

# Annie Ross

"...she is a jazz singer without a peer"  
– John S. Wilson, The New York Times

## THE EARLY YEARS

Annie Ross was born in London on July 25, 1930. Her vaudeville parents were appearing in a show and in true theatrical style Annie was born just hours after the matinee! She could sing before she could walk. Un fact, as an infant Annie worked her way from the audience, finally getting up on the stage and singing a number. She came to New York via Ellis Island at the age of four and a half to visit her famous singer aunt, Ella Logan, who created the title role in "Finlan's Rainbow." Annie comes from a long line of theatrical talent, in fact her brother, Jimmy Logan, is one of Scotland's most famous entertainers who recently was awarded the OBE by the Queen. Annie exhibited an early talent for song writing when at age of fourteen she composed a song for a school contest. Johnny Mercer nad Dinah Shore were the judges and subsequently Johnny Mercer recorded the song, "Let's Fly" with Paul Weston and the Pied Pipers (one of whom was Jo Stafford). This song, written by such a young girl, later became Gene Tierny's favorite song and The Aga Khan named one of this race horses after it! Annie then entered a talent show on the radio accompanied by the Paul Whiteman Orchestra, which resulted an a six-month contract with MGM. She went to Hollywood at age eight where she appeared in "The Little Rascals" singing a jazz version of "Loch Lomond." At age eleven she appeared as Judy Garland's sister in "Presenting Lily Mars."

## THE PARIS YEARS

Anni returned to London at age seventeen where she sang in a club, then went to Paris where she joined Hugh Martin (composer of "The Trolley Song," "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "The Boy Next Door," etc.) and Timothy Gray in a singing trio. She remained in Paris where she cut her first record, "Le Vent Vert" with James Moody. It was during these years that Annie developed her inimitable, unique style. She traveled to North Africa with Coleman Hawkins, Kenny Clarke and James Moody. It was also during this time that Charlie Parker became Godfather to Annie's son by Kenny Clarke, Kenny, Jr. Then, only 20, Annie was asked to record in New York for a record company called DG, which was owned by Dizzy Gillespie and David Usher. Accompanied by Kenny Clarke, Milt Jackson, Percy Heath and Blossom Dearie, Annie recorded four titles. Critics and aficionados alike were unstinting in their praise of her artistry.

## NEW YORK

After a busy life of singing and traveling in Europe, Annie returned to New York traveling with Sugar Ray Robinson and his entourage where she composed the lyrics to "Twisted," a jazz blues composition by Wardell Gray which won her the Downbeat "New Star" award. "Twisted" has become a jazz classic recorded by Betty Midler, Joni Mitchell, Mark Murphy and countless aspiring jazz singers around the world. Woody Allen used the original recording Annie made of "Twisted" for his film, "Deconstructing Harry." While appearing in a club called the Band Box, where she was accompanied by George Wallington, Tommy Potter, Ernie Henry and Max Roach, Lionel Hampton came in from the club next door, Birdland, and asked her if she could leave the next day for a tour of Europe with his abnd, which included musicians Clifford Brown, Quincy Jones and Art Farmer. During this time she wrote the lyrics to Art Farmer's "Farmer Market" and Hampton Hawks' "Jackie." She then signed with legendary agent

Joe Glaser. The day after signing with him she found herself replacing Billy Holiday at the Apollo Theatre. Billy Holiday attended Annie's performances at the Apollo where Duke Ellington introduced the two singers to one another. From that moment on they became lifelong friends.

## LAMBERT, HENDRICKS AND ROSS

After a sting in Paris with Blossom Dearie, Annie went to London to star in a review called "Cranks" with Anthony Newley, which was met with high critical acclaim. The show moved to New York and at the close of the run Annie remained while the rest of the cast went back to London. In New York in the 1950's, Annie met Dave Lambert and John Hendricks who had an idea for a Basie album. They recorded the instantly successful "Sing a Song of Basie" which has become a jazz classic. The trio became an international success; they recorded and worked all over the world, recording Horace Silver's "Come on Home" and the Ellington classic, "Cotton Tail." The now famous trio played at the legendary Birdland and recorded with the Basie Band and Zoot Sims. The trio recorded "The Real Ambassadors" with Louis Armstrong, Carman MacCrae and Dave Brubeck Trio. Annie recorded "Gypsy," which has recently been reissued. Annie individually recorded an album with Gerry Mulligan and Zoot Sims. She then returned to London where she quit LH&R in 1962, recorded "A Handful of Songs" as a soloist, "Loguerhythms," "Annie by Candlelight," and "Hoagland" (the songs of Hoagy Carmichael) with Georgie Fame, got married and opened a club in Convent Garden called Annie's Room, which became the swingingest club in London showcasing the likes of Joe Williams, Stuff Smith, Dakota Staton, Blossom Dearie, Anita O'Day, Jon Hendricks and Erroll Garner.

## THE THEATRE YEARS

Annie was asked to play Pirate Jenny in Brecht and Weill's "Three Penny Opera" directed by Tony Richardson, with Vanessa Redgrave. Lotte Lenya, who had created the role, was in the audience during the opening night. After the show, Lenya said to Annie "I give you half my crown, not all, but I give you half," – quite a compliment from the imposing Miss Lenya. Annie also appeared in "The Seven Deadly Sins" at the Royal Opera House with the Royal Ballet, directed by Sir Kenneth MacMillan. She then went on to appear in "Kennedy's Children." During this time she made several films, as well as appearing in other successful plays, such as the Joe Papp production of "The Pirates of Penzance" with Tim Curry. On one of her trips to England, Annie wrote a cookbook that was published. Then in the 1970's, she did a tour of the far east where she sang in "Side by Side" by Sondheim.

## CURRENT YEARS

During the 1980's and the 1990's she went on to act in such films as "Yanks" with Richard Gere, "Superman III" with Christopher Reeve, "Throw Mama from the Train" with Billy Crystal and Danny DeVito, "Pump up the Volume" with Christian Slater, "Basket Case II" and "Short Cuts," directed by Robert Altman in which she sang as well as acted. Annie conducts master classes at various esteemed music schools in Europe as well as in the States. She recorded the album "Music is Forever" (named after the song she composed with Russ Freeman) with Al Grey, Joe Beck, Frank Wess and Tommy Flanagan. Annie Ross is a vocalist who comes from the inside of the music - she stretches the intonation, rhythm and mood of a song to make it memorable and personal and heartfelt. No one else has her style, her depth or her way of delivering a line. There is only one Annie Ross.

## HOT OF THE PRESS

Annie Ross has teamed up with Jon Hendricks once again! Annie and Jon realized they could never replace the brilliant Dave Lambert, who was killed in a tragic automobile accident in 1966, so they have rejoined as Hendricks&Ross, backed by a superb quartet made up of Peter Mihelich on piano, Paul Gill on bass, Paul Meyers on guitar and Walter Bolden on drums. Hendricks&Ross begin their world tour in

January 1999 at New York's famed jazz emporium The Blue Note. "When Jon and I are singing together, it's just such a positive thing," says Annie. "It swings and we have fun. It's magic. That's the only way I can describe it."