

Mp3 Shannone Holt - The Shannone Holt Ep



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Shannone Holt indeed does it all-singer, songwriter, producer, and arranger. The Shannone Holt EP combines her amazing voice with an eclectic style that is both socially conscious and culturally connected. 8 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Soul, URBAN/R&B: Contemporary urban Details: SHANNONE HOLT THE SHANNONE HOLT EP Standing on a chair at the age of two, Shannone Holt belted out her first solo, "I Don't Feel No Ways Tired" and was told that every time she got to the part "to leave me," she would squat down for emphasis as though she understood the words. Who would have thought that the budding songstress, even as a toddler, would make the connection between the power of emotion through music? On The Shannone Holt EP, released on True York Entertainment, you'll discover a vocal gumbo which merges Gospel, Jazz, The Blues, African Rhythms, Reggae, Hip-Hop, R&B, Classic Soul, Pop, Folk Music, and even Opera into a musical experience that is magical, sonically eclectic, socially relevant, and spiritually empowering. Shannone Holt is, without question, the next great voice in American music. Longtime entertainment industry veteran Kevin Powell (former senior writer for Vibe, cast member on the inaugural season of MTV's "The Real World"; best-selling author; and noted political and cultural commentator and social activist) literally stumbled into Shannone Holt in 2004, while he and his production team, The Colored Orphans (Aaron Burrison, Jamal Gaillard, and Baldwin Powell), were working with another artist. "We were auditioning background singers, and Shannone was one of the first to show up. Interestingly enough, she was not even on the list of folks who we had booked for the audition. She just came, and she blew us away. A few months later, when the situation with the first singer fell apart, we asked Shannone if she would consider being the first artist we'd introduce on True York Entertainment. She immediately said yes and we started working on The Shannone Holt EP." A native of Nashville, Tennessee who now lives in the New York City area, Shannone is the daughter of a

doo-wop singer turned pastor and an English teacher who began teaching their 6 year old daughter classical piano, and then enrolled her into violin lessons shortly after. Shannone found her own instrument like most legendary singers, in her father's church. Although the 20-something classically trained vocalist/songwriter plays keyboard and violin, and studied at the prestigious Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama (the same institution that produced the Grammy award winning gospel acappella group Take 6 and soulful balladeer Brian McKnight), she's no stranger to hip-hop, the dominant music of her generation. Her debut collection of songs, *The Shannone Holt EP*, excellently produced by True York Entertainment's in-house production team, *The Colored Orphans* (Aaron Burrison, Jamal Gaillard, Baldwin Powell), is delivered with passionate conviction, finesse and, above all, honesty, qualities missing from much of today's music. Shannone's vocal tone ranges from the towering crescendos of Whitney Houston's soprano to the deep buttery alto of Toni Braxton. Despite these impressive comparisons, her velvety voice and sound is completely unique. Upon listening, one is left wondering if Shannone's songwriting might be the soundtrack for her life. As a lyricist, Shannone explains that her love affair with music inspires her to write. "Most of the songs were co-written by myself and Kevin Powell and are inspired by conversations about things going on in our lives and in the world. Songwriting for me is about releasing an emotion through melody." When we started writing songs for this EP, I was listening to so many types of music, from Ani Di Franco to Carole King, from Miriam Makeba to Dennis Brown and Peter Tosh, so *The Shannone Holt EP* has so many musical influences inspired from these artists and also from the band I'm working with," explains Shannone. When asked what was so special about recording this album, Shannone replies, "There's nothing like recording with live musicians. The experience allows you to expand your creativity and it's a more flexible environment for improvising." The roots/reggae leaning "Infinite Love" talks about someone so seriously in love that they compare love to music. Your love plays the strings in me. Plays the chord in me. You are my music are lyrics that Shannone believes can only represent love in the highest form. "For me to sing about comparing love to music is a deep thing because I put music on such a high pedestal. So the person who makes me feel that their love is like music, is a person that shares my spirit and has my eternal love." While "Infinite Love" is a celebration of love, "Manny," is a classic soul heartbreak song written about a woman intensely in love with a man who can't reciprocate. Deep inside she knows that she has to let go, but finds it difficult to move on. The influence of rap music is felt on the hip-hop/jazz fusion of "Ay-yo, pot-na" where Shannone extols the

things she holds most dear: God, her father, and music. "I really began to embrace hip-hop when I started visiting my father in Brooklyn, during summer/spring/winter breaks from high school. There was just something about listening to Pac, Biggie and Nas, and later Wu-tang, in my headphones that made me feel protected. Almost like, if I had any beef, they would have my back. I'd put on my walkman just to walk to the corner store on Pitkin and Christopher, less than a block from where we lived. I would memorize and recite the lyrics while sitting on the terrace looking at the L train, or kicking it with my brother and his boys. So working with the Colored Orphans and Kevin Powell, because they are true hip-hop heads, is just like kicking it with the guys the way I used to in Brownsville, Brooklyn. I felt like one of the boys then 'cause of my love for hip-hop, and I still feel like one of the boys now." All the songs on the EP are recorded with live instruments with the exception of "Ay-yo, pot-na," and "Get up on it," which is a straight African-centered dance groove programmed by The Colored Orphans. The song was created in the spirit of Nina Simone's "See-Line Woman," and the songs on Soul II Soul's iconic Keep on Movin' LP from the late 80's. Sonically, "Get up on it" merges beautifully the blending of cultures and artistic backgrounds of the band. A 10-piece crew, a few of the musicians are from the West Indies, a few are African American, and the percussionist is from Senegal, West Africa. All are very accomplished in their fields with resumes that include work with Usher, Alicia Keys, Cassandra Wilson, Meshell Ndegeocello, The Metropolitan Opera, and the Carnegie Hall big band. All are young, for the most part, giving Shannone's sound the feel of a journey through the global Black Experience, with its roots in the humanity of us all. The Shannone Holt EP combines her amazing voice with an eclectic style that is both socially conscious and culturally connected. Three of the songs on the EP were inspired by NO! an upcoming feature length documentary that unveils the reality of rape, other forms of sexual violence and healing in African American communities, produced, written, directed by Aishah Shahidah Simmons. Shannone's scorching alto and searing emotion is felt on the title track "NO!"-a cry out against rape. The lyrics, "I thought I told you no, my body told you no, thought my eyes told you no, thought my screams told you no, then why did you do me just like so," are ones that any victim of rape or sexual assault can identify with. The folksy "One Nation Under" also analyzes the double standards that exist between men and woman, gender and racial inequality, and the questions that come out of that imbalance. The operatic spiritual, "Look What They Done Done," is an account of African American history and examines slavery, lynching, and the effects that both have had on Black people. The Shannone Holt EP purposely crosses lyrical and musical

boundaries because Shannone is serious, very serious, about her creative freedom. "As artists, we're often put into a niche, into neat little boxes, to define our sound or style, and it's really frustrating," she explains. "All the musical parts of me are going to define my sound, not just one thing. All of it matters to me, everything that has ever influenced me." Shannone indeed does it all-singer, songwriter, producer, and arranger. Shannone has also dabbled in modeling and is often mistaken for a runway model, a compliment she appreciates but places lightly to the side. "Aside from being respected as a musician and a songwriter, I'd like the world to see my inner beauty. Everything on the outside is temporary. It will all pass away. And while I love fashion, and enjoy different styles, at the end of the day, when I come home, I've got to come out of these clothes and shoes, lose the hair and make-up, and see my soul through those eyes in the mirror. It's my spirit I want people to remember and the emotion my music evokes. I want always my spirit to be felt."

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