

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Mary Schmidt Campbell

PERSON

Campbell, Mary Schmidt

**Alternative Names:** Mary Schmidt Campbell;

**Life Dates:** October 21, 1947-

**Place of Birth:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

**Work:** Atlanta, GA

**Occupations:** Academic Administrator; Museum  
Executive

## Biographical Note

Born to Elaine and Harvey Schmidt in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on October 21, 1947, Mary Schmidt Campbell has distinguished herself as an educator and prominent advocate of the arts.

After earning a B.A. at Swarthmore College in 1969, Campbell taught English literature at Nkumbi International College in Zambia. Campbell returned to the U.S. and studied art history at Syracuse University,

graduating with an M.A. in 1973. In 1974, she became both a curator of the Everson Museum of Fine Arts in Syracuse, New York and the art editor of Syracuse New Times.

From 1977 to 1987, Campbell served as Executive Director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, a fine arts museum that exhibits, collects and interprets the work of black artists. During this time, she earned a Ph.D. from Syracuse University. She then served as Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for the City of New York until 1991, managing an agency which funds New York cultural institutions and organizations.

After establishing herself as a leader in the field of arts and public policy, Campbell became Dean of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, a preeminent center of theatre and film. Many of the country's leading film directors, Broadway producers, actors and writers as well as theatre historians and critics have matriculated from the school, and recent graduates have won major awards at festivals around the world. Campbell has dramatically improved enrollment, funding and programs. She established and chairs the Department of Art and Public Policy.

Dr. Mary Schmidt Campbell lectures nationally on arts policy issues and American cultural history; is professionally associated with various institutes and academies; and has frequently won awards for her good work. Campbell is married to physicist Dr. George Campbell, Jr. They have three sons: Garikai, Sekou and Britt, and three grandchildren.

Harlem Renaissance: Art of Black America /  
Introduction by Mary Schmidt Campbell, New York:  
Studio Museum in Harlem: Abradale Press, 1994.

The Life and Work of Romare Bearden will be  
published by Oxford University Press.

## Related Entries

**Henry C. Lea Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Philadelphia High School for Girls** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**H.S. Diploma**

**Swarthmore College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**Syracuse University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**Syracuse University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ph. D.**

**Nkumbi International College** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Professor**

**Everson Museum of Fine Arts** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1970 to 1971]

**Curator**

**Syracuse New Times** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1949 to 1951]

**Art Editor**

**Tisch School of the Arts, New York University**  
[EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Dean**

**Studio Museum in Harlem** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1977 to 1987]

**Executive Director**

**New York City Department of Cultural Affairs**

[EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1987 to 1991]

**Commissioner of Cultural Affairs**