

**StoryCorps® Griot**



**KPCC 89.3**  
Southern California Public Radio

*For Immediate Release*

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## StoryCorps returns to Los Angeles

*Partners with 89.3 KPCC to record stories of local African American residents*

**March 15, 2011** – StoryCorps, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of Americans from all backgrounds and beliefs, returns to Los Angeles as part of its Griot Initiative to record and preserve stories of African Americans. StoryCorps will partner with 89.3 KPCC during this visit, and record interviews at the California African American Museum starting Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Griot Initiative has already recorded more than 4,000 interviews around the country, surpassing the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Slave Narratives as the largest collection of interviews with African Americans ever recorded. The project gets its name from the word “Griot” (pronounced GREE-oh), a story teller in West African tradition, who hands down family and community history from generation to generation.

StoryCorps’ now famous MobileBooth—an Airstream trailer outfitted with a recording studio—will park at the California African American Museum from March 24<sup>th</sup> through April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The museum is located at 600 State Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90037.



*The StoryCorps Airstream MobileBooth*

StoryCorps’ interviews are between two people who know and care about each other. At the end of each 40-minute interview, participants get a CD copy of the interview, and if permission is granted, a second copy is archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Interviews recorded through the Griot Initiative are also archived at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African History and Culture.

During the visit to Los Angeles, StoryCorps is partnering with 89.3 KPCC to collect about 175 interviews. KPCC will edit and broadcast some of those interviews locally. Segments of select interviews may also air nationally on NPR's *Morning Edition*.

StoryCorps visited Los Angeles last year as part of the Historias Initiative to collect stories from Latinos, a visit also co-sponsored by KPCC. StoryCorps was founded in 2003 by producer and MacArthur "Genius" Grant recipient David Isay, and has collected more than 60,000 stories from all 50 states.

KPCC president and CEO Bill Davis said, "Most of what we do on the radio passes in a moment, so we're excited to work with StoryCorps again. StoryCorps interviews make great radio, and they also contribute to the American historical record."

Charmaine Jefferson, executive director of the California African American Museum, said, "The StoryCorps Griot mandate to collect and preserve the voices and life of Americans mirrors the California African American Museum's mission of collecting and preserving the art, history and culture of African Americans. We are pleased to welcome KPCC to our CAAM plaza to encourage the recording of the stories of African Americans and their families from the Los Angeles area."

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#### **About StoryCorps**

StoryCorps is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, preserve, and share their stories. StoryCorps is currently one of the fastest-growing nonprofits in the country. Each week, millions of Americans listen to StoryCorps' award-winning broadcasts on NPR's *Morning Edition*. StoryCorps has published two books: *Listening Is an Act of Love* in 2007 and *Mom: A Celebration of Mothers from StoryCorps* in 2010—both *New York Times* bestsellers. StoryCorps' major funders include: The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), The Atlantic Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The Annenberg Foundation, The Kaplen Foundation, and Joe and Carol Reich. StoryCorps also relies on support from its participants and listeners. For more information, or to listen to stories online, visit [storycorps.org](http://storycorps.org).

#### **About 89.3 KPCC and Southern California Public Radio**

89.3 KPCC and its repeating stations in the Inland Empire (89.1 KUOR, Redlands) and Palm Springs (90.3 KPCV, Coachella), along with [www.KPCC.org](http://www.KPCC.org), reach more than 650,000 people each week. The on-air schedule includes all of public radio's signature programs, focusing on a combination of world and international news from NPR and the BBC, and local news from KPCC reporters in Southern California, Sacramento and Washington, DC. In the last ten years, KPCC's news department, daily programs and online services have won 250 major journalistic awards.

#### **About California African American Museum**

The California African American Museum (CAAM) researches, collects, preserves and interprets for public enrichment the history, art and culture of African Americans. Chartered by the California State Legislature in 1977, CAAM is a state supported institution and a partner with the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Friends, the Foundation of the California African American Museum. In addition to its permanent collection, CAAM hosts specially mounted exhibitions curated through loans and its own collection, and tours CAAM exhibitions throughout California and the nation. Located at 600 State Drive in Exposition Park, the museum is open to the public Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, and Sundays, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm. Parking in the adjacent lot is \$8.00 all day. Enter the lot from Figueroa and 39<sup>th</sup> Streets. Admission and workshop participation is free.

#### **About The National Museum of African American history and Culture**

The National Museum of African American History and Culture was created in 2003 when President George W. Bush signed legislation establishing it as the only national museum devoted exclusively to exploring and documenting African American life, art, history, and culture. It will be built in Washington, DC, on the National

Mall on a five-acre site adjacent to the Washington Monument. Through nationally touring exhibitions, collections, and educational programs, the museum will explore several areas of history, including slavery, reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Civil Rights era. For details on its legislative mandate, visit [www.nmaahc.si.edu](http://www.nmaahc.si.edu).