



Happy is the nation that has no history is a piece about resistance and the struggle against racial discrimination, from the 1960s to the present day.

Total running time is 55 minutes and 10 seconds.

This radiophonic composition is at once literary, musical and historical and proposes a poetic and political journey structured by excerpts from a short story entitled *Whatever Happened to Interracial Love?* by the African American film-maker Kathleen Collins. Written at the end of the 1960s, the story and its characters anchor us intimately in the heart of the subject, in an apartment shared by two roommates of different coloured skin in New York City. It's 1963, a key moment in contemporary history, when an entire generation aspired towards greater equality, fraternity and solidarity. Idealism began to take shape, nothing could be taken lightly. Each gesture toward the other(s), each act against the segregationist society in place constituted a real risk.

That precise moment in time and the young people of that generation (as well as their descendants), their passion, audacity and even faults will be put into the spotlight and on air. Although they didn't quite accomplish all their goals, the way they opened up is forever before us, while the struggle against hate and discrimination is an on going reality. You could say that is an American story, yes. But consider America an archetype and its myth a story that belongs to us all. As writer Carlos Fuentes put it, "The myth is a past with a future that acts on the present."

Happy is the nation that has no history, was created by Dominique Godderis and Aurélien Chouzenoux, with the voices of Malika Khatir, Catherine Travelletti, Francesco Panese and Dominique Godderis. Music and arrangements by Godderis-Chouzenoux. Additional sound recordings by Gerald Wang. Graphic design by Pauline Perret. Claudia Rankine appears with the gracious permission of the Louisiana Channel (Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark). Special thanks to Nina Lorez Collins, Nicolas Champeaux, Carmen Sage and Gerald Wang and the Jardin Moderne in Rennes. A production of the LABO, RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, with support from the Institut français, the Region of Brittany and the “Brouillon d’un rêve – sonore” grant program organised by the SCAM.

And, in order of appearance

George Gershwin, Kathleen Collins, Dominique Godderis, Lou Christie, Albert Jacquard, Jacques Sallebert, Bob Dylan, James Baldwin, Catherine Travelletti, Stevie Wonder, Dusty Springfield, Martha and the Vandellas, Amiri Baraka, Joe Johnson, Reverend Ben Gay, Jean Saignier, Francesco Panese, Jim Zwerg, Benjamin Rommineux, Kimberly Jones, Angela Davis, Kwame Ture. Killer Mike, Stephen Colbert, Robert Jordan, Cedric Williams, Michael Eric Dyson, Claudia Rankine, Peter, Paul and Mary, Martin Luther King Jr., Yves Coppens, Malika Khatir, Nino Rota, Public Enemy, Dean Martin, Horace Axtell, Whitney Houston, Tim Wise, Roy Orbison, James Brown, Dr. Cornel West, Dr. Ernest Galarza, Tupac, John F. Kennedy, Nina Simone, Ma Rainey, Jean-Luc Godard, Josephine Baker, Trisha Rose, Jimi Hendrix, Samuel L. Jackson and Nina Lorez Collins.

A little about the work’s creators

Dominique Godderis is a French-American performing and vocal artist and translator, whose approach to composition and poetic language has been shaped by both her literary and choreographic-spatial-temporal experiences over nearly two decades of artistic performance and collaboration. Aurélien Chouzenoux is a multi-instrumentalist composer, sound designer and engineer. Always attentive to notions of dramaturgy, his signature is surely to be heard in his use of pop and electro-acoustic elements. As a duo they create and perform audio-visual live performances, musical performances and radiophonic pieces.

Scam*



