

According to Richard S. Ginell at AllMusic:

"[Washington] was at once one of the most beloved and controversial singers of the mid-20th century - beloved to her fans, devotees, and fellow singers; controversial to critics who still accuse her of selling out her art to commerce and bad taste. Her principal sin, apparently, was to cultivate a distinctive vocal style that was at home in all kinds of music, be it R&B, blues, jazz, middle of the road pop - and she probably would have made a fine gospel or country singer had she the time. Hers was a gritty, salty, high-pitched voice, marked by absolute clarity of diction and clipped, bluesy phrasing..."



Washington was well known for singing torch songs. In 1962, Dinah hired a male backing trio called the Allegros, consisting of Jimmy Thomas on drums, Earl Edwards on sax, and Jimmy Sigler on organ. Edwards was eventually replaced on sax by John Payne. A Variety writer praised their vocals as "effective choruses".

Washington's achievements included appearances at the Newport Jazz Festival (1955-59), the Randalls Island Jazz Festival in New York City (1959), and the International Jazz Festival in Washington D.C. (1962), frequent gigs at Birdland (1958, 1961-62), and performances in 1963 with Count Basie and Duke Ellington.

Early on the morning of December 14, 1963, Washington's seventh husband, football great Dick "Night Train" Lane, went to sleep with his wife, and awoke later to find her slumped over and not responsive. Doctor B. C. Ross came to the scene to pronounce her dead. An autopsy later showed a lethal combination of secobarbital and amobarbital, which contributed to her death at the age of 39. She is buried in the Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois.



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS



Dinah Washington (born Ruth Lee Jones; August 29, 1924 – December 14, 1963), was an American singer and pianist, who has been cited as "the most popular black female recording artist of the '50s". Primarily a jazz vocalist, she performed and recorded in a wide variety of styles including blues, R&B, and traditional pop music, and gave herself the title of "Queen of the Blues". She was a 1986 inductee of the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame, and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1993.

Ruth Lee Jones was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and moved to Chicago as a child. She became deeply involved in gospel and played piano for the choir in St. Luke's Baptist Church while still in elementary school. She sang gospel music in church and played piano, directing her church choir in her teens and being a member of the Sallie Martin Gospel Singers. She sang lead with the first female gospel singers formed by Ms. Martin, who was co-founder of the Gospel Singers Convention. Her involvement with the gospel choir occurred after she won an amateur contest at Chicago's Regal Theater where she sang "I Can't Face the Music".

After winning a talent contest at the age of 15, she began performing in clubs. By 1941-42 she was performing in such Chicago clubs as Dave's Rhumboogie and the Downbeat Room of the Sherman Hotel (with Fats Waller). She was playing at the Three Deuces, a jazz club, when a friend took her to hear Billie Holiday at the Garrick Stage Bar. Club owner Joe Sherman was so impressed with her singing of "I Understand", backed by the Cats and the Fiddle, who were appearing in the Garrick's upstairs room, that he hired her. During her year at the Garrick – she sang upstairs while Holiday performed in the downstairs room – she acquired the name by which she became known. She credited Joe Sherman with suggesting the change from Ruth Jones, made before Lionel Hampton came to hear Dinah at the Garrick. Hampton's visit brought an offer, and Washington worked as his female band vocalist after she had sung with the band for its opening at the Chicago

Regal Theatre.

She made her recording debut for the Keynote label that December with "Evil Gal Blues", written by Leonard Feather and backed by Hampton and musicians from his band, including Joe Morris (trumpet) and Milt Buckner (piano). Both that record and its follow-up, "Salty Papa Blues", made Billboard's "Harlem Hit Parade" in 1944.

She stayed with Hampton's band until 1946 and, after the Keynote label folded, signed for Mercury Records as a solo singer. Her first record for Mercury, a version of Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'", was another hit, starting a long string of success. Between 1948 and 1955, she had 27 R&B top ten hits, making her one of the most popular and successful singers of the period. Both "Am I Asking Too Much" (1948) and "Baby Get Lost" (1949) reached Number 1 on the R&B chart, and her version of "I Wanna Be Loved" (1950) crossed over to reach Number 22 on the US pop chart. Her hit recordings included blues, standards, novelties, pop covers, and even a version of Hank Williams' "Cold, Cold Heart" (R&B Number 3, 1951). At the same time as her biggest popular success, she also recorded sessions with many leading jazz musicians, including Clifford Brown and Clark Terry on the album *Dinah Jams* (1954), and also recorded with Cannonball Adderley and Ben Webster.

In 1959, she had her first top ten pop hit, with a version of "What a Difference a Day Made", which made Number 4 on the US pop chart. Her band at that time included arranger Belford Hendricks, with Kenny Burrell (guitar), Joe Zawinul (piano), and Panama Francis (drums). She followed it up with a version of Irving Gordon's "Unforgettable", and then two highly successful duets in 1960 with Brook Benton, "Baby (You've Got What It Takes)" (No. 5 Pop, No. 1 R&B) and "A Rockin' Good Way (To Mess Around and Fall in Love)" (No. 7 Pop, No. 1 R&B). Her last big hit was "September in the Rain" in 1961 (No. 23 Pop, No. 5 R&B).

Dinah Washington sings Fats Waller

- 1.Christopher Columbus 2:45
- 2.Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do 3:25
- 3.Jitterbug Waltz 2:45
- 4.Someone's Rockin' My Dreamboat 1:58
- 5.Ain'tcha Glad 2:43
- 6.Squeeze Me 2:07
- 7.Ain't Misbehavin' (I'm Saving My Love For You) 2:32
- 8.Black & Blue 2:55
- 9.Everybody Loves My Baby (But My Baby Don't Love Nobody But Me) 2:36
- 10.I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling 2:23
- 11.Honeysuckle Rose 2:33
- 12.Keepin' Out Of Mischief Now 2:34

Please Note: In the interest of preserving the superb sound quality of these historic recordings, they have been preserved in their original, pristine state for maximum fidelity. Transferred from commercially released, analog reel-to-reel tapes (some of which are more than 50 years old), the recordings themselves can be subject to certain "artifacts" which are an inseparable part of the original analog recording process, such as tape "hiss" or other defects, and these may be audible on certain music tracks. Because your CD or DVD-A was individually "burned" in order to realize superior sound quality to stamped, mass-produced versions, microscopic cosmetic blemishes may be visible. Please regard these tiny marks as evidence of the "human touch" in the care and individual attention that each and every HD TT disc receives during its very demanding manufacturing process.



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