

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainer Lena Horne Dies at 92

Barrier-breaking star triumphed over bigotry

(AP)-- Lena Horne, the enchanting jazz singer and actress known for her plaintive signature song "Stormy Weather" and for her triumph over the bigotry that allowed her to entertain white audiences but not socialize with them, has died. She was 92.



Trail Blazing Jazz singer and actress Lena Horne in 1995.

Horne died Sunday at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, according to hospital spokeswoman Gloria Chin. Chin would not release any other details.

Horne, whose striking beauty and magnetic sex appeal often overshadowed her talent and artistry, was remarkably candid about the underlying reason for her success: "I was unique in that I was a kind of black that white people could accept," she once said. "I was their day-dream. I had the worst kind of acceptance because it was never for how great I was or what I contributed. It

of black actors to have a contract with a major Hollywood studio.

In 1943, MGM Studios loaned her to 20th Century-Fox to play the role of Selina Rogers in the all-black movie musical "Stormy Weather." Her rendition of the title song became a major hit and her most famous tune.

On screen, on recordings and in nightclubs and concert halls, Horne was at home vocally with a wide musical range, from blues and jazz to the sophistication of Rodgers and Hart in such songs as "The Lady Is a Tramp" and "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered." In 1942's "Panama Hattie," her first movie with MGM, she sang Cole Porter's "Just One of Those Things," winning critical acclaim.

Her father, her son and her husband, Hayton, all died in 1970 and 1971, and the grief-stricken singer secluded herself. One of them, comedian Alan King, took months persuading her to return to the stage, with results that surprised her.

"I wouldn't trade my life for anything," she said, "because being black made me understand."

was because of the way I looked."

"I knew her from the time I was born, and whenever I needed anything she was there. She was funny, sophisticated and truly one of a kind. We lost an original. Thank you Lena," Liza Minnelli said Monday. Her father, director Vincente Minnelli, brought Horne to Hollywood to star in "Cabin in the Sky."

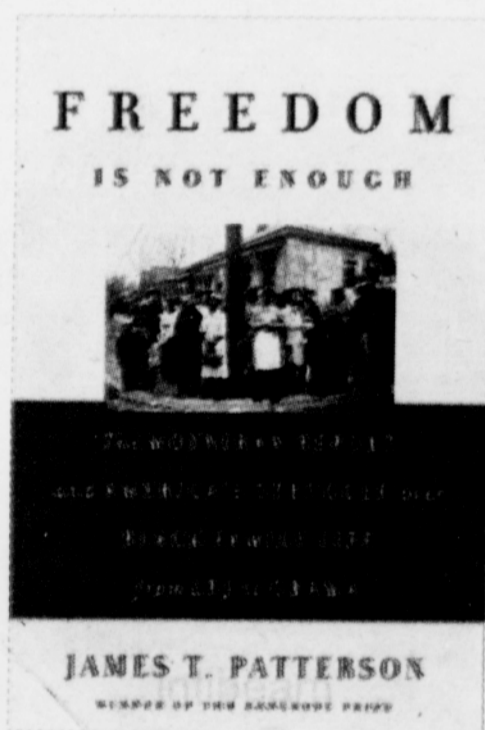
In the 1940s, Horne was one of the first black performers hired to sing with a major white band, the first to play the Copacabana nightclub in New York City and when she signed with MGM, she was among a handful

Black Family Lives Chronicled

It's been 45 years since the Moynihan Report, a document that sparked racial controversy and permanently altered the course of the civil rights movement in this country, was leaked to the public.

The report, officially titled The Negro Family: The Case for National Action, was written by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and it outlined the socioeconomic problems that prevented many African-Americans from enjoying the same privileges as whites.

The report advocated a large-scale effort by the federal government to provide the necessary aid to



get healthcare, housing and education. The momentum of Lyndon Johnson's civil rights program was slowed due to the report's message being distorted and misinterpreted.

James T. Patterson's new book, Freedom is Not Enough: The Moynihan Report and America's Struggle over Black Family Life from LBJ to Obama, offers the first comprehensive account of the report in its historical context and examines Moynihan's long political career trying to rectify the problems identified by the report.

Patterson is a professor of history emeritus at Brown University.

Original Opera at Firehouse

"Queen of Knives", a knife throwing bullseye opera, brought to the stage by Vagabond Opera and Wanderlust Circus, is now playing at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate Ave., through Saturday, May 15.

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