



## NICOLETTE BIOGRAPHY

Nicolette Suwoton was born in Scotland of Nigerian parents. Her upbringing was musical, being as she was exposed to a wide variety of music by her music-loving father (including African, jazz and blues, musicals, classical, George Formby,) and mother (Motown, James Brown, sixties and seventies pop). Furthermore, her father encouraged her musical inclinations by teaching her and her siblings to play and perform a wide variety of music, and recording their performances. Nicolette describes her family at this time as "a black Family Von Trapp"! Later the family returned to Nigeria, which further enriched Nicolette's musical repertoire.

Nicolette has travelled widely all her life, and on her return from Paris to the UK (Cardiff) in the late eighties decided to put aside her academic aspirations (she has a degree in French) and try a music career. She formed a jazz/funk band with some friends, formed a two-voice harmony group with her sister, and also did jazz covers with piano or guitar accompaniment in cafes and restaurants. Very soon she was seduced by the sound and energy of underground dance music coming from London, and she decided to move there in order to participate in the exciting new music scene. Her dream was to work on music that combined the sounds and energy of house and electronic dance with hip-hop. Her dream came true when in 1990 she auditioned for **Shut Up And Dance**, breakbeat pioneers and inventors of Drum n Bass. They took her on and their collaboration proved extremely fruitful, Nicolette releasing her seminal first single "*School of the World/Single-Minded People*" later that year. The single was an underground smash, combining as it did Nicolette's dreamy jazzy vocals and Shut Up And Dance's powerful hardcore backing. Several more singles met with the same enthusiastic response. Nicolette began to be described as "Billie Holiday on acid" (!), the first of many attempts to describe her amazing voice, a potent and soul-stirring mix of childlikeness, sensuality, and smoky jazz.

Nicolette's first album, the groundbreaking "**Now Is Early**", was released in 1992 to a lot of acclaim. Nicolette then decided to leave Shut Up And Dance for pastures new. While working on new material, she was approached by Bristol band **Massive Attack**, who wanted her to sing and compose on two of their tracks. This collaboration also proved fruitful, the result being two dreamy, mesmerising singles "*Sly*" and "*Three*", featured on Massive Attack's 1994 **Protection** Album. These works were very well received and Nicolette later toured with Massive Attack's Soundsystem, whilst working on new material for herself. In 1995 she signed to Gilles Peterson's **Talkin' Loud** label, releasing that same year the first single from her new album, "*No Government*". Due to the song's title, sections of the UK press decided she was about anarchy, although Nicolette re-iterated repeatedly that the song was simply about freedom, (a recurring theme in her work). Nevertheless, the single garnered critical and commercial success, enabling Nicolette to go on to release "We Never Know" (second single), and the album "*Let No-one Live Rent Free In Your Head*", which was released in 1996. Variouslly described as "a masterpiece" and "the best new album of 2002" (!) Nicolette had again made her mark on the music landscape.

1997 was an important year for Nicolette: she left Talkin' Loud; she toured extensively, her 1992 album "**Now Is Early**" was re-issued by the German label **K7**, and she was asked to do a DJ mix album by K7 for their **DJ Kicks** series. Nicolette put the album



together with help from longtime collaborators **Plaid**, and it proved to be groundbreaking in that genre, variously described as “seminal” and “a strange, moving journey”. Nicolette also wrote and recorded a dreamy bonus track for the album, “*All Day*”. On the strength of the compilation, Nicolette began to be offered DJ gigs all over the world. Thus began her DJ career, which Nicolette sees as simply an extension of her composing and recording work.

In 1998, Nicolette set up her own label, *Early Records*. Nicolette spent the following four years recording and mixing her current album, “*Life Loves Us*”, a lush, fun-filled, stirring, affirming album that speaks directly to the heart. Currently on circulation are dance mixes of “*Sunshine*” and “*Lagging Behind*”, both singles from the album, which Nicolette describes as “witches brew pop songs”, partly because of the myriad of influences thrown into the songs, and partly because of the magical and mystical feel therein. “*Life Loves Us*” is out on February 28<sup>th</sup> on *Early Records* and on March 8<sup>th</sup> on *mono''cromatica*.

### Critical Acclaim

“The voice of an angel. A joyous spirit” - Mixmag

“A rare enigma, prepare to be dazzled” - Muzik

“The most exciting wonderful debut” - Sunday Telegraph

“A jolting leap forward into the future. Is it the album of the year? You bet.” - NME

“A strange and singular talent...excellent.” - Guardian

“Always on the move” - Q

“Unique, Seductive, Experimental” - NME Single of the Week ‘No Government’

“A staggeringly wide soundscape” - GQ

“A genuinely individual talent” - Arena

“Anyone out to invest their music collection with more intelligent and innovative self-expression than it has seen in ages should buy her LP” - Big Wig

“A Masterpiece” - ‘Let No-one Live Rent Free in Your Head’ - TimeOut

- END

Early Records website: [www.earlyintime.com](http://www.earlyintime.com)

mono''cromatica records website: [www.monocromatica.com](http://www.monocromatica.com)