

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Irving Burgie

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers® 1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Burgie, Irving
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie,
Dates:	April 10, 2014 and April 9, 2014
Bulk Dates:	2014
Physical Description:	14 uncompressed MOV digital video files (6:31:34).
Abstract:	Songwriter and performer Irving Burgie (1924 - 2019) was a songwriter for three Harry Belafonte albums and wrote the lyrics for the Barbados national anthem. He authored <i>Day-O!!!: The Autobiography of Irving Burgie</i> , and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007. Burgie was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on April 10, 2014 and April 9, 2014, in Jamaica, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2014_123
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Songwriter and performer Irving Burgie was born on July 28, 1924 in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, to a Barbadian mother and a Virginia-born father, who worked as a day laborer. In 1943, Burgie was drafted into the U.S. Army and served for three years in the China, Burma, and India Theaters. When Burgie returned to the U.S., he took advantage of the newly passed G.I. Bill, which allowed him to attend the Juilliard School, the University of Arizona, and the University of Southern California.

In 1953, Burgie performed as a singer and guitarist at the Blue Angel in Chicago, Illinois. After playing at the Village Vanguard in New York City in 1955, he was introduced to Harry Belafonte, and the two began a collaboration with Burgie as songwriter and Belafonte as performer. A year later, they released the album *Calypso*, for which Burgie composed eight of the eleven songs, including the hit "Day-O." *Calypso* became the first American record to sell over one million copies. In 1957, Burgie wrote the song "Island in the Sun" for the film of the same name, which starred Belafonte and Joan Fontaine. Burgie was then credited for ten of the eleven songs on Belafonte's 1957 album *Belafonte Sings of the Caribbean*, and eight of the twelve songs on 1961's *Jump Up Calypso*. In 1963, Burgie composed the music and lyrics for the off-Broadway show, "Ballad for Bimshire," which starred Ossie Davis. Then, while on a trip to Barbados, Burgie was invited to write the lyrics for the Barbados national anthem, which he completed in 1966. In 2011, he signed a fifteen-year publishing deal with BMG Rights Management.

Burgie released *The West Indian Song Book* in 1972, and the *Caribbean Carnival* song book in 1993. He also released the solo album, *Island in the Sun*, in 1996, which included many of his own renditions of the hits that he wrote for Belafonte. In 2007, he published the autobiography, *Day-O!!!: The Autobiography of Irving Burgie*.

Burgie developed the Caribbean Day Assembly Program for New York-area public schools in 1973; and, in 1975,

helped organize the United Black Men of Queens County Federation, Inc. He has received the Silver Crown of Merit from the Barbados government, and was awarded honorary doctorates from the University of the West Indies and St. John's University in New York. Burgie was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007.

Burgie passed away on November 29, 2019.

Irving Burgie was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on April 9, 2014.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Irving Burgie was conducted by Larry Crowe on April 10, 2014 and April 9, 2014, in Jamaica, New York, and was recorded on 14 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Songwriter and performer Irving Burgie (1924 - 2019) was a songwriter for three Harry Belafonte albums and wrote the lyrics for the Barbados national anthem. He authored *Day-O!!!: The Autobiography of Irving Burgie*, and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007.

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:

Burgie, Irving

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews
Burgie, Irving--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Performer

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 Irving Burgie, April 10, 2014 and April 9, 2014. 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 Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_001, TRT: 1:28:22 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_002, TRT: 2:29:41 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_003, TRT: 3:28:41 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_004, TRT: 4:30:45 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_005, TRT: 5:30:05 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_006, TRT: 6:28:22 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_001_007, TRT: 7:30:56 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_008, TRT: 8:27:02 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_009, TRT: 9:28:31 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_010, TRT: 10:28:12 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_011, TRT: 11:28:22 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_012, TRT: 12:28:16 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_013, TRT: 13:30:11 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section A2014_123_002_014, TRT: 14:14:08 ?
Video Oral History Interview with Irving Burgie, Section
A2014_123_Burgie_Irving_06_MED_002, TRT: 1:19:13