

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Aki Leonard Gonzales Aleong

PERSON

Aleong, Aki

**Alternative Names:** Aki Leonard Gonzales Aleong;

**Life Dates:** December 19, 1934-

**Place of Birth:** Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

**Residence:** Sylmar, CA

**Occupations:** Television Actor; Music Executive

## Biographical Note

Actor and record executive Aki Aleong was born on December 19, 1934 in Port of Spain, Trinidad, to Henry Leong (Aleong), a cook from Hong Kong, and Agnes Vera Gonsalves from St. Vincent, British West Indies; he was originally called Assing Aleong by his father and Leonard Gonzales by his mother. Aleong attended Progressive Education Institute in Trinidad as a youth. After moving to Brooklyn, New York, with his mother in 1949, Aleong graduated from Boys High School; in 1951, he started taking classes at Brooklyn College while working in a hardware store.

Responding to a casting call for an Asian character, Aleong was cast as the Goat Boy in the 1954 Broadway production of Teahouse of the August Moon on Broadway. In 1956, Aleong made his first live television appearance in The Letter, an episode of NBC's Producers' Showcase. In 1957, Aleong was cast in the movie Motorcycle Gang. Throughout his career, Aleong performed in over than 200 different television programs, including: Ben Casey (1961); The Outer Limits (1963); The Virginian (1967); L.A. Law(1986); Babylon 5 (1994); Kung Fu: The Legend Continues (1996); and Curb Your Enthusiasm (2001). Aleong's movie credits include: Never So Few (1959); The Hanoi Hilton (1987); Farewell to the King (1989); Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story (1993); Tidal Wave: No Escape (1997); A Breed Apart (1998); Missing Brendan (2003); House of Sand and Fog (2003); and Sci-Fighter (2004).

Also a musician, Aleong wrote the hit songs Trade Winds and Shombalor; in 1963 he formed Aki Aleong and the Nobles. Leaving the movie business in 1967, Aleong worked as the west coast R&B sales and promotion manager for Capitol Records; an assistant vice president of promotion for Polydor Records; an assistant vice president of sales for Liberty/United Artist Records; the president of Pan World Records and Pan World Publishing (BMI); and a record producer for VeeJay Records. Aleong worked

with The 5th Dimension, The Ojays, and Bobby Womack, and produced the Roy Ayers album Red Black and Green. Aleong also managed Norman Connors in 1976, and produced Connors's gold record You are My Starship.

Onetime chairman of the Fraternity of Recording Executives, Aleong returned to acting in 1983. Aleong served on the boards of the Screen Actors Guild and the Media Action Network for Asian Americans and was the executive director for Asians in Media.

## Related Entries

**Boys High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Brooklyn College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Capitol Records, Inc.** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**R&B Sales and Promotion Manager**

**Polydor Records** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Assistant Vice President of Promotion**

**Liberty/UA Records** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Assistant Vice President of Sales**

**Pan World Records** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Co-Chair of Ethnic Minorities Committee**

**Fraternity of Record Executives** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Founder**

**SAG-AFTRA** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Media Action Network of Asian Americans** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Los Angeles Committee on Human Rights** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**ChinaAid** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**