

Nico – Classic Years (1998)

Written by bluesever

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1. *I'm Not Saying* 2. *The Last Mile* 3. *I'll Be Your Mirror* [play](#) 4. *Femme Fatale* 5. *All Tomorrow's Parties* 6. *The Fairest of the Seasons* 7. *These Days* 8. *Little Sister* 9. *Chelsea Girls* 10. *No One Is There* 11. *Ari's Song* 12. *Frozen Warnings* 13. *Nibelungen* [play](#) 14. *Janitor of Lunacy* 15. *Abschied* 16. *Afraid* 17. *Secret Side* 18. *You Forgot to Answer* 19. *The End*

Personnel: John Cale (guitar, acoustic guitar, electric viola, brass, piano, celesta, organ, synthesizer, xylophone, background vocals); Lou Reed, Phil Manzanera (guitar); Maureen Tucker (percussion); Vicki Wood, Annagh Wood, Sterling Morrison (background vocals).

As the golden-haired, frog-throated chanteuse of the Velvet Underground, the German born Nico cast a decadent spell. Her cool, detached performances, in direct opposition with the feel-good hippie vibe of the 1960s, influenced the punk scene of the 1970s. This collection serves as an excellent sampler of Nico's work, beginning with her first single for Rolling Stones' manager Andrew Loog Oldham's then-new Immediate label (a 1965 cover of Gordon Lightfoot's "I'm Not Sayin'") and spanning her Velvet Underground contributions and her stunning first four solo albums. Her ethereal cover of the Doors' "The End" matched with material by producer John Cale, Lou Reed, and Jackson Browne, as well as her own doomy compositions, illuminate her unusual sense of style. The silent hero here, however, is Cale, who served as the perfect collaborator, elevating Nico's worldview with his often gorgeous, always sympathetic musical backing. ---Rob O'Connor, Editorial Reviews

The late **Nico** (nee Christa Paffgen) was the German model and Fellini bit player who added a touch of Euro glamour to the early Velvet Underground and went on to a startlingly original solo

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career performing a neo-medieval plainsong strictly of her own devise. THE CLASSIC YEARS opens with a rare 1965 pre-Velvets single "I'm Not Saying" which proved that this heavy-voiced "chanteuse" could carry a folk-rock tune as well as any at the time. Likewise, her lilting vocals on Velvet favorites "Femme Fatale" and "I'll Be Your Mirror" account in part for the enduring pop appeal of the Andy Warhol-produced debut THE VELVET UNDERGROUND & NICO.

1967's CHELSEA GIRL -- with contributions from Jackson Browne, Lou Reed, Tim Hardin and Bob Dylan -- introduced Nico as a durable New York folk-rock songstress. But it was the sphinx-like THE MARBLE INDEX and DESERTSHORE -- both imaginatively arranged by fellow Velvets alumni John Cale -- that established Nico as an underground solo artist in her own right. Accompanying herself on harmonium with help from Cale's electric viola and keyboards, she carried forth like a 20th century Hildegard, drawing a simple ascending line in the sand of a timeless and unforgiving landscape. ---cduniverse.com

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