

# Big Mama Thornton: The Life and Music of the Legendary Blues Singer

## Early Life and Career

Willie Mae Thornton was born on December 11, 1926, in Ariton, Alabama. She was the youngest of eleven children. Her father was a sharecropper and her mother was a domestic worker. Thornton began singing in church as a child. She was influenced by the blues singers she heard on the radio, such as Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey.



## Big Mama Thornton: The Life and Music by Michael Spörke

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 6814 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 200 pages



In 1948, Thornton moved to Houston, Texas. She began singing in nightclubs and soon developed a reputation as a powerful and soulful singer. In 1952, she recorded her first song, "Hound Dog". The song was a hit, and it helped to launch Thornton's career.

## Rise to Fame

In the 1950s and 1960s, Thornton toured extensively throughout the United States and Europe. She performed with some of the biggest names in blues and rock and roll, including Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, and Elvis Presley. Thornton's powerful vocals and energetic stage presence made her a popular live performer.

In 1957, Thornton recorded her biggest hit, "Ball and Chain". The song was a powerful ballad that showcased Thornton's vocal range and emotional depth. "Ball and Chain" became a classic blues song, and it has been covered by numerous artists, including Janis Joplin and Led Zeppelin.

### **Later Career and Legacy**

Thornton's career declined in the 1970s and 1980s. She continued to perform, but she was no longer able to command the same level of success she had enjoyed in the past. Thornton died of a heart attack on July 25, 1984, at the age of 57.

Big Mama Thornton was a legendary blues singer who influenced generations of musicians. Her powerful vocals and emotional depth made her one of the most respected and admired singers of her time. Thornton's music continues to be enjoyed by fans around the world.

### **Discography**

\* *The Hound Dog Years* (1952) \* *Big Mama Thornton Sings the Blues* (1954) \* *Ball and Chain* (1957) \* *Sings the Blues with Big Mama Thornton* (1961) \* *Big Mama Thornton in Europe* (1965) \* *Big Mama Thornton Sings for My Friends* (1973) \* *Big Mama Thornton: The Complete Mercury Recordings* (1991)

## Awards and Honors

\* Grammy Award for Best Blues Album (1973) \* Rhythm and Blues Foundation Pioneer Award (1983) \* Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1984) \* Blues Hall of Fame (1989) \* Recording Academy Lifetime Achievement Award (2014)

## Legacy

Big Mama Thornton's music continues to be enjoyed by fans around the world. Her songs have been covered by numerous artists, including Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, Led Zeppelin, and Aretha Franklin. Thornton's powerful vocals and emotional depth have made her one of the most respected and admired singers of her time.

Thornton's legacy is also evident in the many musicians she influenced. Her powerful vocals and emotional depth inspired generations of singers, including Tina Turner, Bonnie Raitt, and Susan Tedeschi. Thornton's music continues to inspire and move fans around the world.



### Big Mama Thornton: The Life and Music by Michael Spörke

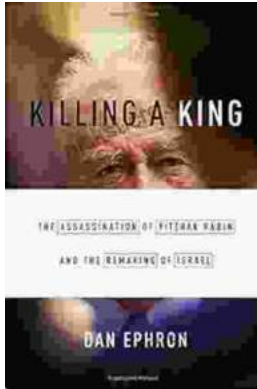
★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 6814 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 200 pages

FREE

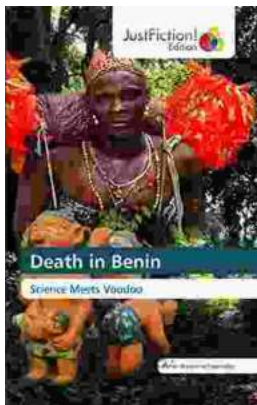
DOWNLOAD E-BOOK





## **Killing A King: The Assassination Of Yitzhak Rabin And The Remaking Of Israel**

## The Assassination Of Yitzhak Rabin And The Remaking Of Israel ## \*\*  
An Event That Reshaped a Nation's Destiny \*\* On an autumn evening in 1995, a single shot shattered...



## **Death in Benin: Where Science Meets Voodoo**

In the West African nation of Benin, death is not simply the end of life. It is a complex and mysterious process that is believed to involve both the physical and spiritual...