

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Paul Douglas Freeman

PERSON

Freeman, Paul, 1936-

Alternative Names: Paul Douglas Freeman;

Life Dates: January 2, 1936-July 22, 2015

Place of Birth: Richmond, Virginia, USA

Work: Chicago, IL

Occupations: Orchestra Conductor

Biographical Note

Born in Richmond, Virginia, maestro Paul Freeman made a global impact with his symphonic direction. Freeman attended the Eastman School of Music, where he earned his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, with his principal instruments being the clarinet and the cello. Following the completion of his Ph.D., Freeman received a Fulbright Scholarship for two years of study at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, and then studied under conductor Pierre Monteaux at the American Symphony.

Freeman began his conducting career with the Opera Theater of Rochester, New York, where he worked for six years. Following his term at the Opera Theater, Freeman served as the associate conductor of the Dallas and Detroit symphonies, and went on to become the principal guest conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1979, Freeman joined the Victoria Symphony in Canada, where he served as music director until 1989. In 1987, Freeman founded the Chicago Sinfonietta, where he served as conductor; in 1996 he was appointed the music director and conductor of the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. Freeman served in both posts concurrently.

After the 1970s, one of Freeman's passions became exposing audiences to black composers. To achieve this aim, the Sinfonietta produced numerous shows highlighting the works of black composers; during the 1970s Freeman released nine albums on Columbia Records to highlight some of the most notable names. In 1975, Time listed Freeman's recordings of the first four volumes in its top ten classical records of all time.

Freeman conducted seven productions for national television; conducted five productions for international audiences through Czech national television; and was involved in more than 200 recordings. Freeman was the recipient of numerous awards, including the prestigious Mitropoulos International Conductors Competition; the

Spoletto Festival of Two Worlds Award; and the Jubilate Award, Canada's highest award for music education. In total, Freeman conducted over 100 orchestras in twenty-eight countries.

Paul Freeman passed away on July 22, 2015, at the age of 79.

Related Entries

Navy Hill School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Booker T. Washington Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Armstrong High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Diploma

Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Bachelor of Music

Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Master of Music

Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ph.D. in Music Theory

Hochschule für Musik [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Chicago Sinfonietta [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Music director/conductor

Czech National Symphony Orchestra [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Music director/conductor