

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Stan Lathan

PERSON

Lathan, Stan

Alternative Names: Stan Lathan;

Life Dates: July 8, 1945-

Place of Birth: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: Studio City, CA

Occupations: Television Producer

Biographical Note

Director and television producer Stan Lathan was born on July 8, 1945, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The youngest of three children, Lathan attended public school in Philadelphia and went on to attend Pennsylvania State University, earning his B.A. degree in 1967.

Lathan began his directing career with the popular African American PBS series *Say Brother*; he then began directing episodes of *Sesame Street* in 1969

while working with well-known film director William Greaves. Over the following decades, Lathan directed numerous hit shows, including *The Redd Foxx Show*, *Hill Street Blues*, *Miami Vice*, *Martin*, and *It's Garry Shandling's Show*. Lathan also directed a number of dance specials for PBS featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov, Alvin Ailey, Martha Graham's Dance Company, and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Lathan also executive produced and directed *Cedric "The Entertainer" Presents* and produced and directed *It's Black Entertainment*, a two-hour musical documentary for Showtime. Lathan did not limit himself to television; he directed *Beat Street*, and *Save the Children*, both feature-length motion pictures, as well as served as executive producer for *Gridlock'd* and *How To Be A Player*.

Lathan went on to become the executive producer and director of the HBO series *Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry*, and served as the co-creator of *Russell Simmons' Def Comedy Jam*. Lathan was also responsible for developing the concept for *Def Poetry Jam on Broadway*, which won a Tony Award in 2003 for best Special Theatrical Event., and went on to tour nationally and in Europe.

Lathan was honored with four NAACP Image Awards and The National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters Award for his achievements. Lathan served on the Board of Directors of the RUSH Philanthropic Arts Foundation and on the Board of Visitors for the School of Communications at Pennsylvania State University.

Lathan and his wife, Marguerite, were residents of Beverly Hills.

Related Entries

Jay Cook Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Pennsylvania State University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Boston University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Jay Cooke Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]