

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Malcolm Brown

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Brown, Malcolm, 1931-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Brown,
Dates:	March 15, 2004
Bulk Dates:	2004
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:54:10).
Abstract:	Painter and high school art teacher Malcolm Brown (1931 - 2020) co-owned the Malcolm Brown Gallery in Ohio. He was also the recipient of numerous public commissions and awards, including the Board of Director's Award from the Watercolor Art Society. Brown was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 15, 2004, in Shaker Heights, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2004_023
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Visual artist and educator Malcolm McCleod Brown was born August 19, 1931 in Charlottesville, Virginia to Dorothy R. and Franklin M. Brown. He attended the public schools of Charlottesville and went on to earn a B.S. degree from Virginia State University in 1964 and a master's of arts degree from Case Western Reserve University in 1969.

After working as an artist at Ohio Bell and American Greetings, Brown began his career as an arts educator and taught at the Shaker Heights High School from 1969 to 2000. Since 1980, he has been co-owner with his wife Ernestine of the Malcolm Brown Gallery in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Malcolm Brown's work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows, including "The Art of Malcolm Brown" at the Butler Institute of American Art; "Something All Our Own: The Grant Hill Collection of African American Art," a touring exhibit; and "Discretionary Accounts: The Artist Speaks," at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

In 1973, Brown was elected to membership in the American Watercolor Society, the most prestigious organization for watercolorists. Founded in the 18th century, today it has approximately 500 members, with ten members being elected annually. He is also the recipient of numerous public commissions and awards, including the Board of Director's Award from the Watercolor Art Society; participation in the Art in Embassies Program of the U.S. State Department, and the Cleveland Arts Prize "Distinguished Service to the Arts" Award. His works can be found in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Springfield Art Museum, Coca-Cola, and Progressive Insurance, among others.

Brown is also a member of the Ohio Watercolor Society and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Brown passed away on October 1, 2020.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Malcolm Brown was conducted by Regennia Williams on March 15, 2004, in Shaker Heights, Ohio, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Painter and high school art teacher Malcolm Brown (1931 - 2020) co-owned the Malcolm Brown Gallery in Ohio. He was also the recipient of numerous public commissions and awards, including the Board of Director's Award from the Watercolor Art Society.

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:

Brown, Malcolm, 1931-

Williams, Regennia (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Brown, Malcolm, 1931---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Visual Artist

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 Malcolm Brown, March 15, 2004. 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 Malcolm Brown, Section A2004_023_001_001, TRT: 0:29:42 ?
Malcolm Brown and his twin brother Milton Brown, were born on August 19, 1931 in Charlottesville, Virginia. His mother, Dorothy Reeves Jackson Franklin, was born in Crozet, Virginia. Brown's maternal grandfather, Jesse Jackson, was born in 1860. He was a carpenter and stone-maker and co-built Piedmont Baptist Church in Crozet. Brown's father, Franklin M. Brown, was born in Virginia and worked as a horse trainer. The Brown family lived in rural Crozet which was an

integrated community divided into three unincorporated areas: Slabtown, Freetown and Greenwood. Brown remembers Christmas dinners with his family and blackberry picking with his brother. He attended Hillsboro Elementary School and Albemarle Training School in Charlottesville and aspired to be a medical doctor, and later, a commercial artist. Brown attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia. He majored in art and secondary education and completed his practice teaching in Norfolk, Virginia.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Brown, Section A2004_023_001_002, TRT: 0:28:28 ?

Malcolm Brown attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia where he pledged Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and played trombone in the marching band conducted by Dr. F. Nathaniel “Pops” Gatlin. He earned a bachelor’s degree in art and secondary education in 1955. He began his post-baccalaureate work at Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts where he met his wife, HistoryMaker Ernestine Brown. At the time, African American artists were protesting against their exclusion from Boston’s artistic community. Brown and his wife relocated to Cleveland, Ohio where Brown earned a master’s degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio in 1969 and joined the faculty at Patrick Henry Junior High School and later Shaker Heights High School in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Brown’s students at Shaker Heights High School participated in HistoryMaker Louis Stokes Artistic Discovery competition. Brown describes the changing racial and socioeconomic demographics of the town of Shaker Heights.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Brown, Section A2004_023_001_003, TRT: 0:29:22 ?

Malcolm Brown describes challenges he encountered as an educator at Shaker Heights High School in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Brown talks briefly about sociopolitical issues that affected his classroom in the 1980s as well as the impact of the introduction of computer technology to art. Brown worked at American Greetings for one year where he was introduced to the American Water Color Society; Brown was inducted in 1973. In 1980, he and his wife, HistoryMaker Ernestine Brown opened the Malcolm Brown Gallery in Shaker Heights. He describes memorable artists and exhibitions featured in the Gallery including Romare Bearden and Hughie Lee-Smith. Brown’s paintings were featured in the 1995 film ‘Waiting to Exhale,’ the 2002 film ‘Antwone Fisher’ and his piece ‘Grooving’ was featured in the Cleveland Museum of Art May Show in Cleveland, Ohio. Brown lists artists that have inspired his work and talks about the existing market for working artists.

Video Oral History Interview with Malcolm Brown, Section A2004_023_001_004, TRT: 0:26:38 ?

Malcolm Brown talks about the existing market for working artists as well as affordable artwork versus expensive artwork and politics in African American art. Brown explains what he considers is an artwork’s purpose; describes how both the professional and personal aspects of his life have been rewarding; and reflects upon his legacy. Malcolm Brown and HistoryMaker Ernestine Brown, his wife, narrate their photographs.