

Throwback: Rene & Angela- Imaginary Playmates



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Rene Moore and Angela Winbush formed a musical partnership in 1977. Winbush is a St. Louis, Missouri native who studied architecture at Howard University and only used music to make extra money from her performances. Hot Tea was a group she was a part of with Tawatha Agee and they would open for various groups. Richard Smallwood also added her to his singing group at the time. She made a demo that was eventually heard by Stevie Wonder and it got her a place in his famous group of back-up singers Wonderlove. Rene Moore is from Los Angeles and he worked with Leon Russell and The Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra before meeting Winbush. Initially they wrote and produced songs for other artists like Dolly Parton, Lenny Williams, Alton McClain and Destiny and Lamont Dozier. In 1980 their first album as artists was released and the highlights

were [“Free And Easy,”](#) [“I Don’t Know Where Love Comes From”](#) and [“Do You Really Love Me.”](#) *Wall To Wall* was their second album and it was released in 1982. [“Imaginary Playmates,”](#) [“Secret Rendezvous,”](#) [“I Love You More”](#) and [“Wall To Wall”](#) were prominent and confirmed their place as major contributors to '80s R&B. This recognition lead to them producing songs for Janet Jackson’s first album that year and [“Young Love”](#) would be Jackson’s first top ten R&B hit. *Rise* would follow-up *Wall To Wall* and the showpiece was [“My First Love.”](#) Their final album together was 1985’s *Street Called Desire* and [“I’ll Be Good,”](#) [“Save Your Love \(For #1\)”](#) and [“You Don’t Have To Cry”](#) allowed them to have a credible exit from the scene as artists. They wrote [“I’ve Learned To Respect The Power Of Love”](#) for Stephanie Mills and Winbush would later write [“Something In The Way You Make Me Feel”](#) for her as well. Winbush helped The Isley Brothers with their successful *Smooth Sailin’* album in 1986 and Ron Isley assisted her with the release of her first solo album *Sharp* in 1987. [“Angel”](#) became a number one single and the other singles [“Run To Me,”](#) [“C’est Toi \(It’s You\)”](#) and the duet [“Hello Beloved”](#) with Ron Isley also managed to make significant chart positions. In keeping with her habit of writing for others she contributed [“Without You”](#) and [“Fire And Rain”](#) to Sheena Easton’s 1988 album *The Lover In Me*. Winbush’s solo success continued with with the 1989 project *It’s The Real Thing*. [“Lay Your Troubles Down,”](#) [“It’s The Real Thing”](#) and [“No More Tears”](#) made this album another musical landmark of its time. A final solo collection was released in 1994 and Winbush maintained her status with [“Treat U Rite,”](#) [“Keep Turnin’ Me On”](#) and [“Hot Summer Love.”](#) She continued to collaborate with Ron Isley who was she married to by this time until 2001. [“Floatin’ On Your Love”](#) in 1996 would be their last great duet and it would receive a second life when it was [remixed](#) by Diddy. Rene Moore released two solo albums, *Destination Love* and *Street Songz* in 1990 and 2004. He received a 1993 Grammy nomination for co-writing [“Jam”](#) for Michael Jackson with Teddy Riley and Bruce Sweden. The song received a Grammy nomination for song of the year.

Angela Winbush appeared on [The Mo'Nique Show](#) this year and shared her cancer story with the audience, performed "Angel" and let them know she is receiving her Master of Divinity. *Unsung* recently did an episode on Angela Winbush but Rene Moore declined to be interviewed.