

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Marc Hannah

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hannah, Marc Regis
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah,
Dates:	March 10, 2011
Bulk Dates:	2011
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:50:04).
Abstract:	Electrical engineer and computer graphics designer Marc Hannah (1956 -) co-founded and designed hardware for Silicon Graphics, Inc., a leading company in the graphics design industry during the 1990s. Hannah was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on March 10, 2011, in Oakland, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2011_006
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Electrical engineer and computer graphics designer Marc Regis Hannah was born on October 13, 1956, in Chicago, Illinois to Huber and Edith Hannah. He attended the Illinois Institute of Technology, with funding from a scholarship awarded by AT&T's Bell Laboratories. Hannah received his B.S. degree in electrical engineering in 1977 before going on to Stanford University where he obtained his M.S. degree in 1978 and his Ph.D. degree in 1985.

In 1982, Hannah co-founded Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI) with Jim Clark and five others, a company that went on to be well-known for its computer graphics technology. In 1986, he was named the company's principal scientist for the creation of computer programs like Personal IRIS, Indigo, Indigo2, and Indy graphics that were used to create effects for movies like Jurassic Park, Aladdin, Beauty and the Beast, The Hunt for Red October, and Field of Dreams. George Lucas' Industrial Light & Magic used Silicon Graphics' technology to create Terminator 2. Hannah's programs have also been used to create television commercials and the opening introduction for Monday Night Football. In addition, the company's technology was used in engineering, research, and for military applications. Hannah is a partial owner of Rondeau Bay, a construction company in Oakland, California.

Since 1994, Hannah has sat on the Board of Directors for Magic Edge. He has also been profiled in *Ebony* magazine, *Electronics* magazine, *Forbes*, and *PC Magazine*. In addition, Hannah has received the Professional Achievement Award from the Illinois Institute of Technology and the National Technical Association.

Marc Hannah was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on March 10, 2011.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Marc Hannah was conducted by Larry Crowe on March 10, 2011, in Oakland, California, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Electrical engineer and computer graphics designer Marc Hannah (1956 -) co-founded and designed hardware for Silicon Graphics, Inc., a leading company in the graphics design industry during the 1990s.

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:

Hannah, Marc Regis

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hannah, Marc Regis--Interviews

African American scientists--Interviews.

African American engineers--Interviews.

Computer graphics.

Illinois Institute of Technology.

Silicon Graphics, Inc.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Silicon Graphics International Division

Occupations:

Electrical Engineer

Computer Graphics Designer

HistoryMakers® Category:

ScienceMakers

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 Marc Hannah, March 10, 2011. 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 Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_001, TRT: 0:30:01 ?

Marc Hannah lists his favorites and describes his family history. He recalls the family history of his mother, Edith Hannah, who grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and later became a school teacher. Hannah recalls the family history of his father, Hubert Hannah, who was raised in Hilltop, West Virginia. He describes how his parents met and his family's move from Columbus, Ohio to Chicago, Illinois. In particular, Hannah remembers the growth of Trinity United Church of Christ under Reverend Jeremiah Wright.

African American families--Ohio--Columbus.

Trinity United Church of Christ (Chicago, Illinois).

African American parents.

African Americans--Illinois--Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_002, TRT: 0:29:23 ?

Marc Hannah reminisces about his youth in Chicago, Illinois, including his earliest childhood memory and the sights, sounds, and smells of growing up in the city. He remembers attending Kipling Elementary School and Fort Dearborn Elementary School, and describes the phenomenon of white flight that occurred during that time. Hannah also considers his initial interest in computer graphics. Hannah describes his high school experiences, first at the University of Chicago Laboratory School and then at Kenwood Academy High School. Hannah closes this segment describing the appearance and function of early computers.

Computers.

Racism--Illinois--Chicago.

African American children--Education (Elementary)--Illinois--Chicago.

Education, Secondary--Illinois--Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_003, TRT: 0:31:28 ?

Marc Hannah shares his experiences moving from high school through college and his initial work on the geometry engine. Hannah discusses his first experiences in computer programming and electrical engineering. He describes how he motivated himself to do well in school at the Illinois Institute of Technology, and how a scholarship he received from AT&T Bell Laboratories afforded him the opportunity to work in the laboratories. He then went on to attend Stanford University and earned his Ph.D. degree. Hannah concludes this part of the interview by talking about his initial work with James H. Clark in computer graphics technology.

Stanford University.

Illinois Institute of Technology.

Computer programming.

Electrical engineering.

Education, Higher--Illinois.

Computer graphics.

Clark, James H.

Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_004, TRT: 0:30:29 ?

Marc Hannah provides further information about the ground-breaking Geometry Engine, describing both its functions in rasterization and its utility as a low-cost multi-functional piece of hardware. Moving forward, Hannah outlines the successes of Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI), a computer graphics technology company that he helped co-found with his adviser, James H. Clark in 1982. He delves into the question of balancing his graduate work with his work at SGI, and explains the theories behind his dissertation. In the second part of the tape, Hannah discusses the growing use of computers in generating movie special effects through the 1980s and 1990s. He notes the success of SGI through this period of time.

Computer graphics--technology and applications.

Stanford University.

Silicon Graphics, Inc.

Clark, James H.

Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_005, TRT: 0:30:24 ?

Marc Hannah begins this interview tape discussing the scientific applications of the graphics technology produced by Silicon Graphics, Inc (SGI). Hannah then details the growth and decline of SGI during the 1990s and 2000s, and he notes his departure from the organization in 1997. Hannah continues by describing his involvement with a series of projects and organizations, including Omniverse Digital Solutions, where he served as a consultant for a web-portal focused on African American community; Pulsent Corporation, where he worked on hardware for video compression technology; and SongPro, Inc., where he worked to develop hardware for playing music on a Nintendo Game Boy. Hannah concludes this interview describing his involvement with the Strategic Urban Development Alliance (SUDA) and his plans for the future.

Scientific applications.

Nintendo Kabushiki Kaisha.

African American engineers--California--Fremont.

Information technology--United States.

Video Oral History Interview with Marc Hannah, Section A2011_006_001_006, TRT: 0:18:19 ?

Marc Hannah begins this segment of the interview by describing his hopes and concerns for the African American community, citing his desire for technology to play a role in improving the educational system. Hannah considers part of his legacy to be the creation of Silicon Graphics, Inc., but hopes to continue his work in engineering and technology. He talks about his family members, and concludes the interview by reflecting on how he would like to be remembered.

Educational technology.

African American families--California.

Science--Vocational guidance.