

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carolyn Wilkins

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## Overview of the Collection

<b>Repository:</b>	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
<b>Creator:</b>	Wilkins, Carolyn (Carolyn Marie)
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins,
<b>Dates:</b>	August 19, 2017
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2017
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:32:58).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Professor and jazz musician Carolyn Wilkins (1952 - ) served as professor of ensembles at Berklee College of Music and has released four albums of original work and authored five books. Wilkins was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on August 19, 2017, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2017_157
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Professor and jazz musician Carolyn Wilkins was born on April 23, 1952 in Chicago, Illinois to Elizabeth Sweeny and Julian Wilkins. She graduated from the University of Chicago Laboratory School in Chicago, Illinois in 1969, and received her B.M. degree from the Oberlin Conservatory in Oberlin, Ohio in 1973, and her M.M. degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York in 1978.

Wilkins taught as an assistant professor of music at Wilbur Wright College in Chicago, Illinois from 1979 to 1981. In 1987, she served as choir director at Mount St. Joseph Academy and in 1989, she developed a "concert-lecture" designed to introduce some of jazz's greatest composers. She has also given concert-lectures on "What Is This Thing Called Jazz - a History from New Orleans to Coltrane", "Black Women in Jazz" and "The Roots of Jazz - African Music, Spirituals and the Blues" for audiences in libraries, schools and colleges. Wilkins was professor of Ensembles at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts.

Wilkins released four albums of her original compositions entitled *SpiritJazz I*, *SpiritJazz II*, *Healin' Time* and *Praise Song* on Tiphareth Records. Wilkins also composed music for *The Search Goes On*, an original musical performed at First Night 2000, for the NPR adaptation of Langston Hughes' *Tell Your Mama*, poet Phil Bryant's *Southside Suite*, and for *Return, a Meditational Journey of Self Discovery for Black Women*. The Wright College Choir, the Mt. St. Joseph Chorale, the Emmanuel College Singers, and the Shiloh Gospel Choir have also performed Wilkins' compositions. She performed her jazz-influenced spiritual music weekly in her role as music director for the Jazz Worship Service at the First Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her performance experience also included radio and television appearances with her group SpiritJazz, a concert tour of South America as a Jazz Ambassador for the U.S. State Department, performances as a percussionist with the Pittsburgh Symphony under Andre Previn and in shows featuring Melba Moore, Nancy Wilson and the Fifth Dimension. Wilkins performed at Boston's Regattabar, Scullers' Grille, the Globe Jazz Festival and the Many Colors of a Woman Jazz Festival. She has also appeared in concert at Harvard, Brandeis and Boston Universities, and was

featured four times as a part of Boston's annual First Night Celebration.

Wilkins authored five books; *Damn Near White: An African American Family's Rise from Slavery to Bittersweet Success*, *They Raised Me Up: A Black Single Mother and the Women Who Inspired Her*, both published by the University of Missouri Press, *Melody for Murder* and *Mojo for Murder*, both published by Pen-L Publishing, and *Tips for Singers: Performing, Auditioning and Rehearsing*.

Carolyn Wilkins was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on August 19, 2017.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Carolyn Wilkins was conducted by Larry Crowe on August 19, 2017, in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, and was recorded on 7 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Professor and jazz musician Carolyn Wilkins (1952 - ) served as professor of ensembles at Berklee College of Music and has released four albums of original work and authored five books.

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## 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®.

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## 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.

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## Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

### Persons:

Wilkins, Carolyn (Carolyn Marie)

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews  
Wilkins, Carolyn (Carolyn Marie)--Interviews

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## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

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The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

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## Occupations:

Jazz Musician

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## HistoryMakers® Category:

MusicMakers

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## 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 Carolyn Wilkins, August 19, 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).

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## 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.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

**Series I: Original Interview Footage**

- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_001, TRT: 1:30:00 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_002, TRT: 2:28:40 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_003, TRT: 3:30:01 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_004, TRT: 4:28:42 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:01 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_006, TRT: 6:30:13 ?
- Video Oral History Interview with Carolyn Wilkins, Section A2017\_157\_001\_007, TRT: 7:36:21 ?