

Abbey Lincoln (b. 8/6/30, d. 8/14/2010) was born Anna Marie Wooldridge in Chicago, Illinois and grew up in rural Michigan on a large farm with her eleven siblings. At an early age Abbey developed an interest in music and soon started singing in school and church choirs. As her talent blossomed she became drawn to the recordings of Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, and Dinah Washington and credited them with teaching her to sing with conviction. At age 21 she moved to California, and at age 22 she spent a summer in Honolulu, singing at a nightclub under the pseudonym Gabby Lee. After returning to California she met lyricist Bob Russell, who became her manager and renamed her Abbey Lincoln. Her debut recording, *Abbey Lincoln's Affair-A Story of a Girl in Love*, was released by Liberty records in 1956. The following year she moved to New York City and worked at the Village Vanguard. She would soon sign with Riverside Records and record a number of acclaimed albums for that label.

While performing there she met drummer, composer, and bebop innovator Max Roach, who she would later marry. Roach was also very involved in Civil Rights, and would play an important role in her development as a socio-political artist and activist. They would collaborate frequently throughout the 1960's. In that year Abbey sang on Max Roach's landmark civil rights-themed recording, *We Insist! The Freedom Now Suite*. Soon after she recorded her masterpiece *Straight Ahead*. It featured four songs with original lyrics written by Lincoln. One of them, "In the Red," addressed the economical injustices many blacks felt in America. For the remainder of that decade her lyrics were often connected to the civil rights movement.

After she and Max Roach divorced in 1970, Abbey moved back to California. She appeared in Television and movies during the late 1960's and 70's, and was nominated for a Golden Globe in 1969 for her role in the film "For The Love of Ivy". Her recording career floundered a bit during this time, but her career received a major boost in 1989 when she signed a 10 record deal with Verve Records/France. Her first record for Verve, *The World Is Falling Down*, was released in 1990 and it propelled Lincoln back into stardom. That same year she also appeared in Spike Lee's film *Mo' Better Blues*. She would enjoy the success of her revitalized career until her death on August 14, 2010 in Manhattan at the age of 80.

