



I Put A Spell On You: The Autobiography Of Nina Simone

By Nina Simone

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I Put A Spell On You: The Autobiography Of Nina Simone By Nina Simone

The inimitable, gorgeously talented Nina Simone (1933-2003)--the "high priestess of soul"--sets the story of her tumultuous, passionate life straight in *I Put a Spell on You*.

Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon in small-town North Carolina, Nina Simone changed the face of both music and race relations in America. She struck a chord with bluesy jazz ballads like "Put a Little Sugar in My Bowl" and powerful protest songs such as "Mississippi Goddam" and "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black," the anthem of the American Civil Rights movement.

Here are the many lives and loves of Nina Simone, recounted in her unshakable voice.

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I Put A Spell On You: The Autobiography Of Nina Simone By Nina Simone Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Simone grew up during the Depression in a small North Carolina town where, thanks to a farsighted music teacher and caring neighbors who paid for her lessons, she was trained as a classical pianist. After attending Juilliard on a scholarship she was rejected by the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia (a setback she attributes to the fact that she is black), and she became a nightclub entertainer, singing and accompanying herself on the piano and, with her skillful improvisations of popular songs in classical style, quickly becoming a star. In the 1960s she joined the civil rights movement and became well known as a protest singer. Then, in the 1970s and '80s, disillusioned with the U.S., she went into self-imposed exile in Africa and Europe. Unfortunately, written with freelancer Cleary, her account of these later years, in which she concentrates on personal problems and a number of tiresome love affairs, lacks the interest of the early part of the book, which describes her unusual childhood and remarkable rise to fame. Photos not seen by PW.

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Review

Lincoln Center Institute Resource Center blog, 7/9/09

"Compelling, honest, and powerful. It is meticulously packed with historical information on America during some of its ugliest times, coming from the voice of someone who lived through it everyday...a voice of a woman who devoted her adult life to changing the face of society.... From a musical standpoint alone, *I Put a Spell On You* is an extremely valuable read. However, this would also be a unique, relevant, and worthwhile addition to any high-school or collegiate history library, or anyone with an interest in the civil rights movement both politically and artistically."

About the Author

Stephen Cleary is a filmmaker living in London.

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