



Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Etu Evans

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Evans, Etu
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans,
Dates:	August 30, 2007
Bulk Dates:	2007
Physical Description:	5 Betacam SP videocassettes (2:08:48).
Abstract:	Fashion designer and fashion entrepreneur Etu Evans (1969 -) has designed shoes for celebrities including Erykah Badu, Halle Berry and Beyonce Knowles. He is also the founder of the Solesville Foundation. Evans was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 30, 2007, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2007_243
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Fashion designer and entrepreneur Etu Evans was born on February 2, 1969 in Orangeburg, South Carolina though he spent much of his youth with his family in Harlem and Queens, New York. His mother Rosa was an educator, who helped Evans overcome a learning disability and eventually excel in school. Evans started his first business, in flower arranging, at the age of six. By the time he was thirteen, he began showing interest in fashion and interior design. Evans attended South Carolina State University, where he graduated cum laude with a degree in social work in 1992.

Evans established the design company Etu Evans, LLC in 1993, focusing on jewelry and hats. However, he continued a career outside of fashion and in 1996, earned his M.S. degree in applied behavioral science from Columbia University, graduating with a 4.0 GPA. Evans moved to Europe, where he worked in Italy and France as a behavioral therapist. In a chance meeting on the streets of Paris, Evans met the publicist for Gucci, and decided to leave his job in order to focus on design.

The scope of Etu Evans, LLC has broadened to include accessories and, especially, shoes. Evans became known for his fashion forward footwear designs, which have been worn by celebrities including Tyra Banks, Halle Berry, Erykah Badu, Queen Latifah, Beyoncé Knowles, Danny Glover and Chris Tucker. His work has been featured at New York's Fashion Week and covered in a broad range of international fashion magazines.

In 1998, Evans founded the Solesville Foundation. This organization collects, repairs, and redistributes new and used shoes and is frequently cited for the effectiveness it demonstrated during the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans, Louisiana. Solesville also coordinated a youth AIDS walk and a shoe repair apprenticeship program for underprivileged youth. Evans's philanthropic efforts have earned him the Burger King Everyday

Heroes National Campaign Honor and the “Citizen of the Year” award from his fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and the National Association of Social Workers. Etu was also chosen by "Ebony" magazine as one of its “30 Leaders of the Future.” Etu Evans was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 30, 2007.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Etu Evans was conducted by Adrienne Jones on August 30, 2007, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 5 Betacam SP videocassettes. Fashion designer and fashion entrepreneur Etu Evans (1969 -) has designed shoes for celebrities including Erykah Badu, Halle Berry and Beyonce Knowles. He is also the founder of the Solesville Foundation.

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:

Etu Evans

Jones, Adrienne (Interviewer)

Burghelea, Neculai (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Etu Evans--Interviews

African American fashion designers--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Etu Evans, LLC

Solesville Foundation

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

StyleMakers

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 Etu Evans, August 30, 2007. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 8/8/2011 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, August 30, 2007

Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans, Section A2007_243_001_001, TRT: 0:30:22
2007/08/30

Etu Evans lists his five favorites and discusses his childhood. As a child, he helped his mother and grandmother select shoes to wear for church. His interest in design flourished. He would deconstruct his grandfather's shoes and rebuild them to make them more versatile. He did not do well in elementary school and was punished by his teachers. Evans describes how his grandmother, seeing his potential, pushed him to work hard on his studies so that he could become as knowledgeable and articulate as possible. Noticing his aptitude for entrepreneurship, his grandmother baked him small, individual cakes to sell around the neighborhood.

African American children--South Carolina.

African American families--South Carolina.

African American students--Education (Elementary).

Shoes--Design.

African American grandmothers--South Carolina.

Grandparent and child--South Carolina.

Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans, Section A2007_243_001_002, TRT: 0:29:42
2007/08/30

Etu Evans recounts his experiences at Brookdale Middle School in Orangeburg, South Carolina. Evans struggled with being labeled as learning disabled. In high school at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School, he became interested in science and began winning awards in science fairs. Evans remembers designing floral arrangements to make money while he was in high school. After graduating from high school in 1988, Evans enrolled at South Carolina State University, one of the Historically Black Colleges Universities (HBCU).

African American high school students--South Carolina.

African American children--Elementary (Secondary).

Learning disabilities.

South Carolina State University--Students.

Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans, Section A2007_243_001_003, TRT: 0:29:30
2007/08/30

Etu Evans recounts his education and his move to New York, New York. In 1992, he graduated from South Carolina State University, in Orangeburg, South Carolina with a B.A. degree in social work. He started his fashion company, Etu Evans LLC which designs accessories and shoes. He moved to New York, New York to introduce his designs to a larger audience and he created his own public relations firm to advertise to celebrities. He decided to continue a career outside of fashion design attending Columbia University. Evan recalls graduating from Columbia University in 1996 with a M.S. degree in applied behavioral science and starting a career as a behavioral therapist. Several years later, he decided to refocus on shoe design and returned to school. In 2000, Evans received his A.A. degree in fashion design from the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, New York.

African Americans--Social work and counselling.

African American students-Columbia University.

African Americans--Fashion designers--New York (State)--New York.

Orangeburg County (S.C.).

Fashion Institute of Technology (New York, N.Y.).

Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans, Section A2007_243_001_004, TRT: 0:30:45
2007/08/30

Etu Evans describes his career and personal achievements. Evans completed shoe design coursework at Parsons The New School of Design. Switching gears again, Evans moved to Europe to work as a private behavioral therapist. After returning to the United States, Evans refocused on his fashion business as well as opening several nonprofit foundations. Evans talks about his foundation, Solesville, which refurbished shoes for people suffering economic hardships who were searching for better employment. Evans developed his own show line which he debuted in high-end department stores such as Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus, and Saks Fifth Avenue.

African American fashion designers--New York (State)--New York.

African Americans--Charities.

African Americans--Behavioral therapy--Europe.

Parsons the New School for Design.

Bergdorf Goodman.

Neiman-Marcus.

Saks Incorporated.

Video Oral History Interview with Etu Evans, Section A2007_243_001_005, TRT: 0:08:29
2007/08/30

Etu Evans describes what he wishes his legacy to be. He hopes to leave a stamp of greatness on society, and that he is remembered as someone who has made a difference. Evans also narrates family photographs.

Social values--United States.