

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Benny Turner

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Turner, Benny
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner,
Dates:	April 27, 2019
Bulk Dates:	2019
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:33:19).
Abstract:	Musician Benny Turner (1939-) played bass with The Soul Stirrers, The Freddie King Band, and Mighty Joe Young. He performed with Eric Clapton, John Fogerty and Grand Funk Railroad and was featured on albums of Otis Clay's and Marva Wright's. Turner was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 27, 2019, in New Orleans, Louisiana. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2019_035
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Musician Benny Turner was born on October 27, 1939 in Gilmer, Texas to Ella Mae King and Ben Turner. He attended Lake Providence School, Bruce Junior High School, and Richard T. Crane Medical Preparatory High School.

Turner joined The Kindly Shepherds gospel music group and also played in his brother's band, The Freddie King Band. During this period, he met Dee Clark and was invited to tour with his rhythm and blues band. Turner then became the bass player for the American gospel music group, The Soul Stirrers. He later rejoined The Freddie King Band and toured regularly with the group, performing with musicians like Eric Clapton, John Fogerty and Grand Funk Railroad. At The Montreux Jazz Festival in 1973, Turner played bass on the live recording of Memphis Slim's *Very Much Alive and in Montreux*. After his brother's death in 1976, Turner joined the band, Mighty Joe Young; and, in 1981, Turner appeared in the film *Thief*, while performing at the Wise Fools Pub in Chicago. In 1986, Turner moved to New Orleans, Louisiana and became the bandleader for Marva Wright. He also sang vocals and played bass on several of Otis Clay's albums including, *The Blues Is...* in 1991, *The Gospel Truth* in 1993, and *When the Gate Swings Open* in 1994. Marva Wright later released, *Born with the Blues* in 1996, featuring Turner on bass. The following year, Mighty Joe Young released *Mighty Man*, featuring Turner on guitar. In 1999, Turner played bass on Marva Wright's album, *Bluesiana Mama*, followed by *Do Right Woman: The Soul of New Orleans* in 2006, and *After the Levees Broke* in 2007, where Turner served as the producer, arranger, guitar player and background vocals on the album. Throughout his career, Turner was also featured on a number of his brother's albums including, *Gives You A Bonanza of Instrumentals*, *Larger Than Life*, *Freddie King (1934-1976)*, *Takin' Care of Business*, *Live in Antibes*, 1974, *Let the Good Times Roll*.

In 2011, Turner released his solo album, *A Tribute to My Brother Freddie King*. In 2014, Turner released an original solo album entitled, *Journey*. Two years later, he released, *When She's Gone* dedicated to his mother. In 2017, Turner published his autobiography, *Survivor: The Benny Turner Story*. That same year, he released the

album, *My Brother's Blues*. In 2019, he released, *Going Back Home*.

Turner has also received a number of awards, including the 2017 Best Blues Song Award at the fifteenth annual Independent Music Awards and the Little Milton Lifetime Bluesman award from Jus' Blues Awards. Turner was inducted into the Chicago Blues Hall of Fame in 2017 and October 27th was proclaimed Benny Turner Day in Turner's hometown of Gilmer, Texas. In 2018, he was voted Most Outstanding Musician (Bass) by *Living Blues* magazine, and received the Silver Medal at the Global Music Awards and the Bronze Medal by the Reader's Favorite Book Awards.

Benny Turner was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 27, 2019.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Benny Turner was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 27, 2019, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Musician Benny Turner (1939-) played bass with The Soul Stirrers, The Freddie King Band, and Mighty Joe Young. He performed with Eric Clapton, John Fogerty and Grand Funk Railroad and was featured on albums of Otis Clay's and Marva Wright's.

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:

Turner, Benny

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Turner, Benny--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Musician

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 Benny Turner, April 27, 2019. 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 Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_001, TRT: 1:28:49 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_002, TRT: 2:29:49 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_003, TRT: 3:29:43 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_004, TRT: 4:28:17 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_005, TRT: 5:27:19 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Benny Turner, Section A2019_035_001_006, TRT: 6:09:22 ?