

I Will Always Love You - Whitney Houston In Memoriam

Written by bluesever

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'The time that I first saw her singing... it was such a stunning impact.' ---Clive Davis, Houston's longtime mentor.

Whitney Houston, a multiplatinum pop/R&B singer who ruled the charts for decades beginning in the mid-1980s, has died. Houston was 48. Police responded to an emergency call at the Beverly Hilton hotel in Los Angeles at about 3:45 p.m. PT. Her death came on the eve of music's biggest night the Grammy Awards.

Whitney Houston

Whitney Elizabeth Houston was born in Newark, NJ, on August 9, 1963; her mother was gospel/R&B singer Cissy Houston. Her cousin was Dionne Warwick and Houston grew up around such star vocalists as Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, and Roberta Flack.

"When I used to watch my mother sing, which was usually in church, that feeling, that soul, that thing-it's like electricity rolling through you,"
she recalled to Anthony DeCurtis of Rolling Stone.



Young Whitney Houston

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By age 11, Houston was performing as a soloist in the junior gospel choir at her Baptist church; as a teenager, she began accompanying her mother in concert and went on to back artists like Lou Rawls and Chaka Khan.

Somewhat bizarrely, Houston's first recording as a featured vocalist was with Bill Laswell's experimental jazz-funk ensemble Material; their 1982 album *One Down* placed Houston alongside such unlikely avant-gardists as Archie Shepp and Fred Frith. The following year, Arista president

Clive

Davis

heard Houston singing at a nightclub and offered her a record contract. Her first single appearance was a duet with Teddy Pendergrass,

"Hold Me,"

which missed the Top 40 in 1984.



Clive Davis

Her self-titled debut album, released in March 1985, began a gradual ascent to the top of the charts. The first single, *"You Give Good Love,"* made its way to the number three position and the second, a cover of the late-'70s hit *"Saving All My Love for You,"*

hit number one later that year. Houston received the 1986 Grammy award for best pop vocal performance and came home with five trophies from the US music awards as well. Two more singles also topped the charts:

"How Will I Know"

and

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"The Greatest Love of All."



Clive Davis and Whitney Houston

Houston cemented her superstar status on her next album, ***Whitney***; despite the unimaginative title, it became the first album by a female artist to debut at number one, and sold over nine million copies. Its first four singles --

"I Wanna Dance with Somebody (Who Loves Me)"

(another Grammy winner),

"Didn't We Almost Have It All," "So Emotional,"

and

"Where Do Broken Hearts Go"

-- all hit number one, an amazing, record-setting run of seven straight.

It was at the Soul Train Music Awards in 1989 that Houston crossed paths with someone who would have a lasting effect on her life. She made the acquaintance of singer Bobby Brown, a popular "New Jack Swing" performer in his own right.

"After a year or so, I fell in love with Bobby," Houston explained after detailing her rebuff of his first proposal.

second time, I said yes."

was married in July 1992.

"And when he asked to marry me the

The couple

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Whitney Houston Sings I Will Always Love You