



**Contact: Azusa SHESHE Dance**  
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A Bluesical, created and written by Azusa SHESHE Dance, edited by Marty L. Bryant, about [Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton \(December 11, 1926 – July 25, 1984\)](#), who was an American rhythm-and-blues singer and songwriter. She was the first to record Leiber and Stoller's "Hound Dog", in 1952, which became her biggest hit, staying seven (7) weeks at number one on the *Billboard* R&B chart in 1953 and selling almost two (2) million copies. Thornton's other recordings included the original version of "Ball and Chain", which she wrote.

*Step back in time with vocal powerhouse, Big Mama Thornton; Blues singer, songwriter and entertainer known for her top Billboard hits. This musical comedy shows her experience with racial and sexual tensions in the music industry. Join us on her fearless journey of musical strife and success. What you know or thought as HIStory is truly HERstory.*



**Run time ninety (90) minutes, no intermission. Explicit language. Ages 14+ appropriate.**  
***Interactive show performed with a live four (4) piece blues band and sound bytes.***

The show was created to preserve and share the herstory of a powerful, bossy, bull headed, no nonsense, cross dressing African- American female, blues music influencer, who allowed her unique spirit to rule her music, writings and style. Learning everything by ear and watching others closely, Willie Mae, AKA Blg Mama Thorton, created her own unique sound that spoke enormous volumes of who she was, what she had been through and where she wanted to go. Like every creative and successful artist, the highs and lows of everyday life are hard to balance, and her drinking, a coping mechanism from years of pain and heartache, limited her rise in fame, professionally and financially, ultimately resulting in an early death with little to no recognition. Hence, the story of many talented firsts, and historically undocumented black artists, during the hard transitional times of the Jim Crow Era, especially females.





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**HOUN' DAWG: LIFE & TIMES OF BIG MAMA THORNTON** debuted in the **UNITED SOLO FESTIVAL 2018**, winning the **BEST CONCERT AWARD** and was featured as the season opener for **UNIVERSITY CHAPEL HILL NORTH CAROLINA STONE CENTER FOR BLACK HISTORY & CULTURE** in Spring **2019**.

HOUN' DAWG has had the honor of being performed in NYC at:

**MIST HARLEM**                      **TEN FOOT RAT CABARET**                      **MY TRUE COLORS FESTIVAL**  
**SISTAH CELEBRATION**      **WOW CAFE THEATER**                      **SISTA TALK TV**  
**NASTY WOMEN UNITE FESTIVAL**



"When she stepped onstage ... you could feel shockwaves of energy and love reverberating all around the room. Dance's performance is kind of thing you really have to see for yourself to believe. Hers is a stage presence so captivating, you can't help but feel like you're witnessing something out of history, something the universe has conspired to create."

-**Eden Gordon**, HOUN' DAWG article - [\*\*Honeysuckle Magazine\*\*](#)







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## About the Producer, Writer & Performing Artist:

Azusa SHESHE Dance

## BIOGRAPHY

[Azusa SHESHE Dance](#) is a native of Chattanooga, TN where she learned her signature vocals raised in the church and music appreciation through the public school system, in classical violin, which in turn provided a financial scholarship to college. SHESHE found her voice in local and regional musical theatre landing lead roles in BESSIE BLUES, HAIRSPRAY, LEGALLY BLONDE, HAIR, THE COLOR PURPLE & THE WIZ to name a few. This lead to private and corporate gigs, and eventually a move to NYC where she successfully thrives as a blues, jazz, rock and musical theatre singer and actress.

SHESHE performs three (3) days a week with [MUSIC UNDER NEW YORK \(MUNY\)](#) program sponsored by MTA at elite locations: Columbus Circle, Times Square, Penn Station, Herald Square, 14th & Union, Port Authority. She also serves on the MUNY yearly application selection panel & is an annual live audition judge. SHESHE performs twice a week with [CONCERTS IN MOTION \(CIM\)](#) providing live performances

for community organizations such as senior centers, hospitals & private residences. She is also a musical theatre, TV and film actress recently performing with the [NATIONAL BLACK THEATRE OF HARLEM in 125th & FREEDOM](#) summer 2019, which made the [NEW YORK TIMES](#) and recently filmed a commercial for the FACETUNE APP.

She has performed on the [APOLLO stage twice winning third place for amateur night June 2016](#), opened for [NEW YORK SUMMER STAGE in HARLEM](#) July 2019 at Adam Clayton Powell State Building and was the featured performer for HARLEM WEEK at the SENIOR CITIZENS LUNCHEON, August 2019. SHESHE has also been the opening act for [SISKIN CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE STARNIGHT](#) GALA 2017 with SHEILA E. & 2018 with LO CASH.

SHESHE has been a featured singer with: [THE JEALOUS FATES BAND](#) (*blues, rock & neo soul*) since 2018, performing regularly at NYC's PROHIBITION, THE RED LION & DINO BBQ 125th; with DAN SCHNAPP's QUARTET (*classic jazz*) since 2019, performing regularly at THE J HOUSE in Greenwich, CT; and CHARLIE RHYNER'S JAZZ ENSEMBLE (*classic jazz*) since 2019, performing regularly at THE ROXY HOTEL.



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Entertainer, Singer, Actress

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Facebook: [SHESHE DANCE](https://www.facebook.com/SHESHE.DANCE)



## PRESS QUOTES & TESTIMONIALS

"THE VOICE of the subway."

- Eleanor, Penn Station, Subway Rider

"SHESHE brings JOY with her VOICE."

- Christine, Port Authority, Subway Rider

"NYC's Subway BEYONCE."

- Victor, Herald Square, Subway Rider

"Incredible acting, incredible singing, commands the stage and takes the audience on non-stop journey of the human experience."

- Sammy Goldstein, Facebook, Subway Rider "Azusa

SHESHE Dance is focused. She connects with an audience like a pro."

-Alix Cohen, HOUN' DAWG review from UNITED SOLO FESTIVAL

- [WomenAroundTown.com](http://WomenAroundTown.com)

"When she stepped onstage ... you could feel shockwaves of energy and love reverberating all around the room. Dance's performance is kind of thing you really have to see for yourself to believe. Hers is a stage presence so captivating, you can't help but feel like you're witnessing something out of history, something the universe has conspired to create."

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## SHESHE YOUTUBE VIDEOS

SHESHE sings HAIRSPRAY- BIG, BLONDE & BEAUTIFUL

For AUDITION HERO COMMERCIAL

<https://youtu.be/YHSUMZXd6Rw>

SHESHE sings BIG MAMA THORNTON'S HOUND DOG

[https://youtu.be/WLhlUkbbK\\_g](https://youtu.be/WLhlUkbbK_g)

SHESHE sings DANCING IN THE STREETS

At PORT AUTHORITY with MUSIC UNDER NEW YORK

<https://youtu.be/ek6eAWGQpIA>

SHESHE sings I WANT TO MAKE LOVE TO YOU

At HERALD SQUARE with MUSIC UNDER NEW YORK

<https://youtu.be/wWw02g35SQ4>

SHESHE sings MAHALIA JACKSON'S UPPER ROOM

[In the Upper Room - Azusa Dance](#)



## LINKS TO SHESHE AUDIO

Bandcamp: SHESHE sings with THE JEALOUS FATES BAND - I WANT TO MAKE LOVE TO YOU

<http://jealousfatesnyc.bandcamp.com/album/yes-we-can>

Soundcloud: SHESHE sings HAIRSPRAY  
 - I KNOW WHERE I'VE BEEN

<https://soundcloud.com/sheshe-dance/32-bars-i-know-where-ive-been>

SHESHE sings BIG MAMA THORNTON- EVERYTHING GONNA BE ALRIGHT

<https://soundcloud.com/sheshe-dance/everything-gonna-be-alright-slow-big-mama-thorton-rehearsals-april-2016>