

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ausbra Ford

PERSON

Ford, Ausbra, 1935-

Alternative Names: Ausbra Ford;

Life Dates: February 28, 1935-August 31, 2020

Place of Birth: Chicago, Illinois, USA

Residence: Chicago, IL

Occupations: Sculptor

Biographical Note

Ausbra Ford's academic and sculptural work has been the result of his adept merging of scholarly research with an artist's creativity. He was born in Chicago, Illinois on February 28, 1935. He attended Coleman Elementary and DuSable High School before studying sculpture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where he earned a B.A. in 1964 and a M.F.A. in 1966.

From 1964-1968, Ford taught art courses for elementary schools in both the Gary and Chicago public school systems. He then served a brief stint as an associate professor at Southern University in Baton Rouge before returning to Chicago to become a full-time Professor at Chicago State University. In support of his interest in the funeral art of Afro-Americans, Ford received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship as well as a grant from Chicago State University to conduct research on the funerary art of West and Central Africa. Subsequent grants from the Chicago State University Foundation allowed him to continue pursuing his work in the field.

Ford's writing on funerary art has been published in journals such as *World Anthropology* and the *Morition Press*, and in the books *Two Centuries of Afro-American Art* and *African Influence in Funeral Art of Haiti*.

He has lectured at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art and the Chicago Field Museum, as well as numerous colleges around the country. Ford sits on the Board of Directors of the DuSable Museum; is the President and one of the founders of the African American Visual Arts Roundtable; and is a member of both the Kemetic Institute of Northeastern Illinois University and the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations. His work has been exhibited both locally and nationally, in one man and group shows. Ford's pieces are part of the permanent

collections of Chicago State University, the University of Suwon in the Republic of Korea, the Southside Community Art Center in Chicago, the DuSable Museum of African American History, Northeastern Illinois University and Chicago's Hilton Hotel.

Ford passed away on August 31, 2020.

Related Entries

Du Sable Leadership Academy [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Colman Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

School of the Art Institute of Chicago [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.E.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.F.A.

Chicago Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1964 to 1968]

Art Teacher

Gary Indiana Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1966 to 1968]

Art Teacher

Southern University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1968 to 1969]

Associate Professor

Chicago State University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 195012 to 195201]

Professor

DuSable Museum [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Visual Artists Roundtable [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

President

Kemetic Institute [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Association for the Study of Classical African Civilization [ASCAC] [MEMBER OF]
[from ? to ?]

Member