# Basic Detail Report

## Title Interview with Anne Mercer and Taki Tanaka

Date 2023 June 8

Medium born digital audio file

Description Interview with Anne Mercer and Taki Tanaka. Interviewed by Alex Dueben on June 8, 2023 at J.René Coffee Roasters, 320 Park Road, West Hartford, Connecticut. They were interviewed as part of the Connecticut Historical Society's Community History Project discussing their experience during the COVID-19 Pandemic. At the time of the interview Anne Mercer was a coffee professional and Taki Tanaka was a barista and manager at J.René Coffee Roasters in West Hartford, Connecticut. The first disruption in Anne’ s life due to COVID occurred when she attended a convention at the Javits Center in New York City. The first disruption in Taki’ s life was when the restaurant where he was working closed. J.René Coffee Roasters remained open through most of the pandemic, offering takeout coffee options with a limited menu. They kept a minimal staff, with only two people working sometimes. Their online orders skyrocketed, which helped keep the business afloat during the pandemic. Anne and Taki discuss their experiences working in the food industry through the pandemic. Both Anne and Taki did not contract COVID until the second wave. They found their reliable information through the New York Times, CNN, watching the news, and the Connecticut Restaurant Association. Anne and Taki discuss the sense of community that they felt, including peoples’ support for small businesses and the Black Lives Matter movement. Taki described the

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January 6, 2021 U. S. Capitol Insurrection as surreal. He also shared insight into the difficulty of managing a staff during a pandemic when many people did not want to work. Both Anne and Taki had more time at home and took up hobbies such as reading and cooking. They agreed that “turbulent” is an appropriate way to describe the pandemic. Their hope for the future is that people come together and communicate rather than continuing to separate further.

Dimensions Duration: 46 Minutes, 31 Seconds