



# Smithsonian

*Anacostia Community Museum*

*The Real McCoy: Afro-American invention  
and innovation, 1619-1930* exhibition records

Carrie Gehrer

2011

Anacostia Community Museum Archives  
1901 Fort Place, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20020  
ACMArchives@si.edu  
<http://www.anacostia.si.edu/Collections/ArchiveCollection>

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Names and Subjects .....	1
Container Listing .....	3
Series ACMA AV03-026: The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 audiovisual records, 1989-1990.....	3

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Anacostia Community Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	<i>The Real McCoy: Afro-American invention and innovation, 1619-1930</i> exhibition records
<b>Identifier:</b>	ACMA.03-026
<b>Date:</b>	1989-05 - 1990-05
<b>Creator:</b>	Smithsonian Institution. Anacostia Community Museum
<b>Extent:</b>	3.52 Linear feet (6 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	An exhibition on African American inventors and innovators, from prominent figures such as the 19th century inventor Elijah McCoy to the anonymous men and women who made important contributions to the development of American technology. The show was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 --May 1990. These records document the planning, organizing, execution, and promotion of the exhibition. Materials include correspondence, research files, exhibit scripts, administrative records, brochures, press coverage, education packets, loan agreements, floor plans, and catalogues.
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): <i>The Real McCoy: Afro-American invention and innovation, 1619-1930</i> exhibition records</a>

---

## Administrative Information

### Related Archival Materials

Audiovisual materials created for the exhibition by Anacostia Community Museum.

### Other Finding Aids

Box list in accession file.

### Preferred Citation

*The Real McCoy: Afro-American invention and innovation, 1619-1930* exhibition records,  
Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

Use of the materials requires an appointment. Please contact the archivist to make an appointment: [ACMarchives@si.edu](mailto:ACMarchives@si.edu).

---

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

African American inventors  
Museum exhibits

Types of Materials:

Brochures  
Catalogs  
Contact sheets  
Correspondence  
Exhibit scripts  
Exhibition records -- 1967-1989  
Photographic prints

Names:

James, Portia P.

---

## Container Listing

### Series ACMA AV03-026: The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 audiovisual records, 1989-1990

*0.25 Linear feet*

*3 Sound recordings (1 open reel 1/4" sound recordings ; 2 audio cassette sound recordings)*

*13 Video recordings (12 VHS 1/2" video recordings ; 1 open reel 1" video recordings)*

Language: English.  
Scope and Contents: Audiovisual materials created for an exhibition on African American inventors and innovators, from prominent figures such as the 19th century inventor Elijah McCoy to the anonymous men and women who made important contributions to the development of American technology. The show was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 – May 1990. This collection contains the audiovisual output of the exhibit, including video created for use within the exhibit and video and audio recordings of guided exhibit tours.  
Restrictions: Use of the materials requires an appointment. Some items are not accessible due to obsolete format and playback machinery restrictions. Please contact the archivist at [acmarchives@si.edu](mailto:acmarchives@si.edu).  
Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Culture: African American  
Genre/Form: Sound recordings  
Video recordings  
Topic: Museum exhibits

ACMA AV002680: The Real McCoy: Audio Tour with Robert Hall, circa 1989  
1 Sound recording (open reel; 1/4 inch)

003130

Creator: Anacostia Museum  
James, Portia P.

Technical: 003130

Language: English.

Notes: Title transcribed from physical asset.

During the audio tour of exhibition, *The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation*, narrator Robert Hall presents contributions made by black inventors to American technology from 1619 to 1930. Inventions and innovations by Benjamin Banneker, Elijah McCoy, Lewis Latimer, James Forten, Lewis Temple, Norbert Rillieux, Ned (slave), Benjamin Montgomery, George Washington Carver, Solomon Harper, Madame C.J. Walker, and Marjorie Joyner, among others, are highlighted. This history, challenges, and successes of patent licensing for inventions created by black inventors, including the question of patents for inventions created by slaves, are discussed.

Audio tour narration. Part of *The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930 Audiovisual Materials*. Undated.

The Real McCoy: Audio Tour with Robert Hall, Exhibition Records AV03-026, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James. Narrator: Robert Hall.

Names:

McCoy, Elijah, 1844-1929  
Banneker, Benjamin, 1731-1806  
Jennings, Thomas L.  
Latimer, Lewis Howard, 1848-1928  
Forten, James, 1766-1842  
Temple, Lewis  
Rillieux, Norbert, 1806-1894  
Montgomery, Benjamin  
Matzeliger, Jan Ernst, 1852-1889  
Morgan, Garrett A., 1877-1963  
Woods, Granville, 1856-1910  
Carver, George Washington, 1864?-1943  
Davidson, Shelby J. (Shelby Jeames), 1868-1930  
Harper, Solomon, 1893-  
Walker, C. J., Madam, 1867-1919  
Joyner, Marjorie Stewart, 1896-1994  
Murray, George W. (George Washington), 1853-1926  
Baker, Henry E. (Henry Edwin), 1859-1928  
Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic:

African Americans  
African American women  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Slaves  
Slavery

Place: Museum exhibits  
Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States  
Genre/Form: Sound recordings  
Narration  
Culture: African American

ACMA AV000926: The Real McCoy: Lewis Temple, Jan E. Matzeliger, and  
Norbert Rillieux, circa 1990

3 Video recordings (open reel; 1 inch)

3 Video recordings (VHS)

1 Sound recording (open reel; 1/4 inch)

002656 001624 000510 000854 004849 005915 010024

Creator: Anacostia Museum  
James, Portia P.  
Reinckens, Sharon A.  
Smithsonian Institution

Technical: 002656 001624 000510 000854 004849 005915 010024

Language: English.

Notes: ACMA AV003326

ACMA AV003324

ACMA AV003433

ACMA AV000226

ACMA AV000227

ACMA AV000228

The exhibition, *The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation*, included three short documentary films: *Lewis Temple and Hunting the Whale*, Jan E. Matzeliger, and Norbert Rillieux. *Lewis Temple and Hunting the Whale* provides an overview of early 19th century whaling industry and tools, including the toggle head harpoon invented by blacksmith Lewis Temple. The short documentary about Jan Matzeliger provides an overview of the shoe industry and shoe making, including the refining of Matzeliger's idea and success of his shoe-lasting machine. The short documentary about Norbert Rillieux covers the history of sugar production and manufacturing from early sugar processing through the development of Rillieux's sugar refining process and the installation of Rillieux's device at Theodore Packwood's Myrtle Grove Plantation. All three documentaries provide historical background of three inventors' families and life, respectively.

Short documentary films. Part of *The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930 Audiovisual Materials*. AV000926 includes all three short films, dated 19910606. AV003326 includes Norbert Rillieux only (film image direction is sideways), dated 19890505. AV003324: Jan E. Matzeliger, undated. AV003433: outtakes, edited voiceover narration by Portia James for *Lewis Temple and Hunting the Whale*, dated 19890517. AV000226: loop tape of Norbert Rillieux with captions, undated. AV000227: loop tape of Lewis

Temple and Hunting the Whale with captions, dated 19920526.  
AV000228: loop tape of Lewis Temple and Hunting the Whale  
with captions, undated.

The Real McCoy: Lewis Temple, Jan E. Matzeliger, and Norbert  
Rillieux, Exhibition Records AV03-026, Anacostia Community  
Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention  
and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black  
inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves,  
craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the  
United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan  
Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized  
shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and  
automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask  
and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as  
African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave  
system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors  
such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and  
Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from  
some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which  
celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition  
was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia  
Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia  
James. Lewis Temple and Hunting the Whale: Producer Sharon  
Reinckens, Anacostia Museum, Smithsonian Institution,  
copyright 1989. Copyright of Jan E. Matzeliger: Inner Circle  
Production.

Names: Temple, Lewis  
Rillieux, Norbert, 1806-1894  
Matzeliger, Jan Ernst, 1852-1889  
Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Whaling  
Shoe industry  
Shoe machinery industry  
Shoemaking  
Sugar  
Sugar -- Manufacture and refining  
Sugar machinery  
Patents  
Slavery  
Slaves  
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States



Genre/Form: Video recordings  
Sound recordings  
Documentary films  
Narration  
Culture: African American

ACMA AV001611: The Real McCoy Exhibit Tour, circa 1989  
1 Sound recording (audio cassette)  
003127

Creator: Anacostia Museum  
James, Portia P.

Technical: 003127

Language: English.

Notes: Tour guide leads visitors through exhibition, The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation. The tour guide talks about West African influence on pottery, rice production, textiles, sugar cane production, whaling industry, agricultural devices, domestic service devices, and railroad industry in the United States. Norbert Rillieux, Lewis Temple, and Henry Bowman are profiled. The tour guide also talks about patents, the early patent office, and patent applications by blacks. Tour guide answers visitors' questions.

Tour of exhibit; audio only. Part of The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930 Audiovisual Materials. Poor audio quality. Undated.

The Real McCoy Exhibit Tour, Exhibition Records AV03-026, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James.

Names: McCoy, Elijah, 1844-1929  
Temple, Lewis  
Rillieux, Norbert, 1806-1894  
Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Slaves  
Slavery  
Museum exhibits  
Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States  
Africa, West  
Genre/Form: Sound recordings  
Culture: African American

ACMA AV002113: Make an Invention, 1990  
3 Video recordings (VHS)  
001921 012430 001729

Creator: Anacostia Museum  
Technical: 001921 012430 001729  
Language: English.  
Notes: ACMA AV002116

ACMA AV002058

Title transcribed from physical asset and calendar of events for Jan/Feb 1990.

During the workshop, students created three-dimensional models of original inventions or innovations after a guided tour of the museum's exhibition on African American inventors titled 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Workshop was recommended for third and fourth grade students. The workshop was held at the Anacostia Museum on February 5, 1990.

Workshop. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' AV002113 and AV002116: dated 19900205. AV002058: undated.

Make an Invention, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and

Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technological innovations  
Education -- Museums  
Children  
Museums and community  
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV002059: The Real McCoy: Teacher Seminar, 1989  
5 Video recordings (VHS)

020403 020410 020401 014857 001729

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 020403 020410 020401 014857 001729

Language: English.

Notes: ACMA AV002131

ACMA AV002151

ACMA AV002060

ACMA AV002058

Held from June 26 - 29, 1989 at the Anacostia Museum, the teacher seminar consisted of lectures and workshops about black inventors and innovators, and their struggle for recognition. The lectures and workshops were led by experts in history and the patent process, and inventors. Sessions on critical thinking and teaching strategies were also part of the program. Curator Portia James highlighted the exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Dr. West and C.R. Gibbs provided historical context about African American inventors. Pat Ives spoke about historical figures and the patent process, and Bessie Wiley discussed creativity and inventiveness. Other seminar participants included Fred Schmidt, Karen Skilman, young inventor Maurice Scales, Frank Price, inventor Cortland Dugger, and Dr. Jimmie Jackson.

Seminar. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' AV002059:

dated 19890626. AV002131 and AV002058: undated.  
AV002151 and AV002060: dated 19890629.

The Real McCoy: Teacher Seminar, Anacostia Community  
Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention  
and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black  
inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves,  
craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the  
United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan  
Matzelienger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized  
shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and  
automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask  
and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as  
African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave  
system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors  
such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and  
Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from  
some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which  
celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition  
was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia  
Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia  
James.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Teachers  
Education  
teaching

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV002057: The Real McCoy: Exhibition Tour, circa 1989  
1 Video recording (VHS)

020609

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 020609

Language: English.

Notes: Curator Portia James led tour of the exhibition 'The Real  
McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.'

Exhibition Tour. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-  
American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Undated.

The Real McCoy: Exhibition Tour, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James.

Names: McCoy, Elijah, 1844-1929  
Temple, Lewis  
Rillieux, Norbert, 1806-1894  
Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Slaves  
Slavery  
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV002065: The Real McCoy: Television Coverage, 1989  
2 Video recordings (VHS)  
003030 001729

Creator: WMAR-TV (Television station : Baltimore, Md.)  
Technical: 003030 001729  
Language: English.  
Notes: ACMA AV002058

Public affairs show '2 The Point,' which aired on WMAR-TV Baltimore, provided coverage and promotion of 'The Real

McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930,' which was on display at the Anacostia Museum from May 1989 - May 1990. Curator Portia James spoke about the exhibition; young inventors explained their inventions; and images from the exhibition were part of the television program.

Television program. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' AV002065: dated 19890702. AV002058: undated.

The Real McCoy: Television Coverage, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James. Public affairs show '2 The Point' aired on WMAR-TV Baltimore.

Names: McCoy, Elijah, 1844-1929  
Temple, Lewis  
Rillieux, Norbert, 1806-1894  
Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Slaves  
Slavery  
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV002143: The Real McCoy: Charles Beckley, circa 1989  
1 Video recording (VHS)

003845

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 003845

Language: English.

Notes: Speaking to a group of students, Charles Beckley, a chair inventor, talked about his invention. He explained the steps of creating an invention; patents and patent law; and producing his invention for mass consumption. He encouraged the students to come up with their own ideas by showing them how inventors build off of others' ideas.

Education program - lecture. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Undated.

The Real McCoy: Charles Beckley, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Patents  
Patent laws and legislation  
Education -- Museums  
Students

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV001251\_A: The Real McCoy: Docent Training, circa 1989

1 Sound recording (audio cassette)

003224 003228

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 003224 003228

Language: English.

Notes: ACMA AV001251\_B

Curator Portia James provided highlights and insights about the exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930' to docents. She provided an overview history of African American inventors and innovators, and the sections of the exhibition. Training was more a discussion than a lecture.

Discussion. Audio only. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Dated April 27.

The Real McCoy: Docent Training, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Exhibition organized by Anacostia Museum. Curator: Portia James.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
African American inventors  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Museum exhibits

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Sound recordings



Culture: African American

ACMA AV002100\_B: Lorenzo Calendar: Storytelling about Afro-American  
Invention and Innovation, circa 1990

1 Video recording (VHS)

014515

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 014515

Language: English.

Notes: To a group of children, Lorenzo Calender, professional  
storyteller and Griot, spoke of the African origin of the language  
of Swahili, agriculture, navigation, monotheism, and algebra.  
He led the children through a portion of the exhibition 'The Real  
McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930,'  
and told stories.

Event. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American  
Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Undated.

Lorenzo Calendar: Storytelling about Afro-American Invention  
and Innovation, Anacostia Community Museum Archives,  
Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention  
and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black  
inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves,  
craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the  
United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan  
Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized  
shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and  
automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask  
and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as  
African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave  
system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors  
such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and  
Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from  
some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which  
celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition  
was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia  
Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Storytelling  
Museums and community  
Children

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

ACMA AV002100\_B: Storytelling about Afro-American Inventors, circa 1990  
1 Video recording (VHS)

014515

Creator: Anacostia Museum

Technical: 014515

Language: English.

Notes: To a group of children, a woman told stories about inventors, including Benjamin Banneker, Norbert Rillieux, Elijah McCoy, Lewis Latimer, and Madame CJ Walker.

Event. Related to exhibition 'The Real McCoy: Afro-American Invention and Innovation 1619-1930.' Transcribed from physical asset: 'Eraka.' Undated.

Storytelling about Afro-American Inventors, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

The exhibition - The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation, 1619-1930 - focused on outstanding black inventors, as well as anonymous innovators, who, as slaves, craftsmen and workers, made important contributions to the United States. Included are actual inventions, such as Jan Matzelieger's "shoe-lasting" machine, which revolutionized shoe production, and Garrett Morgan's safety hood and automatic traffic signal, forerunners of the modern gas mask and traffic stop light. The exhibition examines such topics as African influences on Colonial technology and how the slave system stymied technological innovation. Individual inventors such as Lewis Temple, Elijah McCoy, James Forten, and Norbert Rillieux are profiled. Also featured are artifacts from some of the expositions of the late 19th-century, which celebrated this new surge of black inventiveness. The exhibition was curated by Portia James and organized by the Anacostia Museum. It was held at the museum from May 1989 - May 1990.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum  
Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: African Americans  
Inventors  
Inventions  
Technology  
Technological innovations  
Storytelling  
Museums and community  
Children

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)  
Washington (D.C.)  
United States

Genre/Form: Video recordings

Culture: African American

*[Return to Table of Contents](#)*

ACMA AV003424: Whaling Music, 1989

1 Sound recording (open reel; 1/4 inch)

001001

Creator: Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Technical: 001001

Language: English.

Notes: Title transcribed from physical asset.

Use of the materials requires an appointment. Some items are not accessible due to obsolete format and playback machinery restrictions. Please contact the archivist to make an appointment: [ACMarchives@si.edu](mailto:ACMarchives@si.edu).

Recording of Irish music and Celtic music.

Music. Dated 19890517

Whaling Music, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Created for Anacostia Neighborhood Museum.

Names: Anacostia Community Museum

Anacostia Neighborhood Museum

Topic: Folk music -- Ireland

Celtic music

Place: Anacostia (Washington, D.C.)

Washington (D.C.)

United States

Genre/Form: Sound recordings

Music

Culture: African American