



**ANITA BAKER:
New Songstress Says A Good
Black Man Can Be Found**

New pop-soul songstress Anita Baker is "caught up in the rapture" of success with her No. 1 album and has a "sweet love" to share it with.

Ms. Baker, 28, who grew up singing gospel in Detroit's Hartford Avenue Baptist Church, is an overnight sensation—thanks to her *Rapture* album with the hit singles *Sweet Love* and *Watch Your Step*. The talented songstress is knocking out fans and critics attending her sold-out shows as she performs on national

Songstress Anita Baker describes her music as "fireside love songs with jazz, blues and gospel overtones."

tour.

But despite the fame and popularity, she has not "gone Hollywood." She is the same warm, personable, down-to-earth sister from Detroit she was before her hit album.

"The thing I like about what's happening with my popularity, is that we presented *me* to the public," she recently told *JET* during a visit to the Johnson Publishing Company headquarters in Chicago.

"Sometimes when a project comes out it's contrived and it's not really the person, the artist being portrayed. We put *me* out there and what's being accepted is not an image of me or an idea of how I should be, but people are touching me, they are taking me, they are accepting me," she enthused. "I can just go and be myself on stage and off."

No newcomer to the music business, she was the lead singer of the Detroit-based group, Chapter 8, in 1980. She later signed as a solo artist with the now-defunct Beverly Glen label and recorded the hit LP, *The Songstress*, which included the 1983 hits *Angel* and *No More Tears*.

She revealed *Caught Up in the Rapture* and *Angel* are sung for the man in her life, a young Black professional who works in computer sales for a major company in Detroit and who has "got himself together."

She does not "buy" the argument that a good Black man can

not be found. "People say that they're not around, but there are young Black men who have themselves together," she stressed. "But we look for the whole package. He's got to look like Billy Dee Williams and have the bank account of Billy Dee Williams and all of those things."

While she did not reveal his name, she noted, "I have the utmost respect for him as a man and if all of this (fame) was over tomorrow, I could depend on him and I know that and that gives me such a relaxed feeling."

She did, however, say she met her current mate nearly two years ago. "I met him between deals so nobody can say 'Well, you met him after the fame.' I didn't even have a record deal when I met him."

She described the whirlwind relationship which started when he approached her as she was

Taping her *Sweet Love* video, she is joined by (l-r) Lenny Grodin, Peter Israelson, Robin Sloane and Jon Small. Her album has already sold nearly one million copies.



Ms. Baker signs autograph for a fan after a sold-out concert engagement in Chicago.

shopping in a Detroit shoe store: "I never had a relationship where respect entered into it so much. That was the drawing card, the calling card," she admitted. "I





The sultry 4-foot-11-inch recording star enjoys her success and happy love life.

Taught Belief In Self

have so much respect for this guy

because he's only 29 years old. He knows where he is going, he knows what he wants to do and he's doing it. He's very secure within himself in terms of building a life for himself and in a young man that's very rare. I'm just very impressed with him."

She advised the sisters looking for a good man: "I agree with the fact that you're not going to find everything in one man. A man is not going to find everything in one woman. There are going to be areas where you either decide to make a compromise or you sit around and wait for a perfect person to come and fall in your lap. I'm not perfect. Who am I to require a perfect mate?"

The talented songstress, who has taped guest appearances on "The Today Show," "Nightlife" and "Good Morning America," is also sharing the rapture of success with her family and friends. *Rapture* is dedicated to Mrs. Lois Landry, her aunt who reared her and who she affectionately calls Mother. Mrs. Landry taught her to believe in herself and to be self-reliant. "She said, 'Anita after you, you don't have nobody.' She raised me so that I could hold my own and that's the best gift you can give to anybody."

Reflecting on her red hot career and happy love life, Ms. Baker said she is determined to continue to bring her fans joy. "When you achieve some measure of satisfaction from what you create, it only pushes you to do even better the next time. I'm already looking forward to the next album."

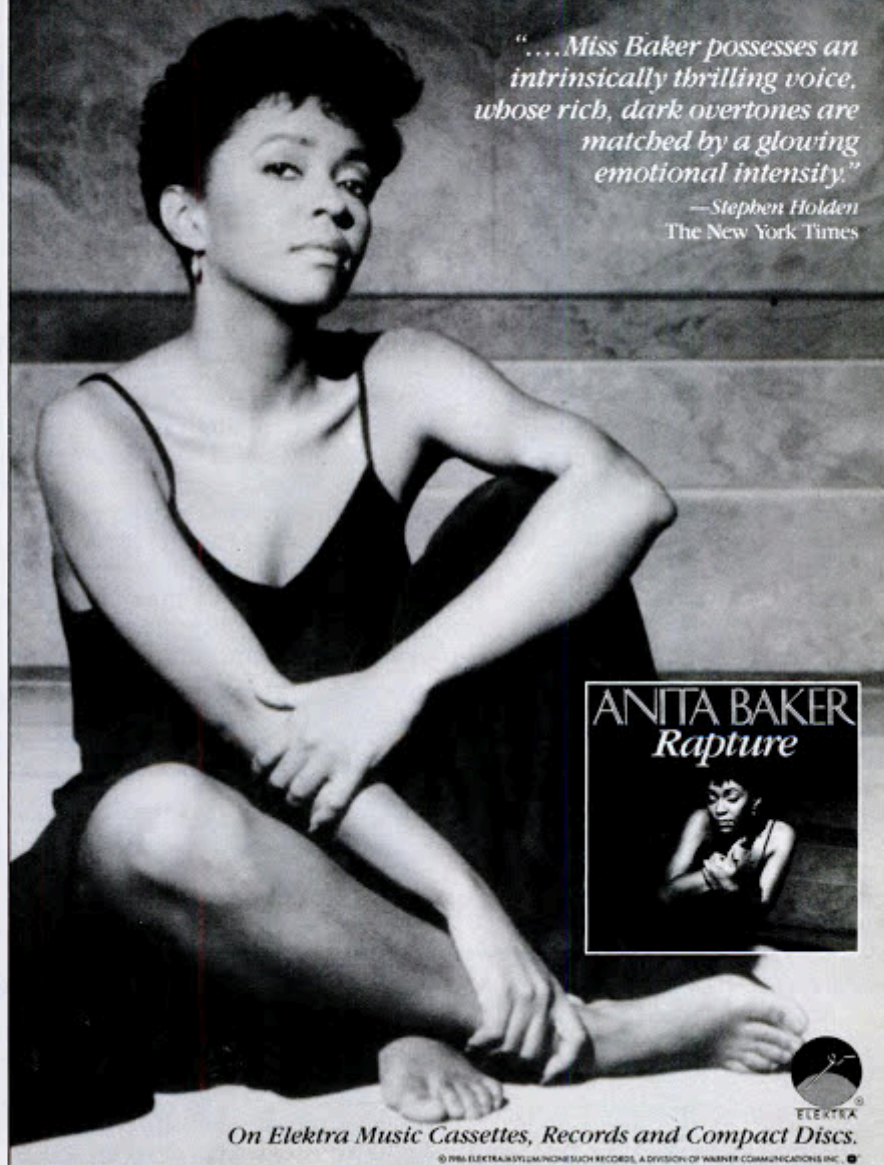
—CLARENCE WALDRON

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ANITA BAKER

"...Miss Baker possesses an intrinsically thrilling voice, whose rich, dark overtones are matched by a glowing emotional intensity."

—Stephen Holden
The New York Times



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