

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Jerry Pinkney

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Pinkney, Jerry
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney,
Dates:	January 30, 2017 and October 26, 2016
Bulk Dates:	2016 and 2017
Physical Description:	12 uncompressed MOV digital video files (5:42:49).
Abstract:	Illustrator Jerry Pinkney (1939 - 2021) illustrated over 100 books since the mid-1960s, and was the first African American recipient of the Caldecott Medal for his illustrated retelling of the Aesop's fable The Lion & the Mouse in 2009. Pinkney was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on January 30, 2017 and October 26, 2016, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2016_106
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Illustrator Jerry Pinkney was born on December 22, 1939 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Willie Mae and James H. Pinkney. Pinkney began drawing when he was four years old and, though he was gifted with creating art, he struggled with undiagnosed dyslexia throughout his childhood, high school, and college years. In 1957, he graduated from Murrell Dobbins Vocational School in Philadelphia and received a full scholarship to attend Philadelphia College of Art. After two and a half years, Pinkney left college to marry and start a family with his wife, Gloria Jean.

Pinkney worked briefly as a flower delivery truck driver in Philadelphia before relocating to Boston, Massachusetts, where he joined the Rust Craft Greeting Card Company. In Boston, Pinkney also joined the Boston Action Group, and developed friendships with artists of color. In 1962, he began working for Barker-Black, a design and illustration studio. Pinkney illustrated his first children's book, *The Adventures of Spider: West African Folk Tales*, by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst in 1964. In 1971, he opened Jerry Pinkney Studio in Croton-on-Hudson, New York. Pinkney illustrated over 100 books, including: *Song of the Trees* (1975) by Mildred D. Taylor, *Mary McLeod Bethune* (1977) by Eloise Greenfield, *The Covenant* (1980) by James A. Michener, *The Talking Eggs* (1989) by Robert D. San Souci, *Back Home* (1992) by Gloria Jean Pinkney, *The Jungle Book* (1995) by Rudyard Kipling, and *Tales of Uncle Remus* (1987), *Sam and the Tigers* (1996), *Black Cowboy, Wild Horses* (1998) and *The Old African* (2005) by Julius Lester.

Pinkney served in a number of educational capacities, including as associate professor of illustration at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York from 1986 to 1988, as associate professor of art at University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware from 1988 to 1992 and as visiting professor at State University of New York-Buffalo in 1991. Between 2003 and 2009, Pinkney served on the National Council of the Arts. His work was featured in multiple group and solo exhibitions throughout the United States as well as in Japan, Italy, Russia, Taiwan and Jamaica. Pinkney also contributed to numerous Caldecott Honor books, and was the first African American recipient of the

Caldecott Medal for his illustrative retelling of the Aesop's fable *The Lion & the Mouse* in 2009.

Pinkney and his wife, Gloria Jean, have four children.

Jerry Pinkney was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on October 26, 2016 and January 30, 2017.

Pinkney passed away on October 20, 2021.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Jerry Pinkney was conducted by Harriette Cole on January 30, 2017 and October 26, 2016, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 12 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Illustrator Jerry Pinkney (1939 - 2021) illustrated over 100 books since the mid-1960s, and was the first African American recipient of the Caldecott Medal for his illustrated retelling of the Aesop's fable *The Lion & the Mouse* in 2009.

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:

Pinkney, Jerry

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Pinkney, Jerry--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Illustrator

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 Jerry Pinkney, January 30, 2017 and October 26, 2016. 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 Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_001_001, TRT: 1:28:03 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_001_002, TRT: 2:29:42 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_001_003, TRT: 3:29:46 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_001_004, TRT: 4:28:57 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_001_005, TRT: 5:28:45 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_006, TRT: 6:28:59 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_007, TRT: 7:28:32 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_008, TRT: 8:29:26 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_009, TRT: 9:28:56 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_010, TRT: 10:29:30 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_011, TRT: 11:30:28 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Jerry Pinkney, Section A2016_106_002_012, TRT: 12:21:45 ?