

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lee Ransaw

PERSON

Ransaw, Lee A., 1938-

Alternative Names: Lee Ransaw;

Life Dates: March 24, 1938-

Place of Birth: Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

Residence: Stone Mountain, GA

Work: GA

Occupations: Fine Artist; ; Art Professor

Biographical Note

Fine artist and art professor Lee Ransaw, was born on March 24, 1938, in Little Rock, Arkansas, to Sylvia and Lee Lester. In 1955, Ransaw received his high school diploma from Shortridge High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. He later attended Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana where he earned his B.A. degree in art education in 1962 and his M.A. degree in fine arts in 1966. In 1973, Ransaw received

his Ed.D. degree from Illinois State University.

While Ransaw was a graduate student at Illinois State University, he travelled to Nashville, Tennessee where he met artist and scholar David Driskell. This visit inspired Ransaw to begin collecting artwork for his private art collection. After taking courses at Pratt Institute in New York, Ransaw moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where he taught African art and Afro-American art at Emory University. In 1979, Ransaw was hired at Morris Brown College as an art professor where he painted the Centennial Mural which depicted the history of the college. The mural was considered to be a national project and was commissioned by the Atlanta Coca Cola Bottling Company. In 2002, Ransaw along with Lamar Wilson, director of Ruth Hall Hodges Art Gallery, founded The National Alliance of Artists from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (NAAHBCU) on the campus of Morris Brown College. Ransaw, then dean of arts and letters, and chair of the fine art department at the college, initially held a statewide exhibit that featured the artwork of the art faculty from Georgia based HBCUs. NAAHBCU held its first major traveling exhibition entitled Visions From Within at the James Kemp Gallery at The Black Academy of Arts & Letters in Dallas, Texas and featured thirty artists. In 2004, Ransaw was hired as an adjunct art professor at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Ransaw retired as president of NAAHBCU in 2010 and served as chairman of the organization. Among his many honors and awards were The Distinguished United Negro College Fund Scholars Award in Washington, D.C., The Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, The Ford Foundation Fellowship, and a Bronze Jubilee Award for artistic achievement given by PBS in Atlanta, Georgia.

Lee Ransaw was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April, 19, 2011.

Related Entries

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

Dipolma

Indiana University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

Indiana University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

Illinois State University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ed.D.

George Washington Carver Elementary School 87
[STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Pulaski Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Indiana University Northwest [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Emory University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Lecturer in Art History

Morris Brown College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

**Professor of Art, Chairman of the fine art
department and dean of arts and letters.**

National Alliance of Artists from Historically Black

Colleges [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1949 to ?]

Founders and president.

Spelman College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1949 to 1950]

Adjunct Art professor

University of Wisconsin-Madison [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1974]

professor

**National Alliance of Artists from Historically Black
Colleges** [MEMBEROF]
[from 1994 to 2010]

Founder

Apex Museum [MEMBEROF]
[from 1981 to ?]

Board of Directors

National Conference of Artists [MEMBEROF]
[from 1980 to ?]

Board of Directors

African-Americans for the Arts [MEMBEROF]
[from 2002 to ?]

Board of Directors

**National Alliance of Artists from Historically Black
Colleges** [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Founder and President

Black Artists of Atlanta [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

National Art Education Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

College Art Association of America [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]