

About the Production

Sounds of a Miracle is one woman's story with a universal appeal. It is a saga of love, struggle, hope and finding one's purpose in life.

Despite no formal music training, Earnestine Rodgers Robinson, with her faith and family, rises from humble southern roots to become an unlikely composer of classical music that takes her all the way to New York's Carnegie Hall and Prague, Czech Republic.

"When I think about where I came from, even now it's still amazing to me how high I've climbed," Robinson said.

Although the composer's journey began more than three decades ago, the idea for the *Sounds of a Miracle* documentary film was born in December of 2002.

In 2002, Composer Earnestine Rodgers Robinson traveled to Prague for the world premiere of her oratorio, "The Nativity."

Robinson desired to share images of the concert and her trip with her husband, Charles, whose health prevented him from attending the concert. The family took pictures and shot video of the City of a Hundred Spires.

Charles enjoyed seeing the beautiful European city and hearing the Czech National Symphony and chorus perform his wife's oratorio.

After returning home, the Memphis Arts Council, which helped to underwrite the trip, asked Ms. Robinson to speak and make a presentation to their top donors at their annual dinner.

Todd Robinson, her eldest son, condensed the home video to a 6-minute short film. After the showing, the head of the Memphis Film Festival invited him to enter it into the festival.

This short film was not the Robinson family's first production venture. Several years earlier, they produced a documentary, "A Woman and Her Music," which aired on PBS stations across the country. But life interrupted plans to show the short film ... it never made its debut. In 2003, after 43 years of marriage, Earnestine's husband, Charles, passed away. He was her number one fan. His loss dealt a devastating blow not only to the family, but also to the musical work.

Still, it was as if fate was pushing the family toward putting together a second documentary.

A couple of years later, members of the family had lunch with the then head of the Memphis Music Commission. After hearing their story, he encouraged them to create a documentary because it was too fascinating not to share with the world.

"Earnestine's music is a gift and it's wonderful how you all have supported it all these years," said Rey Flemming, former Memphis Music Commissioner.

Inspired by this, the family returned to the short film project and decided to extend it into a feature length documentary.

To fund the film, Todd began working a grueling schedule of moonlighting at different hospitals, ER's and medical clinics; and in between medical shifts he became submerged in learning about filmmaking.

"Making a movie is no small feat for any filmmaker, but when you're a doctor out of your element, it's quite challenging," Todd said.

But he was up for the challenge and took it on with a zeal that became his passion.

Once production began, the entire family became involved in every aspect of making a film: writing, filming and editing. For the next several months, they exhausted every resource, pushed themselves to the brink financially and spent every available moment, day and night, working to tell their story.

The Robinson family has worked as a team in just about everything. Whether it is a trip to the grocery store (yes, that really did happen) or producing a documentary, they come together to make things happen.

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