

00:00:00	Music	Music	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under The Stairs
00:00:05	Oliver Wang	Host	Hello, I'm Oliver Wang.
00:00:06	Morgan Rhodes	Host	And I'm Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> . Every episode we invite a guest to join us to talk about a heat rock. You know, fire, combustibles, an album that bumps eternally. And today we will be deep diving together into Nina Simone's 1969 album, <i>To Love Somebody</i> .
00:00:22	Music	Music	"I Can't See Nobody" off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone fades in. A jazz-pop song with steady drums and flourishing strings. <i>I used to smile and say "hello"</i> <i>Guess I was just a happy girl</i> <i>Then you happened</i> <i>This feeling that possesses me</i> <i>[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]</i>
00:00:42	Morgan	Host	Nina Simone's <i>To Love Somebody</i> turned fifty this year. It was released on the first day of 1969, the same day the Ohio State beat the University of Southern California at the Rose Bowl for the National College Football Championship. It was her 21st studio album. There were dozens more still to come. You know them. <i>Black Gold, Baltimore, Fodder on My Wings</i> , stacks of albums. By the time we met up with Nina again for these nine songs, she had already talked about on "Mississippi Goddamn", "Backlash Blues," and "Strange Fruit," and been about it with her activism, lived, spoken, suffered for. <i>To Love Somebody</i> is an oral representation of what breathing on a track means. She breathed on Pete Seeger's version of "Ecclesiastes 3 1-8". She breathed on Bob Dylan's "I Shall Be Released". This is Bob Dylan.
00:01:36	Music	Music	"I Shall Be Released" by Bob Dylan. A gentle, bluesy folk song with a simple, lowkey backing of guitar and soft drums. Bob Dylan sings clearly with one other deep voice singing softly behind him. <i>I see my light come shining</i> <i>From the west down to the east</i> <i>[Music crossfades into Nina Simone's cover, which picks up at the same spot]</i>
00:01:47	Morgan	Host	This is Nina Simone.
00:01:50	Music	Music	"I Shall Be Released" off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. The same tune as Bob Dylan's version and still retaining the bluesy aspect, but with more pronounced jazz and gospel influences. Nina Simone sings clearly with several high voices singing behind her.

*Any day now, any day now
I shall be released*

[Music fades out as Morgan speaks]

00:02:04	Morgan	Host	<p>She linked up with Wheldon Irvine on The Beatles, to make “Revolution”s part one and two, making it a whole mood, a moment, a memory. If there’s a theme here, it is change, seasons, the times, the world, and Nina Simone used nine songs to be the artist she asked others to be, to assume the duty of reflecting the times that she lived in.</p> <p>A high priestess of soul, as usual, stirred up the gifts, christened the lyrics, and ultimately made what was marketed as a jazz album gospel. The gospel according to Nina Simone. So I implore you to discover or rediscover this one, and maybe you’ll be like me. I swooned, lingered on her every word, felt like I’d known her forever. The time went by too fast. She moved me. That’s what it’s like to love somebody.</p>
00:02:54	Music	Music	<p>“I Can’t See Nobody” plays again.</p> <p><i>I used to think of many things I used to watch the falling rain And listen to the sweet birds sing</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades down and plays quietly as Oliver speaks, then fades out completely]</i></p>
00:03:11	Oliver	Host	<p><i>To Love Somebody</i> was the album pick of our guest today, Luz Mendoza, of Portland’s Y La Bamba. I was really taken by the group’s own self-description of themselves as existing in “the dimension of the Mexican-American imagination, somewhere cynical and optimistic at the same time.” Frankly, I feel like a lot of us are dwelling in that particular interstitial zone right now.</p> <p>I suppose Y La Bamba is navigating that existential space by keeping busy, as they released their fifth full-length album, <i>Mujeres</i>, earlier this year. Described by NPR as sun-dappled and psychedelic—and shout-out to writers who use the term sun-dappled, because that’s just a good term—and they just released a brand new, seven-track EP entitled <i>Entre Los Dos</i>, partially inspired by Mendoza’s time spent in Guadalajara.</p>
00:03:57	Music	Music	<p>“Octavio” off the album <i>Entre Los Dos</i> by Y La Bamba. Gentle folk backed primarily by guitar with soft piano.</p> <p><i>Trust me I've been holding onto the same thing How can I let it go? Can't deny that I'm somewhat of a stranger</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]</i></p>
00:04:16	Oliver	Host	<p>At this rate, they might have to release a maxi-single to put out by the end of the year, who knows. Luz Mendoza, welcome to <i>Heat Rocks</i>.</p>

00:04:22 Luz Mendoza Guest Thanks for having me.

00:04:25 Oliver Host By sheer coincidence, you are the second person in this summer and fall to bring us a Nina Simone album, and specifically a Nina Simone album from her late 60s and early 70s RCA era, which I think I might have said during the Frosty McNeill episode about *It Is Finished*. I think to a lot of the more classic jazz purists, this was not necessarily their favorite era of Nina Simone, but clearly this album and this moment appealed to you. Why?

[Oliver and Morgan respond affirmatively and emphatically several times as Luz speaks.]

00:04:51 Luz Guest Because it didn't appeal to them.

[Oliver laughs.]

You know, there's something very powerful in this album, and I was talking to you outside of this room, and I was mentioning that a lot of the music I grew up listening to is Mexican music. A lot of traditional music from huapangos, boleros, mariachi, and gruperos, just all of that.

As I was developing friendships and intimate, creative collaborations along my path, I met some really beautiful people. This specific person who introduced me to this album, his name is Nick Dolce, and at that time in my life I was already 29, 30 years old, and I just didn't have access to a lot of Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, all these artists that wrote these songs that she covered. Then I started to realize, oh these are covers, I had no idea.

It's so powerful. People just want to walk by the most powerful thing and shame it. That's why I laughed. These jazz purists, they're like, "Oh, it just wasn't—" like, mm, you know?

[Oliver laughs quietly.]

It just really says a lot right there, to me. When I heard that album—and I have goosebumps, even just—I felt like I was resting with her. I felt like I could rest with her. I could rest and hang on every single vibrato note and it wasn't just the things I was hearing sonically; there was something in her voice, and I don't even—I hate even saying, *[mocking voice]* "there's something."

[Normal voice] It is clear that that woman embodied a suffering that a lot of people were not ready to listen to, and of course jazz purists are going to walk right by it. It kills me. And Nina Simone, she's the one who sold those songs to me. You know what I mean? Like, they're like, "Oh, Leonard Cohen wrote the first—" you know? I'm just like, even though those people wrote them and I know that they're good versions of the songs, but—

["The Times They Are A-Changin'" starts fading in.]

—it was written for her to sing them to me.

00:07:00	Music	Music	<p>“The Times They Are A-Changin’” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. Nina Simone sings clearly and powerfully over a simple but grand piano backing.</p> <p><i>If your time to you Is worth saving Then you better start swimming Or you'll sink like a stone For the times they are a-changin', changin'</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:07:20	Morgan	Host	<p>I’m so interested in, I think, something you were either going to raise or have already raised, is one thing that I think would help contextualize is, who chose the songs? Because I think that would tell me more about... more about Nina and what she was going through in each release.</p> <p>When we talked about the live album with Frosty McNeill, it was like some of these were recorded at different times, different years, so I was like, “Well, who chose those?” And I think—</p>
00:07:46	Luz	Guest	For her to sing?
00:07:48	Morgan	Host	For her to put on that album.
00:07:49	Oliver	Host	Right, was it her choice, was it someone at the label bringing her those? I mean, what’s notable about this album in particular is there’s three Bob Dylan tracks, which in 1969 makes sense to me, because it’s Dylan in the late 60s, right; but there’s three Bee Gees song at a time at which the Bee Gees are not yet the Bee Gees of the late 70s, where they are mega-stars.
00:08:08	Morgan	Host	Disco Bee Gees, yeah.
00:08:10	Oliver h	Host	Right, this is pretty early-era Bee Gees, so how did they end up picking three Bee Gees songs? In addition to Leonard Cohen? In addition to what’s clearly a Beatles answer cover/riff, though the writing credit goes to Nina Simone and Wheldon Irvine, her music director. But this album in particular I just think is fascinating in terms of who picked what, you know?
00:08:31	Morgan	Host	That’s what I want to know, because I think it would tell me—it would make me understand where Nina was. Because if she chose to make an album of covers, but mostly covers that were about revolution, that tells me something about where her mind was at the time.
00:08:45	Oliver	Host	And covers written primarily by white men. Almost exclusively, right?
00:08:49	Morgan	Host	Sure. For sure.
00:08:52	Luz	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I know, and I’m like—and then a part of me is like, “Did they just choose those songs for her, just so they can shine and use her voice?” Because obviously they knew that it was the most powerful thing, that outruled all of them, just in—

00:09:04 Morgan Host Sure, and then she freaked it.

[Oliver laughs through Morgan's next sentences.]

Like, you know what I'm saying? Then she freaked it. They were like, "Yeah, do our songs," and she was like, "Really? Okay. That's just what I'm gonna do." And then she made this, and it might have been slept on by other people, but—

00:09:17 Luz Guest Man, she wrote those songs. To me, I'm just like, damn, nah.

[Morgan laughs.]

00:09:24 Oliver Host Just throwing an example out there. I've heard many different versions of "Turn, Turn, Turn", a song adapted by Pete Seeger and given some credit, even though I think it's—I don't think Seeger actually wrote the original. I could be wrong about that. But any case, we associate this with being very much a 1960s folk era song.

00:09:41 Music Music "Turn, Turn, Turn (To Everything There Is a Season)" by The Byrds. Upbeat folk rock with rocking drums sung by multiple mid-deep voices.

*A time of love, a time of hate
A time of war, a time of peace
A time you may embrace
A time to refrain from embracing*

[Music fades into Nina Simone's version]

00:10:00 Oliver Host But then here's Nina's version.

00:10:02 Music Music "Turn, Turn, Turn (To Everything There Is a Season)" off the album *To Love Somebody* by Nina Simone. A slower, more bluesy version with gospel influences and a piano backing. Nina Simone sings the main lyrics while several high voices sing the backing lines.

*NINA:
To everything*

*BACK-UP VOCALISTS:
(Turn, turn, turn, turn)*

*NINA:
There is a season*

*BACK-UP VOCALISTS:
(Turn, turn, turn, turn)*

*NINA:
And a time to every purpose—*

*ALL:
—under heaven*

[Music fades out]

00:10:20 Oliver Host This is not the Byrds.

00:10:21 Morgan Host It's not the Byrds.

00:10:22 Oliver Host No shit on the Byrds. The Byrds did a great version of this, too; but to your point, Morgan, I just want to know: who chose this? Was this her choice? Certainly, regardless of who brought it to her, her decisions in terms of how to sing it, those are her choices.

[Luz and Oliver agree emphatically as Morgan speak.]

00:10:37 Morgan Host Yeah, but to your point, it wouldn't be beyond a label to say, "This is what we're gonna have you do on the next album." It wouldn't be beyond them—

00:10:45 Luz Guest Especially seeing the history of what went on.

00:10:49 Morgan Host Yeah. But I just need to know, who made the choice, and what the Byrds didn't have is they didn't have Doris Willingham and Virdia Crawford. They made it a little bit more, she made it a little bit more soulful, and of course, this is straight out of Ecclesiastes and we know Nina Simone's religious, her being the daughter of a minister, so she brought a whole bunch of elements that Pete Seeger didn't have in his backpack.

00:11:10 Oliver Host I also want to say, just listening to this clip again now, I also hear a bit of, I feel like, Afro-Caribbean influence, and this might have been just when she started visiting Barbados—we talked about this in the Frosty episode—by the mid-70s she had spent a lot of time in Barbados; but I want to say around '69 is when she would have started going down there, and I feel like there's a little bit of that in the arrangement as well.

I'm wondering for you—especially as a singer, but also as a songwriter—listening to this, whether it was the first time or revisiting it now all these years later, what do you take from Nina Simone that might have some influence on your own craft?

00:11:46 Luz Guest Vulnerability. Um, honesty. Transparency. No fucking around—I mean, no messing around.

00:11:53 Oliver Host You can swear, it's alright.

00:11:54 Luz Guest Just to the point, really talking about real issues. When I'm faced, or when I'm in the presence of such a strong energy, if I'm listening to music or reading about her or just thinking of her, I really feel familiar. It's a familiarity. It encourages me on my path, and it's just this really raw honesty, that is like, I don't wanna—it's like, beyond the word "appreciating". I feel like that is what we fight for. To fight for, like, people who really need to be heard—

["Revolution (Pt. 2)" begins fading in.]

—people who need to be taken seriously, people to like, wake up.

00:12:32 Music Music "Revolution (Pt. 2)" off the album *To Love Somebody* by Nina Simone. Up tempo jazz with several high and low voices singing the first instance of each line and Nina Simone echoing them.

*What to do
(What to do, now)
I'm telling you
(I'm telling you)*

*Soon you'll know
(Soon you'll know)
It will be through
(Will be through)*

*One, two, three
(One, two, three!)
What do you see?
(What do you see, now?)*

*Four, five six
(Four, five, six)*

[Music fades out as Oliver speaks]

00:12:56 Oliver Host *[Luz and Morgan agree emphatically several times as Oliver speaks.]*

I think you make a really great point, too, about one of the qualities of just listening to Nina is the rawness. I think, often times, when we talk about the rawness of a singer, we're talking about the lack of training in the voice. That is not Nina Simone. I mean, in terms of her technical skills there's just no question in terms of her craftsmanship.

When we talk about the rawness of Nina, it is about that vulnerability, it is about wearing those emotions on the sleeve, to use the phrase that you mentioned earlier, and in a lot of ways it doesn't really—

I'm not going to say that her song choice doesn't matter, because it does, words matter. But what she brings to practically anything she sings, whether it's a Leonard Cohen song; whether it's "I Want a Little Sugar In My Bowl", which is basically about sex; whether it's "I Love You Porgy"—

00:13:38 Morgan Host "Strange Fruit."

00:13:39 Oliver Host Right, it is about that emotional quality. That kind of rawness is something that I think really distinguishes her from a lot of other singers that she's often times compared to, because they have interesting voices, but that's more of a technical aesthetic quality as opposed to, I think, the emotional quality of Nina.

00:13:57 Morgan Host Sure. There's a lack of pretense, and if it doesn't show up for you on the albums, you can surely see it in some of the live stuff. And in prep for the chat, I was looking at a lot of her live videos, especially "To Love Somebody", the title track, and I was like, she's—there it is. She's baring her whole thing. That's your whole Nina. That's everything. There's no holds barred. It's the interaction with the

audience, it's how she presents, it's how she shows up.

There's a whole bunch of stuff mixed up, and I think would have been great about that documentary—and I liked the documentary—was if they would have, if they were going to talk about some of the issues in context with the specific albums. I don't think they did that, because maybe that would have just been an effort of a scholar, or an ethnomusicologist, and I don't think this was made by those. And I think it would have been nice to have seen, here's where she was, if we just did— but you got thirty-nine albums, how long is your documentary going to be if you take—?

00:14:56	Luz	Guest	Well, she deserves it! People are making documentaries— people that don't even need to be making documentaries— <i>[laughs]</i> .
00:14:59	Morgan	Host	Sure, but if you have as many albums as she does—or for that matter, as many albums as Prince does—you're going to be different people at different times. But, to the point that I think both of you are making, the vulnerability and the rawness is something that is not hidden. There's no pretense. Every song she is... she is absolutely present with you, and makes you be present with her.
00:15:21	Luz	Guest	I just love that so much, 'cause when we're talking about it, I feel like it's here right now.
00:15:27	Oliver	Host	I want to bring this back also to the time and place in which she's making this. So this is 1969, obviously an incredibly tumultuous time in American—really, world history, right? And she has a two-parter on here, which is “Revolution”, and, as I mentioned briefly earlier, the writing credit on here goes to herself and Wheldon Irvine, but it's very clear that she is riffing on the Beatles version of “Revolution”, so let's hear what Nina does with this song.
00:15:53	Music	Music	“Revolution (Part 1)” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. Up-tempo jazz with strong drums and twangy guitar. Nina Simone sings the main lines, with a backing chorus of several high voices.

NINA:

Yeah, your Constitution

Well, my friend, it's gonna have to bend!

[Drumbeat, then all instruments stop suddenly]

I'm here to tell you about—

[Drumbeat]

—destruction

[Drumbeat, then all instruments return on “have to”]

Of all the evil that will have to end!

BACK-UP VOCALISTS:

It will, oh yes, it will!

Don't you know, it's gonna be—

NINA:
—*alright!*

BACK-UP VOCALISTS:
It will end!

NINA:
Alright!

[Music fades out]

00:16:21	Morgan	Host	Oo-ee. And you were going to ask me that later, but that's my favorite moment on the album.
00:16:26	Oliver	Host	What, right there?
00:16:27	Morgan	Host	Right there. Soon as the background vocals come in, and soon as it becomes something different, that is my <u>favorite</u> moment on the album.
00:16:35	Oliver	Host	So now I'm curious, what did both of you think about this take on the Beatles' "Revolution"?
00:16:40	Morgan	Host	Alright. Confession's good for the soul, as I always say. I think "Revolution" was sampled by—was placed in an Apple commercial. It was a big deal, because the Beatles don't—
00:16:54	Oliver	Host	Nike. You're thinking the Nike tennis commercial from like—
00:16:57	Luz	Guest	Did this just happen?
00:16:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Oliver: No, this was back in like, the 90s, I think. Morgan: No, no. Yup.
00:17:01	Morgan	Host	And it was such a big deal, because they don't—
00:17:03	Oliver	Host	The Beatles didn't place.
00:17:05	Morgan	Host	And it was super expensive, and then it opened up dialogue about—not it being about that it was so expensive, but about how precious the Beatles are, and you just don't—you just don't... you know, you just don't do that. And so then it wasn't even about the song "Revolution", it was just about any Beatles song, so that's why this came up. So, in prepping for the chat, I thought... I don't know how difficult—I'm not a Beatles expert—but I prefer my "Revolution" coming from Nina— <i>[Oliver laughs as Luz agrees emphatically.]</i> — than coming from the Beatles. I know some of the Beatles listeners are gonna shoot me online, but... it just has more—
00:17:42	Luz	Guest	Nah, they should know better. <i>[Laughs.]</i>

00:17:45 Morgan Host Yeah, it has more authenticity coming from her and what she did for it; and for the time, again, it makes sense for 1969 from Nina. I'm not really wedded to the Beatles, so it feels like to me like this is Nina's thing.

[Morgan agrees emphatically as Oliver speaks.]

00:17:58 Oliver Host That might have been a Superbowl ad, too, which I think might have explained why they were willing to open the coffers to pay for it. We're going off on a whole side tangent, but that was, like—from an American advertising history—

00:18:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Oliver:** I'm not even a music supervisor, I remember that being such a big deal.

Morgan: HUUUUUGE. And millions of dollars.

Oliver: Right.

00:18:14 Oliver Host But to bring this back for a second, and—look, the Beatles are great, I'm not gonna besmirch the Beatles. "Revolutions" for me was never, ever, one of my favorite Beatles songs; and I think, to your point, Morgan, listening to the Beatles sing about revolution is never going to have anywhere near the same kind of weight as listening to the person who sang "Mississippi Goddamn" talking about revolution? The person who made "Four Women"? That's a different story.

00:18:40 Morgan Host Absolutely. Absolutely. And there's many levels of revolution that Nina Simone was taken under.

[Morgan agrees emphatically as Luz speaks.]

00:18:45 Luz Guest *[Very emphatically]* Yeah, that they could never—that they could never carry that, they couldn't.

And that's why—I mean, again, I didn't listen—I didn't grow up listening to the Beatles; but yeah, like, to me... it's, it's... that's why I was like, "What?"

Like, it's—to me, I'm like, I'm—it's not the word "convincing"; but like, I feel very, like, held and taken back by the story of how emotionally she sang. She sang those things; and like, to me, I'm like, "Yeah, duh." I'm like, *[unimpressed]* white dudes like revolution? Okay, awesome.

00:19:17 Morgan Host British white dudes!

00:19:18 Luz Guest Yeah, like, cool. But it's not— to me, it's like... ugh, it's so obvious.

00:19:24 Morgan Host And then, in part two, at the end of the song, whatever this becomes... becomes something different.

00:19:32 Music Music "Revolution (Part 2)" resumes. An array of instruments—drums, piano, more—are playing quickly, almost frantically, working further and further up in energy before the clip fades out.

00:19:52 Morgan Host Not the Beatles. *[Luz laughs.]*

00:19:55 Oliver Host Well, I was actually going to say kind of, though. Because the Beatles had their whole kind of psychedelic phase, but—

00:20:00 Morgan Host They did, but that feels like something else was going on in there, and I would love to see that part live.

00:20:07 Luz Guest And I'm there with you.

00:20:08 Morgan Host Yeah. Something else went on, like the song might've been over and then they noticed Nina was still playing. They were like, "Okay, well listen, we're gonna just go with her, you know what I mean? Get all this out." But it just feels like something else was going on.

00:20:21 Luz Guest I wasn't there, either, you know, during that time; but I do understand the power of more than one people coming together and really creating change, and sound had a lot to do with it, and what was written. And I know that a lot of like, the... what was going on with music, rock 'n roll and all that, obviously, it's there. But also what was going on that was, like, way more present than all of that was just, like, a Black woman, like, really trying to, like, you know, be set free, and like—and whatever it is you want to call it that was going on at the time.

"Oh, yeah, it's Beatles." You know, but it's not. It's like, it's that spirit. It's ancestral, to me, that's what I hear, it's ancestral knowledge that's being—the way that she doesn't stop is different than when John Lennon or Paul, they're vibing together. You can argue that, or whatever, but to me it's so clear that—

00:21:19 Morgan Host They're jamming, she's purging. It's different, and the politics around Black women being angry, and about them being able to allow their emotions to flow, sometimes I wonder, how much did that effect Nina being able to emote her freedom, especially when things started to get a little bit loose for her later. Another whole conversation. We might have to have a side—

00:21:44 Luz Guest I'll come back.

00:21:45 Morgan Host Yeah, come back, we'll dig a little deeper into it. But that's what I'm wondering, who picked those songs?

00:21:52 Luz Guest I can't believe I didn't think about that. I feel like, I'm like, "Yeah, awesome! Okay, they're not written by her." But I didn't think about who chose, especially because of how her career was right then.

00:22:04 Oliver Host Let's go do our break in a moment, but before we do that, I'd like to sneak in one more song in this half. It's the way the album opens. You know, I... whenever I listen to album—and we'll talk about this in the second half—my favorite song is the title track; but the way the album opens is with a Leonard Cohen song, which is "Suzanne".

["Suzanne" by Leonard Cohen begins playing.]

And really listen to the layers and the textures of what's going within this particular arrangement of it.

00:22:28 Music Music "Suzanne" off the album *To Love Somebody* by Nina Simone.

Upbeat, mid-tempo folk with acoustic guitar and electric piano.

*Suzanne takes you down to her place by the river
You can hear the boats go by
You can spend the night forever
And you know that she's half crazy
And that's why you wanna be there*

[Music fades out]

00:22:53 Oliver Host This is such a sleeper jam. She's more restrained, but there's so much intricate texture to it. There's the acoustic guitar, which gives you that kind of singer-songwriter acoustic folksy part of it, but also Wheldon's on the electric piano in there, which is a whole different tamper.

This song kind of blows my mind, and I often times have rushed past it because I'm getting to the songs I really, really like, but "Suzanne" is such an interesting flex.

00:23:21 Morgan Host So pretty. Yeah.

00:23:22 Luz Guest It's so good. Whenever I hear that song, I know I'm listening to the album, again.

[Morgan laughs.]

You know what I mean? It's so good.

00:23:31 Oliver Host Especially it's an A1 selection, right? The decision to open with this and what statement that might make, or how it sets up our anticipation for what's to come. I just think it's a really fascinating choice.

00:23:41 Music Music *["Suzanne" fades back in]*

*And you want to travel with her
And you want to travel blind
And you know that she will trust you
For you've touched her perfect body with your mind!*

[Music fades out again]

00:24:05 Luz Guest I wish there was more words to even describe. My body, this whole interview, is like, in goosebumps, and teary-eyed. Just like... it's just, those words were, right, written by someone else, but the way her tamber and the way she curves her sound and her vocal chords and holds those sentences, those phrases. It's like, come on.

00:24:30 Morgan Host And the voice she chooses, because sometimes Nina Simone goes real in here. This is light, and I love the lightness of it. I love the romance of it. I love how it flows. And compared to the rest of this album, this is a hell of a start. Um, I haven't heard Cohen's original, so that might be— is it all that? Is it on point?

00:24:50 Oliver Host I have no idea. Actually, Christian, can you find it for us real quick?

00:24:53 Music Music "Suzanne" by Leonard Cohen. The same tune as Nina Simone's

cover, but much slower and softer, with only an acoustic guitar backing.

*Now Suzanne takes your hand
And she leads you to the river
She is wearing rags and feathers
From Salvation Army counters
And the sun pours down like honey*

[Music fades out]

00:25:15 Luz Guest

[All three laugh.]

That was a real response.

00:25:20 Oliver Host

So this is the Leonard Cohen original and—

00:25:22 Morgan Host

[Barely restraining laughter] Gentrify. *[Laughs.]*

[Morgan and Luz agree emphatically as Oliver speaks.]

00:25:23 Oliver Host

As it was playing, all of us were cracking up; and again, this is absolutely, no disrespect to Leonard Cohen, it's not. But... you compare the two versions side by side, and it might as well be some night and day stuff, because, yeah. Yeah.

00:25:39 Morgan Host

It's like—this is like when you find out Meryl Streep is playing with you in the same film, and your friends are just like, "Nah, you ain't gonna."

[Luz and Oliver crack up.]

"You're not gonna get nominated. You're not gonna. Meryl's— Meryl's in that? Meryl's in the role with you?" You'd be like, "Mm. You're not getting nominated."

00:25:55 Luz Guest

That's so funny.

00:25:56 Morgan Host

We will be back with more of our conversation with Luz Mendoza on Nina Simone's *To Love Somebody* after a brief word from a couple of great MaxFun podcasts. Don't go anywhere.

00:26:09 Promo Promo

[Mellow ukulele music plays in background.]

Announcer: Welcome!

Speaker 1: Thank you.

Speaker 2: Thanks!

Speaker 3: No problem.

Speaker 4: Thank you.

Announcer: These are real podcast listeners, not actors. What do you look for in a podcast?

Speaker 1: Reliability is big for me.

Speaker 2: Power.

Speaker 3: I'd say comfort?

Announcer: What do you think of this?

[Loud metallic crash and clanging.]

All: Ooh.

Speaker 2: That's *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*

Speaker 1: *Jordan, Jesse, Go!?*

Speaker 2: They came out of the floor?

[Loud thump.]

Speaker 2: And...down from the ceiling?

Speaker 3: That... can't be safe.

Speaker 2: I'm upset. Can we go now?

Announcer: Soon.

[Music that sounds like it would have backed a 1990s commercial starts.]

Announcer: *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*: a real podcast.

[Music fades out.]

00:26:45 Promo

Promo

[Music.]

Janet Varney: Hi! I'm Janet Varney, and like many of you—brand new sentient robots excluded—I used to be a teenager. In fact, just about all of my friends were, too!

Including folks like comedian Danielle Radford.

[Into interview.]

Danielle Radford: And of course all of us, you—you take on that theatre accent, and our teacher would say, "No, that isn't how people talk!"

Janet: Right?!

Danielle: "Don't do the super theatre kid accent; it's the worst!"

But so when I was doing theatre in high school, of course I immediately was talking about *[pseudo-British accent]* being in the theatre.

Janet: *[Laughing]* Uh-huh?

[Both laugh.]

[Out of interview.]

Janet: So join me every week on the *JV Club* podcast, where I speak with my favorite women artists, innovators, and humans as we reminisce about the past and how it led us to becoming who we are.

Find it every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

00:27:30	Oliver	Host	We are back here on <i>Heat Rocks</i> talking about Nina Simone's 1969 album <i>To Love Somebody</i> with our special guest from Y La Bamba, founder and lead singer, Luz Mendoza.
00:27:42	Morgan	Host	We obviously are talking about this album that's full of covers. She's covered Dylan a couple times on here. I especially like her version of "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues." Um, this is a song about a singer in Juarez, he is awash in despair, sickness, I guess debauchery, he ends up in Iowa. Bob Dylan's, to say the least, is a little different.
00:28:08	Music	Music	"Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues" by Bob Dylan. Up-tempo folk rock with piano and drums. <i>Now, if you see Saint Annie Please tell her, "Thanks a lot!" I cannot move My fingers are all in a knot</i> <i>[Music fades, then plays quietly as Morgan speaks before fading into Nina Simone's cover]</i>
00:28:28	Morgan	Host	Nina personalizes this. Makes it a little bit more sad, gives it a little bit more spirit. It's different.

00:28:37	Music	Music	<p>“Just Like Tom Thumb’s Blues” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. Much slower, more traditional folk than folk rock, with more lowkey instrumentals and soulful vocals.</p> <p><i>And my best friend my doctor Won't even say what it is I've got</i></p> <p><i>Sweet Melinda The peasants call her the goddess of gloom</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out entirely]</i></p>
00:29:02	Morgan	Host	<p>You said that’s your favorite song on here. What do you like about it?</p>
00:29:07	Luz	Guest	<p>Um, well, also like the softness behind it all, and also, it’s like a simple thing, but at the end of the song, she goes, “That’s it, folks! That’s it!” And I’m like, “What?” It’s so— it’s like, it keeps me so actively... like, just with her, like I’m present. And, um, as—as we were listening to the songs, I was like, is this really— we can talk about people covering certain songs and artists, but like, I don’t think I can think right now.</p> <p>I think Nina Simone is like... <u>the</u> artist in my mind and my heart that, like, can cover a song and totally... she’s <u>owned</u> it. The way that she says it, she says the words in every single song, we can go on and on and talk about that forever. But it’s—yeah! It’s like, the way I’m hanging on every single word.</p> <p>And people say that about Bob Dylan, too, because he’s so prolific, like, he’s so visual. You know, he was like, talking about all these things that, even when I listen to Bob Dylan it’s like, you know, I’m there. I’m like, oh, okay, I’m like really... But Nina definitely, the way that she holds it, is, like, another body of intelligence.</p>
00:30:20	Morgan	Host	<p>Because this song was specifically about that singer’s journey and that city; and when Nina sings it, it could be about anyone’s journey and any city. It’s about the emotions behind it, to me. But with Bob Dylan’s, that’s specifically on this dude, and his journey to self-awareness; and with Nina, she brings something to it, that it doesn’t have to be Mexico City to Iowa, it could be any city, or every city. It’s just the emotions behind it. And that’s also one of my favorites on here.</p>
00:30:49	Music	Music	<p><i>[“Just Like Tom Thumb’s Blues” fades in again.]</i></p> <p><i>Well, I started out on burgundy But soon hit the harder stuff Everybody said they'd stand behind me When the game got rough</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:31:09	Oliver	Host	<p>My fire track off of this album—and I mentioned this in the first half—is the title track song, which is a song that I’ve come back to off this album many, many times over the years, partly because it’s a song just to play out as a DJ. But it’s also one of those things</p>

where, I think if her cover of “Tom’s Thumb” is being very gentle with Dylan’s original, this is more in the camp of just straight up bodying.

[Luz and Morgan laugh.]

Whatever the original sounded like, she’s just going to erase whatever memory we have of that. So we have to begin with the Bee Gees original, and this is, again, Bee Gees, great songwriters, this is a great tune from them.

00:31:41	Morgan	Host	Shout-out to them.
00:31:42	Oliver	Host	This is how the original sounded.
00:31:43	Music	Music	“To Love Somebody” by the Bee Gees. Soulful, up tempo pop with guitar, a steady drumbeat, woodwinds, and a horn.

*I know my frame of mind
You ain't got to be so blind!
And I'm blind
So, so, so blind*

I'm a man...

[Music fades down, then quietly fades into Nina Simone’s cover]

00:31:59	Oliver	Host	Which is really nice! And this is what Nina does with it.
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[Morgan reacts emphatically at a few moments while the song is playing.]

00:32:03	Music	Music	“To Love Somebody” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. More soulful, with more pronounced guitar, drums, and bassline. Nina Simone sings the main lyrics while several high voices sing the backing lines.
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*NINA:
Can't you see what I am?
I live and breathe for you!
What good does it do
If I ain't got you?*

*BACK-UP VOCALISTS:
If I ain't got you!*

*NINA:
If I ain't got you?*

*BACK-UP VOCALISTS:
I ain't got you!*

[The drums flourish, and the music picks up even further]

*NINA:
Say—*

ALL:
—you don't know
What it's like!

[Music fades out as Morgan, Luz, and Oliver speak]

00:32:23 Morgan Host Doris and Virdia.

00:32:25 Luz Guest That guitar.

[Luz and Morgan agree emphatically as Oliver speaks.]

00:32:26 Oliver Host The guitar does so much work. The basswork does—it's not, like, the most dramatic remake; but it does enough small things where it just feels different. The energies, the background singers make a huge difference here.

00:32:40 Morgan Host The soul. The soul of it.

00:32:42 Oliver Host The soul, right, and I would love to know what the Bee Gees thought when they heard her version. I would hope that they were really flattered by it. You should be flattered. If Nina touches your song, you should just be automatically flattered by it. But it is such, to me, a radical remake of it, and I just kind of love—

This is a larger observation, but I love this moment, especially in the late 60s, where soul music, its dominance, its infectiousness, was so undeniable, that it doesn't matter if you're coming from the world of jazz, the world of country, the world of pop or rock, you had to bow down and you had to allow soul to occupy it. In a way, you saw similar things happen with the dominance of disco in the mid-late-70s, you saw the same thing with hip-hop by the late 80s, early 90s. I think the main differences are, soul was able to creep its way into other genres and still sound incredible in ways that— we know there's a lot of bad disco out there, and a lot of bad hip-hop crossover.

Maybe this is just me with rose-tinted glasses here, I feel like the ways in which soul crossed over still created really compelling songs that no one's embarrassed by. I often times pick on James Brown's disco era, because it was not a great era for the godfather, but somehow—

00:34:03 Luz Guest I'm glad I missed all that.

[Morgan laughs.]

00:34:05 Oliver Host But somehow in this moment in the late 60s, the way in which soul could infuse other genres, other songs, with that particular whatever you want to call it, it just created such sublime examples, and I think this cover of "To Love Somebody" is just one amazing, exemplary example of that.

00:34:26 Morgan Host It's beautiful.

00:34:28 Oliver Host I just want to briefly go on a bonus beat level here, which is that I didn't realize until I was listening to, I guess, the Spotify extended version of this album, that Nina had recorded an Italian language

version of “To Love Somebody”, which I had never heard before, and now I absolutely need to find on 45. I guess it’s because she was in Italy in November of 1965 to do a concert at Teatro Sistina in Rome, and somehow the folks at RCA Italiana convinced her to record, again, an Italian version of the Bee Gees song called “To Love Somebody.”

00:35:03	Music	Music	<p>“Così Ti Amo” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. The same arrangement and same clip as before, but with lyrics sung in Italian.</p> <p><i>NINA:</i> <i>E splende con il sole</i> <i>Così ti amo</i></p> <p><i>BACK-UP VOCALISTS:</i> <i>Così ti amo</i></p> <p><i>NINA:</i> <i>Così ti amo</i></p> <p><i>BACK-UP VOCALISTS:</i> <i>Così ti amo</i></p> <p><i>[The drums flourish, and the music picks up even further]</i></p> <p><i>NINA</i> <i>Sai che—</i></p> <p><i>ALL:</i> <i>—io vivrò qui con te</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:35:18	Morgan	Host	She bodied that, too.
00:35:20	Oliver	Host	<p>I have no idea for Italians, any good. For all I know, it might be as good as Nat King Cole’s Spanish, which, not awesome.</p> <p><i>[Morgan laughs.]</i></p> <p>Nonetheless, the fact that she would even do it, I think that’s really cool.</p>
00:35:31	Luz	Guest	You know, I just heard that today. I just heard it, ‘cause I was like— I’ve been listening to the album and, like, going back, and I’m like, “Is this in Portuguese or is this in—” I didn’t know, and then I saw. I’m like, “This is great, and she still brings the same emotion.”
00:35:44	Morgan	Host	Bodied. Shout-out to Gino Paoli and Franco Boldrini, who wrote that originally and probably were like, “Well, damn. Showed up and killed it.” Further to that, another bonus beat is her cover of “Glory of Love”, which is also on that expanded version. The version of “Glory of Love” I’m mostly familiar with is the one on <i>Beaches</i> , because I love that movie and I love that soundtrack. Also, Otis Redding did his own version. But both of those versions are very sad and very heavy... and then Nina does it.

00:36:14	Music	Music	<p>“Glory of Love” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. Upbeat, soulful, optimistic pop.</p> <p><i>As long as there's the two of us We've got the world and all its charms! And when the world is through with us We've got each other's arms!</i></p> <p><i>You've got to win a little, lose a little...</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:36:31	Morgan	Host	<p>It's missing the heaviness of the Velvetones version, obviously missing the heaviness of Otis Redding's, and it's missing that sort of soundtrack-y version of Bette Midler's, and she makes it a happy song. And this is what I'm saying about Nina being an arrange on her decision-making. She decided that that was going to be different, and to actually celebrate the glory of love, and not the sad side. Shout-out to Nina, shout-out to “Glory of Love”.</p>
00:36:57	Oliver	Host	<p>We talked earlier about favorite moments, and Morgan, you had mentioned your favorite moment was—</p>
00:37:02	Morgan	Host	<p>“Revolution (Part 1)”, in the middle.</p>
00:37:04	Oliver	Host	<p>In the middle of “Revolution”.</p>
00:37:05	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<p><i>[Luz and Morgan both start imitating the crooning sound from the song]</i></p>
00:37:08	Luz	Guest	<p>Yeah, with all the backup singers, and yeah.</p>
00:37:11	Oliver	Host	<p>My favorite moment is just the beginning of her cover of the gospel classic, “I Shall Be Released”.</p>
00:37:18	Luz	Guest	<p>Ohh.</p>
00:37:19	Music	Music	<p>“I Shall Be Released” off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone. Gentle yet intense and soulful piano.</p> <p><i>[Music fades down and plays quietly as Oliver and Morgan speak before fading out entirely]</i></p>
00:37:37	Oliver	Host	<p>I just want to live within those eight bars.</p>
00:37:40	Morgan	Host	<p>Indeed.</p>
00:37:41	Oliver	Host	<p>Wherever that's playing, please take me there. Just leave me there. Leave me a drink.</p> <p><i>[Morgan laughs.]</i></p> <p>I don't even drink, but just leave one in front of me. I will sit with that. Yeah, I could just exist within those opening bars forever. Do you have a favorite moment off this album?</p>
00:37:53	Luz	Guest	<p>Well, in that song, the <i>[singing]</i> “I shall be released”.</p>

[Speaking] Like that whole fucking— excuse me.

00:38:01 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Oliver:** You can swear.

Morgan: Yeah, go ahead.

00:38:02 Luz Guest I'm like, "Yes! Yes!" I'm like, standing up.

00:38:05 Morgan Host It's everything.

00:38:06 Music Music *[Music increases in volume and plays clearly. Nina sings with a backing chorus of several voices]*

Any day now, any day now...

[Most of the instruments stop, with only a few piano notes and gentle cymbals allowing the vocals to stand nearly on their own]

I shall be... released!

[Music fades out]

00:38:31 Luz Guest Yeah, I mean, there's a lot of them on this album, because she was just, you know, herself the whole entire time. There's so many pockets of like these little, like the, "That's all, folks!" I don't know. There's just so many. Not even just with her, but just like the instrumentation in the background. That guitar, that's so good, or the congas. The congas on that song is just so good.

00:39:01 Oliver Host Is there a song off of here that, much like the same way that you were introduced to this album from a friend, so someone who had never heard Nina Simone before, and certainly never heard this album, what is the song that you would tell them to start with, as a way of understanding Nina? If one song could embody that off this album.

00:39:20 Luz Guest I would say "Suzanne". I feel like whenever I make a mixtape, because back at home, well, you know, I have had my turntables set up and I would like to make mixtapes and put on either a La Lupe track or Nina Simone. And La Lupe, oh my God, that could be another—

00:39:38 Oliver Host Yeah.

00:39:39 Luz Guest But it would be "Suzanne", because it's just a full-bodied, kind of like— I mean, I could pick so many, but that one, I feel like once you listen to this, you're going to want to be listening to a lot more.

00:39:54 Oliver Host As a singer and a songwriter yourself, is there a song off of this album that you would deign to cover?

00:39:59 Luz Guest "The Times Are A Changin'" is really good.

00:40:03 Oliver Host And is that something where if you were to do your version of it, would you be paying homage to Nina's version, or would you be paying homage to the Bob Dylan original, and how would you approach it?

00:40:13	Luz	Guest	Oh my God. That's a meta question.
00:40:15	Oliver	Host	I know, I'm putting you on the spot.
00:40:16	Luz	Guest	No, no, but it's true. I mean, if I was to pick a song, it's because Nina, like I said in the beginning, it's because she is the one who is inviting me to, like, where I feel an invitation for me to express myself in that way. It's not Bob Dylan. I did not even think about Bob Dylan once. I do love, not to contradict what I just said, but I do like that song that he did. His words and everything, and how she does it, that would be a very intentional and fun song to try to learn. I like talking and singing, I mean that element of it, but also what is being said, you know?
00:41:01	Oliver	Host	Well, when Y La Bamba does that maxi-single at the end of the year, there you go.
00:41:03	Luz	Guest	Alright, cool.
00:41:04	Oliver	Host	You can put it there. That's the B-side track right there.
00:41:06	Luz	Guest	I wanted to say something, too. It says a lot, now that I know she's doing, I mean, hearing you guys talk about the albums she put out, like a lot of covers, it just says a lot how much of a badass and how strong she is to just navigate through all these things that she was made to do. So it kind of answers that mystery about who decided to present this collection of songs to Nina, you know? Her ability to just go into Narnia and just, you know.
00:41:51	Morgan	Host	Sure. "You want me to do my way? Okay, cool."
00:41:55	Oliver	Host	It also makes me think, the ways in which you had someone like Aretha, by the time she is with Atlantic, which would be in this late-60s era, you know, you have some of the greatest songwriters in the world, Carol King for example, writing songs specifically for Aretha. Stevie Wonder, right? And Nina certainly had songs that were written specifically for her. "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black" was a song that— that was her song, she wasn't covering. That was her song, even though Aretha bodied that in her own cover.
			I do wonder, in some kind of alternative timeline, if there had been more people writing songs specifically because they wanted Nina to take them on—and maybe it doesn't really matter, because a lot of our discussion is it doesn't matter who wrote what for who, like Nina was going to do the Nina thing on it—but still, if someone like a Leonard Cohen or a Bob Dylan was writing songs knowing this is actually going to be sent to Nina to do, I would just love to hear some of that, as opposed to, "Do "Ooh Child" by the Five Stairsteps". Do whatever. It just would've been— I have loved to have that album in hand as well.
			We ask this of all of our guests: if you had to describe this album in three words, what three words would you choose?
00:43:04	Luz	Guest	Self-empowerment, growth, and honesty.
00:43:07	Oliver	Host	Holy cow. Just off the dome.

00:43:09	Morgan	Host	Record time.
00:43:10	Oliver	Host	Off the dome with that. Wow. Alright then.
00:43:13	Music	Music	<p>"Just Like Tom's Thumb Blues" off the album <i>To Love Somebody</i> by Nina Simone</p> <p><i>Who looked so fine at first But left looking just like a ghost</i></p> <p><i>[Spoken]</i> <i>Well, that's it, folks</i> <i>That's it</i></p> <p><i>[Music fades out]</i></p>
00:43:32	Oliver	Host	<p>If you like this week's album, Nina Simone's <i>To Love Somebody</i>, we have some recommendations for other things you might want to check out. I would recommend James Brown's 1970 big-band album, <i>Soul On Top</i>, arranged by Oliver Nelson, and recorded with Louie Bellson's orchestra. And it's—to me, it's almost a reverse of Nina Simone's album, which is that it's a soul-funk giant going back to his jazz roots, because that's where James Brown started back in the '50s; and I thought the arrangements that Oliver Nelson hooked up on here are great.</p> <p>You don't necessarily think of James Brown as being a big-band singer, and yet that's kind of what makes <i>Soul On Top</i> work; and when I especially listen to Nina Simone's <i>To Love Somebody</i>, I <u>always</u> think of what James Brown does with his version of the torch song, "September Song".</p>
00:44:18	Music	Music	<p>"September Song" by James Brown off the album <i>Soul On Top</i>. Soulful jazz.</p> <p><i>[Singing a capella]</i></p> <p><i>Oh, it's a...</i></p> <p><i>[Instruments kick in on "long"]</i></p> <p><i>... long time</i> <i>From May to December</i> <i>But the days grow short</i> <i>Can't you count 'em, now?</i></p> <p><i>When you reach September...</i></p>
00:44:40	Morgan	Host	<p>I would suggest, if you like this album, to go back not too far, but to last year to Meshell Ndegeocello's <i>Ventriloquism</i> album. Since we're talking about covers, that was a Grammy-nominated album of covers, and she does a flip on some of our modern soul hits, including one of my favorites, which is her cover of Al B. Sure!'s "Nite and Day." She also does Force MD's "Tender Love", and she does Janet Jackson's "Funny How Time Flies", she does Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam's "Wonder If I Take You Home". It is her bringing her specific brand of funk and soul and R&B and sexy onto these</p>

covers. One of my favorites.

- 00:45:17 Music Music "Nite and Day" off the album *Ventriloquism* by Meshell Ndegeocello. Somewhat poppy R&B with crooning vocals.
- I can tell you how I feel about you night and day
(How I feel about you)
I can tell you how I feel...*
- [Music fades out]*
- 00:45:33 Luz Guest Okay, I can think of an artist, but I've also been recently introduced to this artist, and I— you know when you find someone, you're just like, "Oh my God, what's this?" It's La Lupe, who we talked about, and she also did a lot of— there's that "Fever" cover song that she did. But, I mean, that's another part of why I love La Lupe, but like, her songs, her— there's these video performances where it's like black and white TV, and there's some recorded music, I don't think there's a real band playing.
- I don't know, maybe sometimes there is. Then she's just dancing, taking off her rings and throwing everything out. I wish I could remember the albums that I was picking some of the songs I was listening to—
- 00:46:20 Oliver Host But just check out La Lupe. She is one of the most interesting figures of the kind of 1960s and '70s Latin salsa movement.
- 00:46:29 Luz Guest Like Tito Puente and Celia Cruz and like, oh my God, she's just like, do you talk about like, emotings? Oh my God.
- 00:46:36 Music Music "Fever" off the album *Laberinto de Pasiones* by La Lupe. Latin jazz-funk with horns and snapping in the background.
- Tener fiebre no es de ahora
Hace mucho tiempo que empezó
You give me fever, ay!*
- [Giggles]*
- When you kiss me
Fever when you hold me tight
Fever! In the morning!
And fever all through the night*
- [Music fades out as Morgan speaks]*
- 00:46:56 Morgan Host That's going to do it for this episode of *Heat Rocks*. We thank you so, so much for coming through and for choosing this album and for turning me onto something that I wasn't familiar with in this woman's vast discography, so thank you so much for bringing this to us. Tell us what's going on with you now, and where can folks find you online?
- 00:47:15 Luz Guest Well, you— *[Laughs]*. I'm so bad at talking about where folks can find me in general. Right now, we're on tour, it takes us to Texas, and we go to Spain, and it's our first time in Europe, and we're

really seeing that EP that I wrote inspired by Guadalajara, just being there. I live there now. Still feels like make-believe, but I have definitely been there and moved my stuff there and still going, and my focus has just been to dig deeper into myself and yeah. It's been a very empowering year, and it's been super vulnerable to really talk about these things that are really important to me, and be an influence. I want to be part of the change. Whatever it is that I keep releasing, it's just always going to be a reflection of how I feel inside, and these are some really very difficult, uncomfortable, and strong times.

00:48:29 Morgan Host Indeed.

00:48:30 Oliver Host And the group's website, if I recall, is just YLaBamba.com?

00:45:34 Luz Guest Yeah. I wasn't sure. *[Morgan and Oliver laugh.]*

00:48:39 Oliver Host Well, you can find the group's history and discography there. Thank you so much for coming through today.

00:48:43 Luz Guest Thank you for having me. It was a pleasure.

00:48:45 Oliver Host You've been listening to *Heat Rocks* with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.

00:48:49 Morgan Host Our theme music is "Crown Ones" by Thes One of People Under The Stairs. Shoutout to Thes for the hookup.

00:48:55 Oliver Host *Heat Rocks* is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Duenas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.

00:49:02 Morgan Host Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.

00:49:07 Oliver Host We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the West Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, where you can turn, turn, turn, including even on a red light.

00:49:16 Morgan Host We'd also like to thank our social media family and fans, including the following:

We want to thank Hadi Kadri (@HadiKadri) for really supporting us on the Lee Fiends episode about Sam Cooke, we do so appreciate that.

We also want to thank Vikki Tobak (@vtobak) for always holding us down, always giving us a shout-out.

We want to thank Raph Doval-Santos (@heaven_spawn).

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We do so much appreciate the tweezees and the retweezies. Up next, a teaser for our next episode. We sit down with Garrett Kennedy to talk about the seminal Whitney Houston album, *My Love Is Your Love*.

00:50:50	Garrett Kennedy	Guest	The thing about <i>My Love Is Your Love</i> , which is why it's my favorite, is because 1998 was just such a pivotal year for a woman in contemporary R&B. You think of the fact that Brandy came out with <i>Never Say Never</i> . Monica had <i>The Boy is Mine</i> . Debra Cox came out with <i>One Wish</i> . Kelly Price, who was on this album, had <i>Soul of a Woman</i> . Tamia dropped <i>So Into You</i> . Erykah Badu, <i>Baduizm</i> . Also you think of, Lauryn Hill <i>Miseducation</i> and what that meant and how it tied together R&B and soul and hip-hop in a way that Whitney was also trying to do, and she did in such a beautiful way.
			I think this was the first time where I saw Whitney much different. I saw her as edgy, I saw her as cool, I saw her as really, really chic. I mean, just I can think of, the roll-off of this album. I remember getting one of the glossy magazines—it might have been <i>Ebony</i> —and just seeing her in these bad Dolce & Gabbana outfits, right? Just being like, this woman is far more regal than I had ever imagined.
00:51:50	Speaker 1	Promo	MaximumFun.org.
00:51:52	Speaker 2	Promo	Comedy and Culture.
00:51:53	Speaker 3	Promo	Artist owned—
00:51:54	Speaker 4	Promo	—Audience supported.