

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Wendell Logan

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Logan, Wendell, 1940-2010
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Logan,
Dates:	June 13, 2005
Bulk Dates:	2005
Physical Description:	5 Betacame SP videocassettes (2:06:30).
Abstract:	Music professor, jazz saxophonist, and music composer Wendell Logan (1940 - 2010) developed a program in African American music at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, in addition to serving on the faculty at Ball State University, Florida A & M University, and Western Illinois University. Logan also had an accomplished career composing and performing. Logan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 13, 2005, in Oberlin, Ohio. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2005_136
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Composer, jazz musician, and music educator Wendell Morris Logan, Ph.D., was born on November 24, 1940, one of three sons born to Dorothy Mae Horton and Simuel Morris Logan. Logan completed his elementary and secondary school education at the McDuffie County Training School and the R.L. Norris High School. Logan earned his bachelor's of science degree in music from Florida A & M University in 1962, his master's of music degree from Southern Illinois University in 1964, and his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in 1968. In 1994, Logan was a fellow at the Rockefeller Study Center in Bellagio, Italy.

Logan taught public school in 1963 and worked as a teaching assistant while completing the requirements for his Ph.D. in Iowa. Logan served on the faculties of Ball State University from 1967 to 1969; Florida A & M University from 1969 to 1970; and Western Illinois University from 1970 to 1973. Logan accepted the invitation to develop a program in African American music in the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he went on to serve as the Chair of Jazz Studies and professor of African American music.

As a musician, Logan performed throughout the United States and in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean. Logan's music was recorded on several labels, including Orion, Golden Crest, University of Michigan Press, Morehouse College Press, and RPM Records. Logan received numerous prizes and awards, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Ohio Arts Council, ASCAP Awards, a Guggenheim Award, the Cleveland Arts Prize, and the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Later compositions of Logan's included "Doxology Opera: The Doxy Canticles" and "Ask Your Mama."

Logan and his wife Betty raised two children, Wendell Jr. and Philecia; they also had one granddaughter, Karen.

Logan passed away on June 15, 2010.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Wendell Logan was conducted by Regennia Williams on June 13, 2005, in Oberlin, Ohio, and was recorded on 5 Betacame SP videocassettes. Music professor, jazz saxophonist, and music composer Wendell Logan (1940 - 2010) developed a program in African American music at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, in addition to serving on the faculty at Ball State University, Florida A & M University, and Western Illinois University. Logan also had an accomplished career composing and performing.

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:

Logan, Wendell, 1940-2010

Williams, Regennia (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Logan, Wendell, 1940-2010--Interviews

African American music teachers--Interviews

African American musicians--Interviews

African American college teachers--Interviews

College department heads--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Jazz Saxophonist

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 Wendell Logan, June 13, 2005. 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 Wendell Logan, Section A2005_136_001_001, TRT: 0:30:19 ?

Wendell Logan was born on November 24, 1940 in Thomson, Georgia to Dorothy Mae Horton Logan and Simuel Logan. Logan's paternal grandparents were Sally and Willie D. Logan, a sharecropper and Sunday school superintendent at Sweet Home Baptist Church near Greenwood, Mississippi. Logan's father was raised in Greenwood and studied agriculture at Tuskegee Institute. Logan's maternal grandfather, Addic Horton, was a carpenter. Logan's mother was raised in Greenville, Mississippi, and attended Allen University and Fort Valley State College to become an elementary school teacher. After meeting in Mississippi, his parents settled in Thomson, where they raised Logan and his two younger brothers. Logan attended McDuffie County Training School and R.L. Norris High School before enrolling at Florida A & M University. He recalls visiting his step-grandmother in Kansas City, Kansas; the jazz scene in Kansas City; seeing Little Richard, James Brown and Fats Domino in Thomson; and demonstrating during the civil rights era.

African American music teachers--Interviews.

African American musicians--Interviews.

African American college teachers--Interviews.

College department heads--Interviews.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Logan, Section A2005_136_001_002, TRT: 0:30:07 ?

Wendell Logan began his musical education at McDuffie County Training School in Thomson, Georgia where his father established the first music program. Inspired by bebop and jazz musicians like Lester Young, Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, Logan majored in music while attending Florida A&M University on a football scholarship. After teaching at a school near Kincheloe Air Force Base in Michigan for a year, Logan attended graduate school at Chicago's American Conservatory of Music. He completed his master's degree in music at Southern Illinois University. In 1965, Logan began his doctoral studies at the University of Iowa, where he wrote a classical avant-garde orchestral piece for his dissertation project. After earning his Ph.D. degree in 1968, Logan taught music composition at Ball State University. He recalls his graduate school mentors and the smells and sights of growing up. Logan also describes his wife, Bettye Reese Logan; their two children, Wendell, Jr. and Felicia Logan; and four grandchildren.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Logan, Section A2005_136_001_003, TRT: 0:30:13 ?

Wendell Logan served on the faculty of Ball State University from 1967 to 1969 and on Florida A&M University's faculty from 1969 to 1970. While teaching at Western Illinois University, he was recruited by Emil Danenberg, who was then the dean of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College, to develop a program in African American music. Although some faculty were resistant to Logan establishing a jazz department at the conservatory, Logan went on to serve as the chair of jazz studies and professor of African American music. In 2002, Logan composed 'Ask Your Mama' for the Langston Hughes Centennial at Trinity Cathedral Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Logan recounts his travels to Africa and Brazil to perform his compositions. Logan describes developing his style as a musical composer, his music's reception, and defining qualities of African American music. He also talks about his career goals, and the absence of African American students at Oberlin Conservatory.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Logan, Section A2005_136_001_004, TRT: 0:29:08 ?

Wendell Logan joined the faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College in 1973 to develop a program in African American music. He went on to serve as the chair of jazz studies and professor of African American music. While visiting schools around the country, he also led outreach efforts to acquaint young students with Oberlin Conservatory of Music. During his career, Logan spent two sabbaticals visiting the Gullah people of Georgia and South Carolina. After witnessing the community's traditional ring shout, he composed 'Gullah Island Suite.' He reflects upon the guidance that he received from his mentor at the University of Iowa, Professor Richard Hervig, who encouraged Logan to develop his own style as a musical composer. Logan considers his family to be his greatest achievement. He describes the challenges facing aspiring young musicians, his legacy and his hopes and concerns for the African American community.

Video Oral History Interview with Wendell Logan, Section A2005_136_001_005, TRT: 0:06:43 ?

Wendell Logan concludes his interview with an abbreviated discography of his musical compositions and a bibliography of materials about African American musicians.