It took a song that lasted 16 minutes, 45 seconds to make her a star. Now, she is living down the image as a vocal sex

symbol, and demonstrating that she CAN act, and CAN sing — she's:

Donna Summer moaned and groaned her way to fame and fortune by singing the sixteen minute - and - forty - second sexual extravaganza "Love To Love You Baby," a tune that featured more simulated orgasms than some persons experience in a lifetime.

Back in 1975, Donna Summer shook up the recording industry when "Love to Love You Baby" sold millions of copies, becoming one of the first records to establish its popularity in the discos as opposed to bombarding the masses by radio.

Donna opened up the market for the twelve-inch disco single and greatly changed some of the marketing strategies of record companies in this country.

But while the song gained her a worldwide reputation as a singer and sex kitten, Donna Summer also found that the song put her in a strait - jacket in terms of what audiences expect from her during a performance.

### A Teacher?

"Sometimes I think that from the 'Love to Love You Baby' image, people think that I'm some kind of sex cat that comes out on stage and makes Tina Turner and Linda Lovelace look like Sunday school teachers," states Donna. "But that's not what I'm about at all. To me 'Love to Love You' was a song and just that. I could do it again and it wouldn't bother me at

"I consider myself a singer and that song represented a small part of what I can do. It's just like taking on a role in a play, you just get out there and do it. But that's not all I want to do. I don't want to sing that song all my life.

"Still I owe a lot to 'Love to Love You Baby.' It has taken me around the world. I was living in Germany, doing fairly well as a singer with two gold singles and two gold albums.

"I wasn't getting rich, but I was making a living.

"One day I was sitting in the office with my publisher and publicist, when my producer came in and started talking about this record 'Je T'aime' which had been banned from the air in several - European countries, but was

# DONA SUMBER

By FREDERICK I. DOUGLASS



selling as fast as stores could stock

## Do Her Own

"He suggested that I buy a copy and listen to it. I jokingly asked why should I buy someone else's 'Je T'aime' when I could do my own. He laughed and said 'What, you do something like that?'

"I had this song I had just written the week before, and my publisher encouraged me to sing it for them."

"I was reluctant because it was so different from the popular things Lahad been doing, but I sang it anyway. My producer,

Girogio Moroder, thought it was catchy and we decided to record the song.

"So we released the record in Europe and nothing happened. Absolutely nothing. We released it again and even a third time, but it got nowhere. But it hit in

I was on a cruise in the Mediterrean when I got a call from my agent who said I had to go to America because 'Love to Love You' was a hit there.

"I was shocked because as far as I was concerned the record was dead. I couldn't believe that the

record was taking off in America, but my agent was telling me that it was the hottest thing in the

And thus the orgasms that were heard around the world on "Love to Love You Baby" firmly established Donna Summer as the "Disco Queen," the "Black Goddess of the Discos," and a woman whose supposed easy sexual vulnerability was marketed by the publicity at Casablanca

### Stage Image

Discussing how her stage image contrasts with her real life Donna states "singing the kind of songs I sing is like baking up some cookies and having your friends say to yourself, WOW! I'll bake up a great big batch and sell

"Now nobody knocks you for selling those cookies because they taste good and make people happy. But when you do something a little different, everybody comes down on your

"Hey when I'm up there on stage, I'm totally into the music I'm singing and the role I'm playing because the audience expects me to deliver my talent 100 %. But the audience can't expect me to be the same way all the time, even on stage.

"These days I'm trying to show people that I can do different kinds of songs. My background includes performing gospel, Broadway and show music. So I've been limiting the 'Love to Love You Baby' thing a bit and stretching out on stage to do some ballads and show tunes.

### Calm Life

"When I'm offstage, my life is a lot calmer than most people probably think. I don't spend a lot of time at big parties. I prefer to spend my time with my daughter Mimi and a few close friends.

"Most of my time is spent rehearsing new acts and writing music. I consider myself to be a professional person and when I go on stage I want everything to be

"I also spend a lot of time planning what my life, my music and my act will be like in the future. I don't believe in just

# Dona

letting things happen. I believe that you can work toward shaping your own future if you really believe in yourself.

"There was a time when I didn't believe in myself. I knew I had talent even when I was young. but I was a little unsure of myself.

"My latest album 'Once Upon a Time' is about how shy and sensitive I was as a child and also goes into my growing up, becoming a woman, finding love, and ultimately; self confidence.

"Growing up in Boston was difficult for me. I felt very restricted and confined in the environment there and I knew I had to leave someday because I felt suppressed there.

"That wasn't just because of the narrow minded attitudes of some of the people I knew, but just that the whole environment made me feel stifled and I felt that some people wanted to crush my ego because my lifestyle was just a little different.

### Get Away

"That's why I ultimately joined the European cast of 'Hair' so I could get away for a while. Getting away was good for me and living in Europe was a learning experience. But I'm happier here in the States.

"It was even beautiful going back to Boston to see my family

and the people I grew up with. Some of my old friends told me that they knew I'd make it because I was always a little crazy. I'd like to think that the success I've achieved thus far is because I have a little talent."

Donna Summer is definitely a talented young lady as evidenced by her best selling recordings as well as her dynamite stage act. Implementing her stated desire to "stretch and express all her talents," Donna recently made her acting debut in the disco musical "Thank God It's Friday" (T.G.I.F.) which co-stars Motown's fantastic band the Commodores.

Donna Summer's starring role is that of an aspiring young vocalist who disguises herself as a waitress in a hip Los Angeles disco in an effort to get discovered by Bobby Speed who is played by Ray Vitte, a popular disc jockey with serious connections in the music industry.

# **Belts Tunes**

Donna belts out some mean tunes including "With Your Love," the hit bound monster "Last Dance," and "Je T'Aime," the tune that inspired her to record her composition "Love to Love You Baby."

Discussing the movie "Thank God It's Friday," Donna states, "I Watch out for Donna Summer in of the running for the currently



Donna and The Commodores in a scene from the movie "Thank God It's Friday," in which they all appear.