

Legendary R&B Singer/Songwriter Angela Bofill, Dies at Age 70

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Longtime vocalist and songwriter Angela Bofill, known for R&B hits such as "This Time I'll Be Sweeter," "I Try," "I'm On Your Side" and "Tonight I Give In," died on Thursday, June 13th, 2024. She was 70.

Although reports of Ms. Bofill's passing were mentioned years before and were found at the time to be false, manager Rich Engel and members of the Bofill family have in fact confirmed her death. She suffered two strokes previously that had left her debilitated, but able to take the stage. During that time, friends and music industry colleagues supported Ms. Bofill while she told the amazing story of her life during the performance production of "The Angela Bofill Experience." Ongoing complications from Ms. Bofill's strokes continued to plague the singer—who was inducted into the Women Songwriters' Hall of Fame in 2023.

"With heavy hearts, we can confirm the loss of Angela Bofill, our mother, grandmother and sweet songbird to the music industry and dear friend to many," stated daughter Shauna Bofill-Portuguez. "She loved every one of her fans and was always reading letters and kind notes from those who adorned her and continued to support her wonderful legacy in music."

Born on May 2, 1954, to Cuban and Puerto Rican parents, Ms. Bofill's goal was to be a singer. Influenced by the rich Latin culture of her Bronx upbringing and early schooling in Harlem, Angela sang and sought after opportunities to shine on stage. She was introduced to GRP Records executives Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen by Dave Valentin, her friend and an exemplary jazz flutist. Grusin and Rosen's label was then distributed by Arista Records.

Her first album under the Arista/GRP banner, "Angie" (1978), produced the Quiet Storm classic



Angela Bofill performing at BB King's Club NYC. Photo courtesy of Rich Engel and the Estate of Angela Bofill. Used by permission.

"This Time I'll Be Sweeter" and the jazz/Latin-flavored "Under the Moon and Over the Sky." Both songs and the project were well received by jazz/R&B radio and she went back into the studio in less than a year. Bofill's second Arista/GRP album, "Angel of The Night" (1979) featured the title track (an R&B/jazz hit) as well as the stunning ballad and hit single "I Try" along with "What I Wouldn't Do (For The Love of You)." As a result of solid sales and radio airplay on jazz/R&B stations of the aforementioned recordings, Ms. Bofill's success with African American audiences and the Afro-Latin community was solidified.

After the Grusin/Rosen team parted company with Arista Records, for her third project, Bofill found herself directly under the wing of Arista's founder/president and music luminary Clive Davis - who had success with vocalist Phyllis Hyman, discovered Whitney Houston and revitalized the careers of Aretha Franklin and Dionne Warwick. Her third album, "Something About You" (1981), produced by Narada Michael Walden, who would produce "Holdin' Out for Love" and the dance hit "Too Tough," which became Bofill's first Top 5 R&B success and spent 4 weeks at the #2 position on the Dance chart. A follow-up single, "Tonight I Give In", reached the Top 20 and "I'm On Your Side," from her fourth album, produced the Top 20 R&B hit of the same name.

Bofill recorded two more albums for Arista before moving on to Capitol Records in the late 1980's. Working with producer Norman Connors for the album, "Intuition" (1988), Angela enjoyed success with a remake of Gino Vannelli's "I Just Wanna Stop", which reached No. 11 on the R&B chart. She recorded three more albums over the next eight years and would later work with the legendary Diana Ross and jazz saxophonist Kirk Whalum. On Connors' album, "Eternity" (2000), Ms. Bofill can be heard on "You Can't Hurt Me Anymore." She also appeared in the stage plays "God Don't Like Ugly" and "What a Man Wants, What a Man Needs."

After losing her ability to sing after suffering a second stroke, Ms. Bofill returned to the stage, at the suggestion of Rich Engel, her long-time manager. Due to a lack of health insurance, the benefit concert, The Angela Bofill Experience, was organized to pay her hospital bills. Planned by Engel and supported by New York City radio stations Kiss FM and WFAN-FM, the event took place on March 11, 2006, at the Bergen Performing Arts Center in Englewood, New Jersey. In the show, a witty and good spirited Bofill recounted her life and career in words, while vocally, she was joined by singers Maysa Leak, Phil Perry, and Melba Moore, who performed her biggest hits and signature songs. Similar events followed as the music industry rallied around Ms. Bofill, as additional aid was sought from the Rhythm and Blues Foundation.

In 2012, Ms. Bofill was profiled and interviewed for the hugely popular TVOne documentary series, *Unsung*. A year later, she was inducted into the Women Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Angela Bofill was married to Rick Vincent from 1984 until 1994. The union resulted in the birth of her daughter, Shauna. During her final years, Ms. Bofill resided with daughter Shauna Bofill-Portuguez and husband Chris Portuguez along with their four children in California. Mrs. Bofill-Portuguez states, "she was loved and lived out her final years as a mother and a grandmother,

being taken care of and just having a beautiful life, with her family.”

Funeral services will take place at on Friday, June 28th, 2024, 1 pm Pacific time at Saint Dominic's Catholic Church, 475 East I Street, Benicia, CA 94510.

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