

FROM THE BEGINING

I must say in all of my years of singing and entertaining, I have had some extraordinary experiences. I have had the pleasure of rubbing elbows with everyone from Paula Abdul while touring with Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam and Club MTV, to being interviewed by Don Cornelius on Soul Train which I grew up watching. I even had the honor of meeting and singing with Stevie Wonder while working with his brother Calvin on a project to remake some Motown Songs. But I would have to say one of the highlights came very early in my career. It actually happened by mistake. I was on tour with Lisa Lisa and I'm not sure if we had just finished a gig or if we just had the night off but a few of us decided to get together and go to the hotel bar. Around a piano stood Nancy Wilson and Regina Belle and probably a few others (but I was too green at the time to really recognize the magnitude of talent that I had stumbled upon). They were singing and harmonizing things that I did not know were even possible. The smoothness and gracefulness of what I had the pleasure of experience intimidated me. I knew that it would take time and life experience for my gift to reach that level and I wanted it. I would have to wait and work to have THAT THING.

Since I can remember music has been a huge part of my life. I guess u could say that music is part of my genetic makeup. I grew up in a musical family. I would listen to my aunts and uncle sing around the house or watch them in the local talent show and wish for the day I'd be able to do the same. Chaka Khan, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye and The Staple Singers were on regular rotation at my house. At my Grandfathers house in the Bronx you could hear Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. I got a well rounded education on music early in the game.

My 1st performance was at the ripe old age of 3. I have very little memory of that moment but I am told I got on stage at a talent show at my uncles school and sang "I found love on a two way street" I guess u could say that singing was my destiny.

I attended East Harlem Performing Arts JHS for voice and Talent Unlimited HS for musical theater. Straight out of high school I went on the road with Columbia Recording artist Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam and rest is history. I have written for and recorded with and toured with several artists on major and independent labels. I have played in venues all over the world including Madison Square Garden, Radio City Music Hall, and The Bellagio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

I believe that WE ARE ALL GIFTED and that some of us have to search for our gifts while others stumble upon there gifts FROM THE BEGINING. I was fortunate and blessed to have found mine early on and with that blessing I vow to respect it and continue to share it with as many who would like to share in it with me.

Peace and Blessings

Toni Menage