

Lauryn Hill

Lauryn Noelle Hill was born on May 26, 1972 in New Jersey where she grew up. Her mother was an English teacher, and her father was a computer and management consultant. Her family was always very musically inclined, constantly playing several instruments and music throughout the house.



Lauryn went to Columbia High School where she excelled in advanced placement classes and sports and founded the gospel choir. In high school, she met two Haitian immigrants, Pras Michel and Wyclef Jean, who asked her to join a hip-hop group, the Fugees, a take on the word "refugees." She became their lead singer-songwriter and learned to rap as well as sing. She modeled her rapping style and flow after Ice Cube, noting that she would often be doing her homework "in the bathroom stalls of hip-hop clubs" as she was still a student while her music career was taking off. Following the release of the Fugee's second studio album, "Killing Me Softly" became an instant hit, winning Lauryn the Grammy Award for Best R&B Performance of the Year.



Black History



After this success, Lauryn was enrolled at Columbia University where she remained for a year before deciding to leave to prioritize her recording career.

She became the first woman to be nominated in ten categories in one year and the first woman to win five awards in one night at the 1999 Grammys.

In 2015, her solo album, *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, was selected to be on the Library of Congress's National Recording Registry. The board called it "a work of honesty in which Hill explores her feelings...effortlessly [fusing] soul, rhythm and blues, rap, and reggae." Hill didn't release another album after this 1998 success, but the impact of her career is indisputable. Hill's legacy goes far beyond the music; she has spoken out against institutional immorality for her entire career. At a concert at the Vatican for a Christmas benefit, Hill spoke out against injustice and corruption within the Catholic Church, asking "what have you got to say about the lives you have broken?" She shocked the audience with this statement against sexual abuse in the Church.

Lauryn Hill is a societal, musical, and cultural icon whose unique style left a permanent imprint on music.

