

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lorenzo Pace

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Pace, Lorenzo
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace,
Dates:	December 17, 2000
Bulk Dates:	2000
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:40:52).
Abstract:	Mixed media artist Lorenzo Pace (1943 -) was commissioned to build a monument at New York City's Foley Square, paying homage to the African slaves originally buried at that site. Pace was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on December 17, 2000, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2000_032
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Artist Lorenzo Pace was born September 29, 1943, in Birmingham, Alabama, moving to Chicago as a teenager. Pace grew up in a strict environment. His father was a Church of God in Christ minister who had hoped the young Lorenzo would follow in his footsteps. Pace had other ideas. He wanted to explore and the city he chose was Paris, France. There, the world of art opened up to him and after a year's stay, he returned to Chicago interested in learning the craft of woodcarving. He showed great promise.

During his first exhibition at the South Side Community Arts Center, a dean from the University of Illinois was so impressed by Pace's wooden masks that he encouraged the young artist to enroll in art school. Pace then attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he graduated with both a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. He went on to receive a doctorate in art education from Illinois State University in 1978. Pace later moved to New York, like many other artists, seeking a more supportive artistic environment.

In 1993, Pace and his work gained national attention when he was commissioned to build a monument at New York City's Foley Square paying homage to the African slaves originally buried on that site. In 1991, the remains of more than 400 African slaves were excavated during the construction of a federal building in the city's financial district. The city of New York wanted to create a memorial and Pace was chosen to make it. His work resulted in a beautiful 300-ton granite sculpture, Triumph of the Human Spirit. However, Pace and other African Americans generated controversy when they boycotted the unveiling ceremony because the day chosen was Columbus Day.

Throughout his career, Pace has worked with a broad range of objects and materials. His sculptures, installations and performance art have received international acclaim and he has exhibited in galleries and museum all over the world. He presently maintains a studio in Brooklyn and serves as director of the Montclair State University Art Gallery.

Pace was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on December 17, 2000.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Lorenzo Pace was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on December 17, 2000, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Mixed media artist Lorenzo Pace (1943 -) was commissioned to build a monument at New York City's Foley Square, paying homage to the African slaves originally buried at that site.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Pace, Lorenzo

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Bieschke, Paul (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Pace, Lorenzo--Interviews

African American artists--Illinois--Chicago--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Mixed Media Artist

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, December 17, 2000. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_001, TRT: 0:31:13 ?
Artist Lorenzo Pace pays tribute to his parents and his ancestors, detailing the backgrounds and personalities of both his mother and father. Pace explains how he paid tribute to both of them through his artwork. Pace also explains how a

lock that was used to enslave his great--grandfather served as inspiration for a children's book he wrote, 'Jalani and the Lock'.

African American families--History.

Genealogy--United States.

Slavery--United States.

African American authors--Juvenile literature.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_002, TRT: 0:29:06 ?

Artist Lorenzo Pace shares memories of his early childhood in Birmingham, Alabama, detailing the strong community in which he grew up and describing his family life, much of which revolved around the church. Pace then explains why his family decided to move north to Chicago, Illinois, and talks about how he and his siblings and parents made that difficult transition. Pace contrasts his neighborhood on the South Side with Alabama and explains the differences.

Childhood--Alabama--Birmingham.

African American families.

African Americans--Migration--History--20th century.

African Americans--Religion--Alabama--Birmingham.

African American neighborhoods--Alabama.

African American neighborhoods--Illinois--Chicago--South Side.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_003, TRT: 0:31:03 ?

Artist Lorenzo Pace details his year spent abroad in Paris, France, and explains how that changed his life and prepared him for becoming an artist. Pace recalls his first interest in the arts and narrates his artistic development from wood carving through sculpture with metals and clay. Pace also describes his parents' reactions to his newfound artistic lifestyle.

International travel--France--Paris.

African American artists.

Carving (Decorative arts).

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_004, TRT: 0:30:47 ?

Artist Lorenzo Pace details his art career in Chicago and New York. Pace describes his first successful exhibition in Chicago and how he gained prominence in the local art scene. Pace then talks about his time at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he learned how to expand his boundaries into the realm of performance art. Pace details one of his controversial performance pieces in Chicago, and then explains his decision to move to New York City. Pace tells of how the move affected his artwork, and recalls some of his most successful pieces in New York, including his award-winning sculpture, 'Triumph of the Human Spirit'.

Art Institute of Chicago. School

Performance art--United States.

African American artists--New York (State)--New York.

African American artists--Illinois--Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_005, TRT: 0:30:47 ?

Artist Lorenzo Pace tells the full story of his award-winning monument, 'Triumph of the Human Spirit'. Pace explains his inspiration for the design of the sculpture, and talks about his artistic process. Pace then details the controversy surrounding the sculpture's various designs and unveiling ceremony. Pace then reflects on his life and career and talks about how the human condition and the

strength of African Americans has inspired his work.

Sculpture.

Video Oral History Interview with Lorenzo Pace, Section A2000_032_001_006, TRT: 0:07:56 ?

Artist Lorenzo Pace names people who have influenced his life and career, and takes a moment to consider his legacy.

Role models.

Mentoring in the arts--United States.