

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Audrey Lavinia Smaltz

PERSON

Smaltz, Audrey Lavinia, 1937-

Alternative Names: Audrey Lavinia Smaltz; Audrey Lavinia Smaltz

Life Dates: June 2, 1937-

Place of Birth: New York, New York, USA

Residence: Jersey City, New Jersey

Occupations: Fashion Show Stage Manager

Biographical Note

Fashion show manager Audrey Lavinia Smaltz was born on June 2, 1937 in New York City. Growing up in the Harlem River Houses with neighbors such as Dr. Alvin Poussaint, Bob Moses and David Scott, Smaltz attended P.S. 46 and the Harriet Beecher Stowe Girls Junior High School. Accepted into New York City's High School of Music and the Performing Arts, she took her first professional modeling job from baseball's New York Giants. After graduating high school in 1955, Smaltz worked as a model and fashion commentator. An art major at the City College of New York, Smaltz also worked for Metropolitan Life Insurance and the Rueben H. Donnelly Corporation. In 1962, Smaltz worked as a model and salesperson at Bloomingdale's and she became an assistant fashion coordinator for the store in 1964. Hired by Lane Bryant Clothing in 1965, she worked as a model and buyer and also as a fashion coordinator. Moving to Chicago in 1969, Smaltz joined the Ebony Fashion Fair in 1970 as a commentator and fashion editor. In 1977, Smaltz organized her Ground Crew team, a backstage management group which has staffed many fashion shows including those by Vera Wang, Giorgio Armani, Betsey Johnson, Oscar de la Renta, Bill Blass, Alice Roi, Michael Kors, Luca Luca, Nanette Lepore, Tommy Hilfiger, Kenneth Cole and Ralph Rucci. Smaltz has also worked with corporations like Nike, Vogue, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's, and J. Crew.

A contributing editor to Vogue, Mirabella and Mode magazines, Smaltz appears frequently on QVC and the Oprah Winfrey Show. She is a board member of the Black Fashion Museum, Dress for Success, the Gracie Mansion Conservancy and Fashion Group International.

Related Entries

City College of New York [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

New York University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Bloomingdales [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1962 to 1965]

Assistant Coat and Suit Buyer

Lane Bryant [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1965 to 1969]

Buyer and Coordinator

Johnson Publishing Co. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197008 to 197708]

Editor and Commentator

The Ground Crew [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197811 to ?]

CEO and Founder

Black Fashion Museum [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Fashion Group International [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Toast Masters [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Children's Art Carnival [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Gracie Mansion Conservancy [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Believers Christian Fellowship [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Speakers Association [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

AFTRA [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member