

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Joan Sandler

PERSON

Sandler, Joan

**Alternative Names:** Joan Sandler;

**Life Dates:** October 2, 1934-April 7, 2020

**Place of Birth:** New York, New York, USA

**Residence:** New York, NY

**Occupations:** Arts Administrator

## Biographical Note

Joan Delores Sandler was born on October 2, 1934 in Harlem, New York. Her mother worked as a nurse's aide and domestic and her father was an elevator operator. Sandler was educated in New York City public schools earning her high school diploma in 1952 from the New York High School of Music and Arts.

After graduation, Sandler worked as a clerk for an insurance company. She also surrounded herself with artists and musicians, while becoming a political activist involved in the peace movement. In the early 1960s, Sandler began studying theatre with the Negro Ensemble Company and landed a role on the television drama series, *Black Girl*.

She began her art career in 1975, working as a program specialist for the Department of Cultural Affairs. Sandler then went on to work for the Black Theatre Alliance and Fundraising in the Public Interest. From 1983 until 1987, she worked for the Metropolitan Museum of Art where she was in charge of community education. She also worked for the National Endowment for the Arts and the Museum of American Folk Art. In 2001, Sandler served as executive director for the foundation of her longtime friend, artist Romare Bearden. The Romare Bearden Foundation continues Bearden's visual arts legacy through community outreach and education.

Sandler continues to consult in arts education. She has worked as a lecturer and faculty member at Hunter College, New York University, Marymount College and Princeton. She has served as an advisor to many foundations and grant making organizations. Sandler has received a number of awards and honors for her contributions to arts education.

Sandler passed away on April 7, 2020.

## Related Entries

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

**P.S. 10 Magnet School for Science and Technology** [STUDENTOf]  
[from ? to ?]

**P.S. 113 Anthony J. Pranzo** [STUDENTOf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Julia Ward Howe Junior High School 81** [STUDENTOf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Ps 333 Manhattan School For Children** [STUDENTOf]  
[from ? to ?]

**New York City Department of Cultural Affairs** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1975 to 1977]

**Senior Program Officer**

**The Black Theater Alliance** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1977 to 1981]

**Executive Director**

**Fundraising in the Public Interest** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1981 to 1983]

**Senior Development Officer**

**The Metropolitan Museum of Art** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1983 to 1987]

**Associate Museum Educator**

**National Endowment for the Arts** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1988 to 1993]

**Regional Representative**

[EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1993 to 1995]

**Consultant**

**Museum of American Folk Art** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1995 to 2000]

**Director of Education**

**Romare Bearden Foundation** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2001 to ?]

**Executive Director**

**National Council of Women** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Children's Art Carnival** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**UNESCO** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**International Women's Forum of the United Nations** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Art Table** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Coalition of 100 Black Women** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Association of American Museums** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**New Federal Theater** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**International Theater Institute** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Association of African American Museums** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Grantmakers in the Arts** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**New York Regional Association of Grantmakers** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]