

## **JOE SIMON BIOGRAPHY**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **BIRTHPLACE: SIMMESPORT, LOUISIANA**

As a young man in the 1950's, Joe Simon moved to the Oakland, Richmond, San Francisco, CA Bay area, where he continued going to church and singing with local quartet groups. Shortly after his quartet years, Joe began to sing with Rhythm and Blues groups. He then began singing R&B on his own, making \$5.50 per night, working only two nights per week, in local night clubs. Times were so hard that Joe couldn't pay his rent so he had to literally sleep in a chicken coop. Joe owned only one suit, and couldn't afford to get it cleaned, so he would just get it pressed. On the nights of a show, he would borrow his friend, Roland Williams' shoes to complete his outfit. When he made it as a Rhythm & Blues star, he would try to repay his friend's kindness but Roland would never accept it. Over the years Joe lost touch with his friend and to this day, still looks to reconnect.

After sleeping in the chicken coop for more than two years, Joe met Gary Thompson who owned the Hush Recording label and was very instrumental in recording his first hit record, "My Adorable One." Joe produced the song which became his first hit, taking him from the chicken coop to the Apollo Theater in New York City. The rest is history.

### **MUSICAL JOURNEY**

- BEGAN SINGING CAREER WITH STREET-CORNER GOSPEL HARMONIZING
- FIRST RECORDINGS WITH THE GOLDEN TONES FOR HUSH RECORDS IN 1960
- 1964 RECORDS "MY ADORABLE ONE" WHICH WAS LEASED TO VEEJAY RECORDS, SIGNIFICANT AIRPLAY BREAKS CAREER AND LANDS BOOKINGS AT THE APOLLO THEATER IN NEW YORK CITY
- FIRST R&B CHART RECORD "LET'S DO IT OVER" FOR VEEJAY RECORDS IN 1965
- LINKS CAREER WITH LEGENDARY WLAC RADIO PERSONALITY, JOHN R. AND SIGNS WITH RICHBOURG'S NEW LABEL, SOUND STAGE SEVEN, IN 1966
- PRODUCES MAJOR HIT RECORDINGS FOR SOUND STAGE SEVEN INCLUDING: "THE CHOKIN KIND", "YOU KEEP ME HANGING ON", "NINE POUND STEEL", "MY SPECIAL PRAYER", "TEENAGER'S PRAYER", "MOONWALK", "FARTHER ON DOWN THE ROAD", "YOUR LOVE", "MISTY BLUE" AND "NO SAD SONGS"
- SIMON IS OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO MANAGE, PRODUCE AND RECORD THE JACKSON FIVE WHICH HE TURNS DOWN

- 1970 LEAVES SOUND STAGE SEVEN AND MOVES TO SPRING RECORDS WHERE HE BECOMES THEIR LEADING ARTIST AND PARTIAL LABEL OWNER
- 1971 RECORDS ALBUM “DROWNING IN THE SEA OF LOVE,” PRODUCED BY KENNY GAMBLE & LEON HUFF, WHICH INCLUDED THE 2 CAREER DEFINING HITS, THE TITLE TRACK AND “POWER OF LOVE.”
- OVER THE NEXT 11 YEARS PRODUCES A LONG STRING OF R&B AND CROSSOVER HIT RECORDINGS INCLUDING: “YOUR TIME TO CRY,” “THEME FROM CLEOPATRA JONES”, “I NEED YOU, YOU NEED ME”, “MUSIC IN MY BONES” AND “TROUBLE IN MY HOME”.
- DISPLAYS THE OBVIOUS INFLUENCE OF COUNTRY MUSIC ON HIS CAREER BY RECORDING A PURE COUNTRY ALBUM ENTITLED “SOUNDS OF SIMON/SIMON COUNTRY”
- 1980 BECOMES LABEL OWNER AND PRINCIPLE ARTIST OF POSSE RECORDS
- LEAVES SECULAR MUSIC FIELD FOR GOOD IN MID 1980’S

### **CAREER HIGHLIGHTS AND AWARDS**

- 1970 GRAMMY AWARD FOR THE NUMBER ONE HIT “CHOKIN KIND”
- 1971 CERTIFIED GOLD FOR THE ALBUM “DROWNING IN THE SEA OF LOVE” PRODUCED BY KENNY GAMBLE & LEON HUFF
- 1971 GRAMMY NOMINATION FOR THE ALBUM “THE POWER OF LOVE”
- 1972 SECOND #1 HIT ON THE R&B CHARTS, CERTIFIED GOLD FOR THE SINGLE “POWER OF LOVE,” WRITTEN BY SIMON, KENNY GAMBLE & LEON HUFF, PRODUCED BY GAMBLE & HUFF
- 1973 GRAMMY NOMINATED FOR BEST RHYTHM & BLUES PERFORMANCE – MALE FOR “DROWNING IN THE SEA OF LOVE,” PRODUCED BY KENNY GAMBLE & LEON HUFF
- 1973 COMPOSES AND PERFORMS THE SCORE FOR THE MOVIE “CLEOPATRA JONES,” ONE OF THE TOP GROSSING FILMS IN WARNER BROTHERS HISTORY; THE “THEME FROM CLEOPATRA JONES” WOULD RISE TO PROMINENCE AGAIN WITH THE INCLUSION AS A FOCAL TUNE IN THE 1991 BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE “BOYZ IN THE HOOD”
- APPEARANCES ON “JOHNNY CARSON’S TONIGHT SHOW”, “SOUL TRAIN” AND “AMERICAN BANDSTAND”
- 3 NUMBER 1 HITS, 13 TOP TEN HITS, 38 TOP 40 HITS
- NUMEROUS GOLD RECORD AWARDS AND INTERNATIONAL TOURS
- HIS SONGS ARE SAMPLED BY SOME OF HIP HOP’S BIGGEST ARTISTS INCLUDING OUTKAST WHO SAMPLED SIMON’S “BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER,” IN THEIR HIT “SO FRESH, SO CLEAN,” FROM THE MULTI PLATINUM ALBUM, “STANKONIA”. IN ADDITION, LIL’ KIM SAMPLED HIS “IT BE’S THAT WAY SOMETIMES,” IN “MAGIC STICK,” FEATURING 50 CENT.

## **CALL TO MINISTRY**

DURING THE MID 1980'S, JOE BECAME MORE AND MORE DISENFRANCHISED WITH THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND THE LIFESTYLE THAT SURROUNDED MANY ASPECTS OF IT, HE BEGAN A SEARCH TO REDISCOVER WHO HE REALLY WAS AS A PERSON, HE BEGAN TO READ THE WORD OF GOD, AND SLOWLY HIS NEW CALLING IN LIFE TOOK FORM. JOE RELATES THE EXPERIENCE:

"I had everything a man could want in life, in a material way, but it didn't fill this certain void I kept experiencing. The defining moment came when I read stunning words of the Apostle Paul—a very affluent, brilliant, and scholarly man of his day, who had studied at the University of Rome and spoke fluently fourteen languages, Paul realized that as great as they were, his personal accomplishments were not very important as he wrestled with the questions of eternity, I was astonished when I read Philippians 3:8—"I count it all as dung." It was then that I saw myself. Suddenly all the things that I had accomplished in life were put into perspective. I even wrote a song about the experience entitled, "Things Didn't Save Me." "My journey had begun, after a period of intense bible study and preparation; I preached my first sermon as a minister to 4,500 people in Alexandria, Louisiana on Saturday, August 6, 1988, an event that was reported in Jet Magazine. I continue to travel and minister to this day with my Evangelistic Community Crusades. Today I can attest that my greatest joy in life was the day I met Christ."

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKER & LEADERSHIP**

- JANUARY 21, 1991, KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. TRIBUTE
- ON FEBRUARY 25, 1999, RECEIVED THE RHYTHM AND BLUES FOUNDATION PIONEER AWARD, SAYS BISHOP JOE SIMON, "I THANK THE RHYTHM AND BLUES FOUNDATION WITH ALL MY HEART AND I THANK ALL OF THOSE WHO HELPED WITH AND IN MY RHYTHM AND BLUES LIFE, BUT I MUST CONTINUE WITH THE LORD'S WILL."
- JULY 20, 2006, THE BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE TRAVELS TO BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA
- AUGUST 2006, THE BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE TRAVELS TO CALIFORNIA
- AUGUST 2006, BISHOP JOE SIMON TAPES TV-ONE'S THE GOSPEL OF MUSIC WITH JEFF MAJORS TV SHOW, AIRS IN OCTOBER
- JUNE 2006-MAY 2007, THE BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE TRAVELS TO ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, FLORIDA, ETC.

## **THE EVANGELIST BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE**

- JUNE 2, 2007, LOUISIANA GOVERNOR WELCOMES FORMER R&B LEGEND TO LOUISIANA. THE BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE TRAVELS TO LOUISIANA
- NOVEMBER 11, 2007, BISHOP JOE SIMON LENDS SUPPORT TO TREATMENT CENTER IN FLORIDA. THE BISHOP JOE SIMON COMMUNITY CRUSADE TRAVELS TO FLORIDA
- JULY 17-20, 2008, BISHOP JOE SIMON HEADLINES THE PORRETTA SOUL FESTIVAL IN PORRETTA TERME, ITALY
- AUGUST 7, 2008, BISHOP JOE SIMON HONORED FOR HIS RHYTHM AND BLUES CONTRIBUTIONS WITH THE JUS' BLUES MUSIC LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
- JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2016. BISHOP JOE SIMON IS HONORED AT CITIZENS BANK PARK IN PHILADELPHIA WITH THE PHILLIES GAMBLE AND HUFF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD FOR HIS CLASSIC BEST-SELLING ALBUM, "DROWNING IN THE SEA OF LOVE"