

# Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Roy F. Eaton

---

## 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>	Eaton, Roy, 1930-
<b>Title:</b>	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton,
<b>Dates:</b>	June 17, 2019
<b>Bulk Dates:</b>	2019
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:48:08).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Music producer Roy Eaton (1930 - ) produced seventy five percent of all of Young & Rubicam's music for products like Chef Boyardee's Beefaroni, Gulf Oil, and Kent Cigarettes in the 1950s. He became vice president of Benton & Bowles before founding Roy Eaton Music, Inc. in 1980. Eaton was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on June 17, 2019, in New York, New York. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
<b>Identification:</b>	A2019_045
<b>Language:</b>	The interview and records are in English.

---

## Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Music producer Roy Eaton was born on May 14, 1930, in Harlem, New York, to Felix and Bernice Eaton, who were of Jamaican descent. Eaton graduated from the Music and Art High School in 1946 and simultaneously enrolled in two schools - the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied piano and musicology, and the City College of New York, where he studied history - graduating from both institutions in 1950. From 1950 to 1952, Eaton attended Yale University, earning his M.A. degree in musicology.

In 1951, Eaton made his debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, performing Chopin. He then performed Beethoven in his debut at the Town Hall in New York in 1952. That same year, Eaton began working with the Manhattan School of Music as a concert pianist, performer, and lecturer. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1953, serving at a hospital radio station at Fort Dix in New Jersey, where he wrote and produced radio programs for two years. In 1955, Eaton left the Army and was hired at the advertising agency, Young & Rubicam, as a copywriter and composer, where over a two year period, he produced seventy-five percent of all of the agency's music for products like Chef Boyardee's Beefaroni, Gulf Oil, and Kent Cigarettes. In 1959, Eaton joined another advertising agency, Benton & Bowles, as its music director. There, he helped to sign the Jackson Five to their first advertising contract deal with Post Cereal. He also helped produce advertisements for Texaco, Yuban's Coffee, and Hardees. Eaton was then promoted to vice president of the agency in 1968. In 1980, Eaton left Benton & Bowles to launch his own company, Roy Eaton Music Inc., where he helped coordinate music production for various advertising agencies, worked with Michael Jackson, and produced advertisements for companies like Coca-Cola and the Ad Council. Eaton returned to the concert stage in 1986, performing Chopin at the Lincoln Center, and went on to perform there two more times. He also toured to other countries and released five albums, one being an international success.

In 2010, Eaton was inducted into the American Advertising Federation's Advertising Hall of Fame. Eaton has five

sons, and lives on Roosevelt Island in New York with his wife and twin boys, Ari and Ravi.

Roy Eaton was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on June 17, 2019.

---

## Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Roy F. Eaton was conducted by Harriette Cole on June 17, 2019, in New York, New York, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Music producer Roy Eaton (1930 - ) produced seventy five percent of all of Young & Rubicam's music for products like Chef Boyardee's Beefaroni, Gulf Oil, and Kent Cigarettes in the 1950s. He became vice president of Benton & Bowles before founding Roy Eaton Music, Inc. in 1980.

---

## 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:

Eaton, Roy, 1930-

Cole, Harriette (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

### Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Eaton, Roy, 1930- --Interviews

---

## Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

---

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

---

## Occupations:

Music Producer

---

## 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 Roy F. Eaton, June 17, 2019. 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 Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_001, TRT: 1:31:17 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_002, TRT: 2:29:11 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_003, TRT: 3:29:31 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_004, TRT: 4:29:08 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_005, TRT: 5:29:52 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_006, TRT: 6:29:14 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_007, TRT: 7:29:24 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Roy F. Eaton, Section A2019\_045\_001\_008, TRT: 8:20:31 ?