

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Claudette Robinson

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Robinson, Claudette
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson,
Dates:	July 22, 2017
Bulk Dates:	2017
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:04:24).
Abstract:	Singer and songwriter Claudette Robinson (1938 -) was a singer with the Motown group The Miracles, often referred to as the first lady of Motown. Robinson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 22, 2017, in Los Angeles, California. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2017_119
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Singer and songwriter Claudette Robinson was born on June 20, 1938 in New Orleans, Louisiana and later moved with her family to Detroit, Michigan in 1950. She graduated from Commerce High School in Detroit at the age of fifteen and enrolled at Wayne State University, before joining the U.S. Marine Corps.

In her teen years, she sang in the female group The Matadorettes. While her brother, Sonny Rogers was away serving in the U.S. Army, Claudette met his friend and band mate Smokey Robinson of The Matadors. Robinson joined the group in her brothers' absence, which was renamed The Miracles. She sang with Ronnie White, Pete Moore, Marv Tarplin, and Smokey Robinson, her husband. Together, the group created the first hit single for Motown Records, "Shop Around," which sold millions of copies. The Miracles would later be known for a variety of songs, including "You've Really Got a Hold on Me," "Mickey's Monkey," "I Second That Emotion," "Baby Baby Don't Cry," and "The Tears of a Clown." The song "The Tears of a Clown" was the group's most popular single, selling over three million copies all over the world. Although Robinson left the group in 1964, she continued to sing back-up vocals for the group until 1972. That year, her husband, Smokey Robinson, left The Miracles to pursue his solo career. Robinson eventually rejoined The Miracles and performed with the group until 2013, when her cousin, Bobby Rogers, passed away.

After leaving The Miracles, Robinson became active in numerous community organizations, including the HAL Awards and the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, which was dedicated to the preservation of R&B music. Robinson has been nationally recognized for her contributions to R&B music through her work with The Miracles. In 2009, she received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Robinson was also inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2012, along with the rest of the members of The Miracles. As the only woman in the first band signed to Motown Records, she is often referred to as the first lady of Motown by its founder, Berry Gordy.

Robinson has two children, Berry William Boro Robinson and Tamla Claudette Robinson.

Claudette Robinson was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on July 22, 2017.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Claudette Robinson was conducted by Harriette Cole on July 22, 2017, in Los Angeles, California, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Singer and songwriter Claudette Robinson (1938 -) was a singer with the Motown group The Miracles, often referred to as the first lady of Motown.

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:

Robinson, Claudette

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Robinson, Claudette--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Singer

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 Claudette Robinson, July 22, 2017. 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 Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_001, TRT: 1:28:08 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_002, TRT: 2:32:30 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_003, TRT: 3:32:00 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_004, TRT:
4:29:29 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_005, TRT:
5:29:32 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Claudette Robinson, Section A2017_119_001_006, TRT:
6:32:45 ?