

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Nora Brooks Blakely

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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>	Blakely, Nora Brooks
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely,
<b>Dates:</b>	May 1, 2018
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2018
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:54:42).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Artistic director and playwright Nora Brooks Blakely (1951 - ) Blakely was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 1, 2018, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2018_089
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

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## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Artistic director and playwright Nora Brooks Blakely was born on September 8, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois to Henry Lowington Blakely, Jr. and Gwendolyn Brooks, the first African American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize in poetry. Blakely graduated from Chicago's Hirsch High School in 1969, and received her B.A. degree in education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1972. She then earned her M.A. degree in interdisciplinary arts from Loyola University.

Blakely taught at Copernicus Elementary School in the Chicago Public Schools system from 1972 to 1980. She also performed as a dancer with the Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago in 1977. In 1979, Blakely founded Anchor, an arts organization for children and the precursor to the Chocolate Chips Theatre Company, which Blakely founded in 1982 on the south side of Chicago. In 1987, the Chocolate Chips Theatre Company began a residence at Kennedy-King College. As the company's producing artistic director, Blakely worked closely with students of Chicago Public Schools and wrote original plays such as *Brother Man*, *A Few of My Sisters*, *The Tiger Who Wore White Gloves*, and *A Day in Bronzeville: Black Life through the Eyes of Gwendolyn Brooks*. Blakely later founded the Aurora Performance Group, a troupe dedicated to honoring Gwendolyn Brooks' memory through the performance arts. After the death of her mother in 2000, Blakely founded Brooks Permission, a licensing firm for Gwendolyn Brooks' literary works. Brooks Permissions later expanded to offer merchandise and programming related to the life and works of Gwendolyn Brooks. In 2014, Blakely donated Gwendolyn Brooks' archives to the Rare Books and Manuscript Library at the University of Illinois. In 2017, Blakely served as an editor for a book about her mother called *Seasons: A Gwendolyn Brooks Experience*. She also served as an organizer for Gwendolyn Brooks' International Birthday Party celebration in 2017, and participated in numerous celebrations of her mother's 100th birthday.

Blakely served on the board of directors for the African American Arts Alliance of Chicago. She also served on the selection committee for the 2017 Gwendolyn Brooks Youth Poetry Awards given by Illinois Humanities organization.

Nora Brooks Blakely was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 1, 2018.

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## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Nora Brooks Blakely was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 1, 2018, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Artistic director and playwright Nora Brooks Blakely (1951 - )

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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:

Blakely, Nora Brooks

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Blakely, Nora Brooks--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:

Artistic Director

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Playwright

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### HistoryMakers® Category:

ArtMakers

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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 Nora Brooks Blakely, May 1, 2018. 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 Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_001, TRT: 1:29:04 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_002, TRT: 2:31:50 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:28 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_004, TRT: 4:33:30 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:50 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_006, TRT: 6:34:44 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_007, TRT: 7:29:57 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Nora Brooks Blakely, Section A2018\_089\_001\_008, TRT: 8:16:19 ?