

In Honor Of
Black History Month
M'sippi Slide
“Paying Tribute to these Great Artists”

See, See Rider- Ma Rainey

A blues standard written and first recorded by **Ma Rainey**, whose version hit #12 in **1925** as "See See Rider Blues." The "C.C. Rider," also known as "See See Rider" or "Easy Rider," is a blues cliché for the sexual partner, although originally it referred to the guitar hung on the back of the traveling bluesman.



Hound Dog- Big Mama Thornton

The story of the song that gave Elvis his longest-running #1 hit (11 weeks) in the summer of 1956 began four years earlier, when "Hound Dog" was recorded for the very first time by the rhythm-and-blues singer **Ellie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton** in Los Angeles, California.



Mojo- Ann Cole

The song "Got My Mojo Working" was written by Preston "Red" Foster in **1956**. Though most people associate it with Muddy Waters, the *first recording* of the song was by R&B singer **Ann Cole** (credited as **Ann Cole and the Suburbans**). She cut it in 1956 for **Baton Records** and it was released as a single in early 1957. **Muddy Waters' version** is frequently cited as one of the most influential blues recordings, helping bridge blues into early rock and roll and inspiring **British blues/rock artists of the 1960s**.





Ruth Brown — “Miss Rhythm”

Ruth Brown was one of the most important **Rhythm & Blues (R&B) vocalists of the 1950s** and a major architect of the sound that evolved into rock & roll. She combined gospel phrasing, blues tonality, jazz timing, and pop accessibility into a commercially powerful style. Brown's music emerged **during segregation** in the United States. Black performers, including Brown, often toured **segregated venues** where audiences were split by race yet united by the music's emotional power. Her success as a Black woman in a male-dominated music industry helped open doors for later generations of Black artists. She later advocated for **musicians' rights and fair royalties**, especially for Black performers who were historically exploited by record companies.

Ruth Brown's influence extends beyond a chart hit—she's remembered as a **pioneer of R&B**, crucial in bridging blues traditions with modern popular music. Her stylistic innovations and commercial success made her a **role model and inspiration in Black musical communities**, reinforcing the importance of Black artists in shaping American music history. She wasn't just a singer — she reshaped the **music industry landscape for Black artists**.

Mama He Treats Your Daughter Mean- Ruth Brown

A song written by **Johnny Wallace** and **Herbert J. Lance** and recorded by **Ruth Brown** in 1952. It was Brown's third number-one record on the US *Billboard* R&B chart and her first pop chart hit. Brown re-recorded the song in 1962, when it made number 99 on the US pop chart.

As Long As I'm Moving- Ruth Brown

“As Long As I'm Moving” charted at #4 on the R&B chart in 1955, marking it as a notable R&B hit of that year. The song was **written by Jesse Stone**, a prolific songwriter and arranger also known under the pseudonym **Charles Calhoun**

5-10-15 Hours- Ruth Brown

The song features Brown's commanding vocal style—sultry and rhythmic—with strong tenor saxophone backing, emblematic of **early 1950s R&B** that was a direct precursor to rock and roll. Brown's string of hits, including *5-10-15 Hours*, contributed to R&B's mainstream growth in the 1950s, setting the stage for soul, rock and roll, and later Black popular music forms. **Written by Rudy Toombs** and recorded in 1952 (released March 1952)

24 Hours Of The Day- Ruth Brown

Written by Ted Jarrett, a notable R&B songwriter who penned the track in 1955.

Release: Issued as a single in **1955** and later included in various Ruth Brown albums and compilations. **Chart Performance:** Brown's version reached the **US Billboard R&B charts** in the mid-1950s, marking one of her many influential R&B hits.



Aretha Franklin — “The Queen Of Soul”

Aretha Franklin's place in **Blues music and Black history** sits at the intersection of the Black church, Southern migration, and the evolution of R&B into Soul — with Blues as a foundational language in her vocal and emotional approach. Aretha was not a “classic 12-bar blues” artist like Muddy Waters or B.B. King, but her style is deeply Blues-based. In Black history, Blues has always been a space where **Black women articulated autonomy** (Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Memphis Minnie).

Aretha continues that lineage. Her sound represented the emotional reality of post-Jim Crow Black America, where Blues feeling met modern social change. She helped transform the Blues from a rural and urban folk form into a **vocal philosophy embedded in modern Black popular music**. Even without being labeled “a blues singer,” Aretha Franklin is crucial to Blues history because she helped shift Blues themes from survival alone to **demanding respect and equality**. She is part of how the Blues moved **from juke joints to global stages** without losing its emotional core. Her music shows how Blues is not just a genre — it is an **emotional and cultural framework in Black history**, and she is one of its most powerful modern carriers.

Chain Of Fools- Aretha Franklin

A song written by **Don Covay**. **Aretha Franklin** first released the song as a single in 1967 and subsequently it appeared on many of her albums. It hit number one on the *Billboard* Hot Rhythm & Blues chart and number two on *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart.

Baby, I Love You- Aretha Franklin

Soul/R&B single released by **Aretha Franklin** in July 1967. It was the lead single from her *Aretha Arrives* album and became one of her early major hits — **peaking at #4 on the Billboard Hot 100** and spending **two weeks at #1 on the R&B charts**. It was written by Ronnie Shannon specifically for Franklin after he met her husband and manager in Detroit.



Etta James

Artists like James were **pushing Black musical styles into broader American culture** long before rock & roll's explosion. Though many R&B songs of the era were later covered by white artists or adapted into pop and rock formats, the *original Black recordings* laid the groundwork.

I'd Rather Go Blind- Etta James

A blues song written by **Ellington Jordan** and co-credited to **Billy Foster** and **Etta James**. It was first recorded by Etta James in 1967, released in 1967, and has subsequently become regarded as a blues and soul classic.

That's All- Etta James

Recorded by **Etta James** is an early rhythm-and-blues/rock-and-roll track she cut in the **mid-1950s** while signed to *Modern Records* (before her later fame on *Chess Records*) While the specific track “That’s All” wasn’t a major chart hit, James’s early catalog is now valued as a document of how Black artists shaped R&B and helped lay the groundwork for later soul and rock developments. Songs like “That’s All” reflect how Black musicians transformed blues and gospel influences into rhythmic, dance-oriented music that prefigured rock-and-roll and soul.

Good Lookin- Etta James

an R&B track performed by **Etta James** and credited as written by **Joe Josea** and **Maxwell Davis** — figures associated with the *Modern Records* label’s rhythm & blues output in the 1950s. “Good Lookin” itself didn’t chart highly or become a crossover pop hit, unlike some of James’s later recordings. However, it exemplifies the **breadth of her early work** and the vibrant R&B scene that shaped Black music in the 1950s.



Koko Taylor — “Queen of The Blues”

Koko Taylor proved that **traditional blues never died**—it evolved. She maintained a direct line from the juke joints of the rural South to international concert halls. Modern blues and roots artists—especially women—stand on the foundation she helped preserve.

She wasn’t just a performer. She was a **cultural carrier of Black Southern history, migration, struggle, joy, and resilience** expressed through amplified blues.

Evil- Koko Taylor

Koko Taylor recorded “Evil” on her 1985 album *Queen of the Blues*, released through **Alligator Records** on **February 1, 1985**.

The song was first recorded as “Evil (Is Goin’ On)” by **Howlin’ Wolf** in **1954** for **Chess Records** in Chicago. It’s a **12-bar Chicago blues** piece with a warning theme about domestic betrayal — essentially cautioning that “evil is going on” back home while someone’s away. Howlin’ Wolf’s recording featured notable blues musicians like Hubert Sumlin and Otis Spann, and Wolf’s raw vocal delivery and harmonica gave the song a sinister character.

Wang Dang Doodle- Koko Taylor

“Wang Dang Doodle” began as a Willie Dixon composition first recorded by Howlin’ Wolf in 1960 but didn’t become widely known until **Koko Taylor’s 1966 version**, which turned it into a **blues classic** and her career-defining hit. That performance helped bridge traditional Chicago blues into broader mainstream awareness and continues to be celebrated as a foundational blues recording.

Twenty Nine Ways- Koko Taylor

The song “Twenty-Nine Ways” (also known as *Twenty-Nine Ways (To My Baby’s Door)*) was written by legendary Chicago blues songwriter **Willie Dixon**. His song dates back to at least 1956, when it was first registered under his authorship.

Koko Taylor’s recording of the song appears on her self-titled album **Koko Taylor**, released in 1969 on **Chess Records**. On that album, Taylor is credited as vocalist with Dixon producing and playing bass on the track alongside a band of Chicago blues musicians (**including Buddy Guy on guitar**).

Soulful Dress- Sugar Pie DeSanto

Written by **Maurice McAlister and Terry Vail** and first recorded and released by **Sugar Pie DeSanto in 1964** as a single on the **Checker/Chess label**. “Soulful Dress” became one of DeSanto’s **notable hits in 1964**, charting in R&B/soul markets; some sources report it reached **#19 on the Cash Box chart** during the summer of that year.

While not as high on the mainstream pop charts as some contemporaries, it was a **signature record** for DeSanto and helped solidify her persona as an energetic, assertive performer capable of competing stylistically with her peers.



You'll Lose A Good Thing- Barbara Lynn

Barbara Lynn Ozen's smoky voice and fine guitar playing was one of the better blends of soul vocals and blues. Artist Barbara Lynn Ozen, who, performing as **Barbara Lynn**, scored a 1962 Top 10 hit, peaking at #8 and also the number 1 spot on the R&B charts, with her bluesy rendition of the song.



People Get Ready- Curtis Mayfield

a 1965 single by The Impressions, this single is the group's best-known hit, reaching number-three on the *Billboard* R&B chart and number 14 on the *Billboard* Hot 100. The gospel-influenced track was a **Curtis Mayfield** composition that displayed the growing sense of social and political awareness in his writing. **Martin Luther King Jr.** named the song the unofficial anthem of the **Civil Rights Movement** and often used the song to get people marching or to calm and comfort them.



Stormy Monday- T-Bone Walker

Is a song written and recorded by American blues electric guitar pioneer **T-Bone Walker**. It is a slow twelve-bar blues performed in the West Coast blues-style that features Walker's smooth, plaintive vocal and distinctive guitar work. As well as becoming a record chart hit in 1948, it inspired B.B. King and others to take up the electric guitar. "Stormy Monday" became Walker's best-known and most-recorded song



I Shot The Sheriff- Bob Marley

A song written by Jamaican reggae musician **Bob Marley** and released in 1973 with his band **Bob Marley and the Wailers**.

The song reflects a classic **folk-ballad tradition** (similar to outlaw songs in American and Caribbean oral music) where the accused tells their side of the story, authority is portrayed as corrupt, justice and law are not synonymous. Although popular in reggae circles, the song achieved massive international reach when **Eric Clapton** recorded a cover in 1974. Clapton's version reached **#1 on the Billboard Hot 100**. It introduced mainstream rock audiences to reggae. It became the first reggae song to top U.S. charts.



This success significantly expanded Marley's global audience and helped establish reggae as an international genre.

Use Me- Bill Withers

Written and composed by Bill Withers and first recorded for his 1972 album *Still Bill*. It was released as a single in September 1972 on Sussex Records. The song became one of Withers' biggest hits, reaching No. 2 on the U.S. *Billboard Hot 100* and No. 2 on the soul charts — kept from No. 1 by Michael Jackson's "Ben" and Chuck Berry's "My Ding-a-Ling." It was certified Gold by the RIAA for strong sales.



Knock On Wood- Eddie Floyd

The song was **co-written by Eddie Floyd and guitarist Steve Cropper** (of Booker T. & the M.G.'s) in **1966**. They composed it in a room at the **Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee** — a site later known historically as the location where **Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968** and now part of the **National Civil Rights Museum**. Although originally intended for **Otis Redding**, **Stax Records manager Jim Stewart decided Eddie Floyd** should record it himself. The recording session took place on July 13, 1966, at Stax Studios in Memphis, with Booker T. & the M.G.'s as the backing band and Isaac Hayes on piano. It was released as a single on **July 25, 1966**, with the B-side "**Got to Make a Comeback**." The song **peaked at #28 on the Billboard Hot 100** and spent **one week at #1 on the Billboard Soul Singles chart** — a major achievement for a Stax release at that time.



Your've Got To Serve Somebody- Mavis Staples

Original Song: Written and first recorded by *Bob Dylan* in 1979 during his gospel period. **Staples' Cover:** First widely released on *Tangled Up in Blues* (1999), and later performed live with Levon Helm on *Carry Me Home* (2022). **Interpretation:** Staples' version brings the song into the realms of **gospel, blues, and soul**, emphasizing its spiritual message through her distinctive vocal and stylistic strengths.



You Can Have My Husband- Irma Thomas

Dorothy LaBostrie was an American songwriter, best known for co-writing Little Richard's 1955 hit "Tutti Frutti". *You Can Have My Husband but Please Don't Mess with My Man* was written by Dorothy LaBostrie and first released by Irma Thomas in 1959.



Gimme One Reason- Tracy Chapman

"Give Me One Reason" (1995) is one of the most successful songs by **Tracy Chapman**, a Black American singer-songwriter known for blending **blues, folk, and soul** with socially conscious lyrics. The song's style and success are rooted in African American musical traditions — especially **blues** — and its mainstream breakthrough reflects both Chapman's artistic voice and broader recognition of Black songwriters outside of strictly R&B/soul markets.



Valerie- Amy Winehouse

Amy Winehouse **covered "Valerie"** in 2007, in collaboration with **Mark Ronson**, on his album *Version*. Her rendition transformed the song from indie rock to a **soul and Motown-influenced style**, highlighting her jazz, R&B, and soul background. Amy Winehouse's style was deeply influenced by **Black American music**, including: **Motown artists** like The Supremes and Marvin Gaye, **Soul and R&B legends** like Aretha Franklin and Etta James and **Jazz and blues singers**, particularly female vocalists from the 1950s–1960s



M'sippi Slide plays all of the songs listed in this tribute!

We would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to the artists and continue to keep their legacy alive!!!