

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Angela Jackson

PERSON

**Jackson, Angela, 1951-**

**Alternative Names:** Angela Jackson;

**Life Dates:** July 25, 1951-

**Place of Birth:** Greenville, Mississippi, USA

**Residence:** Chicago, IL

**Occupations:** Playwright; Poet

## Biographical Note

Angela Jackson, poet, playwright and fictionist, was born July 25, 1951, in Greenville, Mississippi. Her father, George Jackson, Sr. and mother, Angeline Robinson Jackson moved to Chicago where Jackson attended St. Anne's Catholic School. Fascinated with books, Jackson frequented the Kelly Branch Library and admired Chicago's Gwendolyn Brooks. She graduated from Loretto Academy in 1968 with a pre-med scholarship to Northwestern University. In 1977, Jackson received her B.A. degree from Northwestern University and went on to earn her M.A. degree from the University of Chicago.

At Northwestern University, Jackson joined FMO, the black student union. Influenced by artist Jeff Donaldson and visiting poet Margaret Walker, she was invited by Johnson Publishing's Black World magazine editor, Hoyt W. Fuller, to join the Organization for Black American Culture (OBAC), where she stayed as a member for twenty years. At OBAC, Fuller mentored young black writers like Haki Madhubuti (Don L. Lee), Carolyn Rodgers, Sterling Plumpp and others. Jackson was praised as a reader and performer on Chicago's burgeoning black literary scene. First published nationally in Black World in 1971, Jackson's first book of poetry, Voodoo Love Magic was published by Third World Press in 1974. She won the eighth Conrad Kent Rivers Memorial Award in 1973; the Academy of American Poets Award from Northwestern University in 1974; the Illinois Art Council Creative Writing Fellowship in Fiction in 1979; a National Endowment For the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship in Fiction in 1980; the Hoyt W. Fuller Award for Literary Excellence in 1984; the American Book Award in 1985; the DuSable Museum Writers Seminar Poetry Prize in 1984; Pushcart Prize for Poetry in 1989; ETA Gala Award in 1994; Illinois Authors Literary Heritage Award in 1996; six Illinois Arts Council Literary Awards; five for fiction and one for poetry; The Carl Sandburg Award; Chicago Sun-Times Friends of Literature Book of

the Year Award; an Illinois Art Council Creative Writing Fellowship in Playwriting in 2000; and in 2002, the Shelley Memorial Award of the Poetry Society of America.

Jackson's published poetic works include: *The Greenville Club*, 1977 (chapbook); *Solo in the Boxcar Third Floor E*, 1985; *The Man with the White Liver*, 1987; *Dark Legs and Silk Kisses: The Beatitudes of the Spinners*, 1993; and *All These Roads Be Luminous: Poems New and Selected*, 1997, which was nominated for the National Book Award. Her plays include *Witness!*, 1970; *Shango Diaspora: An African American Myth of Womanhood and Love*, 1980; and *When the Wind Blows*, 1984 (better known as the eta production entitled, *Comfort Stew*). Jackson is working on *Treemont Stone*, a novel; *Lightfoot: The Crystal Stair*, a play; her memoir, *Apprenticeship in the House of Cowrie Shells*; and more poems.

Jackson lives and works in Chicago, Illinois.

## Related Entries

**Loretto Academy Catholic High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**St. Ann Catholic School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**University of Chicago** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**Northwestern University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**