



Late Life Jazz: The Life and Career of Rosemary Clooney

Ken Crossland, Malcolm Macfarlane

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When people hear the name "Clooney," they automatically think of George Clooney, one of Hollywood's biggest stars. But it was his aunt Rosemary who first catapulted the name into bright lights with a string of hit songs in the 1950s and a starring role alongside Bing Crosby in the immortal "White Christmas."

Drawing on interviews with family members, managers, promoters, and the jazz musicians who worked with her, as well as contemporary newspaper articles and reviews, *Late Life Jazz* tells the unsung story of one of America's finest singers, Rosemary Clooney. Ken Crossland and Malcolm Macfarlane trace Rosemary's life from her hardscrabble beginnings in Maysville Kentucky, through her first performances singing with the Barney Rapp Band in Cincinnati, through her rise to pop stardom in the early 1950s when she topped the Hit Parade with songs such as "Come On-a My House," "Tenderly," and "Half As Much." By the time the 1960s arrived, however, personal turmoil, fueled by depression and an addiction to prescription medication, almost destroyed Clooney's career-and her life. She underwent years of therapy and recuperation before she was able to perform again in the early 1970s. Few expected her to be anything more than a baroness of nostalgia, but Rosemary had other ideas. Rejuvenated by a series of concerts alongside her friend and mentor, Bing Crosby, she found a new medium in the midst of America's finest jazz musicians, building a second career and with it a reputation as one of the finest interpreters of the Great American Songbook.

Vividly written and painstakingly researched, *Late Life Jazz* explores the rise, fall, and final triumph of Clooney the First, Aunt Rosemary, jazz singer par excellence.

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