

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ronne Hartfield

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Hartfield, Ronne, 1936-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield,
Dates:	July 3, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	6 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:39:51).
Abstract:	Arts administrator Ronne Hartfield (1936 -) was project director at Urban Gateways, the largest private arts education organization in the United States. She was a professor and dean of students at The School of the Art Institute, Chicago, where she became the executive director for museum education. Due to this work, Hartfield is internationally recognized as an expert in arts and multicultural education. Hartfield was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 3, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_080
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Arts administrator Ronne Hartfield was born on March 17, 1936 in Chicago, Illinois to Thelma Shepherd and John Drayton Rone. After graduating from Wendell Phillips High School in 1952, Hartfield (then Rone) went to the University of Chicago. She earned a B.A. in history in 1955. Her first job, doing public relations for the Chicago Children's Choir, gave her a "sense of mission." That sense, as well as her natural energy and enthusiasm, carried over to the rest of her career in which she sought positions through which she could positively affect the arts and society.

In 1969, Hartfield became the project director at Urban Gateways, the largest private arts education organization in the United States. After a successful start there, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago hired her in 1974 as professor of comparative literature and Dean of Students. There, she developed national and international exchange study programs and fellowships, supervised student services and designed and executed assessment studies. She taught at Northwestern University and the University of Illinois, Chicago as well. Seven years later, Urban Gateways lured Hartfield back as the Executive Director. Under her leadership, the organization was designated by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as the national model for artist training and community arts education. She returned to the University of Chicago for graduate studies, earning an M.A. in theology and literature in 1982. In 1991, she began serving the Art Institute as the Executive Director for Museum Education. In this role, she provided interpretive materials and programs for all visitors to the museum. Because of this work, Hartfield is internationally recognized as an expert in arts and multicultural education.

Hartfield continues to consult with the Art Institute on a variety of projects. She serves as a trustee for the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation and the Rhode Island School of Design. She served as a trustee for Chicago's Columbia College and New York's International Sculpture Center for five years and has worked as a consultant for

the NEA and the Rockefeller Foundation. She and her husband, Robert Hartfield, have four children.

Selected Publications:

Hartfield, Ronne. "The Chicago Years: Gathering Light in the Gray City." *Gullah Images: The Art of Jonathan Green*. University of South Carolina Press, 1996.

Hartfield, Ronne. *Encountering Art/Different Facets of the Esthetic Experience*. Miho Museum/Kyoto. New York: Overlook Press, 2001.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Ronne Hartfield was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 3, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 6 Betacame SP videocassettes. Arts administrator Ronne Hartfield (1936 -) was project director at Urban Gateways, the largest private arts education organization in the United States. She was a professor and dean of students at The School of the Art Institute, Chicago, where she became the executive director for museum education. Due to this work, Hartfield is internationally recognized as an expert in arts and multicultural education.

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:

Hartfield, Ronne, 1936-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Hartfield, Ronne, 1936---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Arts Administrator

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 Ronne Hartfield, July 3, 2002. 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 Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_001, TRT: 0:28:53 ?
Ronne Hartfield describes her family history. Her mother, Thelma Shepherd Rone, was born on July 20, 1899 in Woodville, Mississippi to Cornelia Lehmann and Arthur Shepherd. Lehmann's grandmother had come to the United States as a slave. Arthur Shepherd was an unmarried British plantation owner who had three kids with Lehmann. Lehmann died when Thelma Shepherd was six years old, and when she was fifteen her father was struck by lightning, leaving her an orphan. Thelma Shepherd moved to New Orleans, Louisiana in 1914 and to Chicago, Illinois in 1918. Hartfield's father, John Drayton Rone, was born on June 9, 1900 to John F. Rone and Eliza Roberts Rone in Haynesville, Louisiana. John F. Rone was born a slave in Charleston, South Carolina in 1850 to a white father who taught to read and write. In 1865, and ran away to Texas, where he married Eliza Roberts, who was half-Choctaw. Both Rone and Roberts died when John Drayton Rone was a child. He lived with older siblings and hopped boxcars before moving to Chicago.
- Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_002, TRT: 0:29:39 ?
Ronne Hartfield describes her childhood in Chicago, Illinois in the 1930s and 1940s. Hartfield was born as Ronola Rone on March 17, 1936 in Chicago. Hartfield's father, John Drayton Rone, worked at a printing press on 14th and Damen while her mother, Thelma Shepherd Rone, worked as a homemaker. Though she grew up in a very segregated neighborhood, Hartfield's primary memory of her childhood was being able to roam around the city on streetcars and her bicycle. She frequented the Hardin Square Branch Library and institutions like the Art Institute of Chicago, the Newberry Library, and the Wabash YWCA. Hartfield attended John B. Drake Elementary School, which she graduated from in 1948, and Wendell Phillips High School, where she graduated in 1952. In the fall of 1952, at the age of 17, Hartfield enrolled in the University of Chicago to study history, and on September 4, 1953 she married one of her classmates, Robert Hartfield.
- Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_003, TRT: 0:29:28 ?
Ronne Hartfield describes her experience at the University of Chicago and her early career at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Urban Gateways. While attending the University of Chicago, Hartfield was inspired by her professors Charles H. Bell, Canon B.I. Bell, and Herman Sinaiko, and became interested in the study of religion, art, poetry, and history. After receiving her A.B. degree in history in 1955. Hartfield worked as an assistant editor in a publishing company until the birth of her first daughter, Claire, in 1957. Hartfield raised four daughters and returned to work in 1969 at the Chicago Children's Choir. In September of 1969, Hartfield was offered a part-time position as an arts educator for Urban Gateways under Jesse Woods. In 1974, Hartfield became a dean at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a position which she held until 1981. During this time, she was also enrolled in the University of Chicago Graduate Divinity School, where she studied Theology and Literature.
- Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_004, TRT: 0:29:43 ?
Ronne Hartfield describes her experience at Urban Gateways and the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1981, Hartfield became Executive Director of Urban Gateways in Chicago, Illinois. Urban Gateways started in 1961 as a program to increase arts education in inner-city schools and strengthen the black arts community. Hartfield had worked for them as a part-time teacher and workshop

organizer in the early 1970s under Executive Director Jesse Woods. In 1981, Hartfield became executive director and helped the struggling organization make a profit through marketing packages of bundled programs and increasing the involvement of school principals. In 1991, Hartfield left Urban Gateways and became Executive Director of Museum Education at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she helped the museum change its image and increase community involvement through programs like 'Evenings for Educators.' She was instrumental in the museum's purchase of a daguerreotype of Frederick Douglass and in an exhibition of spiritual art.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_005, TRT: 0:29:51 ?

Ronne Hartfield talks about her recent career and her book. After retiring as Executive Director of Museum Education at the Art Institute of Chicago, Hartfield began working with Lawrence E. Sullivan at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University and at the Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion at the University of Chicago. In 2001, she received a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation to work at a scholar's center on Lake Como in Bellagio, Italy, where she spent six months working on a book about her family history called 'Another Way Home.' During this time, she also led conferences on sacred art around the world. Hartfield ends the interview by reflecting on her hopes and concerns for the African American community, the need to valorize African American history, and her legacy.

Video Oral History Interview with Ronne Hartfield, Section A2002_080_001_006, TRT: 0:12:17 ?

Ronne Hartfield narrates her photographs.