

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Michael "Rahni" Flowers

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Flowers, Michael, 1955-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers,
Dates:	August 25, 2013
Bulk Dates:	2013
Physical Description:	11 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:15:36).
Abstract:	Hairstylist Michael "Rahni" Flowers (1955 -) opened the Van Cleef Hair Studio in 1981 in Chicago, and purchased the salon's present location in 1988. First Lady Michelle Obama was a regular customer of Flowers, starting in 1981. Flowers was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 25, 2013, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2013_226
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Hair stylist and business owner Michael "Rahni" Flowers was born on March 15, 1955 in Chicago, the tenth of thirteen children. His father, Edmond Joseph Flowers, was a factory worker, and his mother, Mae Carrie Byrd, was a housewife. The couple had come to Chicago from Mississippi in the 1940's as part of the great migration of African Americans seeking more economic opportunities in the North. In 1973, he entered Northern Illinois University as a pre-med/psychology major, where he studied until 1976. He later enrolled at Pivot Point International, where in 1977 he received his degree in cosmetology. After

graduating from Pivot Point International, Flowers trained and worked at Vidal Sassoon for several years. In 1981, he opened the original Van Cleef Hair Studio in Chicago. In 1988, Flowers purchased the salon's present location in what was then the still underdeveloped Chicago River North area. First Lady Michelle Obama had been a regular client of Flowers from the age of 18, until her move to Washington D.C. He had the honor to style the First Lady, and the ladies of the First Family, for the 2009 Inauguration. Flowers has worked with a number of other celebrities, including Kerry Washington, Marilyn McCoo, Nancy Wilson, Regina Taylor, Sinbad, and Phyllis Hyman. Other notable Chicago clients include Allison Payne, Carol Mosley-Braun, Merri Dee and Muriel Clair.

Flowers, through his studio, has supported a number of organizations, including Cabrini Green Tutoring Program, Children's Advocacy, Lynk's Organization, DuSable Museum, WGN-TV's Wednesday's Child, Chicago Juvenile Detention Center, Planned Parenthood, the National Organization for the Advancement of Colored People and special interest programs during Women's Health Month. In 2010, Flowers received a L.E.O. Award from Pivot Point International for success in field of the professional beauty.

Hair stylist and business owner Michael "Rahni" Flowers was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 25, 2013.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers was conducted by Anthony Poole on August 25, 2013, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 11 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Hairstylist Michael "Rahni" Flowers (1955 -) opened the Van Cleef Hair Studio in 1981 in Chicago, and purchased the salon's present location in 1988. First Lady Michelle Obama was a regular customer of Flowers, starting in 1981.

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:

Flowers, Michael, 1955-

Poole, Anthony (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Flowers, Michael, 1955---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Hair Stylist

HistoryMakers® Category:

StyleMakers

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 Michael "Rahni" Flowers, August 25, 2013. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

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 (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 Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_001, TRT: 1:02:16 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_002, TRT: 2:31:09 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_003, TRT: 3:32:01 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_004, TRT: 4:34:06 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_005, TRT: 5:27:45 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_006, TRT: 6:33:08 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_007, TRT: 7:25:23 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_008, TRT: 8:27:29 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_009, TRT: 9:32:43 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_010, TRT: 10:05:42 2013/08/25

Video Oral History Interview with Michael "Rahni" Flowers, Section A2013_226_001_011, TRT: 11:03:54 2013/08/25