Waters, Ethel (1900-1977) Encyclopedia Article

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Waters, Ethel (1900-1977)

Born in turn-of-the-century Chester, Pennsylvania, black singer-actor-entertainer Ethel Waters presided for nearly fifty years as one of America's most celebrated performers. She began her career as a singer in 1917 at the Lincoln Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland. Billed as "Sweet Mama Stringbean" during her early years as a "shimmy dancer" and robust singer of heart-rending songs, her work traversed stage, movie screen, radio, and television. Her memorable credits include numerous Broadway reviews, the stage and screen versions of *Cabin the Sky* (1943) and *Member of the Wedding* (1952), the 1949 film classic *Pinky,* and the title role in the *Beulah* television series (1950-52).

Ethel Waters

Further Reading:

Waters, Ethel, with Charles Samuels, *His Eye Is on the Sparrow: An Autobiography.* New York, Pyramid, 1967.

Knaack, Twila, *Ethel Waters: I Touched a Sparrow.* Waco, Texas, Word Books, 1978.

Young, William C. *Famous Actors and Actresses on the American Stage.* New York, R. R. Bowker, 1975.