

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Charles Weldon

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Weldon, Charles
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon,
Dates:	November 7, 2016 and October 24, 2016
Bulk Dates:	2016
Physical Description:	10 uncompressed MOV digital video files (4:29:41).
Abstract:	Actor and artistic director Charles Weldon (1940 - 2018) appeared in numerous Hollywood movies and television productions. He was a member of the Negro Ensemble Company since 1970 and its artistic director since 2004. Weldon was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 7, 2016 and October 24, 2016, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2016_079
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Actor and artistic director Charles Weldon was born on June 1, 1940 in Wetumka, Oklahoma to Beatrice Jennings. At the age of seven, his family moved to Bakersfield, California, where he worked in nearby cotton fields until the age of seventeen, when he joined the local doo-wop group, The Paradons.

After the success of their 1960 hit single, "Diamonds and Pearls," The Paradons dissolved, and Weldon went on to perform with the soul group, Blues For Sale, before discovering his love of acting. Weldon's sister, actress Ann Weldon, introduced him to the theater group Dialogue Black/White and playwright Oscar Brown, Jr. After appearing in the musical *Hair* at the Geary Theater in San Francisco, California, Weldon accepted Brown's invitation to perform in *Buck White*, appearing alongside Muhammad Ali in his only Broadway appearance. In 1970, Weldon joined the Negro Ensemble Company and performed in Joseph Walker's *Ododo*. In 1973, he starred in Paul Carter Harrison's *The Great MacDaddy* and played Skeeter in Joseph Walker's *The River Niger*. Weldon reprised the role in the 1976 film adaptation with stars James Earl Jones and Cicely Tyson. He also appeared in several other films including *Who's Minding the Mint?* (1967), *Serpico* (1975), *Stir Crazy* (1980), *Fast Walking* (1982), Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (1992), and *The Wishing Tree* (1999). He appeared in several television mini-series, including *A Woman Called Moses* (1978) and *Roots: The Next Generation* (1979). His television credits also include *Sanford and Son*, *Hill Street Blues*, *Kojak*, *St. Elsewhere*, *L.A. Law*, and *Law & Order*.

Throughout his film career, Weldon continued to perform with the Negro Ensemble Company, acting in Charles Fuller's *A Soldier's Play* in 1981. In 2004, Weldon was named artistic director of the Negro Ensemble Company. Additionally, Weldon directed Leslie Lee's *Blues in a Broken Tongue*, Jimmy Barden's *Offspring*, Samm Art-Williams' *The Waiting Room*, and Layon Gray's *WEBEIME*. Weldon also produced the Negro Ensemble Company's *Sundown Names and Night-Gone Things*.

Co-founder of the Negro Ensemble Company, Inc.'s Alumni Organization, Weldon received the Audelco Award

for best supporting actor, the Remy award for best leading actor, and the 2006 Henry Award for the Best Supporting Actor in August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*.

Weldon passed away on December 7, 2018.

Charles Weldon was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on October 24, 2016 and November 7, 2016.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Charles Weldon was conducted by Harriette Cole on November 7, 2016 and October 24, 2016, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 10 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Actor and artistic director Charles Weldon (1940 - 2018) appeared in numerous Hollywood movies and television productions. He was a member of the Negro Ensemble Company since 1970 and its artistic director since 2004.

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:

Weldon, Charles

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Weldon, Charles--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Actor

Artistic Director

HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

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 Charles Weldon, November 7, 2016 and October 24, 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).

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 Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_001_001, TRT: 1:28:07 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_001_002, TRT: 2:30:27 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_001_003, TRT: 3:28:45 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_001_004, TRT: 4:29:46 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_001_005, TRT: 5:27:57 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_002_006, TRT: 6:34:00 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_002_007, TRT: 7:27:45 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_002_008, TRT: 8:27:41 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_002_009, TRT: 9:26:32 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Charles Weldon, Section A2016_079_002_010, TRT: 10:08:41 ?