

Preston Scott
Curator, *Circus Arts*
Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Preston Scott is curator at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, where he develops public programs, including festivals and exhibitions. Scott is currently curating the 2017 Smithsonian Folklife Festival program *Circus Arts*. In 2014, Scott curated the *Kenya: Mambo Poa* program.

Scott began working at the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in 2004 as curator of the Festival's *Bhutan: Land of the Thunder Dragon* program (2008), which was then the largest and most comprehensive presentation of Bhutanese life and culture ever hosted outside the remote Himalayan kingdom. Scott has continued his involvement with Bhutanese culture, working closely with the Kingdom of Bhutan on specialized environmental and cultural projects, including production of the first opera in Bhutan in 2013.

A lawyer by training, for much of his career Scott specialized in developing collaborative institutional arrangements relevant to biological resource conservation and cooperative research initiatives. In this capacity, he has participated in biodiversity access and benefit-sharing negotiations, related workshops and development of cooperative scientific research project initiatives in more than thirty countries on five continents.

Scott is fond of saying that conceptualization and organization of Smithsonian Folklife Festival programs reflect a repurposing of the very same out-of-the-box skills of research, negotiation, and complex project development that typically involve many diverse people, ideas, and places. He received both his J.D. and bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia, completing his studies in 1980.