

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Zita Cousens

PERSON

Cousens, Zita, 1953-

Alternative Names: Zita Cousens;

Life Dates: July 30, 1953-

Place of Birth: Lowell, Massachusetts, USA

Residence: Newton, MA

Work: Oak Bluffs, MA

Occupations: Art Gallery Owner

Biographical Note

Art gallery owner Zita Cousens was born on July 30, 1953 in Lowell, Massachusetts to Major M. Cousens and Inez Lopez Cousens. She received her B.S. and M.S. degrees in psychology from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts in 1975 and 1978, respectively.

Cousens began her career as a resource teacher for the Boston Latin School in Boston, Massachusetts. She eventually became a guidance counselor and served in that role for more than thirty years. In 1980, Cousens co-founded the Cousen Rose Gallery in Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts with painter Stephen Rose. The gallery houses a diverse collection of art as well as a retail space and has showcased works by artists such as Delilah W. Pierce, Lois Mailou Jones, John Breckenridge, M.C. Lamarre, Mark Zeender, and Boston Globe photographer Derrick Jackson. Cousens also hosted a book signings for Oak Bluffs author Dorothy West, Jacqueline Kennedy, Lani Guinier, Jill Nelson, Stephen L. Carter, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Charles Ogletree, and the late Bebe Moore Campbell and Gwen Ifill.

Cousens hosts an annual reception at the art gallery for the Martha's Vineyard Camp Ground's cottage tour and fundraiser, which provides awards for children during the All Island Art Show, and raises funds for the local hospital. Cousens has also served on the Gala Host Committee for the Visiting Nurse Association of Boston and is a Friend of the Studio Museum of Harlem.

Cousens and her husband, Michael Brown, have two children.

Zita Cousens was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 17, 2017.

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