

Josephine Baker: Image and Icon

Olivia Lahs-Gonzales, Editor

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Provocative Performer. In 1919, thirteen-year-old Freda Josephine McDonald ran away from home to become a Vaudeville player. When she left the country several years later, she would become one of the most famous entertainers of the early twentieth century.

Josephine Baker: Image and Icon, edited by Olivia Lahs-Gonzales (Reedy Press, 9 x 11, 90 color and b/w photographs and illustrations, 159 pages, hardcover, \$35.00, 978-1-933370-02-6), was created to celebrate the 100th birthday of the legendary jazz performer. Biographical essays detail the actress's life, including her childhood in St. Louis; her early career, when she began exploring issues of race, gender, and class; and her eventual move to Paris, where she became a star.

Photographs are accompanied by promotional posters and pieces of art, depicting the exotic Baker mid-performance—dancing, singing, and in her famous banana skirt.

A fascinating addition to any jazz or burlesque collection.

WHITNEY HALLBERG (December 8, 2006)

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