

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Morris Butch Stewart

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Stewart, Morris, 1953-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart,
Dates:	April 8, 2003
Bulk Dates:	2003
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:46:02).
Abstract:	Music producer and songwriter Morris Butch Stewart (1953 - 2017) is the president and founder of Joy Art Music. Stewart was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 8, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2003_068
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Musician Morris "Butch" Stewart, Jr., was born in Chicago, Illinois, on January 13, 1953. The third of four children, Stewart earned his high school diploma in Harvey, Illinois, and went on to attend DePaul University in Chicago.

At the age of twenty-two, Stewart and his future wife, Brenda Mitchell, began working as background vocalists for Ramsey Louis. That same year, 1975, Stewart performed in several shows with Earth, Wind, and Fire, with whom he later worked on other projects. In 1978, Stewart formed JoyArtMusic, his musical jingle production company. JoyArtMusic was hailed as one of Chicago's premiere creative houses for television and radio theme song creation, as well as advertising. Some of JoyArtMusic's more recognizable tunes include the theme song to the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, and the *Tom Joyner Morning Show*. By 1985, Stewart was producing records, as well as writing music and lyrics. In 1990, Stewart teamed up with Earth, Wind, and Fire to write "King of Groove;" throughout his career, he wrote numerous other songs for various artists.

Stewart created music for exercise videos and collaborated on a children's project, Home, with the purpose of teaching children about the importance of friendship, generosity, and family. Stewart was the owner and founder of Copia Records. Stewart and his wife also established the Art of Making Music Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raised money for music education in schools; the couple also raised two children.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Morris Butch Stewart was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 8, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Music producer and songwriter Morris Butch Stewart (1953 - 2017) is the president and founder of Joy Art Music.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Stewart, Morris, 1953-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Stewart, Morris, 1953---Interviews

African American composers--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Music Producer

Songwriter

HistoryMakers® Category:

MusicMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart, April 8, 2003. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart, Section A2003_068_001_001, TRT: 0:29:29 ?

Music producer Morris "Butch" Stewart describes his family background, detailing the lives of his mother and father. Stewart recalls his childhood in Markham, Illinois, discussing his early interest in music and other childhood activities. Stewart also describes his life as an elementary school student.

Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart, Section A2003_068_001_002, TRT: 0:29:38 ?

Producer and musician, Morris "Butch" Stewart details his rise in Chicago's music industry and several bumps along the way. He recalls the influence of mentor, Charles Stepney and how Stepney's death at a young age impacted him.

Stewart moved into composing advertising jingles and eventually ended up working with Tom Burrell. From there, Stewart began his own company, Joy Art Music.

Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart, Section A2003_068_001_003, TRT: 0:29:53 ?

Producer and composer Morris 'Butch' Stewart shares several highlights from his musical career in advertising. As the composer for the Oprah Winfrey Show, Tom Joyner Morning Show and several well known McDonalds and Coke commercials, Stewart recounts the creative process behind the music. He shares one major regret, that he had not spent more time with his children when they were younger.

Video Oral History Interview with Morris Butch Stewart, Section A2003_068_001_004, TRT: 0:17:02 ?

Producer and composer Morris 'Butch' Stewart details his current business venture, 'Uncle Butchie's Live House'. He also shares a fervent hope that the black community will return to God and learn to love and nurture itself. Stewart struggles to think of how he wants to be remembered. He settles on the notion of maintaining a constant presence by leaving a body of work and a legacy which will remain ever present.