Overview of the Collection

Repository:  The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com

Creator: Salaam, Kalamu ya, 1947-

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Kalamu ya Salaam,

Dates: November 14, 2002

Bulk Dates: 2002

Physical Description: 4 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:03:20).

Abstract: Poet and music critic Kalamu ya Salaam (1947 - ) was born Val Ferdinand III. He founded BLACKARTSOUTH and Ahidiana Work Study Center. He is senior partner of Bright Moments, a public relations firm. He is also the founder of WordBand, a poetry performance group; the NOMMO Literary Society; and Runagate Press. Salaam has written seven books of poetry. Salaam was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 14, 2002, in New Orleans, Louisiana. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2002_205

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Poet, editor, music producer and arts administrator, Kalamu ya Salaam was born Val Ferdinand III in New Orleans on March 24, 1947. Inspired by the poetry of Langston Hughes and the civil rights movement in New Orleans, Salaam became interested in writing and organizing for social change. Graduating from high school in 1964, he joined the U.S. Army and served in Korea. After service, Salaam attended Carleton College but returned to New Orleans in 1968 to earn an
Salaam attended Carleton College but returned to New Orleans in 1968 to earn an associate's degree from Delgado College.

During the Black Arts Movement, Salaam was a member of John O'Neal's Free Southern Theater for five years and was a founder of BLACKARTSOUTH. Changing his name along the way to Kalamu Ya Salaam, which is Kiswahili for "pen of peace," he was a founder of Ahidiana Work Study Center. He also assumed the editorship of the Black Collegian magazine, a post he held from 1970 to 1983. Salaam published cultural and political essays in Black World, Black Scholar and Black Books Bulletin. In 1977, he was part of the first African American activist delegation to the People's Republic of China.

Today, he is senior partner of Bright Moments, a public relations firm. He is also the founder of WordBand, a poetry performance group; the NOMMO Literary Society, and Runagate Press. Salaam has written seven books of poetry. His play, "The Breath of Life", was honored by Louisiana State University, and "BLK Love Song #1" won a Best of Fringe Award from The Manchester Evening News in England. A respected music writer and critic, he is the arts and entertainment editor for The New Orleans Tribune and is a regular contributor to Wavelength, The Louisiana Weekly and The New Orleans Music Magazine. He was executive director of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival for many years, and produced "A NATION OF POETS" for the National Black Arts Festival. Selected Bibliography


------Tarzan Can - Not Return to Africa But I Can (1996)


Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Kalamu ya Salaam was conducted by Larry
This life oral history interview with Kalamu ya Salaam was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 14, 2002, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Poet and music critic Kalamu ya Salaam (1947 - ) was born Val Ferdinand III. He founded BLACKARTSOUTH and Ahidiana Work Study Center. He is senior partner of Bright Moments, a public relations firm. He is also the founder of WordBand, a poetry performance group; the NOMMO Literary Society; and Runagate Press. Salaam has written seven books of poetry.

**Restrictions**

**Restrictions on Access**

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**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:**

Salaam, Kalamu ya, 1947-
Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Salaam, Kalamu ya, 1947- --Interviews

African American poets--Interviews

Music critics--Interviews

Periodical editors--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Poet

Music Critic

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers|MusicMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History