

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Regina Harris Baiocchi

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Baiocchi, Regina A. Harris, 1956-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi,
Dates:	May 31, 2000
Bulk Dates:	2000
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:15:49).
Abstract:	Music composer Regina Harris Baiocchi (1956 -) has composed music for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She was most known for compositions of the one-act operas, "Gbeldahoven: No One's Child" and "Dreamhoppers." Baiocchi was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 31, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2000_002
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Music composer Regina Harris Baiocchi was born on July 16, 1956 in Chicago, Illinois. Baiocchi received an education as eclectic as her talents. She has studied at DePaul University, Roosevelt University, Illinois Institute of Design and New York University. Baiocchi primarily composes instrumental and vocal music for opera, libretti and concertos. Among her distinctive compositions is "Gbeldahoven: No One's Child", a one-act opera written in 1996 about the careers of Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes during the Harlem Renaissance. In 1997, she produced "Dreamhoppers", another one-act opera that has been performed widely. Both works make use of varied musical traditions in order to express the multicultural nature of music. For Baiocchi, it is through music that the greatest strides in civil rights and cultural tolerance have been and will continue to be made.

Baiocchi's compositions have been performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, as well as at festivals nationwide. "African Hands", an award-winning percussion concerto, was performed by the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra. Her opera "Good News Falls Gently" was performed in 1995 at the Festival Incontri Musicali in Rome, Italy. In 1998, she served as artistic director of the Roots & Wings concert at Chicago's prestigious Ravinia Festival.

Baiocchi is also a writer. She has written several articles on several composers and musicologists. In 2004, she self-published a collection of poems entitled "Urban Haiku and Other Collected Poems" Her novel, entitled "Indigo Sound", was self-published in 2003. She created a piece entitled "Against the Odds" that combined her poetry and music into a single work which was performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Regina Harris Baiocchi was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 31, 2000.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi was conducted by Julieanna L. Richardson on May 31, 2000, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Music composer Regina Harris Baiocchi (1956 -) has composed music for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She was most known for compositions of the one-act operas, "Gbeldahoven: No One's Child" and "Dreamhoppers."

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:

Baiocchi, Regina A. Harris, 1956-

Richardson, Julieanna L. (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Baiocchi, Regina A. Harris, 1956---Interviews

African American women composers--Interviews.

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Music Composer

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 Regina Harris Baiocchi, May 31, 2000. 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 Regina Harris Baiocchi, Section A2000_002_001_001, TRT: 0:30:38 ?

Regina Harris Baiocchi discusses her family's background and history in the American South, specifically in Kentucky and Tennessee. Her parents migrated north in search of better employment opportunities and less racial

discrimination. Baiocchi describes her parents and their relationship with their eight children. They always encouraged an interest in the arts. Baiocchi tells stories of her grandparents' lives and racial experience in the South. She shares anecdotes about her grandfather taking her around Chicago when she was a child. Baiocchi recounts several anecdotes that have been passed down in her family and begins to speculate about her ethnic heritage.

African American families--Tennessee.

African American families--Kentucky.

African American families--Southern states.

African Americans--Migrations--History--20th century.

African American parents--Illinois--Chicago

Video Oral History Interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi, Section A2000_002_001_002, TRT: 0:30:57 ?

Regina Harris Baiocchi discusses her ethnic heritage and speculates on the origins. She believes her family is a mixture of West African, Native American and Italian ancestry. Baiocchi describes being particularly interested in her family's linguistic history; she compares the dialect that members of her family speak to the patois she encountered while traveling in Jamaica. She mentions that her great-grandmother survived slavery and lived to recount her experiences. Baiocchi goes on to describe each of her seven siblings as well as their children. She and each of her siblings were expected to learn to play a musical instrument in their youth. Baiocchi discusses her elementary and secondary education experiences. She attended public schools in Chicago as well as a Catholic academy in Wisconsin. Paul Laurence Dunbar High School had extensive music resources and was an inspirational place for young Regina Harris Baiocchi. She remembers her musical performance debut as an unnerving experience.

English language--Dialects--Jamaica.

African American families--Illinois--Chicago.

Brothers and sisters--Illinois--Chicago.

Public schools--Illinois--Chicago.

Catholic schools--Wisconsin.

Video Oral History Interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi, Section A2000_002_001_003, TRT: 0:31:01 ?

Regina Harris Baiocchi recalls her childhood. She admits she was her mother's favorite child and recalls that she was an introspective, melancholy young girl with a love of reading. She completed her undergraduate degree in music at Chicago's Roosevelt University. Although the music department lacked diversity in race and gender, and her curriculum presented a few challenges, the experience made Baiocchi stronger. She credits her parents with giving her support and guidance throughout her undergraduate work. Upon graduation, she taught math and science in a local school at her father's suggestion. After seven years of teaching, Baiocchi pursued a public relations post at a Chicago seminary. At the same time, she began to write an opera, spawned from one of her musical compositions. The opera is entitled "Gheldahoven: No One's Child", and it considers the careers African American authors Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes. The opera enjoyed considerable success; it was performed twice at influential Chicago institutions.

Roosevelt University.

Hurston, Zora Neale.

Hughes, Langston, 1902-1967.

Opera.

Video Oral History Interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi, Section A2000_002_001_004, TRT: 0:29:16 ?

Regina Harris Baiocchi created a piece entitled 'Against The Odds,' that brought her war poetry and musical composition together. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, an institution that she credits as being integral to her career performed the piece. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra also held a competition for African American composers that Baiocchi and two others won. She is particularly highly sought after during Black History Month but has also faced rejection in her writing career. She has fundraised to produce her own work and plans to publish her own novels and poetry. Baiocchi cites jazz musician, Hale Smith; jazz singer, Betty Carter; and jazz pianist, Alan Swain as her most powerful influences. Baiocchi has faced many obstacles in completing her opera. She accepts the complications of the music and publishing industries and finds inspiration in artists that released their own work. Baiocchi describes the thirty-year history she has with her husband, Greg Baiocchi, who is white.

African American composers.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Interracial marriage--Illinois--Chicago.

Smith, Hale, 1925-2009.

Carter, Betty, 1930-1998.

Swain, Alan D.

Video Oral History Interview with Regina Harris Baiocchi, Section A2000_002_001_005, TRT: 0:13:57 ?

Regina Harris Baiocchi narrates her personal photographs and various publicity shots.