

Oby Onyioha – A Nigerian Music Icon

How does anyone start to write about the ebullient irrepressible and irresistible Oby Onyioha, without having to mention that she walked into the bright lights of show-biz superstardom in 1980s with the chart bursting 'I WANT TO FEEL YOUR LOVE'



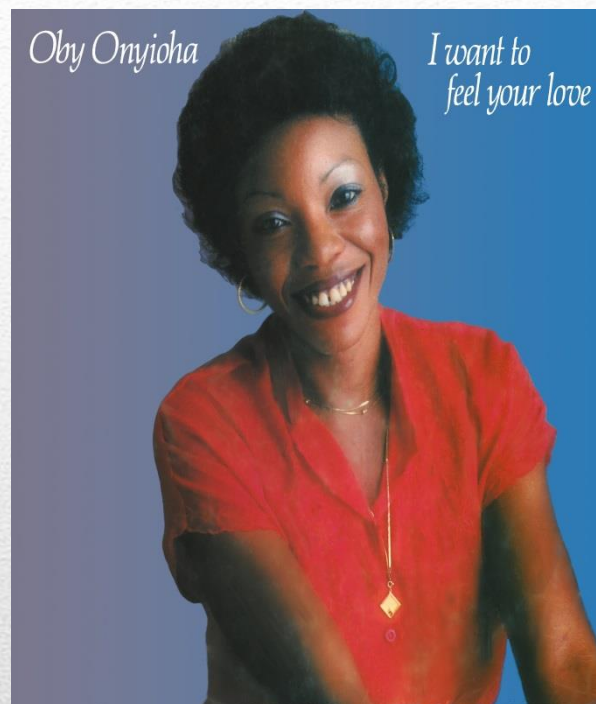
Oby Onyioha.

I WANT TO FEEL YOUR LOVE.

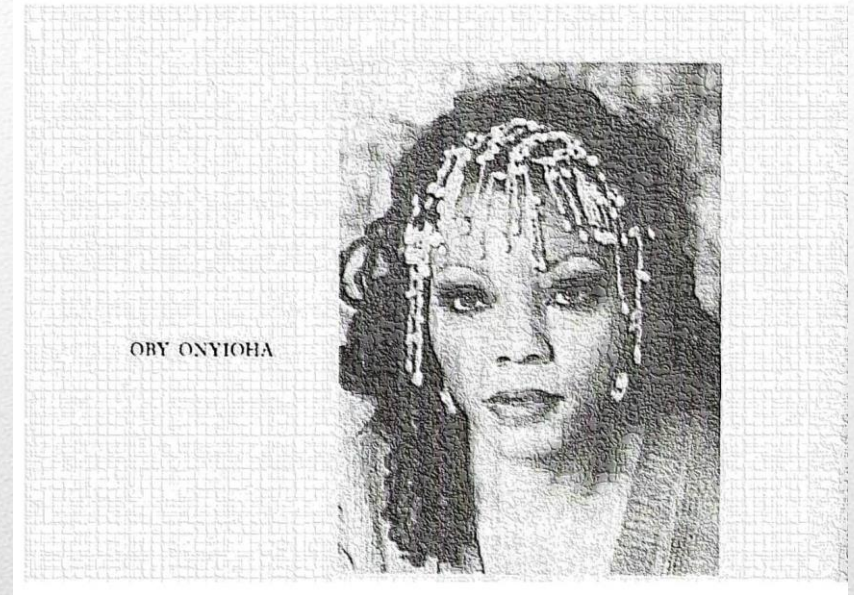
Oby Onyioha, one of the doyens of the Nigerian music industry, first burst onto the Nigerian music scene with the chart bursting 'I Want to Feel Your Love' album that took the Nigerian music world by storm in the 1980's. This was followed by an equally big hit 'Break It' around the same period, all this at a time when disco and break-dance music was considered the exclusive domain of western artistes. Its novelty and unprecedented release catapulted her into being the singular pioneer of the disco and break-dance music in Nigeria at a time when there was a paucity of the genre.

It was new; it was refreshing, more especially as the tracks were sprinkled with some memorable African songs. She became the first Nigerian female scholastic achiever to venture into the music business, a vocation that had hitherto been denigrated as a profession for the 'academically challenged' female.

She therefore played a big part in helping to break that perception of the Nigerian female musician.



- Oby had no formal training in music. But her discography dates back to Oby at age 8 when she started singing on television and in her School and Church choir. She had her Primary School education at Methodist School Uwani, Enugu. Her High School education was at Queen's School Enugu. Oby graduated from Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan with a B.A in History and a double Concentration in Business Management and African History. She later went on to obtain an M.A./ Ph.D. in Social Anthropology, and a Ph.D. in Natural Theology. Oby Onyioha's I WANT TO FEEL YOUR LOVE was so successful that at an auction in Europe the vinyl record sold for \$1700!



EDUCATION

Break It

- Her Album 'Break It' was the biggest test she had faced in a pretty long time. But the whole effort had been well-worth it as many would agree on listening to the Album.
- Then the long silence. Then there was a long hiatus with everyone wondering what happened to Oby's musical career.
- What happened to Oby was disillusionment in the integrity of Nigerian music Executives and Marketers. With corruption so rife within the industry, and having a sound education to fall back on, she decided to quit the music scene and concentrate on making a living by other means



Hiatus Another incarnation!



- As Regional Director for a well known U.K Company, welcoming the Mayor of Guildford, Surrey, in the UK, to one of her establishments.

- However the pull of music was so strong that she decided to dabble her feet in musical waters once more, but this time with a twist and added depth. Looking through the lens of an Anthropologist as she became, she decided to re-direct her genre into an 'Africanist' paradigm that is a conflation of her intellectual discipline and heritage.
- Hence another Album simply titled 'HERITAGE'.



HERITAGE

- Oby Onyioha's music is an introduction into mostly old and classic African centred melodies, lyrics, expressions, sentimentality and interpretations, with some influences reflecting a musical universality with other cultures over the centuries. The result is a dynamic synthesis that showcases African music in a fluidity of sound, weaving seamlessly from African into western and other influences and back again creating a genre she labels ATRADO RHYTHMS.

ATRADO RYTHYMS



Forgotten Treasure: Oby Onyioha “Enjoy Your Life” One fine morning last spring, bright and early, my friend played this Disco song at full volume across the empty shop we were working in. It was a song I had never heard before but instantly loved and needed to have in my collection. Without even trying, an incredible new Disco track fell into my lap and made my morning so much finer.....

Oby Onyioha’s Enjoy Your Life is a rare find, and I am thankful for my wonderful Disco counterpart/co-worker for sharing this gem that I never knew before. <http://www.musicismysanctuary.com/forgotten-treasure-oby-onyioha-enjoy-your-life-1981>

On: The Quincey Jones of Nigeria, woman singers and the London Era of Nigerian Music –After the dically austere presentation of the folk singers, to have a woman like Oby Onyioha wearing red lipstick and a perm, cooing ‘I Want To Feel Your Love’ and exhorting her sisters to ‘Enjoy Your Life’ while decadent strings swooped around her was a deliciously radical change of pace, forerunning a substantial cultural shift. .

<http://combandrazor.blogspot.com/2007/11/on-quincey-jones-of-nigeria-woman.html>

Celebrating Ndi-Igbo: Oby Onyioha –A baby-voiced vocalist with a toothy grin, Onyioha represented the new wave of Nigerian Female pop singers emerging with the arrival of the 1980s.

<http://igbopeople.blogspot.com/2009/03/oby-onyioha.html>



PRESS

- “She sounds good; the music sounds good and very professional.” – Micky Most, a veteran British Producer and owner of RAK Studios, London, where the Albums were mixed.
- “Do you really mean these are Nigerian Artistes... because there has never been anything so mature from Africa since Fela” Steve Rowland, Artiste and Repertoire Director, Hansa Records, London.
- This is a pleasant surprise ... sounds a bit too grown to be coming from home”. Gordon Tialobi, Punch Group London Correspondent.
- ‘Here comes the sound to set the trend for the rest of the ‘80s” – Tony Amadi Editor/Publisher African Music.
- “Simply Wonderful, especially Oby’s” Tony Essien, Product – A&R Manager Phonodisk Nigeria Ltd.
- “Every Dee Jay will be proud this is ours”- Femi Oni doyen of Nigerian Disco and Hip Hop DJs.
- “For once, this is something really good!” –Tony Benson



Press
