

Ruth Brown

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 collapsed by a large-scale California earthquake. She overcame it all to continue performing and helping other artists rise.

In recent years, even after the first severe stroke, which led doctors to suggest her singing career was over, she returned to singing weekly on Thursdays at the Bootlegger, a well established supper club on the South end of the Las Vegas Strip, until it ended this September. All the while, she traveled and continued to perform at engagements across the country and appeared as a guest on television talk shows.

Her voice remained strong, although she preferred to perform seated after problems from the stroke. One friend, local singer Jennie Mistie, recalled telling her that she had "more rhythm in the chair than she had on her feet. 'Miss Rhythm' is right."



Mary Wilson of the Supremes with Ruth Brown at her 78th birthday bash held at the Bootlegger Restaurant.

Other veteran artists recall how much she influenced developing singers, helping them with their styling and stage presence. Genevieve, a local performer, said she met her at the Bootlegger, and was impressed with how comfortable she was. "She [Ruth Brown] was raw, real... it was like you were just sitting in her living room, hearing her tell her story." Genevieve said she learned

some things that have helped in her own singing performances. She said she was saddened at the news she died, and feels "happy to have had the opportunity to touch her hand... She was just a cool lady."

Grammy nominee jazz artists, The Cunninghams, are among the scores of local artists who appreciated her and will miss her deeply. The duo of Don Cunningham



Ruth Brown, right, with entertainers Marlena Shaw and Don Cunningham.

and wife Alicia spent time with her socially, and Don musically accompanied Brown when she performed at a show at the Blue Note with singer Marlena Shaw.

"I first met [Ruth Brown] years ago when she came to St. Louis in the mid '50s. I teased her about how she used to wear her trademark long ponytail," said Don Cunningham. "Recently, I accepted an award on her behalf," he added. He said that several friends, including Shaw, Joe Williams' widow, Jillian, are working to coordinate a local tribute planned for December to honor Ruth Brown.

She is survived by two sons, Ron McThatter of Los Angeles and Earl Swanson of Las Vegas; a sister, Delia Weston; brother Leonard Alvin Benny; four grandchildren, Brandon, Loren, Shauna and Elena; and many other relatives. She was survived by another brother, Leroy Weston, who passed just two days after her, her son Ron said.

She will be laid to rest beside her mother in her hometown of Portsmouth, Va., where the memorial services are scheduled for Monday for the public and privately on Tuesday for the family.



Ruth Brown electrifies guests in the foyer outside the Terrazza Lounge at Caesars Palace.

O.J.

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 also was a low for Fox, which has long tested viewers with risky reality programming dating back to "When Animals Attack."

O'Reilly had urged a boycott of any company that advertised on the special.

Simpson was acquitted in 1995 of murder in a case that became its own TV drama. The former football star, announcer and actor was later found liable for the deaths in a wrongful-death lawsuit filed by the Goldman family.

The TV special was to air on two of the final three

nights of the November sweeps, when ratings are watched closely to set local advertising rates. It has been a particularly tough fall for Fox, which has seen none of its new shows catch on and is waiting for the January bows of "American Idol" and "24."

The closest precedent for such an about-face came when CBS yanked a miniseries about Ronald Reagan from its schedule in 2003 when complaints were raised about its accuracy. It was seen on CBS' sister premium-cable channel,

Showtime, instead.

One Fox affiliate station manager said he wasn't going to air the special because he was concerned that, whether or not Simpson was guilty, he'd still be profiting from murders.

"I have my own moral compass and this was easy," said Bill Lamb, general manager of WDRB in Louisville.

Numerous books have been withdrawn over the years because of possible plagiarism, most recently Kaavya Viswanathan's "How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a

Life," but removal simply for objectionable content is exceptionally rare. In the early 1990s, Simon & Schuster canceled Bret Easton Ellis' "American Psycho," an exceptionally graphic account of a serial killer. The novel was released by Random House Inc., and later made into a feature film.

Sales for "If I Did It," had been strong, but not sensational. It cracked the top 20 of Amazon.com last weekend, but by Monday afternoon, at the time its cancellation was announced, the book had fallen to No. 51.

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