

Writer's Notes

By Laiona Michelle

Little Girl Blue is my passion project—an homage to Nina Simone, the great Lady herself, and to the incredible influence she has had on me personally. I began putting the pieces of this musical together more than ten years ago and bit by bit it came together.

For so long, I felt that she had been misunderstood, partly because of the labels often attached to Black women who don't play by the standard rules, and partly by the media. Nina was a very complicated woman, but what always stood out for me was just how talented, how naturally gifted she was. Yes, she was angry, but I want the audience to understand through this piece, where that anger stemmed from. That being Black in this country is no easy feat. And when you are as brilliant, when you are a genius like Nina Simone, and you are forced by a system that does not respect your talent, nor does it allow you the option of following your creative spirit where it wants to go, you become disillusioned and hurt.

Nina Simone felt that she was born to be a classical



musician and that was denied to her very early in life. Instead, she was pushed into a genre of music that she had not wanted, but that she took on and changed and made her own. But even with the fame that it brought her, it was never what she herself desired to be as a musician.

I think above all else, I wanted to shed light on Nina's pain, and her conflicts. I want audiences today to see the full 360° view of this amazing artist, this important creative who spent her life chasing her dream. We might think that she was living her dream, but more than anything, she wanted to sit at her piano, in a concert hall and play Bach. She wanted the world to acknowledge her as a classical musician and it was a constant struggle for her to accept the mantle of High Priestess of Soul, though she wore it well.

Little Girl Blue offers audiences a glimpse at the activist, the classical musician, the woman, the lover, the performer that Nina Simone was.

Little Girl Blue
The Nina Simone Musical