Overview of the Collection

Repository: The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com

Creator: Chew, Raymond Leighton, 1958-

Title: The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew,

Dates: July 12, 2013

Bulk Dates: 2013

Physical Description: 10 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:46:42).

Abstract: Musician and singer and music director Ray Chew (1958 - ) served as the music arranger on seven albums with the legendary duo Nick Ashford & Valerie Simpson. He also served as the musical director for the television shows “Showtime at the Apollo” and “American Idol.” Chew was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 12, 2013, in Teaneck, New Jersey. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.

Identification: A2013_194

Language: The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Musician and music director Ray Chew was born in 1958 in the Harlem, New York to Henry and Elaine Chew. Chew developed an interest in music at an early age. At age six, Chew received a scholarship to attend the Julliard School’s Children’s Program. He continued to pursue music education throughout his childhood, and enrolled in institutions such as Third Street Music School and the High School of Music and Arts where he was exposed to iconic musicians such as jazz legends Lionel Hampton, Max Roach, and Dizzy Gillespie.
As a music arranger and multi-instrumentalist, Chew has worked with notable musicians including Gladys Knight, Quincy Jones, Diana Ross and Aretha Franklin. In 1974, Chew received his first big break in the music industry when he was given an opportunity to go on tour with recording artist and Broadway star Melba Moore. Chew was selected to produce music for Nick Ashford & Valerie Simpson in 1975. He went on to serve as the music arranger on seven albums with the legendary duo over a twenty year period. In 1980, Chew became the musical director of the Saturday Night Live Band. In 1998, he co-founded Chew Entertainment with his wife, music executive Vivian Scott Chew. Later Chew and his wife founded Power to Inspire, a nonprofit organization that aims to improve music appreciation among youths. He continued his career in television when he was named musical director of “Showtime at the Apollo,” a talent competition filmed at Harlem’s historic Apollo Theater, in 1992. In 2001, Chew composed the score for the short film, The Gilded Six Bits, earning him his first credit for a musical score; and, in 2008, he was recruited as the bandleader for the Democratic National Convention. In 2009, he was selected by President Barack Obama to direct the Neighborhood Inaugural Ball. Chew became the musical director of “American Idol” in 2011.

Since his early years as a student at the High School of Music and Arts, Chew has received recognition for his talent as a musical arranger and multi-instrumentalist. Chew served as the musical director of the Apollo Theater Foundation and as a national trustee for the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Chew is married to Vivian Scott Chew. they have two daughters: Bianca and Loren.

Ray Chew was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on July 24, 2013.

**Scope and Content**

This life oral history interview with Ray Chew was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on July 12, 2013, in Teaneck, New Jersey, and was recorded on 10 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Musician and singer and music director Ray Chew (1958 - ) served as the music arranger on seven albums with the legendary duo Nick Ashford & Valerie Simpson. He also served as the musical director for the television shows “Showtime at the Apollo” and “American Idol.”

**Restrictions**
Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

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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:

Chew, Raymond Leighton, 1958-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Chew, Raymond Leighton, 1958---Interviews
Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Musician and Singer

Music Director

HistoryMakers® Category:

MusicMakers

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


Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual
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 Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_001, TRT: 1:44:19 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_002, TRT: 2:30:41 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_003, TRT: 3:30:07 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_004, TRT: 4:28:27 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_005, TRT: 5:27:40 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_006, TRT: 6:31:19 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_007, TRT: 7:32:25 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_008, TRT: 8:28:32 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_009, TRT: 9:30:23 2013/07/12
- Video Oral History Interview with Ray Chew, Section A2013_194_001_010, TRT: 10:02:49 2013/07/12

(Matters 1995).