

BORDER CROSSINGS: THE GREAT MIGRATION AND WOMEN IN JAZZ



Dinah Washington – Circa 1952

Birth name Ruth Lee Jones

- **Also known as** Queen of the Blues, Queen of the Jukebox, Queen of Jam Sessions
- **Influenced by** Mahalia Jackson
- **Origin/Grew Up** - Chicago, Illinois, U.S.
- **Genres** - Jazz, blues, R&B, gospel, traditional pop music
- **Instruments** - Vocals, piano, vibraphone
- **Associated acts** - Lionel Hampton, Brook Benton
- **1924 - Born** August 29 - Tuscaloosa, Alabama, U.S.
- 1939 - Won an amateur contest at Chicago's Regal Theater where she sang "I Can't Face the Music". After winning a talent contest at the age of 15, she began performing in clubs.
- 1941-42 Performing in such Chicago clubs as Dave's Rhumboogie and the Downbeat Room of the Sherman Hotel (with Fats Waller). She was playing at the Three Deuces, a jazz club, when a friend took her to hear Billie Holiday at the Garrick Stage Bar. Joe Sherman^[who?]
- 1944 - Recording debut for the Keynote label that December with "Evil Gal Blues", written by Leonard Feather and backed by Hampton and musicians from his band, including Joe Morris (trumpet) and Milt Buckner (piano).^{[1][6][7]} Both that record and its follow-up, "Salty Papa Blues", made *Billboard's* "Harlem Hit Parade".
- 1946 - Signed with Mercury Records as a solo singer. Her first solo recording for Mercury, a version of Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'", was another hit, starting a long string of success.
- 1948 – 1955 27 R&B top ten hits, making her one of the most popular and successful singers of the period.
- 1959 - First top ten pop hit, with a version of "What a Difference a Day Makes"
- 1960 – Recorded two successful duets with Brook Benton, "Baby (You've Got What It Takes)" (No. 5 Pop, No. 1 R&B) and "A Rockin' Good Way (To Mess Around and Fall in Love)" (No. 7 Pop, No. 1 R&B).
- 1961 - Her last big hit was "September in the Rain" (No. 23 Pop, No. 5 R&B).
- 1963 – Died December 14 (aged 39) – Detroit, MI, U.S.
- 1986 - Inductee of the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame

- 1993 - Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

Additional Facts

- She was married 7 times and has 2 sons.
- The origin of her stage name remains unclear. Some say it was given to her by talent manager Joe Glaser, others say it was Lionel Hampton.
- She was cited as "the most popular black female recording artist of the '50s"

Track #	Song Title	CD Title	Year	Element
1	Evil Gal Blues	*	1943	Jump Blues
2	Record Ban Blues	**	1943	Political
3	Long John Blues	*	1949	Double Entendre
4	I Wanna Be Loved	*	1950	Love Romance & Longing
5	Blow Top Blues	*	1952	Blues
6	"What a Difference a Day Makes	*	1959	Rhythm & Blues

*Golden Voices (Remastered)

**Dinah Washington Complete on Mercury Vol. 1 (1946-1949)