

Soul music is a music genre originating in the United States combining elements of gospel music and rhythm and blues.[1] According to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, soul is "music that arose out of the black experience in America through the transmutation of gospel and rhythm & blues into a form of funky, secular testifying." [2] The genre occasionally uses improvisational additions, twirls and auxiliary sounds. Catchy rhythms, stressed by handclaps and extemporaneous body moves, are an important feature.[1] Other characteristics are a call and response between the soloist and the chorus, and an especially tense vocal sound.



Soul music has its roots in gospel music and rhythm and blues. The hard gospel vocal quartets of the 1940s and 1950s were big influences on major soul singers of the 1960s.

Ray Charles is often cited as inventing the soul genre with his string of hits starting with 1954's "I Got A Woman". Charles was open in acknowledging the influence of Pilgrim Travelers vocalist Jesse Whitaker on his singing style. Another view has it that a decade would transpire until Solomon Burke's early recordings for Atlantic Records codified the soul style; his early 1960s songs "Cry to Me", "Just Out of Reach" and "Down in the Valley" are considered classics of the genre. Little Richard, Fats Domino and James Brown originally called themselves rock and roll performers. However, as rock music moved away from its R&B roots in the 1960s, Brown claimed that he had always really been an R&B singer. Little Richard proclaimed himself the "king of rockin' and rollin', rhythm and blues soulin'", because his music embodied elements of all three, and because he inspired artists in all three genres.

Aretha Franklin's 1967 recordings, such as "I Never Loved a Man (The Way I Love You)", "Respect" (originally sung by Otis Redding), and "Do Right Woman-Do Right Man", are considered the apogee of the soul genre, and were among its most commercially successful productions. In the late 1960s, Stax artists such as Eddie Floyd and Johnnie Taylor made significant contributions to soul music. Howard Tate's recordings in the late 1960s for Verve Records, and later for Atlantic (produced by Jerry Ragovoy) are another notable body of work in

the soul genre. By 1968, the soul music movement had begun to splinter, as artists such as James Brown and Sly & the Family Stone began to incorporate new styles into their music.

Geographical origins

Many[who?] consider the birthplace of soul music to be northern United States inner cities, particularly Chicago. Other cities, such as New York, Detroit, Memphis and Florence, quickly followed, creating their own soul styles based on their regional gospel roots.

Florence, Alabama, was the home of Fame Studios. Jimmy Hughes, Percy Sledge and Arthur Alexander recorded at Fame, and Aretha Franklin recorded in the area later in the 1960s. Fame Studios (often referred to as Muscle Shoals after a nearby town) enjoyed a close relationship with the Memphis label Stax Records, and many of the musicians and producers who worked in Memphis contributed to recordings in Alabama. Another notable Memphis label was Goldwax Records, which signed O.V. Wright and James Carr. Carr's "The Dark End of the Street" (written by Chips Moman and Dan Penn) was recorded in 1967 at two other Memphis studios, Royal Recording and American Sound Studios. American Sound Studios owner Chips Moman produced "The Dark End of the Street", and the musicians were his house band of Reggie Young, Bobby Woods, Tommy Cogbill and Gene Chrisman. Carr also recorded songs at Fame Studio with musicians David Hood, Jimmy Johnson and Roger Hawkins.

The Detroit-based Motown Records also contributed to the soul canon in the 1960s, although at the time, the label described itself as a manufacturer of pop music. Music by Motown artists such as Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Marvin Gaye and Diana Ross did much to popularise what became known as the Motown sound.

In Chicago, Curtis Mayfield helped develop the sweet soul sound that later earned him a reputation as the Godfather of northern soul. As a member of The Impressions, Mayfield infused a call and response style of group singing that came out of gospel, and influenced many other groups of the era, notably fellow Chicago artists the Radiants.

1970s

Later examples of soul music include recordings by The Staple Singers (such as I'll Take You There), and Al Green's 1970s recordings, done at Willie Mitchell's Royal Recording in Memphis. Mitchell's Hi Records continued the Stax tradition in that decade, releasing many hits by Green, Ann Peebles, Otis Clay, O.V. Wright and Syl Johnson. Bobby Womack, who recorded with Chips Moman in the late 1960s, continued to produce soul recordings in the 1970s and 1980s.

In Detroit, producer Don Davis worked with Stax artists such as Johnnie Taylor and The Dramatics. Early 1970s recordings by The Detroit Emeralds, such as Do Me Right, are a link between soul and the later disco style. Motown Records artists such as Marvin Gaye and Smokey Robinson contributed to the evolution of soul music, although their recordings were considered more in a pop music vein than those of Redding, Franklin and Carr. Although stylistically different from classic soul music, recordings by Chicago-based artists are often

considered part of the genre.

By the early 1970s, soul music had been influenced by psychedelic rock and other genres. The social and political ferment of the times inspired artists like Gaye and Curtis Mayfield to release album-length statements with hard-hitting social commentary. Artists like James Brown led soul towards funk music, which became typified by 1970s bands like Parliament-Funkadelic and The Meters. More versatile groups like War, the Commodores and Earth, Wind and Fire became popular around this time. During the 1970s, some slick and commercial blue-eyed soul acts like Philadelphia's Hall & Oates and Oakland's Tower of Power achieved mainstream success, as did a new generation of street-corner harmony or city-soul groups like The Delfonics and Howard University's Unifics. By the end of the 1970s, disco and funk were dominating the charts. Philly soul and most other soul genres were dominated by disco-inflected tracks. During this period, groups like The O'Jays and The Spinners continued to turn out hits.

1980s and later

The emergence of hip hop culture in the late 1970s greatly influenced the soul music that followed in the 1980s. Afrika Bambaata & The Soulsonic Force had hits with a new electronic sound, with songs such as "Planet Rock" and "Looking For The Perfect Beat". Soul music-makers realised they would have to make their beats bigger, and also find a way of fusing soul with drum machines and synthesizers. Production teams like James 'Jimmy Jam' Lewis and Terry Harris (former members of The Time), L.A. Reid and Babyface created a harder but also lush almost epic soul sound, providing endless hits for Janet Jackson, TLC, Alexander O'Neal, The SOS Band and Bobby Brown

MJs EIGHTIES

.Luther Vandross, Penny Forde, Melissa Morgan, Chaka Khan, Don Blackmon, Brass Construction, were releasing quality albums and dance records and by the early to mid 80s the soul scene was at full speed, the UK soul scene was also influencing young Britons both black and white, Central Line, Beggars and Co, Freeze, Level 42, Shakatak, the Cool Notes and the mighty Loose Ends all helped to enhance our genre of music this side of the Atlantic.

Writer and producer Teddy Riley and others created new jack swing (also known as swingbeat), which fused soul and hip hop. Riley's sound consisted of hip hop beats, gospel and jazz melodies, and a raw and sparse sound.

After the decline of disco and funk in the early 1980s, soul music became influenced by electro music and funk. It became less raw and more slickly produced, resulting in a style known as contemporary R&B, which sounded very different from the original rhythm and blues style.

In mid 1980s Chicago, house music was heavily influenced by soul, funk and disco. This was mainly made using synthesizers and other electronic equipment. House and techno rose to mainstream popularity in the late 1980s and remained popular in the 1990s and 2000s. Also starting in the 1980s, soul music from the United Kingdom became popular worldwide.

The United States saw the development of neo-soul around 1994. Mainstream record label marketing support for soul genres cooled in the 2000s due to the industry's re-focus on hip hop.

In the fifth season of Fox's American Idol, Taylor Hicks won the show and has a fan club called the Soul Patrol which is a reflection of the genre he prefers to sing.

Detroit (Motown) soul

Further information: Motown Records

Dominated by Berry Gordy's Motown Records empire, Detroit soul is strongly rhythmic and influenced by gospel music. The Motown sound often includes hand clapping, a powerful bass line, violins and bells. Motown Records' house band was The Funk Brothers.

Deep soul and southern soul

Further information: Deep soul and Southern soul

The terms deep soul and southern soul generally refer to a driving, energetic soul style combining R&B's energy with pulsating southern United States gospel music sounds. Memphis, Tennessee label Stax Records nurtured a distinctive sound, which included putting vocals further back in the mix than most contemporary R&B records, using vibrant horn parts in place of background vocals, and a focus on the low end of the frequency spectrum. The vast majority of Stax releases were backed by house bands Booker T and the MGs (with Booker T. Jones, Steve Cropper, Duck Dunn, and Al Jackson) and the Memphis Horns (the splinter horn section of the Mar-Keys).

Memphis soul

Further information: Memphis soul

Memphis soul is a shimmering, sultry style of soul music produced in the 1960s and 1970s at Stax Records and Hi Records in Memphis, Tennessee. It featured melancholic and melodic horns, organ, bass, and drums, as heard in recordings by Hi's Al Green and Stax's Booker T. & the M.G.'s. The latter group also sometimes played in the harder-edged Southern soul style. The Hi Records house band (Hi Rhythm Section) and producer Willie Mitchell developed a surging soul style heard in the label's 1970s hit recordings. Some Stax recordings fit into this style, but had their own unique sound.

New Orleans soul

The New Orleans soul scene directly came out of the rhythm and blues era, when such artists as Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Huey Piano Smith made a huge impact on the pop and R&B charts and a huge direct influence for the birth of the Funk music. The principal architect of Crescent City's soul was songwriter, arranger, and producer Allen Toussaint. He worked with such artists as Irma Thomas ("the Soul Queen of New Orleans"), Jessie Hill, Kris Kenner, Benny Spellman, and Ernie K. Doe on the Minit/Instant label complex to produce a distinctive New Orleans soul sound generating a passel of national hits. Other notable New Orleans hits came from Robert Parker, Betty Harris, and Aaron Neville. While record labels in New Orleans

largely disappeared by the mid-1960s, producers in the city continued to record New Orleans soul artists for other mainly New York and Los Angeles record labels—notably Lee Dorsey for New York-based Amy Records and the Meters for New York-based Josie and then LA-based Reprise.

Chicago soul

Further information: [Chicago soul](#)

Chicago soul generally had a light gospel-influenced sound, but the large number of record labels based in the city tended to produce a more diverse sound than other cities. Vee Jay Records, which lasted until 1966, produced recordings by Jerry Butler, Betty Everett, Dee Clark, and Gene Chandler. Chess Records, mainly a blues and rock and roll label, produced a number of major soul artists. Mayfield not only scored many hits with his group, the The Impressions, but wrote many hit songs for Chicago artists and produced hits on his own labels for The Fascinations and the Five Stairsteps.

Philadelphia soul

Further information: [Philadelphia soul](#)

Based primarily in the Philadelphia International record label, Philadelphia soul (AKA Philly Soul) had a lush orchestral sound and doo-wop-inspired vocals. Thom Bell, and Kenneth Gamble & Leon Huff are considered the founders of Philadelphia soul.

Psychedelic soul

Further information: [Psychedelic soul](#)

Psychedelic soul was a blend of psychedelic rock and soul music in the late 1960s, which paved the way for the mainstream emergence of funk music a few years later.

Blue-eyed soul

Further information: [Blue-eyed soul](#)

Blue-eyed soul is a term used to describe R&B or soul music performed by white artists. The term doesn't refer to a distinct style of music, and the meaning of blue-eyed soul has evolved over decades. Originally the term was associated with mid-1960s white artists who performed soul and R&B that was similar to the music released by Motown Records and Stax Records. The term continued to be used in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly by the British media to describe a new generation of singers who adopted elements of the Stax and Motown sounds. To a lesser extent, the term has been applied to singers in other music genres that are influenced by soul music

Further information: Neo soul

The term neo soul is a marketing phrase coined by producer and record label executive Kedar Massenburg to describe a musical blend of 1970s soul-style vocals and instrumentation with contemporary R&B sounds, hip hop beats and poetic interludes. The style was developed in the early to mid 1990s. A key element in neo soul is a heavy dose of Fender Rhodes or Wurlitzer

electric piano pads over a mellow, grooving interplay between the drums (usually with a rim shot snare sound) and a muted, deep funky bass. The Fender Rhodes piano sound gives the music a warm, organic character.

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