

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carmen Lundy

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Lundy, Carmen
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy,
Dates:	November 12, 2014
Bulk Dates:	2014
Physical Description:	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:33:00).
Abstract:	Jazz singer Carmen Lundy (1954 -) has recorded fourteen albums and published over 100 songs. She has also acted on stage and is an exhibited painter and co-founder of Afrasia Productions. Lundy was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 12, 2014, in Woodland Hills, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2014_256
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Jazz singer, arranger and composer Carmen Lundy was born on November 1, 1954 in Miami, Florida. Her mother, Oveida, was the lead singer in a gospel group; her younger brother, Curtis Lundy, is a jazz bassist. Inspired by those around her, Lundy began playing the piano at age six, and started singing in her church choir at age twelve. She went on to attend the University of Miami, where she received her B.M. degree in studio music and jazz.

At the age of sixteen, Lundy began her professional career in Miami, then moved to New York City in 1978 where she worked with numerous Jazz veterans. The following year, she made her first appearance on an album with a group called Jasmine; and, in 1980, formed her own group, performing with pianists John Hicks and Onaje Gumbs. In 1985, Lundy released her first solo album, entitled *Good Morning Kiss*, which remained at the #3 spot on Billboard's Jazz Chart for twenty-three weeks. Subsequent records included *Night and Day*, *Self Portrait*, *Old Devil Moon*, *This Is Carmen Lundy*, *Jazz and the New Songbook: Live at the Madrid*, *Come Home*, *Solamente*, *Changes*, and *Soul To Soul*, among others. In all, Lundy has released fourteen albums and has published over 100 songs. Her compositions have been recorded by such artists as Kenny Barron, Ernie Watts, Terri Lyne Carrington, and Regina Carter. In addition, Lundy and producer Elisabeth Oei launched the Afrasia Productions music label in 2005.

Lundy has taught master classes throughout the world, including Australia, Denmark, Russia, Japan, Switzerland, New York and Los Angeles, California, and at the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, and for the Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead Program at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In addition to being a multi-instrumentalist, she has acted and played the lead role in Duke Ellington's Broadway musical, *Sophisticated Ladies*, and portrayed Billie Holiday in Lawrence Holder's *They Were All Gardenias*. Lundy is also a mixed media artist and painter, and her works have been exhibited in New York at The Jazz Gallery, and at The Jazz Bakery and Madrid Theatre in Los Angeles, California.

Throughout her career, Lundy's music has been critically acclaimed by *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Variety*, *The Washington Post*, *Jazz Times*, *Jazziz*, *Downbeat* and *Vanity Fair* among many others. Miami-Dade County Office of the Mayor and Board of County Commissioners proclaimed January 25th "Carmen Lundy Day" and she received the keys to the City of Miami.

Lundy resides in Los Angeles, California.

Carmen Lundy was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 12, 2014.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carmen Lundy was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 12, 2014, in Woodland Hills, California, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Jazz singer Carmen Lundy (1954 -) has recorded fourteen albums and published over 100 songs. She has also acted on stage and is an exhibited painter and co-founder of Afrasia Productions.

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:

Lundy, Carmen

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Lundy, Carmen--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Jazz Singer

HistoryMakers® Category:

MusicMakers

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 Carmen Lundy, November 12, 2014. 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 Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_001, TRT: 1:28:40 ?

Carmen Lundy was born on November 1, 1954 at Kendall Regional Hospital in Miami, Florida. Her mother, Oveida Lundy-Francis, was born in 1935 in Monticello County, Florida. Lundy's mother sang with the Apostolic Singers church choir, and worked as a milliner and a halfway house supervisor for the City of Miami in Dade County, Florida. Lundy traces her maternal family ancestry back to Hobart Presha, a Haitian immigrant that settled in Northern Florida as a free person and landowner in 1784. Lundy's maternal grandfather, Henry Mathews, established a community in Perrine, a township in southern Florida. He owned a market and barbershop, and operated a recreation center. Lundy's maternal grandmother, Gertrude Taylor-Mathews, established polling places for African Americans in the 1960s. Lundy's father, Freddie Lundy, was born in 1931 in Alachua County, Florida. Lundy describes her paternal family background in northern Florida; she also describes visiting Alachua and Monticello Counties as a child.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_002, TRT: 2:29:15 ?

Carmen Lundy's parents both worked at the Kendall Regional Medical Center in Miami, Florida. Lundy describes which parent she takes after the most as well as her mother's character and visiting her father at his second job on the grounds crew at the University of Miami. Lundy's family was respected in the community of Perrine, Florida. Lundy is the oldest of seven siblings. She describes her early childhood memories, getting lost on her way home and her father's authoritarian parenting style. Lundy received her first piano lessons from a classical pianist whose house her mother cleaned. Lundy attended Frank C. Martin Elementary School in Miami and Miami Killian High School when it was recently integrated school. Lundy remembers when she first heard HistoryMaker Nancy Wilson on a record in science class and describes her experience in the school's choral program. Lundy was inspired to be a singer when she saw Barbara McNair perform on the 'The Ed Sullivan Show.'

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_003, TRT: 3:37:17 ?

Carmen Lundy talks about the black people she saw on television in the 1960s and describes the musical influence of Aretha Franklin, Roberta Flack and others. Lundy played piano in her high school chorus and performed in the duo, Steph and Trett, with Stephanie Patterson. Lundy was introduced to jazz in high school by her choral accompanist. She also performed Roberta Flack's, "Trying Times" in the school talent show. Lundy graduated from Miami Killian High School in 1972 and was admitted into the University of Miami. She selected opera as a major, but changed to jazz during her sophomore year. She also started a singing group with classmate David Roitstein and they got their first gig in 1974 at the Eden Rock Hotel in Miami Beach. She describes Miami's jazz scene in the 1970s as well as sitting in with Thad Jones and Mel Lewis at the Village Vanguard in New York City. In 1978, Lundy left Miami and moved to New York City. As an adult, she met Barbara McNair, in Pasadena, California.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_004, TRT: 4:28:31 ?

Carmen Lundy graduated from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida in 1980. In college, she took a class with jazz educator Vince Lawrence Maggio. She also talks about being introduced to Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holliday and the influence of Stevie Wonder. She talks about her introduction to Latin jazz and percussionist Mayra Casales. In 1975, Lundy and her brother, bassist Curtis Lundy, formed the band Nimbus. In 1979, she sang background vocals for musician Ray Barretto. She recalls her first apartment in New York City and

being held at gunpoint by the person who subletted her the apartment who was a heroin addict. In New York, she sang on Friday nights at the jazz club Jazzmania with musicians like John Hicks, Charlie Persip and others. She also joined a band formed by jazz pianist Walter Bishop, Jr., featuring Kenny Washington, Michael Carvin, Marcus Miller, Ricky Ford and Casales. Lundy talks about the El Corso Latin dance club and her relationship with conga player Carlos "Patato" Valdes.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_005, TRT: 5:29:20 ?

Carmen Lundy describes her experience working as a vocalist in New York City from 1978 through 1985. In 1979, Lundy recorded her first record, 'Angelica,' with a band called Jasmine. She talks about working in New York's Greenwich Village and her relationships with pianists Onaje Allan Gumbs and Harry Whitaker, who encouraged her to start singing her own compositions. In 1984, Lundy recorded a demo tape for Columbia Records and was offered a record deal. However, the deal was dropped, and she released her own record, 'Good Morning Kiss,' on the independent record label Black Hawk Records in 1985. Unable to find work after the release of 'Good Morning Kiss,' she parted ways with her manager Father Peter O'Brien, the former manager of pianist Mary Lou Williams. In 1986, she recorded 'Night and Day' with Sony Japan. Lundy describes being cast in 'Sophisticated Ladies' by choreographer HistoryMaker Donald McKayle as they launched a European tour. Lundy then returned to New York in 1989.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_006, TRT: 6:32:23 ?

Carmen Lundy remembers an article written about her in The Village Voice in 1983 titled, 'She's Got it All', performing at Mikell's Jazz Club in New York City and at the North Sea Jazz Festival in the Netherlands. Lundy left New York City in 1991 headed for Los Angeles, California where she was sent on an acting audition and cast in a pilot special for the CBS network. Lundy remembers her performance in Los Angeles at The Red Sea restaurant that was reviewed favorably in the Los Angeles Times by journalist Leonard Feather. The restaurant, however, refused to pay her and she remained unpaid until the arrival of the police. Lundy talks about becoming a visual artist, the physicality of her performances, and how she stays in shape. She describes her songwriting process and explains the inspiration behind the song, 'Quiet Times,' and describes writing 'Seventh Heaven,' after pianist Kenny Kirkland's death.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_007, TRT: 7:32:57 ?

Carmen Lundy released her album, 'Self -Portrait' in 1994 and her album 'Old Devil Moon,' which was also released as 'Love Me Forever,' in 1997 under JVC Kenwood Victor Entertainment Corporation. She worked with Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead Program and saw Betty Carter for the last time before her death in 1998, at the North Sea Jazz Festival. Lundy was signed with Justin Time Records in 2001, and launched her own label, Afrasia Productions, in 2004 with her wife, Elizabeth Oei. She organized a concert in Los Angeles, California which featured her original compositions and from that concert, Lundy produced her first live recording, 'Jazz & The New Songbook: Live at the Madrid Theater.' Lundy talks about her collaborations with percussionist Mayra Casales and pianist Geri Allen. Lundy recorded her single, 'Grace,' about the transatlantic slave trade with singer-songwriter Simphiwe Dana. Lundy talks about the landscape for young jazz musicians and the lack of appreciation for jazz artist's work.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_008, TRT: 8:28:14 ?

Lundy describes recording her single, 'Grace,' about the transatlantic slave trade

with Simphiwe Dana and the production of her album, 'Soul to Soul,' featuring artists Patrice Rushen and others. Lundy learned to play the guitar from bassist Chip Jackson and talks about playing the guitar onstage and her upcoming projects. Lundy is married to Elizabeth Oei. She talks about attitudes towards same-sex marriages and racial prejudice in the United States. She also talks about contemporary African Americans' relationship to jazz music. Lundy describes her hopes and concerns for the African American community and reflects upon her legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_001_009, TRT: 9:26:23 ?

Carmen Lundy's mother was very supportive of her career, but her father disapproved and has never seen her perform. Lundy talks briefly about her work as a visual artist and describes how she would like to be remembered. She ends by narrating her photographs.

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_002, TRT: 0:40:39

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_003, TRT: 0:46:58

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_004, TRT: 0:45:43

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_005, TRT: 0:54:39

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_006, TRT: 0:44:35

Video Oral History Interview with Carmen Lundy, Section A2014_256_Lundy_Carmen_06_MED_007, TRT: 0:54:54