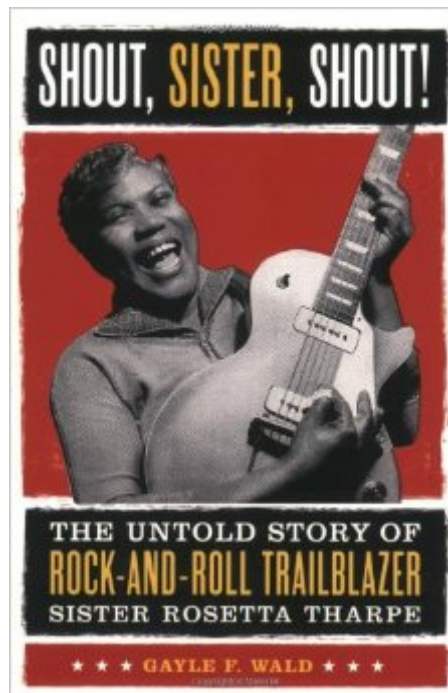


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Shout, Sister, Shout!: The Untold Story Of Rock-and-Roll Trailblazer Sister Rosetta Tharpe



Synopsis

A New York Times Book Review Editor's Pick Long before "women in rock" became a media catchphrase, African American guitar virtuoso Rosetta Tharpe proved in spectacular fashion that women could rock. Born in Cotton Plant, Arkansas, in 1915, Tharpe was gospel's first superstar and the preeminent crossover figure of its golden age (1945-1965). *Shout, Sister, Shout!* is the first biography of this trailblazing performer who influenced scores of popular musicians, from Elvis Presley and Little Richard to Eric Clapton and Etta James. Tharpe was raised in the Pentecostal Church, steeped in the gospel tradition, but she produced music that crossed boundaries, defied classification, and disregarded the social and cultural norms of the age; incorporating elements of gospel, blues, jazz, popular ballads, folk, country, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll. Tharpe went electric early on, captivating both white and black audiences in the North and South, in the U.S. and internationally, with her charisma and skill. People who saw her perform claimed she made that guitar talk. Ambitious, flamboyant, and relentlessly public, Tharpe even staged her own wedding as a gospel concert-in a stadium holding 20,000 people! Wald's eye-opening biography, which draws on the memories of more than a hundred people who knew or worked with Tharpe, introduces us to this vibrant, essential, yet nearly forgotten musical heavyweight whose long career helped define gospel, r&b, and rock music. A performer who resisted categorization at many levels-as a gospel musician, a woman, and an African American-Tharpe demands that we rethink our most basic notions of music history and American culture. Her story forever alters our understanding of both women in rock and U.S. popular music.

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Customer Reviews

As a collector and student of American popular music for more than 40 years now I have occasionally come across the name of Sister Rosetta Tharpe in some of the reference books that I own. I would also see her name mentioned in the liner notes for various CD's as well as in books chronicling the rich and diverse history of American popular music. Having said that there was really not a heck of a lot of information out there on the life and remarkable career of this extremely influential figure. Author Gayle Wald has corrected this unfortunate oversight with her entertaining and highly informative new book "Shout, Sister, Shout: The Untold Story of Rock and Roll Trailblazer Sister Rosetta Tharpe". As a result of reading this book I have already been motivated to purchase a collection of her music. And let me tell you I was not disappointed! Sister Rosetta Tharpe was born in the tiny town of Cotton Plant, AR on March 20, 1915 not far from the birthplace of another American music legend Johnny Cash. With the encouragement of parents who were very active in the local Church of God in Christ, Rosetta began singing in church at an unusually young age. Before the age of six she started playing around with a guitar. Just about everyone who saw and heard Rosetta thought that she was an exceptionally gifted young lady. In fact, it was her acumen with the guitar that would set her apart and help to make a career in music possible. "Shout, Sister, Shout" follows the mercurial career of Rosetta from performing at her local church to a gig at the world famous Cotton Club in New York City in 1938. It is quite apparent that Rosetta was torn between the gospel music she grew up with and loved so much and the incredible opportunities and financial rewards that beckoned in the secular world.

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