

# **Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection**

**AFC 1983/008**

**Prepared by Michelle Forner**



**American Folklife Center, Library of Congress**

**Washington, D.C.**

**March 2002**

**Encoded by Kate Culkin May 1995**

**Finding aid URL: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadafc.af002001>**

**Latest revision: March 2002**

## Collection Summary

**Call No.:** AFC 1983/008

**Creator:** Bilby, Kenneth M., 1953-

**Title:** Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection

**Span Dates:** 1977-1991

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1977-1979)

**Contents:** 1 box; .5 linear feet; 332 items (containing 300 pages of manuscripts, 29 10" audio tapes, and 3 videocassettes in color)

**Repository:** Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** The Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection consists of manuscript materials, audio recordings, and video recordings that document the music and dance of Jamaican Maroons, particularly the Kromanti Dance ritual complex.

**Languages:** Collection material in English and Spanish

## Collection Concordance by Format

Quantity	Physical Description/Version	Location/I.D. Numbers
<b>Manuscript Materials</b>		
1	folder	
1	binder: M.A. thesis	
<b>Sound Recordings</b>		
29	10" DT preservation tapes at 7.5 ips	AFS 21,959-21,987; RWA 6073-6101
<b>Graphic Images</b>		
3	1/2" videocassettes, color	AFC 1983/0082:V1-V3 (AFC Originals)

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The sound recordings were loaned to the Library for duplication in 1983. The videocassettes were duplicated in 1994 for the Archive of Folk Culture collection from the original video tapes housed in the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution.

### Processing History

Collection processed by Michelle Forner. Collection guide was encoded by Kate Culkin in May 1995 as part of the Dance Heritage Coalition Access to Dance Research Resources Project, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. In March 2002, the guide was revised by Nora Yeh under the guidance of Mary Lacy.

### Location

Although the American Folklife Center holds custody of this collection, the preservation tapes, RWA 6073-6101, are housed in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division (M/B/RS). See the Collection Concordance by Format for more information.

### Access

Listening and viewing access to the collection is unrestricted. Listening copies of the recordings are available at the Folklife Reading Room.

### Restrictions

Restrictions may apply concerning the use, duplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a reference librarian in the Folklife Reading Room for specific information. See <http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/mopic/folkrec.html> for information about ordering audio reproduction.

### **Related Materials**

Bilby, Kenneth M. *Drums of Defiance: Maroon Music from the Earliest Free Black Communities of Jamaica*. Compact disc and accompanying booklet. Washington DC : Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings (SF 40412), 1992.

Bilby, Kenneth M. "Jamaica's Maroons at the Crossroads." *Caribbean Review* 9, no. 4: 18-21, 49.

Bilby, Kenneth M. "The Kromanti Dance of the Windward Maroons of Jamaica." *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 55, nos. 1/ 2 (1981): 52-101.

Bilby, Kenneth M. *Music of the Maroons of Jamaica*. LP record and accompanying booklet. New York: Folkways Records, 1981. FE 4027

### **Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: The Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection, Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

## **Key Subjects**

### **Groups**

Maroons--Jamaica

### **Languages**

Creole dialects--Jamaica

Creole dialects, English--Jamaica

English language--Jamaica

Kromanti [esoteric sacred language spoken by Jamaican Maroons]

Maroon Spirit Language

### **Topics**

Business dance--Jamaica

Convince [non-Maroon Afro-Jamaican religious dance and drumming tradition]

Cults--Jamaica

Dance--Jamaica

Drumming events--Jamaica

Handicraft--Jamaica

Folk music--Jamaica

Gravediggers--Jamaica-Songs and music

Healing--Jamaica

Ibo [Jamaican Maroon song and dance genre]

Jamaica--Religious life and customs

Jamaica--Social life and customs

Jawbone [Jamaican Maroon song, dance, and drumming style/genre]

Kromanti play

Kromanti dance

Kromanti music

Kumina (Cult) [non-Maroon Afro-Jamaican religious dance and drumming tradition]

Kumina songs [Jamaican country and bailo songs]

Mandinga [Jamaican Maroon song and dance genre]

Maroons--Jamaica--Rites and ceremonies

Maroons--Jamaica--Social life and customs

Maroons--Jamaica--Songs and music

Nanny Day [Jamaican Maroon holiday celebration]

Pleasure dance--Jamaica

Prapa [Jamaican Maroon song and dance genre]

Processions--Jamaica

Processions, Religious--Jamaica

Ritual healing--Jamaica

Sa Leone [Jamaican Maroon song, drumming, and dance genre]  
Spiritual healing--Jamaica  
Tambu [Jamaican Maroon song, drumming, and dance genre]

#### **Locations**

Accompong  
Charles Town  
Kingston  
Moore Town  
Nanny Falls  
Scott's Hall

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Kenneth M. Bilby Jamaican Maroon Collection consists of manuscript materials, audio recordings, and video recordings. The materials span the years 1977-1979 and 1991. Bilby conducted fieldwork in Jamaica from 1977 to 1978 as part of his research for a master's thesis in anthropology from Wesleyan University. His focus was on the traditional religion and music of the Jamaican Maroons (descendants of runaway slaves) who live in Moore Town, Scott's Hall, Accompong, and Charles Town. The collection is the result of a 1983 Library audiotape duplication project and a 1994 videotape duplication project, and includes a manuscript copy of Bilby's master's thesis. Bilby and another researcher, Diana Baird N'Diaye, recorded the Maroons in October 1991 as part of their fieldwork in Jamaica prior to the 1992 Maroon Program of the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife. Duplicates of videotapes made in 1991 further complement the materials.

The collection documents the traditional music and dance forms that the Jamaican Maroons have maintained as part of their unique cultural identity. The materials focus on the ritual complex known as Kromanti Dance or Kromanti Play, a ceremony that incorporates a variety of music and dance styles. The ritual involves the possession of participants by spirits of Maroon ancestors, most often to heal spirit-caused ailments. The audio and video recordings include examples of various "pleasure" (yanga) and "business" (nyaba) styles of dance and music, such as Jawbone, Sa Leone, Mandinga, Tambu, Prapa, and Ibo. Also included are audio recordings of drumming demonstrations, processional music, grave digging songs, and related music of the Kumina and Convince religions practiced by non-Maroons in neighboring areas. The video provides visual documentation of the annual Nanny Day celebrations during which various styles of music and dance belonging to Kromanti Dance are displayed. Also included on the video are scenes of dance performance at the Symposium on Maroon Heritage held in Kingston, Jamaica; demonstrations of the uses of natural materials found at Nanny Falls; and demonstrations of Maroon music, dance, and crafts at Accompong, Jamaica.

Manuscript materials include an audiotape inventory created by Bilby, duplication concordance, background notes on the videotape and on an interview with Bilby at the American Folklife Center, a copy of his master's thesis based on fieldwork research, and Bilby's liner notes from published recordings that draw from these materials.

## Description of Series

*Container*

*Series*

**SERIES I: MANUSCRIPTS**

**SERIES II: SOUND RECORDINGS**

**SERIES III: MOVING IMAGES**

# Collection Inventory

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
	<b>SERIES I: MANUSCRIPTS</b>
<b>FOLDER 1</b>	Collection Guide. Archive of Folk Culture administrative materials. The collection guide [this document], original audiotape inventory, duplication concordance, notes on Bilby interview and videotape content, and copies of liner notes from published recordings taken from this collection.
<b>FOLDER 2</b>	<i>Partisan Spirits: Ritual Interaction and Maroon Identity in Eastern Jamaica</i> . Kenneth Bilby's master's thesis, Anthropology Department, Wesleyan University. 1979.
	<b>SERIES II: SOUND RECORDINGS</b>
21,959-21,987 (AFS)	Song and Drumming Genres of the Kromanti Dance Ritual. 29-10" DT tapes at 7.5 ips. Duplicates of original field recordings on 40 5" audiotapes of various formats. Recorded by Kenneth Bilby in Moore Town, Scott's Hall, Accompong, and Charles Town, Jamaica, 1977-1978. Documents song and drumming genres that are part of the Kromanti Dance ritual complex. Includes music of the Kumina and Convince cults, drumming demonstrations, processional music, and grave digging songs.
	<b>SERIES III: MOVING IMAGES</b>
1983/008:V1 (AFC)	Symposium on Maroon Heritage, Kingston, and the Nanny Day Celebration in Moore Town, October 1991. One 1/2" VHS, sound, color, approximately 90 minutes. Filmed by Diana Baird N'Diaye and Kenneth Bilby. Documents music and dance performance at the Symposium on Maroon Heritage, Kingston, Jamaica, and music and dance at the Nanny Day celebration in Moore Town, Jamaica. Duplicate of hi-8 video from the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution, FP-1992-SUPER8-0090.
1983/008:V2 (AFC)	Nanny Day Celebration (cont'd) and Demonstration by Major Charles Aarons at Nanny Falls, October 1991. One 1/2" VHS, sound, color, approximately 2 hours. Filmed by Kenneth Bilby. Continuation of AFC 1983/007:V1 documenting music and dance at the Nanny Day celebration in Moore Town, Jamaica. Also documents demonstration by Major Charles Aarons of the many uses Maroons derived for natural materials found at Nanny Falls. Duplicate of hi-8 video from the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution, FP-1992-SUPER8-0091.
1983/008:V3 (AFC)	Arts and Crafts Demonstrations at Accompong, October 1991. One 1/2" VHS, sound, color, approximately 90 minutes. Filmed by Kenneth Bilby. Documents demonstrations of music, dance, storytelling, drum-making, and crafts at Accompong, Jamaica. Duplicate of hi-8 video from the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution, FP-1992-SUPER8-0092.