

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carolyn Adams

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Adams, Carolyn
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams,
Dates:	June 26, 2018 and June 28, 2018
Bulk Dates:	2018
Physical Description:	9 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:35:37).
Abstract:	Dancer Carolyn Adams (1943-) toured with the Paul Taylor Dance Company from 1965 to 1982 as its first African American dancer. She also founded several organizations including the American Dance Legacy Initiative and the Harlem Dance Studio and Foundation. Adams was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 26, 2018 and June 28, 2018, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2018_107
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Dancer Carolyn Adams was born on August 16, 1943 in New York City to writer and composer Olive Arnold Adams and newspaper editor Julius J. Adams. She attended the Ethical Culture Fieldston School and studied dance at the Martha Graham School in New York City. Adams received her B.A. degree in 1965 from Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, where she spent her junior year studying abroad at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. Later, she earned her M.S.W. degree from Fordham University in 2006.

In 1965, Adams joined the Paul Taylor Dance Company becoming the company's first African American dancer. During her seventeen year career with the company, Adams starred in several major productions including *Orbs* in 1966, *Big Bertha* in 1971; *Aureole* and *Esplanade* in 1975; and *Le Sacre du Printemps* in 1980. In 1973, Adams co-founded the Harlem Dance Studio and Foundation with her parents and sister, Julie Adams Strandberg, who was also a professional dancer. The studio and foundation held dance classes, produced holiday musicals and organized community events to expose the area's underprivileged children to the arts. Adams and her family also founded the Central Harlem Brownstone Preservation Committee. She left the Paul Taylor Dance Company in 1982, and became a professor of modern dance at The Juilliard School in New York City in the following year. In 1989, Adams became the founding artistic director for the School of Dance at the New York State Summer School of the Arts. From 1991 to 1993, she served as the dance director at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Massachusetts. In 1993, Adams and her sister founded the American Dance Legacy Initiative at Brown University, which featured a series of instructional videos from well-known choreographers known as the Repertory Etude Collection. Adams went on to become a professor of modern dance at The Ailey School in New York City.

In 2005, Adams curated an exhibition on the New Dance Group for the National Museum of Dance in Saratoga Springs, New York. She served as co-chair of the New York State Blue Ribbon Commission on the Arts for the New York State Education Department and chaired the Dance/USA's national task force on dance education.

Adams also served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and for the New York State Council on the Arts. In honor of her work and dedication to dance, Adams received many awards and honors including the Balasaraswati/Joy Ann Dewey Beinecke Endowed Chair for Distinguished Teaching in 2009 and the 2016 Dance Magazine Award for which her former student, dancer Robert Battle, choreographed the piece, *For Carolyn*, in her honor.

Adams and her husband, former Paul Taylor dancer Robert Kahn, have two children, Sandra and Vitali.

Carolyn Adams was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 26, 2018.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carolyn Adams was conducted by Harriette Cole on June 26, 2018 and June 28, 2018, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 9 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Dancer Carolyn Adams (1943-) toured with the Paul Taylor Dance Company from 1965 to 1982 as its first African American dancer. She also founded several organizations including the American Dance Legacy Initiative and the Harlem Dance Studio and Foundation.

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:

Adams, Carolyn

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

Adams, Carolyn--Interviews
African Americans--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Choreographer

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 Carolyn Adams, June 26, 2018 and June 28, 2018. 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 Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_001_001, TRT: 1:28:09 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_001_002, TRT: 2:27:04 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_001_003, TRT: 3:29:11 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_001_004, TRT: 4:27:32 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_001_005, TRT: 5:28:13 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_002_006, TRT: 6:23:26 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_002_007, TRT: 7:28:44 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_002_008, TRT: 8:12:14 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Adams, Section A2018_107_002_009, TRT: 9:11:04 ?