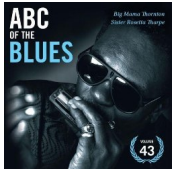


ABC Of The Blues CD43 (2010)

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ABC Of The Blues.CD43 (2010)



CD 43 – Big Mama Thornton & Sister Rosetta Tharpe 43-01 *Big Mama Thornton – Partnership Blues* 43-02 *Big Mama Thornton – I’m All Fed Up* 43-03 *Big Mama Thornton – Let Your Tears Fall Baby* 43-04 *Big Mama Thornton – They Call Me Big Mama* 43-05 *Big Mama Thornton – Hound Dog* [play](#) 43-06 *Big Mama Thornton – Walking Blues* 43-07 *Big Mama Thornton – I’ve Searched the World Over* 43-08 *Big Mama Thornton – I Smell a Rat* 43-09 *Big Mama Thornton – Nightmare* 43-10 *Big Mama Thornton – I Ain’t No Fool Neither* 43-11 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Let That Liar Alone* 43-12 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Sit Down* 43-13 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – What’s the News* 43-14 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Singin’ in My Soul* 43-15 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – The Natural Facts* 43-16 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Two Little Fishes and Five Loaves of Bread* 43-17 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Nobody’s Fault but Mine* [play](#) 43-18 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Nobody Knows, Nobody Cares* 43-19 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – All Over This World* 43-20 *Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Four or Five Times*

Big Mama Thornton (Willie Mae Thornton, December 11, 1926, Montgomery, AL - July 25, 1984, Los Angeles, CA) was an American blues musician.

Her introduction to music, as with most fellow blues legends, started in the Baptist church. The daughter of a minister, she and her six siblings began to sing at a very early age. While still a child, Willie Mae taught herself to play the drums and harmonica, and by the age of 14, she had run away from home to make her career in secular music.

She joined Sammy Green’s “Hot Harlem Revue” and toured throughout the South in the 1940’s, first beginning her musical career in 1947. While touring Texas in 1948, Thornton left the Revue

in favor of the state's growing club scene, which she immersed herself in. It was during this time that she was discovered by Don Robey, a black entrepreneur who owned several clubs and record stores in the Houston, TX area. Impressed by her massive size (6 ft, 350+ lb), formidable multi-instrument abilities, and fiery stage presence, Robey signed her to his Peacock Records label, where he began the task of translating the forceful belter's energy onto record.

Her big hit came, not from Robey's capable pen, but from the young songwriting team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. It was "Hound Dog," which she recorded in 1953 with the Johnny Otis band. Big Mama Thornton always claimed to have written the song herself (a claim which may actually hold some validity), and her ferocious rendition of it (complete with Big Mama's growl and a nasty guitar line by Pete Lewis) held the #1 spot in the Billboard rhythm and blues charts for nine weeks. Unfortunately for Thornton, Elvis Presley's smoother and bowdlerized version was a major pop hit in 1956 and successfully eclipsed her biggest claim to fame.

Thornton continued to tour the "chitlin' circuit" as fans began to favour newer R&B sounds over blues. For some years, Big Mama suffered in obscurity like most of her fellow bluesmen. Her name gained wider prominence and her career enjoyed a significant resurgence as her song "Ball and Chain" was covered by Janis Joplin, making it a regular number in her repertoire. From that point onward, Thornton would remain a headliner at blues festivals, colleges, and clubs throughout the country and even in Europe. She began recording again, and released albums for the Arhoolie, Mercury, and Vanguard labels. Years of hard drinking and living began to take their toll, however, and by the late 1970s her health (and her trademark girth) had declined greatly. She nevertheless performed until her death at the age of 57 on July 25, 1984 in Los Angeles, where she was found dead from natural causes in the boarding house room in which she had been living. Johnny Otis conducted her funeral services, and she was laid to rest in Inglewood Park Cemetery. ---last.fm

"Sister" Rosetta Tharpe (March 20, 1915 – October 9, 1973) was a pioneering Gospel singer, songwriter and recording artist who attained great popularity in the 1930s and 1940s with a unique mixture of spiritual lyrics and early rock accompaniment. She became the first great recording star of Gospel music, first surfacing on the pop charts in 1939 with "This Train", her version of the traditional gospel standard.

Willing to cross the line between sacred and secular by performing her inspirational music of

'light' in the 'darkness' of the nightclubs and concert halls with big bands behind her, her witty, idiosyncratic style also left a lasting mark on more conventional gospel artists

Born Rosetta Nubin in Cotton Plant, Arkansas, she began performing at age four, billed as "Little Rosetta Nubin, the singing and guitar playing miracle", accompanying her mother, Church of God in Christ (COGIC) evangelist Katie Bell Nubin, who played mandolin and preached at tent revivals throughout the South. Exposed to both blues and jazz both in the South and after her family moved to Chicago in the late 1920s, she played blues and jazz in private, while performing gospel music in public settings. Her unique style reflected those secular influences: she bent notes the way that jazz artists did and picked guitar like Memphis Minnie.

Rosetta also crossed over to secular music in other ways. After marrying COGIC preacher Thomas Thorpe (from which "Tharpe" is a misspelling) in 1934 and moving to New York City, she recorded four sides with Decca Records backed by "Lucky" Millinder's jazz orchestra. Her records caused an immediate furor: many churchgoers were shocked by the mixture of sacred and secular music, but secular audiences loved them. Appearances in John Hammond's 1938 extravaganza "From Spirituals To Swing", at the Cotton Club and Café Society and with Cab Calloway and Benny Goodman made her even more popular. Songs like "This Train" and "Rock Me", which combined gospel themes with bouncy up-tempo arrangements, became smash hits among audiences with little previous exposure to gospel music.

Tharpe continued recording during World War II, one of only two gospel artists able to record V-discs for troops overseas. Her song "Strange Things Happening Every Day", recorded in 1944 with Sammy Price, Decca's house boogie woogie pianist, showcased her virtuosity as a guitarist and her witty lyrics and delivery. It was also the first gospel song to make Billboard's "race records" Top Ten—something that Sister Rosetta Tharpe accomplished several more times in her career.

After the war Decca paired her with Marie Knight, a Sanctified shouter with a strong contralto and a more subdued style than Tharpe. Their hit "Up Above My Head" showed both of them to great advantage: Knight provided the response to Tharpe in traditional call and response format, then took the role that would have been assigned to a bass in a male quartet after Tharpe's solo. They toured the gospel circuit for a number of years, during which Tharpe was so popular that she attracted 25,000 paying customers to her wedding to her manager Russell Morrison (her third marriage), followed by a vocal performance, at Griffith Stadium in Washington, D.C. in 1951.

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Their popularity took a sudden downturn, however, when they recorded several blues songs in the early 1950s. Knight attempted afterwards to cross over to popular music, while Tharpe remained in the church, but rebuffed by many of her former fans. Retreating to Europe, Tharpe gradually returned to the gospel circuit, although at nowhere near her former celebrity. Her performances were curtailed even further by a stroke in 1970 after which she lost the use of her legs. She died in 1973 after another stroke, on the eve of a scheduled recording session.

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