

K Kansas City Jazz Oral History Collection, 1977-1980
0012 3 cubic feet

RESTRICTED

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INTRODUCTION

The collection contains audio recordings and transcripts of interviews with jazz musicians who played in Kansas City during the "Golden Age of Jazz." In addition, there are interviews with individuals familiar with Kansas City's jazz scene from 1924 to 1942. Some of those interviewed include Count Basie, Orville "Piggy" Minor, Myra Taylor, and Druie Bess.

DONOR INFORMATION

The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Nathan Pearson and Howard Litwak on July 23, 1980 (Accession No. KA0022). An addition was made on September 12, 1983, by P. Robert Paustian and the University of Missouri-Kansas City General Library (Accession No. KA0217). An addition was made on October 28, 1983, by Nathan Pearson (Accession No. KA0220).

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Use of this collection is intended for scholarly research only. No for-profit use can be made of the tapes or the transcriptions of the Kansas City Jazz Oral History Collection in print, electronic, or other medium during the lifetime of the interviewee of the tapes without the express permission of Nathan Pearson, Howard Litwak, and the interviewee.

The restriction shall expire upon the death of the interviewee in question.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKETCH

Howard Litwak and Nathan Pearson first discussed the possibility of doing a jazz oral history project in 1975. In 1976, they were awarded a Youth Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to begin work on "Kansas City--The Oral History of a Jazz Scene, 1924-1942." Oral interviews by Litwak and Pearson were conducted in Kansas City, New York, and other locations in Missouri and the Southwest. The scope of the interviews included musicians, dancers, civic leaders, politicians, band managers, and nightclub owners important to the Kansas City jazz scene.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection has been arranged into the following two series.

Transcripts Oral Histories

The **Transcripts** series contains thirty-five transcripts of oral history interviews. These transcripts come from the oral histories, although not all oral histories have been transcribed. Transcripts are arranged alphabetically.

The **Oral Histories** contains 139 audio cassette tapes. The tapes have been placed in alphabetical order when possible. Some tapes have segments of more than one interview. The interviews focus on the individual's background, early music experience, and time in Kansas City during the jazz era. The topics of the interviews range from drug and alcohol use, racial discrimination, life as a traveling musician, speakeasies, nightclubs and dance halls in Kansas City where jazz was played, jazz stars of the era, and the people who were involved in the jazz scene.

Biographical information for many of the people interviewed can be located in *Who's Who of Jazz*, by John Chilton.

PREFERRED CITATION

Specific item; box number; folder number; *Kansas City Jazz Oral History Collection (K0012)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

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