all human beings have for the Divine Springtime are a few central themes that he displays in his hoop dance, which is essentially a prayer for the unification of all mankind. Using his folk arts as a vehicle, Locke shares this prayer with children and adult alike ranging from 50 to 55,000 people at a time. Even though he has performed in many prestigious venues to innumerable dignitaries such as Nelson Mandela and Dalai Lama, his favorite audience continues to be children and youth. Mr. Locke comes from a distinguished family. His great-great-grandfather was the famous Dakota patriot, Little Crow. His great-grandmother, Mniyáta Ožáŋžaŋ Wiŋ, was a renowned medicine woman. His mother, Patricia Locke, was an activist for Indian rights and recognition. When recently asked about his mission in life he said: "All of the people have the same impulses, spirits, and goals. Through my music and dance, I want to create a positive awareness of oneness of humanity."

## Awards & Honors

Bush Foundation Fellowship (1988)

National Heritage Fellow awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts (1990)

Featured Performer and Speaker at the United Nations Habitat II Conference (1996)

Native American Music Award Best Traditional Recording (The First Flute, 1999)

Bush Foundation: Enduring Vision Award (2009)

Native American Music Award: Album of the Year (Earth Gift, 2009)

Independent Music Award Vox Pop World Traditional Album Winner (First Lightning, 2009)

Living Indian Treasure awarded by the Governor of South Dakota (2013)

National Storytelling Network Circle of Excellence Award (2013)

Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation USArtist International Awardee (2017, 2018)

South Dakota Arts Council Touring Artist Roster for the last 40 years

First Peoples Fund Cultural Capital Fellow, 2019

## Selected Recordings

Dream Catcher (July 13, 1993)

Keepers of the Dream (June 27, 1995)

Love Songs of the Lakota (September 29, 1995)

The Flood and Other Lakota Stories (The Parabola Storytime Series) Harper Audio (March 1996)

The Flash in the Mirror (April 2, 1996)

Open Circle (Oct 15, 1996)

The First Flute (July 27, 1999)

Midnight Strong Heart (January 1, 2003)

Earth Gift (January 1, 2009)

### Selected Publications

Lakota Hoop Dancer, with Suzanne Haldane and Jacqueline Left Hand Bull, Dutton Juvenile; 1st edition (May 1, 1999).

Real Dakota!: About Dakota by Dakotans!: The life, people & history of the Dakotas by the people who know and love it! by Kevin Locke, Tempe, AZ : Blue Bird Pub., 1988.

Dawn Flight: A Lakota Story by Kevin Locke, Medicine Wheel Education Pub., 2018

Arising, Kevin Locke, Kim Douglas, Aleah Douglas Khavari, Baha'i Publishing Trust, 2018

### Films

Songkeepers (1999, 48 min.). Directed by Bob Hercules and Bob Jackson. Produced by Dan King. Lake Forest, Illinois: America's Flute Productions. Five distinguished traditional flute artists - Tom Mauchahty-Ware, Sonny Nevaquaya, R. Carlos Nakai, Hawk Littlejohn, Kevin Locke – talk about their instrument and their songs and the role of the flute and its music in their tribes.