



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Karen Kramer film collection, circa 1970-1997

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Karen Kramer film collection
Date:	circa 1970-1997
Identifier:	HSFA.1992.09
Creator:	Karen Kramer Films Kramer, Karen (Karen Susan)
Extent:	Film reels (color silent sound; 48,900 feet) Videocassettes (color silent sound)
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Received from Karen Kramer in 1992, 2003, and 2009.

Preferred Citation

Karen Kramer film collection, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Scope and Contents

Collection consists of outtakes from film by Karen Kramer, including THE SERPENT HANDLERS, TO SERVE THE GODS, HAITIAN SONG, LEGACY OF THE SPIRITS, CELEBRATION, MOCCO JUMBIE, CIGAR ROLLERS, RICE AND PEAS, CONEY ISLAND MERMAID. Collection also contains production videotapes for DAYS OF AWE, project video tapes for CHILDREN OF SHADOWS, and two film prints each of THE JOLO SERPENT HANDLERS, TO SERVE THE GODS, HAITIAN SONG, CELEBRATION and LEGACY OF THE SPIRITS.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or Anthropology Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Cooking
- Festivals
- Rites and ceremonies
- Tobacco

Types of Materials:

- Sound films
- Video recordings
- silent films

Places:

- Appalachian Region
- Caribbean Area
- Haiti
- New York (N.Y.)
- North America
- West Virginia

Container Listing

Moko Jumbie (Outtakes), circa 1970

Film reels (color sound; 3000 feet)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, MOKO JUMBIE, documents the art, craft, dance, and history of *moko jumbie* (dancing spirit)--twelve foot high stilt walkers. Moko jumbies are shown at street festivals in New York City, at Carnival in the Virgin Islands, and in religious ceremonies in Nigeria.

HSFA 1992.9.6

Rice and Peas (Outtakes), circa 1970

Film reels (color sound; 900 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, RICE AND PEAS, documents a Trinidadian woman, living in New York City, giving to an audience her recipe for cooking a traditional West Indian dish of rice and peas and discussing her reasons for opening a restaurant in New York City.

HSFA 1992.9.8

Celebration (Outtakes), circa 1970s

Videocassettes (29 minutes; color sound)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, CELEBRATION, documents Brooklyn's Caribbean Carnival including calypso music and costumes and includes historical information and a detailed examination of the creation of the elaborate costumes worn at Carnival time.

HSFA 1992.9.5

The Last of the Cigar Rollers (Outtakes), circa 1970s

Film reels (color sound; 1000 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, THE LAST OF THE NEW YORK CIGAR ROLLERS, documents the step-by-step process of hand-rolling cigars--a once important industry in New York City--as demonstrated and explained by the last three cigar rollers of this nearly extinct tradition.

HSFA 1992.9.7

Coney Island Mermaid (Outtakes), circa 1970s

Film reels (color sound; 2800 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, CONEY ISLAND MERMAID, document a yearly sea ritual held in Brooklyn which is conducted by a group of women and men who dress as mermaids and sea figures to celebrate the onset of summer.

HSFA 1992.9.9

To Serve the Gods (Outtakes), 1982

Film reels (color sound; 5400 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, TO SERVE THE GODS, document a *sevis loua*, a week-long ceremony given in

honor of a family's ancestral spirits which only happens every twenty to thirty years. Filmed in a rural community in southern Haiti, the footage records dance, song, drumming, possession, animal sacrifice, and sharing of food with family, neighbors, friends, and the gods. Filming project is based on the research of anthropologist Ira Lowenthal and his paper, "Ritual Performances and Religious Experience: A Service for the Gods in Southern Haiti."

HSFA 1992.9.2

Haitian Song (Outtakes), 1982

Film reels (color sound; 8500 feet)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, HAITIAN SONG, document a week--Monday through Sunday--in the life of Gustav and Zilmen, male and female inhabitants of a small village in rural Haiti. The footage shows typical daily and weekly activities such as the market, getting water from the river, making sisal rope by hand, cooking beans and rice outdoors, planting and harvesting, cockfight, and Sunday night dance.

HSFA 1992.9.3

Legacy of the Spirits (Outtakes), 1985

Film reels (color sound; 14,8000 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, LEGACY OF THE SPIRITS, explores and documents the religion of Vodun in Caribbean communities of New York City. Footage documents ceremonies, ritual objects, and ve-ve (sacred drawings) and explores the theology of Vodun, the meaning of the rituals, the pantheon of spirits, Catholic influence, and African origins. Priests and priestesses of Vodun and lay persons are interviewed.

HSFA 1992.9.4

Celebration, circa 1970s

Film reels (color sound; 8500 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Edited film documents Brooklyn's Caribbean Carnival including calypso music and costumes and includes historical information and a detailed examination of the creation of the elaborate costumes worn at Carnival time.

HSFA 1992.9.5

Rice and Peas, circa 1970s

1 Videocassette (12 minutes; color silent)

Notes: Edited film documents a Trinidadian woman, living in New York City, giving to an audience her recipe for cooking a traditional West Indian dish of rice and peas and discussing her reasons for opening a restaurant in New York City.

HSFA 1992.9.8

The Last of the New York Cigar Rollers, circa 1970

1 Videocassette (13 minutes; color sound)

Notes: Edited film documents the step-by-step process of hand-rolling cigars--a once important industry in New York City--as demonstrated and explained by the last three cigar rollers of this nearly extinct tradition.

HSFA 1992.9.10

The Jolo Serpent-Handlers (Outtakes), circa 1980

Film reels (color sound; 4000 feet; 16mm)

Notes: Outtakes from the edited film, THE JOLO SERPENT HANDLERS, documents two serpent-handling services in a rural West Virginia church and the activities surrounding the services, an all-night prayer vigil held for the victim of a rattlesnake bite, interviews with church members, and singing and playing music.

HSFA 1992.9.1

Production videotapes for Days of Awe, 1997

Videocassettes (24 hours)

Notes: Production videotapes for DAYS OF AWE shot in Haiti in 1997.

HSFA 1998-012

Project videotapes for Children of Shadows, undetermined

15 Videocassettes

Notes: Project video tapes of edited video "Children of Shadows."

HSFA 2003-003

Film prints, undetermined

Film reels

Notes: 2 film prints each of THE JOLO SERPENT HANDLERS, TO SERVE THE GODS, HAITIAN SONG, CELEBRATION and LEGACY OF THE SPIRITS.

HSFA 2009-007