Washington State JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Marina Pierce

SUMMARY

Marina Pierce shares about her upbringing in a Jewish, musical-theater family. Following in her mother's footsteps as an actor, Marina Pierce played Hodel in the Whidbey Island Center for the Arts' production of "Fiddler On The Roof". She shares details about Seattle's Jewish theater scene.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Uh, will you say your name, please, for me?

Marina Pierce: My name is Marina Pearce.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Thanks. And do I have your consent to record this?

Marina Pierce: You do.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Great. Um, can you tell me what is your connection to the Jewish community or to Fiddler on the Roof?

Marina Pierce: Yeah. So I have long connections to both. Um, my family is Jewish. We weren't raised, like, religious, really, but we were culturally Jewish. And I like to kind of associate my relationship growing up with my Jewish culture, as we're, like the Easter Christian equivalents of Jews. And so but, um, I always felt really connected and happy with Passover and, um, Hanukkah and all that. And so I when I kind of entered my adolescence, I started really wanting to explore it more. And so that was when I started to get more in depth researching into what does being a Jew look like? Because it's always something that I knew was just a fact about my heritage and my life and my family, but I hadn't actually questioned what that meant because we weren't really that in depth in the community, you know. And so in probably the last ten years, I have put a lot more of my energy into that. And it's felt really meaningful and grounding in a way. Um, and then with Fiddler on the roof, my family. So I'm a only child, single parent situation, and my mom was an actor my entire life. She still is. And now she's a drama teacher. But, um, I have been raised listening to Golden Age musical theater since before I could speak. And so I really, sorry, I forgot how to say words [Laughs]. Um, but.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: You just performed an entire play.

Marina Pierce: I just did, It's been it's been a long week. Um, but I remember first watching the movie when I was probably seven, eight, and then it was a yearly watch. And usually I would choose to watch it by myself. And it was it was great. And when Lonny called me and said, can you come play Hodl? I was like, oh my God, oh my God. Absolutely. Absolutely. It was a dream come true.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Awesome. Thanks so much for sharing that. Yeah. Um, do you live on Whidbey?

Marina Pierce: I don't, I live in Seattle.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Okay. And do you find, any are there any Jewish community hubs that you kind of gravitate to there?

Marina Pierce: Well, theater in itself is kind of a Jewish hub. I mean, um, there's a song in Spamalot called You Won't Succeed on Broadway if you don't have any Jews to kind of, which is, which is great. It's a great song. But, um, the there's, there's a there's a lot of Jews in theater and that's been both my entire life. And so that's also been a touchstone for me. Like, I remember I went to

school with an amazing family who they would make, um, show themed menorahs. And so, um, I wasn't in this production, but I remember them posting, um, photos of when their kids were in A Christmas Story and the menorah they made were all the little leg lamps. And so there's a lot of Jews in theater.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Thank you so much. This is really great!