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# Three Wishes: An Intimate Look At Jazz Greats



## Synopsis

An unprecedented, behind-the-scenes look at jazz legends— In the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, Pannonica de Koenigswarter, known as Nica, was a constant and benevolent presence on the thriving New York jazz scene. Known as the Jazz Baroness (she was born into the wealthy Rothschild family and later married a French aristocrat) she befriended such giants as Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Barry Harris, Art Blakey, Miles Davis, Bud Powell, and many more. She inspired over twenty jazz compositions, bailed musicians out of jail, and even acted as a booking agent. She also collected wishes. Over the course of a decade, Koenigswarter asked three hundred musicians what their three wishes in life were, jotting them all down in a notebook. At the same time she took hundreds of candid photographs, saving them all. In *Three Wishes*, Koenigswarter's forays into the psyches and lives of these legendary jazz artists are made available in America for the first time. With a foreword by celebrated jazz critic Gary Giddins, and an introduction from Nica's granddaughter, Nadine de Koenigswarter, providing rare insights into the mysterious baroness's life, this funny, eclectic, and moving compilation is a uniquely intimate look into the immortals of the classic era of jazz, and a must-have for any fan or aficionado.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

De Koenigswarter (1913-1988), known as the "Jazz Baroness," was a fixture on the East Coast jazz scene of the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Born into the wealthy Rothschild family and married to a French

aristocrat, de Koenigswarter emigrated to New York City in the early '50s and became an enthusiastic patron of artists large and small. She was also a canny amateur photographer, evidenced in this enthralling collection of candid snapshots. She also, over course of a decade, collected wishes from some 300 musicians; alongside vibrant, smoky Polaroids, these wishes--though plenty go to money, health and more wishes--provide a brief glimpse into each subjects' dreams: Julian "Cannonball" Adderley wishes for a jazz artists' subsidy organization; Dinah Washington wishes for triplet girls; and Charles Mingus wishes for "enough to pay my bills, but that's absolutely all." Not everyone wishes deep: Bill Hardman wishes for "a crazy old lady

Pannonica de Koenigswarter, daughter of Charles and Rozsika Rothschild, was married to the Baron Jules de Koenigswarter, a renowned freedom fighter in the French resistance, before she moved to New York City, where she emerged as a major patron of the Jazz scene. Nadine de Koenigswarter, Nica's granddaughter, is a multimedia visual artist living in Paris and West Africa. Gary Giddins is an award-winning jazz critic and author. He writes columns about music for Jazz Times and about film for the New York Sun.

I can't recall how I found this book but am so glad I did. It's a great retrospective by the author who was right there in the middle of the Golden Age of Jazz and experienced this era personally together with many jazz greats of the period. Pannonica de Koenigswarter was the subject of a song composed by Horace Silver called "Nica's Dream." She was a dear friend of Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker, among others, and a great patron of jazz. Her acquaintance with these great jazz icons gave her access to some of the most treasured jazz musicians in the world. The premise of the book is the author asks her subjects to tell her what they would do if they had "three wishes" which, in turn, allows us a peak into their minds and hearts for a fleeting moment in time. This is a very entertaining compilation and unlike anything I've ever read. I recommend it highly for jazz enthusiasts everywhere.

I am such a huge bop and post bop jazz fan and can't believe I hadn't read this book sooner! I had heard about the mysterious Nica and her touch on some of the most prolific artists of that period but didn't know just how much apart of the jazz family she really was. I really enjoyed this book- great coffee table book too!

Historical photos of the time period regarding jazz writings of Monk, and the lady, Ms.

Koeningswater who wrote the book- "Nica's Dream,"...A visual of the musicians that wandered through her life. Yes, amateurish...but this is what makes this book so wonderful- an honest history of what was transpiring in jazz during those years.

Fantastic visually. The parade of bebop jazz artists in their casual moments. What a thrill! This is a book every jazz fan should have on their nightstand. It transports one back to a magical time of creativity and artistry during often turbulent times. I like to browse the book while listening to my favorite musicians...Monk, Dizzy, Peterson, Mobley, Blakey, Miles, Cannonball, Coltrane, etc. They're all here and it's joyous! I love this book.

I read all the responses and noticed a number of commonalities that I decided to graph. A pie graph in Excel showed that most artists were interested in World Peace, Advancing Their Craft, Seeking Greater Appreciation of Jazz As An Art Form, Wishing for Health, Being Able To Better Support Their Families. Although there were outliers with raunchy attempts at humor, a careful read lets you know that most of this was to mask their real sensitivities. I truly enjoyed this book and use it in teaching Jazz classes to kids and adults.

This book is fun, touching and real. It's not a novel but just random quotes to Nica's basic question to these legendary musicians. "What are your three wishes". The responses are quite revealing. Some great previously unpublished photographs too. Worth the price and an essential part of Jazz lore.

Amazing! Grew up knowing many in book! Thank you.

This woman is one of the ROTHCHILD CLAN!! Used her influence and wealth to become totally LOYAL & A GREAT SUPPORTER/FAN of Jazz and the Artist! Gave up her Family to move to NYC to become a Jazz Fixture in the community! She is a TRUE ORIGINAL and anybody that comes on the scene after her is a "WANNA BE"! This book proves her love of the music and the artist! What a class act! Would love to meet her and hang out with her at some cool jazz dives and concerts! ...Peace.

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