WILLIS KIRK
COLLECTION, CA. 1950–2007

Collection Information

Biographical Sketch

Scope and Content Note

Contents

Cataloging Information

Processed by

Wilma L. Moore
December 2011

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org
COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 folders

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1950s; 2007

PROVENANCE: Willis Kirk, Vallejo, California, March 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0064

NOTES:
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

An Indianapolis native, Willis Kirk (1928—) graduated from Crispus Attucks High School under the tutelage of music teacher, Russell Brown in 1946. After service in the United States Army during the 1950s, he went to college on the GI bill. He went on to receive a bachelor degree and an MA at Butler University and a PH.D at Walden University.

Kirk got married in 1955. He taught in the Indianapolis Public Schools for twelve years. During the early 1960s he worked part time as a business agent for the Indianapolis Musicians Local 3. During the late 1960s, he moved his family to California. He taught music at the public schools in Oakland. During his career as a teacher in Indiana and California, Kirk also played many professional musical performances.

Later, he worked as a counselor for City College of San Francisco. From 1988 - 1991 he served as the president of the college.

Kirk has played with Lionel Hampton, J.J. Johnson, Jimmie Coe, Slide Hampton, Earl Hines, Dizzy Gillespie, Eddie Harris, Charlie Parker, Tiny Bradshaw, John Hendricks, Mills Brothers, Wes, Monk, and Buddy Montgomery, and Melvin Rhyne. He has recorded with Earl Hines in Brazil and with David Hardiman’s San Francisco All Star Big Band. He wrote and recorded the jazz oratorio, “Rejoice! Rejoice!

Sources:
Materials in the collection
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains two photographs and a newsletter. One image, ca. 1950s, represents an inside scene of Henri’s Café Lounge, a club that was located at 408 Indiana Avenue in Indianapolis. Owned by Henry Vance, the club that offered night time entertainment was also a popular lunchtime venue for downtown workers. The musicians included in the image are Wes Montgomery on the guitar; Willis Kirk on drums; Monk Montgomery on bass; and Buddy Montgomery on piano.

The second image is a photograph of Kirk playing the drums during a Tribute to Max Roach concert at the Diego Rivera Theatre (located at the City College of San Francisco) on December 11, 2007. There is also an issue of the newsletter, City Currents (Volume XXII, Number 19, December 17-23, 2007), which contains this photograph and an article about the image.
CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Wes, Buddy, and Monk Montgomery and Willis Kirk with their instruments at Henri’s Café Lounge in Indianapolis, ca. 1950s

Willis Kirk playing the drums during a Tribute to Max Roach concert at the Diego Rivera Theatre; City Currents, 12–17–2007

CONTAINER

Photographs: Folder 1

Photograph Folder 2
CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
   http://opac.indianahistory.org/

2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.

3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.

4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P0507).

5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.