

Erykah Badu-Honey



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Happy Birthday Jimi!

November 27th is the birthdate of Mr.Hendrix who left this world in 1970 after taking the blues to make rock and roll underneath a pandering showmanship that eventually gave way to concerts without the teeth-picking and fire-starting.

Every genre of popular music has some Jimi in it somewhere because his virtuosity was not a technical triumph but a tool of supreme expression.

Soultracks.com Awards 2007 Cont.



Rahsaan Patterson

You won album of the year tonight, how does it feel?

It was really nice and a beautiful surprise and it's really

nice to be able to say it.

You were kind of speechless you didn't have much to say.

No, no (laughs.)

What is [Wine And Spirits](#) all about?

It's about my life over the last ten years in the music industry. The great things that come with it and all the downsides to it. As well as the last three years of my life.

I really like "Cloud Nine" it reminds me in some ways of *There Is A Riot Going On* .

I was listening to a lot of Roy Ayers and Donald Byrd and I wanted to take it back to that time in R&B music when you know we partied. I grew-up with parents who had house parties and would play music that was who we were. I wanted that song to capture that.

"Pitch Black" has guitars to it and a different kind of feel from most of your work what inspired you?

That was just lyrically my being in doubt of the whole concept of God and questioning it. Using my free will to continue to have my own relationship with God. I think sometimes we get caught up in not utilizing that free will to establish a true relationship with God, the creator whatever you want to call it. Especially a lot of us raised in church we're taught that this is what it's supposed to be without people ever truly looking at life and proving that it is real going through the darkness to prove that it is light. And that's what I had to do I had to be sure that I believed in something that I gained knowledge from as opposed to just being a kid coming from a Black family that is religious.

I saw the MOB0 protest how did you feel about that?

That was fun that was necessary I thought in awards ceremony based on the origins of Black music and you don't have a soul category.

Going back to tonight's event with Soultracks this is an honor coming from activity on the net. How do you feel about things like file-sharing?

I feel there is a place for it and I definitely think it helps to expose people. But I think for people who supposedly are real supporters of indie music for them to file share and not purchase the music you can file share all day long but if you're going to really be about it why wouldn't you purchase it?

What do you want at this point in your career?

I want to direct I believe I'll always make music I only aspire musically to be able to communicate what I feel I need to communicate.

You gave a good performance tonight did you know the back-up singers?

It was all impromptu I wasn't scheduled to perform.

What's next?

Tours and promotion of the album.

Phil Perry

You got male vocalist of the year Congratulations.

It feels great it only took me 40 years.

Yes and it came from another generation and different kind of audience.

It lets me know one of the larger fears I had in my career is subsidized because I wondered if younger audiences would ever get turned on to me and now I know they have.

Are you surprised?

Yeah a little because when you make music you'd like to think that everybody would like it but in your heart of hearts you know you can't make everybody happy at the same time.

What do you think of soul music today?

I don't think it's as melody-driven as the classics in terms of soul music but I think it's a very unique expression and I think as the younger artists get older and live a little more of life their subject matter and content will reflect the moves of their lives.

I heard you say that there is less axe-playing and more sampling why do you think that happened?

Well number 1 record companies are cutting budgets if you get 35 or 40 grand to cut a record you better use it wisely or you're not going to put anything in your pocket. I'm all for artistry but I'm also for paying bills I have four children I need to be you know so I don't think especially in the younger generation doesn't utilize computers and live musicians simultaneously which is really the best way to do it. You know use the computer for the clean sample, use the computer for digital editing but use real people for the vibe.

Why do you think the American soul scene is not as appreciative of soul artists more true to the tradition? I heard you talk about the people overseas having more openness about different kinds of music?

One reason is, is that there is a shrinking pure soul outlet what we call R&B radio in this country is really hip-hop radio

which is a lot of rhythm, a lot of prose and very little music. It is what it is and it ain't what it ain't. I ain't hating because I like to see young brothers go out and make a lot of money but I'd like to see them be a little true to the game. True to the game when you pay your dues and master an instrument whatever instrument that is and let that be in the music you record.

Do you feel more appreciated overseas than in America?

I've always felt like I was more appreciated overseas than in America. I've been to Indonesia 12 times. Most African-American artists don't go to Indonesia.

Do you think baby-boomers are getting their fair share of soul music?

I think the people in my generation have a dwindling resource of music but it's cats like me who keep cutting the old stuff again that keeps them listening. You know and I think as I said earlier as the younger generation grows they will be able to tap into that already awaiting pool of resource waiting on them to grow-up and start talking subject matter that deals with adult things that doesn't deal with younger things.

The last album is [Classic Love Songs](#) and the new one is [A Mighty Love](#), why so many cover songs? You've helped write some nice songs of your own?

It's my way of thanking the artist for the inspiration he gave me as a child to maintain and preserve in this industry.

What is your advice to independent artists?

I think if you have a commitment to quality and you try to cut the best stuff that you can it'll find its own audience and

I'm proof-positive that it will because I have a generation of listeners that weren't even alive when my career started what better positive-proof do I need than that? It could be misconstrued as egoist of a statement but if it's good every generation that comes up and gets an opportunity to hear it if it's quality if there is content they will like it. If there is no quality or content they won't if there is no gray matter. And you have to be willing to take it on the chin and take constructive criticism from a younger ear because they are coming from another perspective they're not coming from a multi-harmonic melody-driven perspective they're coming from a rhythmic perspective so you have to find a way to fuse the two. It catches their ear with the rhythm but catches their spirit with the story. All covers are great classics because they tell a story. If it's not a great story it will not stand the test of time. Any song that is 30-years old is a good story.

Maya Azucena

You were nominated again tonight?

Well it's really wonderful to be acknowledged for the work you invest in your career so I was thankful to be nominated in two categories by Soultracks which is like the largest soul portal on the web right now so I feel really thankful for that.

Your performance was not defeated the mic blew and you kept going.

I was joking around and I said to [Eric Roberson](#) "We didn't get to where we are because the sound systems were good so it has to be something more going on for you than a sound system to make your music live. And for that's almost like a microcosm for an independent career right there. What are you going to do when you don't have resources. You gotta deliver that message what you have to say still has to be said. And that's where I'm coming from you know.

And that's no big deal for you because [Junkyard Jewel](#) is an acoustic album, what is the inspiration behind that at a time when almost everything is digital?

Sometimes maybe it's one part not trying to fit in with everybody else and really free myself of those types of boundaries. The other thing is that I have an acoustic version of my band and we've been touring literally the world in that format and so many people have said I wish you had a CD like that so that planted a seed in my mind. Lastly I just think that it's very daring to sort of expose yourself it's almost easy to get some phat beats and fill it up with all kinds of production so that it gets radio play but to really strip it down and just have the song and your voice is really an honest, revealing and vulnerable thing and I feel like maybe that's a starting place for the next great thing to have it stripped down to come back. When I do the fully produced CD you've already been introduced to my soul.

Who are your muses?

One of my main muses is [Mahalia Jackson](#) a classic gospel inspiration who was one of Aretha Franklin's inspirations. What I love about her is she never ever ever held back and I have a very big voice. It was a time especially in hip-hop where producers were all looking for mousy baby-girl vocals and like I would be in the studio with those producers and they would try to get me to not sing it was really offensive. 'Can you do it quieter?' I'm a singer singer and Mahalia Jackson inspires me because she would always she was wide open Ella Fitzgerald, we were talking about Angela Bofill earlier. I don't know Earth, Wind & Fire.

What else are you doing right now?

I have a single that's charting right now on the underground hip-hop charts it's not even on my record it's called "The Half" it's on [DJ Black Panther's](#) project it's called My

Eternal Winter is the name of his CD. I have singles coming out I have one coming on BBE London one coming out in Paris just learning living and being as an artist. I'm already writing my next project and I'm still promoting Junkyard Jewel. Like one of the first tracks got picked-up by The Wire television show.

Do you have a dream project?

Yeah I would love to work with a producer like Danger Mouse because he's daring and I respect that mentality that you're willing to be fun and creative and you're not bound by the boundaries of Clear Channel radio like I love that about him like if i ever got into the studio with him he would be willing to try some stuff. I would love loooovvve to do a duet with Anthony Hamilton. We actually did a bill together so it was in the air *laughs.* Stephen Marley and I did a collaboration on his CD he has asked me to do more work with him and I'm hoping that will pan out.

How did you end-up working with [Burnt Sugar](#)?

I feel like musicians of a certain ilk like just draw together, I was invited I was recommended to them and invited. Somebody asked me how do you get into Burnt Sugar it really is invitation-only. It's like they find you it's like an alignment of the stars and somebody comes to you and says 'Would you be in Burnt Sugar?' It's about a vibe thing.

What are your thoughts on file-sharing and webcasting?

I feel that independent artists are where we are because of the internet so I have to embrace it. I really fully embrace I feel like the world is my oyster I have fans on the other side of the world specifically due to the internet. I think there is a way to embrace it and let it be your friend.

Soultracks.com Awards 2007



Soultracks.com took their online poll of stunning but underrated soulstars offline to Detroit's Cobo Hall for an evening of honors and performance on a cold and wintry November 16th that had all of winter's feeling but no snow. A cadre of soul bloggers, musicians, soul fans and their friends took in the grassroots-efforted affair inside the venue's Riverview Ballroom overlooking the murky water shared by Michigan and Canada. Jodine of [Jodine's corner](#) hosted the event and blessed the night with David Bowie's quote that "Major labels will be in shambles in the next ten years." She left out part of the quote where he also says that "touring will be the only unique situation left."

It is the constant travels of Eric Roberson, Maya Azucena, Maysa Leak, Phil Perry and a chain of other independent soul artists that have allowed them to have careers outside the shareholder-driven worlds of Viacom, Universal, Sony Bmg, Warner and EMI. The readers of Soultracks.com did not pick their winners from the nationalized playlists of terrestrial radio but the niche economies of online music.

For the price of the ticket spectators saw Rahsaan Patterson sing "Stop Breaking My Heart" from the Album of the Year winner *Wines and Spirits*. Patterson's unplanned but professional appearance benefitted from sassy ad-libs with one of the house band's polished back-up singers. Russell Thompkins Jr., the famous lead-singing falsetto of The Stylistics received a lifetime achievement award and a tribute from Maysa Leak and Phil Perry. Leak's deep tone that has

influenced many critics to compare her sound to the solumn sexiness of Sade sang a careful reneition of "Betcha By Golly Wow." But it was Phil Perry's fire-starting version of "Stop, Look, Listen" that made the audience stand-up, clap and wonder for the milllionth time why larger American audiences have not followed him since his Billboard-charting cover of Aretha's "Call Me." Maya Azucena who has caught the spirit with the experimental funk jazz of Burnt Sugar in the past sang her acoustic single "Junkyard Jewell" never flinching when the mic died. Eric Roberson, Kloud 9, Gordon Chambers and El Renee also made the stage and gave their best. Kickmag spoke with some of the artists that night to ask them about what the night felt like for them and what was going on with their careers.

Maysa

How does it feel to win female vocalist of the year?

Unbelievable, it's just a beautiful surprising feeling. It's a people's choice award it means the people voted for me so I must be doing something right.

The last couple of albums have been classic songs, what made you want to do more covers?

The record company hired me and I love these songs, I grew-up on these songs it was an honor to sing them.

Do you have a favorite song from the latest collection [Feel The Fire](#)?

"Happy Feeling."

Any wishlist of who you would like to work with?

Um Frank Mccomb, Eric Roberson and I would really like to work with Chaka Khan I would like her to produce me.

Gordon Chambers

You are a known songwriter, when you write do you ever have anyone particular in mind or does it just flow through you?

Yes I mean I can do it when I write for an artist specifically or I can just write generally it doesn't make a difference.

How does it feel to be nominated tonight?

It was wonderful it was a wonderful experience to have my hard work be acknowledged and my appearance.

As someone who works behind the scenes a lot and you are an independent artist. How do you feel about file-sharing and webcasting?

It's hurtful and it's helpful. Its helpful as a promotional vehicle it's hurtful because it makes things available for free. It's about balance and I think that right now the technology will find a way to make it fair and equitable to all. But it does make things like youtube gives independent artists more of a visual presence with our sound. In our instance it is helpful.

That was a nice song you did with El Renee we know you did it originally with Ledisi and you have worked with a lot of people. Are there any people on your wishlist?

Oh yeah, I'd love to work with Alicia Keys I'd love to work with Mary J.Blige I'd love to work with Seal, I'd love to work with Sting, I'd love to work with Prince I'd love to work with Stevie Wonder, Celine Dion tons of artists to work with neverending.

You've written some classic songs yourself such as Anita Baker's "I Apologize" and Angie Stones' "No More Rain" among others. Are there any songs out there that you wished you wrote?

Oh yeah there's tons of songs I wished I wrote. I love Eric Roberson's "Couldn't Hear Me" I love that. When I first got

that CD I listened to that song 15 times in a row I swear to you in a row because it encapsulated so many things I've thought and gone through in relationships. Yeah a great song is a great song whenever you hear a great song you say 'I wish I wrote that.'

So what's next I know we are still listening to [Love Stories](#)?

Next I am going to release a live album. I'm in the studio with Aretha Franklin right now her album is about to drop next year. I have a cut on Angie Stone's album that just came out that debuted at number 1. And I have been working with a young artist on Def Jam called Karina Pasian I'm really excited about she is a young prodigy genius. She's 16 and plays the piano and speaks 5 languages amazing.

Where is she from?

She's from New York from the um Spanish Harlem, Washington Heights she's Dominican.

A lot of people don't know you were on Being Bobby Brown how was that? did it raise your profile?

Yeah a lot of people saw my face. I don't know what people thought of Bobby or thought of the show but even when I was in other countries people would say 'I saw your face' Anything you can have to have your face out there and Bobby and Whitney have always been very good to me and I had absolutely no problem supporting one of their ventures because they supported mine.

Is there anything else you want to add?

The website is www.gordonchambers.com .

Russell Thompkins Jr.

How does it feel to get this Lifetime Achievement Awards?

It feels very fantastic because this is the first time something like this has ever happened in my life. I've gotten awards before I've been in situations like this but never at this time in my life.

Did it catch you by surprise?

No it didn't catch me by surprise but I am very honored tremendously.

What did you think of the tribute given to you tonight?

Well I'm a looooong time great fan of Phil Perry. He is one of the most phenomenal vocalists I ever heard in my life. The lady who came and sang after him was very great too. Maysa she sang the song really really nice. But Phil is just one of a kind.

How does it feel to hear your influence travel through artists even today?

I've been around a long time and I have been in situations where people have sang my music before to hear my influence in it. But Phil did not my song with my influence he did it the way he wanted to. He is a seasoned artist and has been around as long as I have. Younger people who do my music I can hear when they are growing and what type of artist they are to take from the old to give to the new.

What made you do this latest project [The Three Tenors](#)?

This idea has been thrown around for a long time but we just didn't know which tenors were gonna do it. William Harwick is one of the biggest influences in my musical career. When I was 17-years old the first TV program I did I was in high school "La La Means I Love You" after William Hart had sang that. And Ted Mills I didn't know Ted as a singer when I first met him he was a songwriter he wrote three songs for me that I never got a chance to record but they were so wonderful that I never

forgot them. So both of them have been a great influence on my career and my life.

Q.Are you going to tour that album?

No, I'm working with my group [The Stylistics](#) right now doing music that I made and trying to keep that going but I have a solo CD that I'm working on right now. And we're going into the studio to record the new Stylistics a DVD already made and a CD of the new Stylistics coming out.

Is that old or new footage?

It's only a couple of months old we did it with the Myrtle Beach Symphony

What do you think of contemporary soul music?

The soul music of today that I heard tonight had the influence of the older music. Some soul music that is out right now might be a little bit to the hip-hop side. I don't hate hip-hop but I don't understand hip-hop. It goes a little too much to the hip-hop side my ears don't listen as well as it does when it stays more to the hip-hop side.