

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with André De Shields

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	De Shields, André, 1946-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields,
<b>Dates:</b>	September 19, 2016 and September 22, 2016
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2016
<b>Physical Description:</b>	13 uncompressed MOV digital video files (6:47:13).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Stage actor, director, and choreographer André De Shields (1946 - ) starred on Broadway in <i>The Wiz</i> , <i>Ain't Misbehavin'</i> , <i>Play On!</i> , <i>The Full Monty</i> , and <i>Impressionism</i> in addition to serving as director of numerous off-Broadway productions. De Shields was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 19, 2016 and September 22, 2016, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2016_020
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Stage actor, director, and choreographer André De Shields was born on January 12, 1946 in Dundalk, Maryland to Mary Gunther and John De Shields. He was raised in Baltimore, Maryland as the ninth of eleven children. De Shields obtained his high school diploma at Baltimore City College in 1964, and earned his B.A. degree in English literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1970. In 1991, De Shields received his M.A. degree in African American studies from New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

De Shields began his career in 1969 at Chicago's Shubert Theatre in Tom O'Horgan's production of *Hair, The American Tribal-Love Rock Musical*. In 1971, De Shields joined the Organic Theater Company and began performing in *Wrap!* in Chicago. In 1973, De Shields left the Organic Theater Company and became an associate choreographer for Bette Midler's *Clams on the Half Shell Revue* the following year. In the late 1970s, De Shields began choreographing for *Saturday Night Live* and *Sesame Street*. He then went on to perform in many televised productions, including *Ain't Misbehavin'* (1982), *Alice in Wonderland* (1983), and *Duke Ellington, The Music Lives On* (1984). De Shields continued his work while holding professorships at New York University, Southern Methodist University, and the University of Michigan. In 2009, in honor of President Barack Obama's election, Mr. De Shields created his solo performance, *Frederick Douglass: Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*.

De Shields received numerous awards, including three Chicago Joseph Jefferson Awards and nine AUDELCO Awards. In 1982, De Shields won an Emmy for Outstanding Individual Performance for the NBC TV Special based on *Ain't Misbehavin'*. In 2004, he received honorary doctorate of fine arts degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and from SUNY-Buffalo State. De Shields received a Village Voice OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence of Performance in 2007, and in 2009, he won the National Black Theatre Festival's Living Legend Award. De Shields received a Distinguished Achievement Award from Fox Foundation Fellowship in 2012, a Making Waves Award from Florida Atlantic University in 2014, an Award for Excellence in The Arts

from the theatre school at DePaul University in 2015, and a Pioneer of the Arts Award from Riant Theatre in 2016.

André De Shields was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on September 19, 2016.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with André De Shields was conducted by Harriette Cole on September 19, 2016 and September 22, 2016, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 13 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Stage actor, director, and choreographer André De Shields (1946 - ) starred on Broadway in *The Wiz*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Play On!*, *The Full Monty*, and *Impressionism* in addition to serving as director of numerous off-Broadway productions.

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## 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®.

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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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

De Shields, André, 1946-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

De Shields, André, 1946---Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Stage Actor

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Stage Director

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Choreographer

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

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## 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 André De Shields, September 19, 2016 and September 22, 2016. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

### Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

## Series I: Original Interview Footage

- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_001, TRT: 1:28:30  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:48  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_003, TRT: 3:26:41  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:14  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_005, TRT: 5:30:54  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_006, TRT: 6:28:54  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_001\_007, TRT: 7:44:23  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_008, TRT: 8:29:18  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_009, TRT: 9:44:55  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_010, TRT: 10:19:23  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_011, TRT: 11:33:28  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_012, TRT: 12:29:28  
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- Video Oral History Interview with André De Shields, Section A2016\_020\_002\_013, TRT: 13:34:17  
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