

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	DMC (Musician)
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels,
Dates:	August 26, 2016
Bulk Dates:	2016
Physical Description:	5 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:35:49).
Abstract:	Hip hop artist Darryl "DMC" McDaniels (1964 -) was a founding member of the hip hop group Run DMC. McDaniels was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 26, 2016, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2016_018
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Hip hop artist Darryl “DMC” McDaniels was born on May 31, 1964 in Harlem, New York. He graduated from Rice High School in Manhattan in 1982, and enrolled at St. John’s University in Queens, New York, but did not graduate.

In 1982, McDaniels formed Run DMC with group mates Joseph “Rev Run” Simmons and Jason “Jam Master Jay” Mizell. In 1984, Run DMC signed to Profile Records under the management of Russell Simmons, and released their first album, *Run DMC*. That same year, the group’s music video “Rock Box” became first rap music video played on MTV. In 1985, Run DMC released the *King of Rock* album. They became only the second rap group to appear on American Bandstand, performing the hit “Jam Master Jammin.” In 1986, Run DMC released the critically acclaimed *Raising Hell* album, which was their top selling album, reaching certified triple platinum status. *Raising Hell* featured the popular song “Walk This Way,” a cover of the 1975 Aerosmith single of the same name. In the same year, Run DMC became the first rap group to appear on the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine, and the first rap group to perform on *Saturday Night Live*. The group followed their success with albums *Tougher Than Leather* in 1988 and *Back From Hell* in 1990. In 1993, Run DMC released *Down with the King*, and after an eight year hiatus, Run DMC released their comeback album, *Crown Royal* in 2001. McDaniels released his first solo album, *Check Thugs and Rock N Roll*, in 2006.

McDaniels co-founded The Felix Organization, a nonprofit focused on children who grow up in the foster care system. In 2009, he and Run DMC were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. McDaniels authored an autobiography entitled *King of Rock: Respect, Responsibility, and My Life with Run DMC*, and a memoir entitled *Ten Ways to Not Commit Suicide*. In 2014, McDaniels created the comic book publishing imprint, Darryl Makes Comics. Run DMC became the first rap group to be awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

McDaniels and his wife, Zuri McDaniels, have one son, Darryl “D’Son” McDaniels, Jr.

Darryl “DMC” McDaniels was interviewed by *The Historymakers* on August 26, 2016.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 26, 2016, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Hip hop artist Darryl "DMC" McDaniels (1964 -) was a founding member of the hip hop group Run DMC.

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:

DMC (Musician)

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

DMC (Musician)--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Hip Hop Artist

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 Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, August 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 Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Section A2016_018_001_001, TRT: 1:28:36 ?

Darryl “DMC” McDaniels was born on May 31, 1964 in New York City to Berncenia Lovelace. McDaniels’ biological mother placed him for adoption at birth, and he was adopted by Bannah Griffin McDaniels and Byford McDaniels. McDaniels learned of his adoption at thirty-five years old, and met Lovelace in 2004. His adoptive father was born in Jacksonville, Florida, and his adoptive

mother born in Olar, South Carolina. Both of McDaniels' adoptive parents moved to New York City as teenagers in search of better employment opportunities. His adoptive father worked for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, while his adoptive mother was a nurse. McDaniels and his older brother, Alford McDaniels, were raised in a middle class community in the Hollis neighborhood of Queens, New York, and attended the St. Pascal Baylon School. McDaniels was interested in comic books and writing from an early age, and was frequently bullied while walking to school.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Section A2016_018_001_002, TRT: 2:30:04 ?

Darryl "DMC" McDaniels discovered hip hop music while attending Rice High School, an all-boys Catholic school in New York City. Around 1976, McDaniels began to notice deejays mixing disco songs at block parties. After listening to 'Rapper's Delight' by the Sugarhill Gang, he and his older brother, Alford McDaniels, decided to sell their comic book collection in order to purchase deejay equipment, including a mixer and two turntables. At the time, McDaniels admired the style of emerging hip hop artists like the Treacherous Three, The Funky Four Plus One, and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five; and began writing songs that mimicked their technique. He also befriended Joseph Simmons, whose brother, Russell Simmons, was working as a hip hop party promoter and manager. In addition, McDaniels remembers the celebrity residents of his neighborhood in Queens, New York, including singer James Brown, trumpeter Louis Armstrong and professional basketball player Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Section A2016_018_001_003, TRT: 3:29:33 ?

Darryl "DMC" McDaniels graduated from Rice High School in New York City, and enrolled at St. John's University in Queens, New York, where he studied business management. During the summer following his high school graduation, McDaniels recorded the songs 'It's Like That' and 'Sucker M.C.'s' with Joseph Simmons at the Greene St. Recording studio in New York City. The songs became hit tracks on the radio, and attracted the interest of Profile Records. With Russell Simmons as their manager, McDaniels, Joseph Simmons and Jason Mizell signed a contract with Profile Records to record as Run-DMC. McDaniels continued his studies at St. John's University, although he struggled academically, and considered changing his major. He eventually took a leave of absence from college to tour with Run-DMC. McDaniels also remembers the legacy of early hip hop artists like DJ Kool Herc, Kool Keith, Grand Wizard Theodore and Afrika Bambaataa and the Universal Zulu Nation.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Section A2016_018_001_004, TRT: 4:31:09 ?

Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Joseph Simmons and Jason Mizell formed the group Run-DMC, and adopted the rap names DMC, Run, and Jam Master Jay. "Rock Box" was the first single released on Run-DMC's self-titled debut album; and, in 1984, the accompanying video became the first rap video played on MTV. Run-DMC's next album, 'King of Rock,' was released in 1985, followed by 'Raising Hell' in 1986. It featured the singles "My Adidas," "Peter Piper" and "Walk This Way," which was the rap version of an Aerosmith song by the same name. Initially, McDaniels and Run planned only to sample the original track, but producer Rick Rubin, along with Russell Simmons and Jam Master Jay, convinced them that "Walk This Way" would be more successful as a collaboration with Aerosmith. The song became a hit, and appealed to rock fans

as well as the hip hop community. McDaniels also talks about the emergence of hip hop artists like KRS-One, Queen Latifah, Sir Mix-a-Lot and The Fat Boys.

Video Oral History Interview with Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, Section A2016_018_001_005, TRT: 5:36:27 ?

Darryl "DMC" McDaniels wrote rap lyrics about his life experiences, including the songs 'Christmas in Hollis' about his neighborhood in Queens, New York; 'Son of Byford' about his adoptive father, Byford McDaniels; and 'Sucker M.C.'s,' in which he rapped about attending St. John's University. Despite these positive images, Run-DMC drew criticism in 1986, when a gang brawl took place at their concert at the Long Beach Arena in Long Beach, California. McDaniels reflects upon the careers of hip hop artists like Chuck D of Public Enemy, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five's Melle Mel, Killer Mike and Mohandas "Kool Moe Dee" DeWese. He also recalls performing at an after party held by Tupac and Suge Knight in Las Vegas, Nevada in 1996, on the night that Tupac was shot. McDaniels talks about the influence of hip hop in the African American community, and shares his critique of contemporary hip hop music. He also talks about the election of President Barack Obama.