

**FACT SHEET**

## Gospel, stax and soul artists

### Ray Charles

Blinded by glaucoma at age six, Ray Charles learned to read and write music in braille. He incorporated gospel into his rhythm & blues style, along with elements of country and jazz. His hits include 'I Got A Woman', 'What'd I Say', 'Georgia On My Mind', 'Hit The Road, Jack' and 'I Can't Stop Loving You'.

### Otis Reading

Otis Redding was Stax Studio's biggest star, with hits such as 'Try A Little Tenderness', 'Respect' and 'The Dock Of The Bay'. His impassioned vocal delivery made him very popular with African American audiences. He was tragically killed in a plane crash in 1967.

### Wilson Pickett

A former gospel singer turned rhythm & blues artist, Wilson Pickett had a distinctive gravelly voice, and enjoyed hits with 'In The Midnight Hour' and 'Mustang Sally'. Both songs featured the 'Memphis horn sound' and strong, driving bass lines.

### Aretha Franklin

The daughter of a Baptist minister, Aretha Franklin grew up surrounded by the best religious singers in the country. Nicknamed 'Lady Soul', she was particularly popular from 1965–1975. Her hits include 'Respect', '(You Make Me Feel Like A) Natural Woman', 'Think', 'Chain Of Fools' and 'I Never Loved A Man The Way I Love You'.

### Marvin Gaye

The son of a preacher, Gaye had a tragic life. Signed by Motown, he enjoyed a hit with 'What's Going On', despite Motown's reluctance to release it. He wrote numerous hits for others and experienced more success with 'I Heard It Through The Grapevine', 'Mercy Mercy Me' and 'Sexual Healing'. He was shot and killed by his father after an argument in 1984.