



IN MEMORIAM

Richard C. Hawkins
Professor of Theater, Film and Television
UC Los Angeles
1922 - 2015

Richard C. Hawkins, a professor emeritus in the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television who directed full-length ethnographic films, including two on the care of pre-school children in China and the Nuer tribe in Kenya, died January 29 in Los Angeles following a stroke.

Among the short films he wrote and directed during his 38-year career at UCLA were "Bird Hunt" and "The Woodcutter's Willful Wife." In 1980 he produced a documentary short subject, "Luther Metke at 94," which was nominated for an Academy Award. Hawkins, who started teaching in the theater arts department in 1953, retired in 1991 as a professor emeritus.

Born in Waco, Texas, Hawkins attended Baylor University, where his father taught German for 55 years. After working for Pan American Airways as an assistant airport manager in Colombia and the Panama Canal Zone, he was drafted in 1943, studied Chinese at University of Chicago and served in the Office of Strategic Services organizing guerrilla operations against Japanese forces and teaching English to Nationalist Chinese generals.

After he was discharged in 1946, Hawkins found work at the newly established United Nations, simultaneously translating Chinese to Spanish. "Years later, he said he left the interpreter's booth every day with sweat pouring off him," wrote his son, Marlowe Hood, a journalist at Paris-based Agence France Presse. In 1953, Hawkins joined UCLA's Motion Picture Division of the Theater Arts Department. That same year, having co-written and co-directed "Claimed," an experiment in the editing of dramatic stereoscopic film in color and sound, he traced the history of the stereoscopic moving picture in an article in the Quarterly of Film Radio and Television.

After he retired from UCLA, Hawkins designed a low-cost generator of electricity based on a special application of solar and wind technologies. Working with a Chinese associate, Shao Pingbo, and several software experts, he also designed and produced a prototype of a low-cost voting machine.

He is survived by his son, Marlowe Hood. Shirley, his wife of 39 years, died in May 2002.