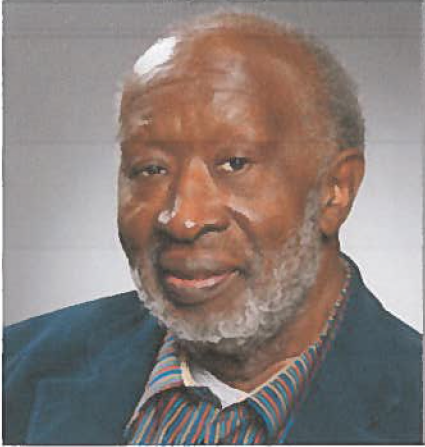


Clarence Avant



ex producer
Jason's Lyric
Stainwood

TV save the children
DOC

Produced albums
w/ Marley, SOS Band
The Waiters

Since the 1950s Clarence Avant has been a significant part of the music industry as a manager, mentor, publisher and innovative business leader. After getting his start as a manager at Teddy P's Lounge in Newark, New Jersey Mr. Avant went on to manage acts as significant as Sarah Vaughn and Little Willie John. He played an integral role in some of the most notable music ventures of the 20th century including brokering the first deal between an African American artist and a major record label and helping to facilitate the deal that brought Stax records to Gulf & Western. While standing at the helm of the Sussex, Tabu and Motown labels, Mr. Avant developed some of the most influential musicians and producers of our time including Bill Withers, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis and The SOS Band. He also has the distinction having owned the first black owned radio station in metropolitan Los Angeles. These are a few of the accomplishments that have earned Clarence Avant the nickname "The Godfather of Black Music."

Nominee's Qualifications

- 1950s- Manager at Teddy P's Lounge in Newark New Jersey, began managing acts Sarah Vaughn, Little Willie John and Tom Wilson
- 1960s- In 1967 Clarence Avant brokered the first deal between an African-American Artist and a major record label. In 1968 he helped sell Stax records to Gulf& Western
- 1969 Sussex Records Founded - Bill Withers signed.
- 70s-In March 1973 he became the owner of the first African-American owned radio station in Metropolitan Los Angeles
- 80s- Work key mentor and advisor in the rise of Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis
- 90s- 1993 Became Chairman of the Board for Motown, 1997 First African American to serve on the International Management Board for Polygram
- 00's to present day. President of his music publishing companies. Recipient of a doctorate from Morehouse (2003), National Association of Recording

Arts and Sciences awarded him the Trustee Award (2008) Honored by BET (2013)

LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY AND CIVIC-ORIENTED PARTICIPATION

Mr. Avant is a noted philanthropist particularly in the support of the cultivation preservation of the arts including but not limited to.

- Ebony Repertory Theatre
- Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz
- 102.3 FM KJLH Salute to Stevie Wonder:
- The Living Legends Foundation, Inc.
- Hero's and Legends (HAL) Scholarship Fund:
- Motown Museum
- Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC):
- Children Uniting Nations*:
- The Regalettes Scholarship Fundraiser:
- Los Angeles Jazz Society:
- Smithsonian National Museum of African Art:
- The Westwood Kehilla:
- Black Enterprise Entrepreneurs Summit
- Alpha and Omega Network:
- The Paley Center for Media (A tribute to African-American Achievements in TV)
- Harlem Village Academics
- National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
- KJazz 88.1 FM
- Alliance of Children's Rights
- NAACP
- Langston Bar Association
- Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (The NY Public Library)
- The Jackie Robinson Foundation
- Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation
- Exploring The Arts
- The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding



Biography of Clarence Avant

1 message

Martinez, Ana <stargirl@hollywoodchamber.net>

Mon, Aug 22, 2016 at 3:16 PM

To: Pamela Teneza <Pamela.Teneza@lacity.org>, William Ayala <william.ayala@lacity.org>

Here is another bio you can use.

CLARENCE AVANT BIOGRAPHY

Clarence Avant is an American music executive known to many as the "Godfather of Black Music." Born Clarence Alexander Avant in 1931 in Greensboro, North Carolina to Gertrude Avant, Clarence was one of eight children raised in Climax and Pleasant Gardens, North Carolina (siblings: Weldon L. Avant, William E., Paul A., Harold L., Ann M., Brenda, and Linda Woods). He attended a segregated two-room school in Climax, North Carolina until the third grade and then attended school in Goshen, NC (now part of present-day Greensboro, NC) through the eighth grade. Mr. Avant spent his freshman and sophomore years of high school at Dudley High School in Greensboro, NC before dropping out at the age of 16, and, at age 17, would leave North Carolina permanently. In 1967, Mr. Avant found new roots in New Jersey, working as a stock clerk at Bamberger's department store in Newark and as an "office boy" for the prestigious Martindale-Hubbell law directory and store clerk at Macy's in New York. Although he only completed the tenth grade, Clarence Avant, through drive, determination, "street smarts," and an unwavering commitment to success, became one of the entertainment industry's most successful executives as well as a respected entrepreneur, business advisor, mentor, and civic leader. Mr. Avant's influence spans across the recording and entertainment industry, politics, and both civil rights and charitable endeavors around the world.

Mr. Avant's career in the music industry began in the late 1950s as the manager of Teddy P's Lounge in Newark, New Jersey<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newark,_New_Jersey>, representing blues artist Little Willie John, a frequent act at the lounge. He went on to manage jazz organist Jimmy Smith, jazz producer Creed Taylor, and became familiar with those in the jazz community, including Joseph Glaser, music manager of Louis Armstrong<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Armstrong>, serving as a strong influence and mentor to Clarence. Mr. Avant also represented rock & roll record pioneer Tom Wilson, with whom he partnered in the Wilson Organization. After meeting the then-pianist for Dizzy Gillespie's band, Argentine composer Lalo Schifrin (best known for film and TV score, such as the theme for Mission Impossible), Joe Glaser encouraged them to work together. As a result, Clarence Avant packed up his bags and moved to Los Angeles. As a consultant for MGM Studios, former Motown A & R, William Mickey Stevenson, asked Mr. Avant to represent him in a new joint music label with MGM Records' financial backing, Venture Records. This would become the first joint venture between an African American-owned music company and a major record label. Shortly thereafter, record producer, songwriter, and executive Al Bell<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Bell> enlisted the aid of Mr. Avant to sell Stax Records to Gulf & Western in 1968.

After Venture Records' unsuccessful run in the music industry, Clarence Avant formed Sussex Records in Hollywood in 1969. He assembled a slate of artists, including "Sixto" Rodriguez, The Presidents, Bill Withers, Dennis Coffey, The Gallery, Amish, Creative Source, Bill Cosby presents Bad Brown & The Bunions Bradford Funeral Marching Band, Faith, Hope, & Charity, Lonette McKee, The Soul Searchers, and Phonic Rock along with other artists in an expansive catalogue. One of Sussex Records' most successful artists was Bill Withers, whose 1971 LP "Just As I Am" scored a Grammy for the hit single "Ain't No Sunchine." Withers's songs, like "Lean on Me" and "Grandma's Hands," have been sampled by hip-hop and R&B acts from Big Daddy Kane to Blackstreet. Later in the 1970s, Mr. Avant founded KAGB (Avant Garde Broadcasting), which was one of the first African American owned radio stations in the Los Angeles market. It has become a beacon for Black music.

The first artist signed by Sussex was "Sixto" Rodriguez. By some trick of fate, Rodriguez's two albums, Cold Fact and Coming To Reality, were seen as complete failures in the United States that is until they were brought to South Africa during the worst of the apartheid days. Rodriguez captured the soul of millions across South Africa and became as popular and awe-inspiring as The Beatles and The Rolling Stones in the United States. In fact, not only did Rodriguez's albums produce big hits, they became theme songs for the struggle against apartheid. White Afrikaners pored over Rodriguez in the same manner rebellious young white Americans responded to the powerful lyrics of Bob Dylan. Lacking the story of what happened to this musician, South Africans told legendary tales of Rodriguez's supposed public suicide. In 2012, this story was conveyed in a documentary film " Searching for Sugar Man," which was the opening film at the Sundance Film Festival<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sundance_Film_Festival>, the Sheffield DocFest and the Traverse City Film Festival, which opened in U.S. and U.K theaters in July 2012. The film has gone on to receive tremendous

accolades, including the Special Jury Prize and the Audience Award for best international documentary at the Sundance Film Festival<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sundance_Film_Festival>, the Audience Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, the Durban International Film Festival and the Melbourne Film Festival, and nominated in the Best Documentary category at the 2013 Academy Awards.

In the early 1970's, KAGB radio station and Sussex Records dissolved, respectively. With a "don't stop because you fail" attitude, in January 1976, Clarence Avant launched yet another music label, Tabu Records. The S.O.S. Bank, Alexander O'Neal, Cherrelle, Brainstorm, Jim Gold, and General Caine were but a few of the artists featured on the Tabu Records roster. Throughout his career, Mr. Avant has advised a broad range of artist and business executives, standing out as a pioneer and mentor for a generation in the music industry. Mr. Avant was the force behind deals with the successful rise of Grammy Award<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammy_Award>-winning R&B and pop music songwriters and producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, who worked with several Tabu Records artist and later, Janet Jackson.

Avant went on to represent Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds and Antonio "LA" Reid in connection with the launch of the joint venture between their labels, LaFace Records and Arista Records, spawning mega artists such as Toni Braxton. In 1988, with the help of former music promoter Al Haymon, Mr. Avant promoted Michael Jackson's "Bad" World tour, his first and only solo tour.

From 1993-1999, Mr. Avant served as the Chairman of the Board of Motown Records and was a member of the Board of Directors of PolyGram International. In addition to his music ventures, Mr. Avant also served as Executive Producer on the film

" Save the Children" for the PUSH Foundation, as Executive Producer for the only television show ever hosted by Muhammad Ali, ABC's Wide World of Sports, and as an advisor on the PepsiCo African American Advisory Board from 1998-2007.

Mr. Avant participated in a variety of civic, charitable, and business organizations, including the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Recording Industry Association of America, Apollo Theatre Foundation, Los Angeles World Affairs Council, Inner City Broadcasting Corporation, Qwest Broadcasting, and The Brotherhood Crusade. Mr. Avant is an active leader in the Democratic Party on a national, state, and local level. He was an instrumental supporter on the presidential campaigns for President William Jefferson Clinton in 1992 and 1996, and the historic election and re-election of the United State's first African America president, President Barack Hussein Obama in 2008 and 2012. Mr. Avant has served in several official capacities, including delegate to the Dominican Republic under President Carter and member of the Trade Mission to the African Nations under former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young.

Among his recognitions, Clarence Avant was awarded an honorary doctorate from Morehouse College in 2003, and in 2010 was inducted into the NAACP Hall of Fame. Mr. Avant received the key to the city of Paris in 2008. BET honored Clarence Avant at the 2013 BET Honors for his extraordinary work in Entrepreneurship. He has become known as the "Godfather" in the music industry because of his willingness to aid newcomers in the business. Through his mentoring, many of these newcomers and, on occasion, some veterans, have become very successful and prestigious leaders in the business.

Clarence Avant resides in Beverly Hills, California with his wife of 45 years Jacqueline. He has two adult children: former U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas, Nicole Avant-Sarandos and Entertainment Executive, Alex Avant.