

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lou Stovall

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Stovall, Lou
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Lou Stovall,
Dates:	September 27, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:10:12).
Abstract:	Printmaker Lou Stovall (1937 -) started Workshop, Inc. as a small, active studio concerned mainly with community posters. Under Stovall's leadership, Workshop, Inc. has evolved into a professional and highly respected printmaking facility. One of his best-known works, "Breathing Hope," was commissioned for the inauguration of Howard University President H. Patrick Swygert. Stovall was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on September 27, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_236
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

World-renowned printmaker and artist Lou Stovall has helped build a thriving artistic community in the nation's capital. Born in Athens, Georgia, on January 1, 1937, Stovall grew up in Springfield, Massachusetts, before founding a printmaking company, Workshop, Inc.

After graduating from high school in 1962, Stovall moved to Washington, D.C. He earned a B.F.A. from Howard University in 1965. While there, Stovall was influenced by his teachers to give back to his community and to share his wisdom with young artists. In 1968, Stovall started Workshop, Inc. as a small, active studio concerned mainly with community posters. Under Stovall's leadership, Workshop, Inc. has evolved into a professional and highly respected printmaking facility.

A master printmaker by trade, Stovall has been commissioned to print works from a number of artists. His passion, however, remained drawing. Stovall has produced drawings and prints for several special occasions. One of his best-known works, "Breathing Hope," was commissioned for the inauguration of Howard University President H. Patrick Swygert. In 1982, First Lady Nancy Reagan asked Stovall to design the Independence Day invitation for the White House. Washington Mayor Marion Barry commissioned Stovall in 1986 to create "American Beauty Rose" for the city's host committee for the 1988 Democratic National Convention. Stovall's prints and drawings have found homes in several public and private collections around the world.

Stovall's efforts to build a community of artists in Washington extended beyond the opening of his studio. Stovall has provided apprenticeships to several young artists in the city. In 2001, he served as a juror for the Howard University Student Art Exhibition.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Lou Stovall was conducted by Larry Crowe on September 27, 2003, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Printmaker Lou Stovall (1937 -) started Workshop, Inc. as a small, active studio concerned mainly with community posters. Under Stovall's leadership, Workshop, Inc. has evolved into a professional and highly respected printmaking facility. One of his best-known works, "Breathing Hope," was commissioned for the inauguration of Howard University President H. Patrick Swygert.

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:

Stovall, Lou

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Stovall, Lou--Interviews

African American artists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

African American printmakers--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews

African American families--Georgia

Rural-urban migration--United States

Howard University

Race relations in the United States--1950

Civil rights movement--Washington (D.C.)

Artists--Political activity--United States

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (U.S.)

Creation (Literary, artistic, etc.)

Screen process printing

Lawrence, Jacob, 1917-2000

Black English

Mentoring in the arts--United States

Art--Vocational guidance

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Printmaker

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 Lou Stovall, September 27, 2003. 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 Lou Stovall, Section A2003_236_001_001, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Lou Stovall talks about his family history, especially his parents' migration from Athens, Georgia to Massachusetts. He describes his parents in detail, particularly his father. He then discusses his childhood memories, his early education, and his early artistic endeavors.

African American artists--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American printmakers--Washington (D.C.)--Interviews.

African American families--Georgia.

Rural-urban migration--United States.

Howard University.

Civil rights movements--Washington (D.C.).

Artists--Political activity--United States.

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (U.S.).

Creation (Literary, artistic, etc.).

Screen process printing.

Lawrence, Jacob, 1917-2000.

Black English.

Mentoring in the arts--United States.

Art--Vocational guidance.

Video Oral History Interview with Lou Stovall, Section A2003_236_001_002, TRT: 0:29:30 ?

Lou Stovall describes his high school and early college years, including those

people, places, and events that particularly influenced him. He talks briefly about his first marriage, and his two children. He then focuses on the racial dynamics of the 1950s, and talks about his early involvement in the Civil Rights Movement in Washington, D.C. He ends by discussing the role that art and artists can play in protest movements.

Video Oral History Interview with Lou Stovall, Section A2003_236_001_003, TRT: 0:22:52 ?

Lou Stovall begins by discussing his artistic contributions to the Civil Rights Movement protests and his involvement in SNCC. He continues by describing his higher education, including his experience at Howard University, and his aborted plans for graduate school. Stovall also talks about his early career, especially the people who got him started. He concludes with a description of the creative process of building furniture and creating silk screens.

Video Oral History Interview with Lou Stovall, Section A2003_236_001_004, TRT: 0:29:00 ?

Lou Stovall discusses his creative process, such as the importance of a clean, orderly studio, or his use of circular frames, birds, and earth tones. He talks about the value of silk screening and of recreating other artists' work, such as that of Jacob Lawrence. Stovall also talks about mentoring young artists, and why it is crucial to know one's history when creating art. He concludes by briefly discussing his concerns and hopes for the future of the black community, particularly in terms of African American vernacular language.

Video Oral History Interview with Lou Stovall, Section A2003_236_001_005, TRT: 0:19:20 ?

Lou Stovall continues his discussion of how the use of African American vernacular English can be problematic. He goes on to talk about mentoring -- first, in his relationship with Jacob Lawrence, and later, his own experiences mentoring younger artists. He then talks about his legacy -- what he would like to be remembered for, how he would like to be remembered, and what he would have liked to have done differently. Stovall concludes with his advice to young artists.