

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Shirley Kinsey

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Kinsey, Shirley
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey,
Dates:	December 18, 2013
Bulk Dates:	2013
Physical Description:	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:11:39).
Abstract:	Art collector, educator, and Shirley Kinsey (1946 -) and her husband, Bernard Kinsey, were the owners and curators of an extensive collection of African American art, books and manuscripts. She coauthored <i>The Kinsey Collection: Shared Treasures of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey</i> , which was a companion book to the exhibit of the same name. Kinsey was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 18, 2013, in Pacific Palisades, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_340
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Art collector and educator Shirley Pooler Kinsey was born on February 7, 1946 in Lake City, Florida to Erma and Eddie Pooler. She grew up in St. Augustine, Florida, and was raised by her paternal grandmother, Susie Plummer Pooler. Kinsey attended the Richard J. Murray High School, where she was valedictorian of her graduating class. She then went on to attend Florida A&M University, where she married her husband, Bernard Kinsey, and graduated in 1967 with her B.A. degree in English.

Upon graduation, Kinsey moved to California, where she was hired as an elementary school teacher for the Compton Unified School District. Then, from 1973 until 1982, Kinsey worked as a trainer and training manager for Xerox Corporation. She also went on to receive her M.A. degree in multi-cultural education from Pepperdine University in 1976. From 1985 to 1995, Kinsey served as a project manager for KBK Enterprises, Inc., a real estate development firm. Kinsey and her husband are known for their collection of African American art, books and manuscripts that document and tell the story of African American triumphs and struggles from 1604 to the present. Their exhibit, entitled “The Kinsey collection: Shared Treasures of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey – Where Art and History Intersect,” has been on national tour since 2006, and has been on exhibit in fourteen museums, including the Smithsonian National Museum of American History and Epcot at Walt Disney World. In 2009, Kinsey, with her husband, co-authored *The Kinsey Collection: Shared Treasures of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey*, a companion book to their exhibit, which was adopted by the Florida Department of Education as part of their African American history curriculum for grades K-12 statewide.

In 2008, Kinsey co-founded the Bernard and Shirley Kinsey Foundation for the Arts and Education to promote education and understanding of African American history and culture through the exhibition of their personal treasures. Additionally, she has helped raise over twenty-two million dollars for charitable and educational

institutions, including Florida A&M University. Kinsey has also received numerous awards, including the Spelman Alumni Humanitarian Award, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Florida A&M University, and a Living Legend Award from ESPN.

Kinsey resides with her husband and son in Pacific Palisades, California.

Shirley P. Kinsey was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on December 18, 2013.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Shirley Kinsey was conducted by Larry Crowe on December 18, 2013, in Pacific Palisades, California, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Art collector, educator, and Shirley Kinsey (1946 -) and her husband, Bernard Kinsey, were the owners and curators of an extensive collection of African American art, books and manuscripts. She coauthored *The Kinsey Collection: Shared Treasures of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey*, which was a companion book to the exhibit of the same name.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Kinsey, Shirley

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Kinsey, Shirley--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Art Collector

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, December 18, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_001, TRT: 1:28:21 ?

Shirley Kinsey was born on February 7, 1946 in Lake City, Florida to Erma Lee Lofton Pooler and Eddie Pooler. Her mother was born in Lake City, and was raised by relatives after being orphaned at a young age. Kinsey's father grew up on a farm in the area, where he lived with his mother, Susie Plummer Pooler. Kinsey's parents met at Richardson High School, and married after graduating. Kinsey was the only child born to her mother, who died in 1948. In 1950, she moved with her father and paternal grandmother to St. Augustine, Florida, where her father found work on the railroad. He was often away from the home, so Kinsey was primarily reared by her paternal grandmother. They attended the St. Luke A.M.E. Church and often spent time with Kinsey's paternal cousin. When Kinsey was four years old, she enrolled at the West Augustine School No. 6, where her uncle was the principal. Her father later remarried and moved to Orlando, Florida, while Kinsey remained in St. Augustine.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_002, TRT: 2:28:12 ?

Shirley Kinsey attended the all-black West Augustine School No. 6 in St. Augustine, Florida. The school was later renamed Webster Elementary School in memory of Kinsey's paternal uncle, Principal James Webster. At this point, she talks about her uncle's acquaintance with Jacob Lawrence and Zora Neale Hurston. Kinsey completed the sixth grade at the Excelsior School, and then enrolled at Richard J. Murray High School, where she served as the head majorette and student council president. She was mentored by her English teacher and guidance counselor, Rosalie Gordon-Mills, who encouraged her to study pharmacy at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. Gordon-Mills helped Kinsey obtain a scholarship, and brought her to visit the campus in Tallahassee, Florida. Kinsey graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in 1963, and was sent to live with her aunt in North Carolina during the summer. She became involved in the Civil Rights Movement after arriving on campus in Tallahassee.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_003, TRT: 3:29:16 ?

Shirley Kinsey studied English at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee, Florida. During her freshman year, she was arrested for demonstrating against the segregation of Tallahassee's State Theatre. She was held for three days, and was relocated to a work camp when the jail became overcrowded. During that time, she met Bernard Kinsey. Kinsey went on to teach at the Head Start summer program in St. Augustine, Florida, and became the first black teacher at St. Augustine's Evelyn Hamblen School in 1966. She married Bernard Kinsey in 1967. That year, he was hired to work at Humble Oil and Refining Company in Los Angeles, California. A few months later, Kinsey joined him on the West Coast. She worked as a substitute teacher in Compton, California, and then earned her state teaching license and became an elementary school teacher. During this time, Kinsey and her husband traveled frequently and began collecting art.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_004, TRT: 4:28:43 ?

Shirley Kinsey and her husband, Bernard Kinsey, traveled frequently during the first ten years of their marriage. They used his salary for living expenses, and saved her income for trips to national parks and foreign countries. Kinsey and her husband initially collected Hopi and Navajo art, including kachina dolls. In 1976, the 'Roots' miniseries aired on television, and Kinsey's son was born. Both of these events influenced her interest in African American history. She and her husband began their African American collection with the purchase of

several paintings by Ernie Barnes, and later began collecting historic documents. In 1972, Kinsey moved to San Francisco, California, where her husband joined the Xerox Corporation. They moved several times for her husband's promotions. As a result, Kinsey became familiar with the real estate market in California, and began renovating and selling homes. In 1982, her husband left the Xerox Corporation to focus on their real estate business, KBK Enterprises, Inc.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_005, TRT: 5:30:24 ?

Shirley Kinsey and her husband hosted their first art show in 1987. They featured the sculptor Ed Dwight, and later organized exhibitions for artists Jonathan Green, Bill Dallas and Phoebe Beasley. They also hosted fundraisers for Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and dinner parties honoring Rosa Parks and Mayor Tom Bradley. After Kinsey was featured in the Los Angeles Times, she was asked to lend her art collection to the California African American Museum. The collection went on to be featured at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the DuSable Museum of African American History, the Norton Museum of Art and the National Museum of American History. In 2010, Kinsey and her husband created a digital exhibition of the Kinsey Collection for Black History Month. They also authored an exhibition catalog titled 'The Kinsey African American Art and History Collection.' In 2013, Kinsey secured funding from Wells Fargo and Company to mount the exhibit at three more African American museums.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_006, TRT: 6:30:51 ?

Shirley Kinsey's son, Khalil Kinsey, helped bring the Kinsey African American Art and History Collection to several museum spaces, including the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. At the time of the interview, the resort was hosting a number of historic pieces from the collection. The exhibit included an audio tour voiced by famous African Americans. At this point in the interview, Kinsey reflects upon her career as a collector, and describes her favorite pieces in the collection. She also talks about her plans for the future, including the possibility of filming a documentary about the Kinsey African American Art and History Collection. Kinsey describes her advice for young people and her hopes and concerns for the African American community. She reflects upon her life and legacy, and concludes the interview by describing how she would like to be remembered.

Video Oral History Interview with Shirley Kinsey, Section A2013_340_001_007, TRT: 7:15:52 ?

Shirley Kinsey narrates her photographs.