

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Kevin Willmott

PERSON

Willmott, Kevin

**Alternative Names:** Kevin Willmott;

**Life Dates:** August 31, 1958-

**Place of Birth:** Junction City, Kansas, USA

**Residence:** Lawrence, KS

**Work:** Lawrence, KS

**Occupations:** Filmmaker; Screenwriter

## Biographical Note

Filmmaker and screenwriter Kevin Willmott was born on August 31, 1958 in Junction City, Kansas. After he attended Junction City High School and St. Xavier Catholic High School, Willmott received his B.A. degree in drama from Marymount College in Salina, Kansas in 1981. He went on to receive his M.F.A. in dramatic writing from New York University, Tisch School of the Arts in 1988.

Willmott worked as a peace and civil rights activist in Junction City, Kansas in between college and graduate school. After receiving his M.F.A. degree, he returned to Kansas to begin working on his first film, Ninth Street, which he directed, wrote, produced, and acted in. Ninth Street, which starred Martin Sheen and Isaac Hayes, premiered in 1999; and, in 2000, Willmott joined the Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of Kansas, teaching screenwriting, the history of African American images and film, anti-war and Blaxploitation films. The same year, he served as a writer for the NBC miniseries, The 70s. Willmott went on to direct and write the mockumentary C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America, which was released in 2004, and direct, write, and produce the film Bunker Hill, which was released in 2008. His film The Only Good Indian, which he directed and produced, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2009. In 2013, Willmott's films Destination: Planet Negro! and Jayhawkers were both released. He also served as a writer on Spike Lee's film Chi-Raq and as a screenwriter on Lee's film BlacKkKlansman, which premiered in 2015 and 2018, respectively. In 2019, Willmott began working on the film Da 5 Bloods with Spike Lee, the film The 24th, and the documentary I, Too, Sing America: Langston Hughes Unfurled.

In 2009, Willmott was named Best Director at the American Indian Film Festival for his work on The Only Good Indian. In 2019, he received an Oscar and a British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for BlackKkKlansman.

Willmott and his wife, Becky Willmott, reside in Lawrence, Kansas.

Kevin Willmott was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on November 8, 2019.

## Related Entries

**Junction City Junior/Senior High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**St. Xavier Catholic High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Marymount College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**New York University Tisch School of the Arts** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.F.A.**

**Lincoln Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ninth Street** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Director, Writer, Producer, Actor**

**University of Kansas** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Professor, Department of Film and Media Studies**

**The 70s** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to 2000]

**Writer**

**C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1974 to ?]

**Director and writer**

**Chi-Raq** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Writer**

**High Tech Lincoln** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Producer**

**Bunker Hill** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Director, writer, producer**

**The Only Good Indian** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to 2009]

**Director and producer**

**Destination: Planet Negro!** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to 2013]

**Director, writer, actor**

**Jayhawkers** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to 2013]

**Director, writer, producer**

**BlacKkKlansman** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Screenwriter**

[EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]