

Musicians on United States Stamps



This collection illustrates the entire range of vocal and instrumental musical arts by showing those individual professional musicians who have been honored for their accomplishments on United States postage stamps. Included are composers, song writers, band leaders, singers, conductors, arrangers, choreographers, dancers and instrumentalists, many of whom fall into more than one of these categories. The stamps are presented in the order of their date of issue.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Stephen Foster

1826 - 1864



Known as “The Father of American Music”, Foster wrote over 200 songs, mainly in the parlor song or minstrel genre. Many of these, such as *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Oh! Susannah* and *Beautiful Dreamer* are still popular. Though most of his songs have a Southern flavor, he never lived in the South and visited only once, on his honeymoon.

John Philip Sousa

1854 - 1932

Early in life, the “March King” enlisted in the Marine Corps band, where he learned to conduct. After leaving the Corps, he concentrated on conducting and composing marches such as *Semper Fidelis*, *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and *Washington Post March*. He rejoined the Marines and served 12 years as the band’s director. Later he organized his own orchestra, which he led till his death. He was the inventor of the sousaphone, a large tuba-like brass instrument.



Victor Herbert

1859 - 1924



Born in Ireland and raised in Germany, Victor Herbert became an accomplished cellist and conductor, but is best known for his operettas. A prolific composer, he wrote 2 operas, 43 operettas and over 80 other pieces of different genres. He was also one of the founders of ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

Musicians on United States Stamps

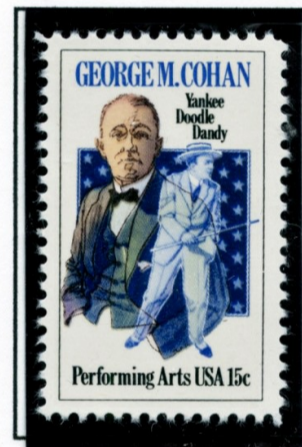
Jimmie Rodgers
1897 - 1933



Jimmie Rodgers, known as "The Singing Brakeman" and "The Father of Country Music", was organizing traveling shows at the age of thirteen. To settle him down, his father got him a job on the railroad, where he learned to pick and strum from the workers. He left to give traveling shows again, but his career was suspended by tuberculosis. He resumed it, but after his tent was destroyed by a tornado, he returned to the railroad, and later had his own radio show.

George M. Cohan
1878 - 1942

George M. Cohan began his career at an early age. He was a prop, then an infant in his parents' vaudeville show. Best known for *I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *Give My Regards to Broadway* and *It's a Grand Old Flag*, he wrote, composed, produced and acted in over three dozen musicals and wrote over 500 songs.



Igor Stravinsky
1882 - 1971



Born and raised in Russia, Stravinsky, moved to France and later the United States. He was a pianist, composer and conductor, though known primarily for the latter two. His ballets *The Firebird*, *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*, produced from 1910 to 1913, made him famous. He always pushed the outer limits of classical music. Most of his later works paid tribute to earlier composers such as Bach and Tchaikovsky.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Scott Joplin
1867 - 1917



Pianist and composer, Scott Joplin was called "The King of Ragtime", the genre which he almost single-handedly originated. He also composed two opera and a ballet, but it is his ragtime works that he's famous for. After a stint as an itinerant musician, he performed at the Chicago World's Fair, where his popularity made ragtime a national sensation. His songs remain popular, and many of his own recordings are available today on compact discs.

John McCormack
1884 - 1945

John McCormack, an Irish tenor, was born in Ireland, the fourth of eleven children. His natural talent and incredible breath control brought him many awards in Ireland. He was said to be able to sing 64 notes on one breath. Money from fund raisers allowed him to study in Italy. His American operatic debut was in 1906, but he turned largely to concert performances. He recorded hundreds of songs, and performed until 1943, when his voice began to fail. The centennial of his birth was commemorated by the stamp at right, which was issued along with an Irish stamp of the same design.



Jerome Kern
1885 - 1945



One of the most important composers of theatrical and popular music in the early 20th century was Jerome Kern. He wrote over 700 songs which were used in more than 100 theater productions. *Ol' Man River*, *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, *Long Ago and Far Away* and *A Fine Romance* are just a few of his most popular works. He created dozens of hit shows during his forty plus year career, however the only one frequently revived is *Showboat*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Duke Ellington
1899 - 1974



Born Edward Kennedy Ellington, "Duke" Ellington was a composer, pianist and big-band leader. In a career lasting over fifty years, he wrote over a hundred songs, primarily jazz, but also in blues, gospel, popular, classical and film score formats. He helped jazz become perceived as an art form in itself. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize posthumously in 1999. He led his band till his death, and is considered one of the major influences in twentieth century music.

Enrico Caruso
1873 - 1921



Enrico Caruso is considered the best operatic tenor of his time. Born and raised in Italy, he went on after his initial successes there to tour Europe, North and South America, playing a wide range of roles. He made over 290 recordings, all of which are available on compact discs. His 1904 recording of *Vesti di giubba* from *Pagliacci* was the first million-selling record. His life was the subject of a film starring Mario Lanza in the title role.

James Weldon Johnson
1871 - 1938



Johnson was primarily an author, poet, politician, diplomat, lawyer and educator, though he managed to find time in his busy career to be a successful songwriter. Two of his best known compositions are *Charleston* and *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. He was very active in the pursuit of civil rights for blacks, and was the driving force behind many advances in that area.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Arturo Toscanini
1867 - 1957



Arturo Toscanini was an accomplished cellist and conductor, one of the most acclaimed of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was musical director at La Scala, the New York Symphony and the NBC Symphony Orchestra. Toscanini was noted for his perfectionism and photographic memory. He began his career at La Scala in Milan at age nineteen, when with no notice he was asked to replace the conductor in *Aida*. He did so to great acclaim, having memorized the score. He went on to conduct eighteen other operas that season and later was judged the world's best conductor. In later years, he spent his time editing recordings for publication.

Cole Porter
1891 - 1964

Cole Porter, an American composer and songwriter, defied his family at an early age to take up the study of music. He was particularly drawn to musical theater, and had many successes in the 1920s. By the 1930s, he was one of the major songwriters for Broadway productions. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he wrote both music and lyrics for his songs. His later work in the 1940s was not as successful, but *Kiss Me Kate* was deemed the best musical of 1948. Some of his best known songs are *I've Got You Under My Skin*, *Night and Day* and *You'd Be So Easy to Love*.



Elvis Presley
1935 - 1977



Singer, actor and cultural icon, Presley was known as the "King of Rock and Roll" or just plain "Elvis". His first RCA record, *Heartbreak Hotel*, immediately was a number one hit. His song interpretations and uninhibited performance style made him immensely popular. He acted in his first film, *Love Me Tender* in 1956, and is generally regarded as the most important figure in 20th century pop culture. Elvis is still the best-selling solo artist in the history of popular music. Abuse of prescription drugs eventually destroyed his health, and he died suddenly at the age of forty-two as a result.

JOHN GRADNER

Musicians on United States Stamps

Hank Williams 1923 - 1953



Perforated 10 x 10

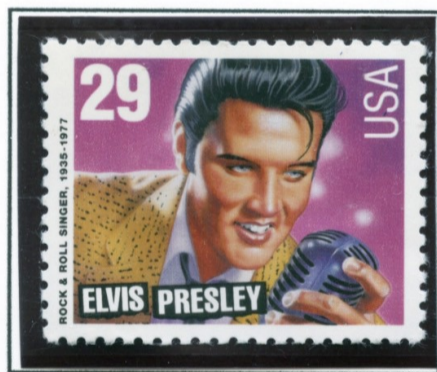


Perforated 11.2 x 11.5

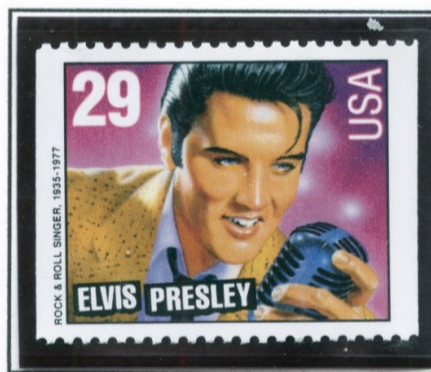
Hank Williams, born Hiram King Williams, was one of the most important figures in country music for all time. Songwriter, singer and guitarist, he had 35 of his recordings in Billboard's top ten Country and Western category, of which eleven reached number one and five were released posthumously. His son, Hank Williams Jr. carries on the tradition, being a country star himself.

This issue, normally perforated 10 x 10, also has a variety perforated 11.2 x 11.5 by mistake.

Elvis Presley 1935 - 1977



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

The stamp issued for Elvis Presley was so popular that it inspired a long series of stamps honoring musicians, mostly in a se-tenant format and booklets. The first of these, a pane of 35 stamps with seven different designs, contained another Elvis stamp, but with perforation 10 rather than 11, and the name reading "Elvis Presley" rather than just "Elvis". The same design also appeared in booklet form, but with a smaller marginal inscription, a black frame line and brighter colors. The same applies to the next six stamps, which were part of the same sheet and booklet issue. The sheet and booklet stamps appear paired on these pages.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Bill Haley
1925 - 1981



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

One of the first rock and roll musicians, Bill Haley is credited with first popularizing this form of music in the early 1950s through his band, *Bill Haley and His Comets*. Some of his million-selling hits are *Rock Around the Clock*, *See You Later*, *Alligator* and *Shake, Rattle and Roll*. He has sold over 100 million records. He formed his first band at 13, and at fifteen left home to play wherever he could. His early leanings were country and western, and he was known as a good yodeler. He played in clubs and on the radio around Philadelphia, and began recording rock music in 1951.

Clyde McPhatter
1932 - 1972



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Clyde McPhatter was perhaps the most imitated Rhythm and Blues singer of the 1950s and 1960s, making him a key figure in the shaping of doo-wop and R & B. His early experience was in gospel singing. Best known for his solo hit *A Lover's Question*, he was lead tenor for the *Mount Lebanon Singers*, then *Billy Ward and His Dominoes*. After leaving them, he formed his own group, *The Drifters*, then went solo. One of his major influences was taking the Ink Spots' major chord harmonies, using them in call-and-response patterns and singing as if he was in church.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Ritchie Valens 1941 - 1959



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Ritchie Valens was a Mexican-American singer, songwriter and guitarist. His career lasted only eight months. However, in that time he scored several hits, notably *La Bamba* in 1958, which was transformed from a Mexican folk song. He was a pioneer of the Spanish-speaking rock and roll movement. On February 3, 1959, which has since become known as "The Day the Music Died", Valens and his fellow musicians Buddy Holly and J.P. "Big Bopper" Richardson died in a small plane crash in Iowa. Ritchie was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2001.

Otis Redding 1941 - 1967



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

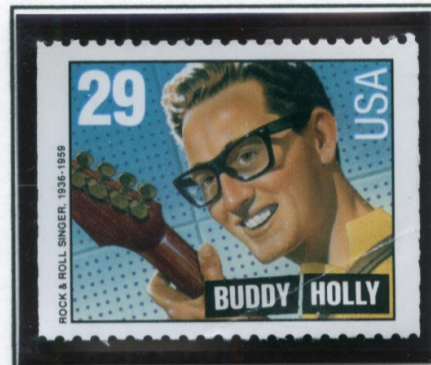
Otis Redding was a soul singer-songwriter, record producer, arranger and talent scout. He is considered a major figure in soul music and R & B. His open-throated style was an influence on other soul singers of the time. He left school at 15 to join Little Richard's band, later joining Johnny Jenkins' band, *The Pinetoppers*, serving as driver and musician while on tour in the southern U.S. He signed a contract with Stax Records and his first single, *These Arms of Mine*, was released in 1962. His initial popularity was with an African-American audience, but he later became popular in mainstream music. In 1967, he wrote and recorded *The Dock of the Bay*, which after his death became a number one hit on *Billboard's* Hot 100 and R & B charts and also in the United Kingdom.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Buddy Holly
1936 - 1959



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Singer, songwriter and rock and roll pioneer Buddy Holly has been called the single most creative force in early rock and roll. He began singing in junior high school, performed locally with a friend, and started incorporating rockabilly into his music after seeing Elvis in 1955. He transitioned to a rock and roll format, formed *The Crickets*, and was signed by Decca. His biggest hits were *That'll Be the Day* and *Peggy Sue*. His year and a half career was cut tragically short by the same plane crash that claimed the lives of Ritchie Valens and "Big Bopper" Richardson. In 1971, *American Pie* was recorded as a tribute to them.

Dinah Washington
1924 - 1963



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Dinah Washington, pianist, blues, rhythm & blues, gospel, pop and jazz singer, was born Ruth Lee Jones. She won a talent contest at 15 and began playing the better Chicago clubs. She sang with Lionel Hampton's band for two years. She was known as "Queen of the Blues" and was the most popular black singer of the 1950s. Her *Ain't Misbehavin'* started a string of her hits, including *Unforgettable*, *Teach Me Tonight* and *What a Diff'rence a Day Makes*.

— Musicians on United States Stamps —



The booklet stamps appearing on the previous pages are shown here in a complete booklet pane of eight stamps. They were also issued in a booklet pane of four which showed only the bottom four of the eight stamp pane. Note that there are two "Elvis" stamps on this pane, distinguishable from each other by the top being perforated at both top and bottom while the other has a straight edge at the bottom.

Musicians on United States Stamps



The booklet stamps appearing on the previous pages are shown here in a complete booklet pane of four stamps. Without the tab, they are identical to the bottom four stamps in the pane of eight.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Hank Williams 1923 - 1953



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

The two stamps above represent a reprise of the earlier issue in which there was only one design. These make the third and fourth (counting the perforation error) stamps to feature an individual who was not a President or major historical figure, and may be a record, especially since they all use the same illustration. The sheet stamps are part of a se-tenant pane.

Patsy Cline 1932 - 1963



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Country singer Patsy Cline was part of the early 1960s "Nashville Sound", but very successfully crossed over to pop music. She was one of the most acclaimed and influential female vocalists of the twentieth century. She was known for her rich, emotionally expressive contralto voice and helped pave the way for other women in the genre. She began singing at an early age in her church choir, but became ill with a throat infection that she claimed was the source of her booming voice. Her career began after asking her local radio station to let her sing, where she was very well received, leading to club dates and recording contracts. *Walkin' After Midnight*, *I Fall to Pieces*, *Crazy*, *Sweet Dreams* and *Back in Baby's Arms* are just a few of her hits.

Returning from a performance in Kansas City in March, 1963, her plane went down in stormy weather and no one aboard survived.

Musicians on United States Stamps

The Carter Family 1927 - 1956



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

The Carter Family was a traditional folk music group whose recordings spanned the years 1927 to 1956. They were the first vocal group to become country music stars and had great influence on bluegrass, country, gospel and rock musicians. The group consisted of A.P. Carter, his wife Sara Carter and sister-in-law Maybelle Carter. Sara Carter sang the lead vocals. Some of their hits are *Wabash Cannonball*, *Can the Circle Be Unbroken* and *Wildwood Flower*.

Bob Wills 1905 - 1975



Sheet Stamp



Booklet Stamp

Bob Wills was a songwriter, band leader and swing musician. He was called the "King of Western Swing". He formed several bands, including *The Texas Playboys* after years playing on the radio. They became nationally popular in the 1940s with hits such as *Steel Guitar Rag*, *New San Antonio Rose*, *New Spanish Two-Step* and *Faded Love*. After 1950, his career faded due to poor health and the growing popularity of the rock genre.

Musicians on United States Stamps



The booklet stamps appearing on the previous two pages are shown here in the complete booklet pane format.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Al Jolson
1886 - 1950



Jolson was a comedian, singer and actor whose extroverted, shamelessly sentimental, melodramatic style was the impetus behind the popularity of many songs of the 1930s. During that time he was the most popular and highest paid entertainer of the period. He starred in the first full-length talking movie, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927. He enjoyed performing in blackface, and introduced African-American music to a wide audience. He championed advancement of blacks in the arts and elsewhere. He also performed in musicals on Broadway. *My Mammy*, *California*, *Here I Come* and *Swanee* are indelibly associated with his name. Al Jolson was the first entertainer to perform for troops in both World War II and Korea, and it is his efforts that led to the formation of the USO.

Ethel Waters
1896 - 1977

Ethel Waters was an actress, blues, jazz and gospel singer. She began singing the blues in the 1920s, and later pop, jazz and big band music on the Broadway stage. On her 17th birthday her performance in a Chester, PA club led to her performing at the Lincoln Theater in Baltimore. She worked the black vaudeville circuit and carnivals, then went to Harlem where she made many records in the 1920s and 30s, frequently acting on Broadway. Some of her great hits are *Dinah*, *Stormy Weather*, *Heat Wave* and *Am I Blue?* Ethel made several films, before her career tapered off in the 1950s.



Bing Crosby
1894 - 1977



Born Harry Lillis Crosby, Bing's bass-baritone voice made him one of the best-selling recording artists of the 20th century. His laid-back, intimate style greatly influenced Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. In 1948, *Music Digest* said his records took up more than half of the weekly radio time devoted to music. Touring Europe in World War II and later, he saw how tape recording was superior to then current methods, and formed the Crosby Research Institute to further develop tape recording. He sponsored Ampex, and was the first to pre-record his shows to eliminate a second performance for western time zones. He received an Oscar for his role as Father O'Malley in *Going My Way* in 1944, and made seven films with Bob Hope, the *Road...* series. His *White Christmas* is the all time best selling single, but *Where the Blue of the Night*, his theme song, and *Out of Nowhere* are not to be forgotten.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Nat King Cole
1917 - 1965



Nat Cole began his career at 12, taking formal training in piano, and became a prominent jazz pianist. The addition of vocals in his soft baritone voice determined a change in emphasis on his performances. Radio was quite important in advancing his popularity. He played many Chicago clubs in the 1930s, and by the 1940s was recording for a more mainstream audience. *His Straighten Up and Fly Right, Unforgettable, Nature Boy, Too Young and Mona Lisa* are still popular. *The Nat King Cole Show* was the first on TV hosted by a black performer, but failed due to lack of national sponsorship in 1957. He had many hits in the 1950s and was especially popular with the Latin audience, as he recorded several albums in Spanish. Changing public tastes in music contributed to the end of his career.

Ethel Merman
1909 - 1984

Ethel Merman, "The First Lady of Musical Comedy", was an actress and singer, primarily in the area of musical theater. She became interested in music in high school, watching vaudeville and emulating it. In the mid twenties she was performing at private parties and clubs. Her act caught the attention of columnists, who publicized it in the papers. Some of her best known songs are *I Got Rhythm, I Get a Kick Out of You, You're the Top* and *There's No Business Like Show Business*. Her performance in *Girl Crazy* led to her starring in ten musical films. The last part of her career was devoted entirely to musical shows.



Bessie Smith
1894 - 1937



"The Empress of the Blues", Bessie Smith was the most popular female blues singer of the 1920s and 1930s. Along with Louis Armstrong, she is considered to be one of the major influences on jazz vocalists of the period. Her career started in 1912 in Chattanooga as a dancer, when she was hired by a band which already had a vocalist. Afterward she moved on to the Theater Owners Booking Association circuit, and began recording for Columbia Records in 1923. Bessie eventually had her own show, which included up to forty performers, and toured on her own private railway car. Later, her career tapered off as musical tastes changed to newer genres of music.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Muddy Waters 1915 - 1983



Muddy Waters was born McKinley Morganfield and was known as "The Father of the Modern Chicago Blues". He started by learning to play the harmonica and guitar, and eventually became confident that he had the ability to become a professional musician. By the 1940s he was playing in many clubs in the Chicago area. When his popularity increased, he began recording for several companies. He formed his own band in the 1950s, and is known especially for *I Can't Be Satisfied*, *I Feel Like Goin' Home* and his signature tune, *Rollin' Stone*. He had a large influence on the British jazz explosion of the 1960s, which faded away after the arrival of The Beatles on the musical scene.

Billie Holiday's vocal style, inspired by jazz singers, pioneered a new way of manipulating tempo and phrasing. Though she wrote few songs, some of them have become jazz standards, such as *God Bless the Child*, *Fine and Mellow* and *Lady Sings the Blues*. In 1927, she teamed up with a neighbor, sax player Ken Hollan, and the pair played the Harlem club circuit. Producer John Hammond saw her there and arranged for her recording debut with Benny Goodman. An early hit was *I Cried for You*. She worked for Count Basie, singing *I Can't Get Started* and *Summertime*. Holiday became the featured singer for Artie Shaw, and in 1938 had a radio broadcast which vastly increased her exposure. She made many recordings during the mid-1950s, but she was becoming progressively ill, largely due to drug and alcohol abuse, which led to her death from cirrhosis of the liver in 1959.

Billie Holiday 1915 - 1959



Robert Johnson 1911 - 1938



Johnson was a blues singer and guitarist. He described himself as a "walkin' musician", an itinerant who played throughout Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee and small delta towns, even at school dances and on street corners. He began his recording career in 1936, signing with Brunswick Records, which led to the release of sixteen songs, some of which are *Kind Hearted Woman*, *Terraplane Blues* and *Come On in My Kitchen*. In 1937 he recorded eleven more. Johnson was among the first to edit his compositions to fit the three minutes available on a 78 RPM disk. He never achieved recognition during his lifetime, only after the re-release of his records in 1961, when he was regarded as a master of the Mississippi Delta Blues style. His death is an unsolved murder, but is believed to have been committed by the husband or boyfriend of one of the many women with whom he consorted in his travels throughout the South.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Jimmy Rushing
1902 - 1972



Jimmy Rushing was a swing jazz singer and “blues shouter”, best known as the featured vocalist with Count Basie’s band. Due to his rotund build he was called “Mr. Five by Five” after a 1942 Harry James song of that name. His most popular records were *Boogie Woogie*, *Goin’ to Chicago* and *Harvard Blues*. His powerful voice enabled him to be heard over the instruments in a big band, and ranged from bass to tenor. He left Basie’s band when it broke up in 1950, retired for a period, then formed his own band. Rushing also made album recordings with the Dave Brubeck Quartet and Duke Ellington’s band in later years.

Mildred Bailey
1907 - 1951

Mildred Bailey was a popular and influential jazz singer during the 1930s. She was called “The Queen of Swing”. Some of her most popular recordings are *It’s So Peaceful in the Country*, *I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart*, *Small Fry*, *Darn That Dream* and *Rockin’ Chair*. Bing Crosby introduced her to Paul Whiteman and she sang with his band from 1929 to 1933. She left Whiteman to record with the Dorsey brothers and Benny Goodman. In the mid-1930s, she and husband Red Norvo recorded with his band until 1945, when her health began to fail. She died of diabetes and heart failure in 1951.



“Ma” Rainey
1886 - 1939



“Ma” Rainey was one of the earliest professional blues singers, and also one of the first of her generation to record her songs. She was called “Mother of the Blues”. She began her career at twelve to fourteen years of age, and made over a hundred recordings, starting in 1923. They include *Bo-Weevil Blues*, *Moonshine Blues*, *See See Rider* and the *Black Bottom*. Her powerful voice and style aren’t done justice by the records. She had an exclusive contract with Paramount, which was noted for its poor recording techniques and the low quality of the finished records. She later recorded with Louis Armstrong, and then performed on tour until her retirement in 1935.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Louis Armstrong
1901 - 1971



“Satchmo” Armstrong was a jazz trumpeter, cornetist, singer and composer from New Orleans, coming to prominence in the 1920s. One of his primary influences on jazz was the shifting of emphasis from collective improvisation to solo performance. His deep gravelly voice was instantly recognizable to most Americans. Renowned for his stage presence and voice as much as his playing, he was a profound influence on popular music as well as jazz. He was an avid listener to the local musicians and learned to play the cornet in his teens. He played in dance halls and brass band parades and in the band of Joe “King” Oliver. He left Oliver to join Fletcher Henderson in New York. At this time, he made many records on the side. His *Stardust*, *Lazy River*, and *Rockin’ Chair* were big hits before his greatest, *Hello, Dolly*, which in 1964 displaced the Beatles from the #1 spot they had for fourteen weeks.

The stamp comes in two varieties: the first with white denomination and USA comes from a pane with just the Armstrong stamp, and the other with black denomination and USA comes from a se-tenant pane with other artists.

Howlin’ Wolf
1910 - 1976



Chester Arthur Burnett, known as Howlin’ Wolf was a blues singer, guitarist and harmonica player with a booming voice and huge physical presence, being 6’3” and 300 pounds. A number of his songs, like *Smokestack Lightnin’*, *Killing Floor* and *Spoonful* have become blues standards. He acquired the nickname from his grandfather, who told stories of the wolves in the area. In the 1930s, he performed in the South as a solo artist, but after a short stint in the Army in WW II formed his band in 1948. and moved to Chicago in 1953. His album *Howlin’ Wolf* was released in 1962 and he toured Europe with the American Folk Blues Festival. His last album, *The Back Door Wolf*, came out in 1973. Unlike many musicians of the time he was always financially successful and able to afford to pay the best musicians of the time to play with him.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Coleman Hawkins
1904 - 1969



Coleman Hawkins was one of first prominent jazz musicians to play tenor sax. Before that, it wasn't really known as jazz horn. He was strongly associated with swing & big band, and had a role in start of bebop in the 1940s. His first major break came in 1921, and he joined Fletcher Henderson in 1923, where he subbed on clarinet & bass sax. In 1934, he was invited to join Jack Hylton in London, and toured Europe till 1939. Back in U.S. in 1939, he recorded *Body and Soul*, a landmark in that only first four bars of the melody are recognizable. It was considered the next advance in jazz recording. Unsuccessful with his own big band, he was leader with Dizzy Gillespie & Max Roach on the first ever bebop recording. After 1948, he divided time between the U.S. and Europe, and began to play more traditionally, tapering off till his last recording in 1967.

James P. Johnson
1894 - 1965



A pianist & composer, Johnson is considered along with Jelly Roll Morton one of the two most important pianists to bridge ragtime and jazz. He was a role model for Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Art Tatum & Fats Waller, and was the composer of many hit tunes including *Charleston* and *If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight*. Johnson also created the show "Runnin' Wild". He was the most technically proficient pianist till Art Tatum. His Harlem Stride style has the syncopation of rag, but a more freely swinging rhythm, some elements of blues and more complex harmonies. His musical legacy is heard particularly in the style of Fats Waller and others.

Jelly Roll Morton
1890 - 1941



Ferdinand Joseph LaMothe, ragtime and early jazz pianist, band leader and composer, got his start in New Orleans. He is notable for being the first jazz arranger, proving that a genre noted for improvisation could retain the essential spirit and characteristics of jazz even when notated. *Jelly Roll Blues*, a foxtrot was the first published jazz composition. He wrote *Wolverine Blues*, *Black Bottom Stomp* and *King Porter Stomp*. He started touring the South at fourteen with minstrel shows. He then moved to Chicago, where in 1923 he released his first recordings. He signed a Victor contract 1926. His songs of the period with the *Red Hot Peppers* are regarded as classics of 1920s. After moving to New York in 1928, his career suffered due to lack of good available sidemen. Due to the collapse of the recording industry in the depression, he lost his contract and struggled financially. After relocating to Washington DC, was stabbed in a brawl, which eventually led to his death.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Charlie "Bird" Parker
1920 - 1955



Known as Yardbird, but more frequently Bird, Charlie Parker was a jazz alto and tenor saxophonist and composer. An influential soloist and leading figure in development of bebop, he introduced new and revolutionary harmonic techniques to jazz. Parker's virtuosic technique and complex melodic lines on records sometimes included other genres such as blues, Latin & classical elements. He became an icon for the "Beat Generation", personifying jazz musicians as uncompromising artists and intellectuals rather than simply entertainers.

A composer, lyricist and ragtime pianist, Eubie (from his middle name, Hubert) Blake is best known for his ragtime compositions, though he also was involved in jazz and popular music. He co-wrote the Broadway musical *Shuffle Along* with Noble Sissie, and himself became the subject of a musical, *Eubie*, in 1979. His works include *Memories of You*, *I'm Just Wild About Harry* and *Charleston Rag*, which he said he wrote at the age of twelve, but didn't publish till he learned musical notation at age fifteen. He began playing at four or five and started formal lessons at seven. During the ragtime revival of the 1950s, he relaunched his career as an artist, educator and lecturer. Eubie was a frequent guest on TV with Merv Griffin & Johnny Carson and performed with Gregory Hines, Leonard Bernstein and Arthur Fiedler, the last on *Evening at Pops* on public television.

Eubie Blake
1887 - 1983



Charles Mingus
1922 - 1979



Mingus was an influential jazz double bassist, composer and bandleader. His compositions retained the feel of hard bop and drew from gospel music as well. He created his own brand of music that fused tradition with unexplored realms of jazz. His noted hot temperament earned him the nickname "Angry Man of Jazz," due to his many on-stage eruptions, exhortations to musicians and their dismissals. He refused to compromise in the performance of his music, and at one time much of it was considered too difficult to play without his leadership. Due to the brilliance of his writing for mid-size orchestras and his emphasizing the strengths of band members, he is sometime called the heir to Duke Ellington.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Thelonius Monk

1917 - 1982



A composer and jazz pianist, he was considered by many to be one of the giants of American music. His compositions are full of dissonant harmonies & melodic twists, which he played with a highly percussive style with abrupt pauses and silences. At times, he would get up from the piano bench and dance a bit while the band continued to play. Some of his songs in the standard jazz repertoire are *Epistrophy*, *Round Midnight* and *Straight, No Chaser*. He is the second-most recorded jazz composer after Duke Ellington, all the more remarkable since Ellington wrote over a thousand songs while Monk wrote only seventy.

Beginning as an alto saxophonist and jazz composer, Coltrane concentrated primarily on bebop & hard bop in his early career. He joined the Navy in 1945 and played in the Navy jazz band. He returned to civilian life in 1946 and studied jazz theory with Dennis Sandole. At this time he switched to tenor sax. A significant moment in his life came when he first heard Charlie Parker play in 1945. Parker became his idol, and they sometimes played together in the late 1940s. He joined Miles Davis' band in the mid 1950s, at which time several significant albums were released, notably *Thelonius Monk with John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall*. In the 1960s, influenced by Sidney Bechet, he took up soprano sax and formed his own quartet. His music of his period has a strong spiritual flavor. The quartet later expanded to a quintet, and featured avant-garde jazz until his impaired health finally led to his death.

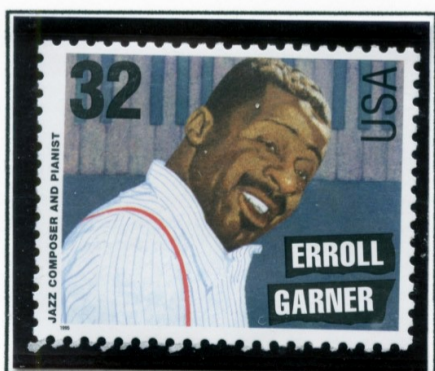
John Coltrane

1926 - 1967



Erroll Garner

1921 - 1977



Erroll Garner was a jazz pianist and composer noted for his swing playing and ballads. His best known composition is *Misty*, which has become a jazz standard. He was musically self-taught and remained an "ear player" all his life, never having learned to read music. He first appeared on radio at seven, was playing on river boats at eleven, and joined saxophonist Leroy Brown at fourteen. He played with Charlie Parker in 1947 on the *Cool Blues* session. Garner was known for his superb musical memory. An example is that on one occasion after hearing a classical concert, played a large part of it from memory. He was reportedly Johnny Carson's favorite jazz musician and frequently appeared on *The Tonight Show*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Count Basie
1904 - 1984



A jazz pianist, organist, composer and band leader, Basie was taught piano by his mother and was performing by his mid-teens at local venues. In 1924 he left home for Harlem, where he played with many bands, then toured Chicago, St. Louis and Kansas City with Bennie Moten's band until Moten's death in 1935. He then formed his own band, moved to Chicago and led his group for over fifty years. The Count made several arranging innovations, such as the use of two tenor saxophones. Two of his best known compositions are *One O' Clock Jump* and *April in Paris*.

The Dorsey Brothers Orchestra was a studio group only throughout its life. They began recording in 1928 and through its existence included almost all of the great white jazz musicians of the period. The band broke up in 1935 due to differences between the brothers. Their greatest hit together was "*Lullaby of Broadway*".

Tommy Dorsey was a trombonist, trumpeter and band leader. In 1935 he took over Joe Haymes' band and he was noted for raiding other bands for their star performers. He hired Frank Sinatra and made 80 records with him. Tommy's best known songs are *Marie*, *Boogie Woogie*, *All the Things You Are* and *Sentimental Journey*.

Jimmy was a trumpeter, clarinetist, composer and band leader. He took over the Dorsey band in 1935 and hired Bob Eberly, Ray McKinley, and in 1939, Helen O'Connell. This pair used an "a-b-c" format where Jimmy would sing a solo, then the band would play alone, followed by Helen's solo. The big hits were *Tangerine*, *Maria Elena*, *Amapola* and *Green Eyes*. He rejoined Tommy's band in the early 1950s.

Tommy Dorsey
1905 - 1956

Jimmy Dorsey
1904 - 1957



Harold Arlen
1905 - 1986



Harold Arlen was a composer of popular music. In collaboration with lyricists Ted Koehler, Yip Harburg and Johnny Mercer, he wrote over five hundred songs, the best known of which is *Over the Rainbow*, sung by Judy Garland in *The Wizard of Oz*. His tunes were very popular with jazz performers as they were usually very adaptable to the blues genre.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Glenn Miller
1904 - 1944



Miller was a cornetist, big band arranger, composer and band leader. Becoming interested in dance music in high school, he left college to follow a musical career. He toured with Ben Pollack and Victor Young as a player, but realized his talents were more adaptable to composing instead. While playing with an undistinguished band, he created the "Glenn Miller Sound" of lead clarinet over four saxophones, which was unique to his band. His career then took off, and by 1939 as many as a quarter of recordings on juke boxes were his. He was sponsored by Chesterfield on the radio in the 1940s, and joined the army in 1942. He persuaded the army to make him leader of the Army Air Force Band. While on tour in England, his plane disappeared on a flight to Paris over the English Channel. *Moonlight Serenade*, *String of Pearls*, *Pennsylvania 6-5000* and *Little Brown Jug* are some of his best known compositions.

Goodman was a jazz and swing musician, clarinetist and band leader who became known as the "King of Swing". He was enrolled at the age of ten music lessons, then two years of classical clarinet. Benny played with several bands around Chicago, where the New Orleans style of jazz was popular. He joined Ben Pollack in 1926, then recorded under his own name in 1928. His was one of radio's three bands on *Let's Dance*, where he became very popular using Fletcher Henderson's arrangements. After the show folded in 1935, he toured, then went on the *Camel Caravan* show. In 1938 he was booked into Carnegie Hall as a publicity stunt, where it immediately sold out. The concert was an immense success and the recordings have never been out of print since. His big hits were *One O' Clock Jump*, *Sing, Sing, Sing*, *Blue Room*, *Stompin' at the Savoy* and *Don't Be That Way*. As big bands began to fade during the 1940s, his interests turned toward classical music and we are indebted to him for many pieces in that genre.

Benny Goodman
1909 - 1986



Johnny Mercer
1909 - 1976



A lyricist, songwriter and singer, Mercer was also a co-founder of Capitol Records. He became interested in music at an early age, particularly the black music he was exposed to in his boyhood surroundings in Savannah, Georgia. He was greatly involved with music in college, where he realized his greatest talent was in lyrics and singing. He moved to New York, where jazz and blues were popular, and was first published in 1931. His singing debut was in 1932, and *Lazybones* was his first hit. He moved to Hollywood in 1935 and began writing songs for movies. His *I'm an Old Cowhand from the Rio Grande* in a Bing Crosby movie assured his career, and he was in great demand for other films. In the 1950s, rock music cut into his popularity, but his movie songs still remained in vogue. *Jeepers Creepers*, *You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby* and *That Old Black Magic* are some of his better known songs.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Dorothy Fields
1905 - 1974



A librettist and lyricist, Dorothy Fields wrote over 400 songs for the movies and Broadway musicals. She was among the first successful female songwriters in Hollywood and Tin Pan Alley. Her career began to soar in 1928, when she was invited by Jimmy McHugh to provide the lyrics for *Blackbirds of 1928*. They worked as a team through 1935, and this period produced *I Can't Give You Anything But Love* and *On the Sunny Side of the Street*. In the later 1930s, she collaborated with Jerome Kern on the movies *Roberta* and *Swing Time*. *The Way You Look Tonight* won the pair an Oscar in 1936. Back on Broadway, she and her brother wrote the books for three Cole Porter shows as well as *Annie Get Your Gun*, for which Irving Berlin wrote the music when Jerome Kern passed away.

Hoagy, from his middle name, Hoagland, was a pianist, composer, singer, actor and band leader. He is best known for the composition of *Stardust*, *Georgia on My Mind*, *The Nearness of You* and *Heart and Soul*, four of the most-recorded songs of all time. Composer Alec Wilder called him the most talented, innovative, sophisticated composer of the first half of the twentieth century. He began playing piano at six, easily absorbing his mother's musical skills. He got his degree in 1925 and a law degree in 1926 and started a law firm, but devoted most of his time to composing and *Washboard Blues* and *Riverboat Shuffle* were among his first hits. *Stardust* came out in 1929, followed by *Up a Lazy River* in 1930. This began a long string of hits extending through the mid 1960s. He also acted in fourteen films, playing one of his songs in each. Hoagy claimed to have the longest song title ever, *I'm a Cranky Old Yank in a Clanky Old Tank on the Streets of Yokohama with My Honolulu Mama Doin' Those Beat-o, Beat on My Seat-o, Hirohito Blues*, written in 1942.

Hoagy Carmichael
1899 - 1981



Lily Pons
1898 - 1976



Lily Pons was a French-born operatic soprano and actress who had an active career from the late 1920s through the early 1970s. She specialized in the coloratura soprano roles and performed title roles in *Lakmé* and *Lucia di Lammemoor*. She was primarily associated with the Metropolitan Opera, performing over 300 times there, but appeared world-wide at many other opera houses. Her career debuted in 1928 and sang in French provincial opera houses until discovered by Giovanni Zenatello, who brought her to New York, where she made her debut as Lucia at the Metropolitan Opera with tremendous success. She was principal soprano there for over thirty years. During World War II, she cancelled her season and toured Europe with the USO. Her career in opera lasted through 1960, but she gave many concerts afterward. She was extremely successful at promoting herself as an icon, matched only by Luciano Pavarotti, even managing to have a town in Maryland named Lilypons, from which she mailed her Christmas cards thereafter.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Richard Tucker
1913 - 1975



An operatic tenor, he was born Rivn Ticker in Brooklyn, NY, and his musical talent was discovered early. He began lessons before the first grade, and he began singing in his teens at Jewish festivals and as a cantor. Edward Johnson, general manager of the Metropolitan Opera, heard Tucker and offered him a contract. In 1945, he debuted in *La Gioconda*, the start of a 30 year career as the leading American tenor. He was engaged by Toscanini for the role of Radames in *Aida*, the first full opera shown on American TV, and had a long series of recordings with Columbia and RCA Victor. Many of his TV performances have been reissued on DVD. He died of a heart attack in 1975 on tour, and his funeral is the only one ever held on the Metropolitan Opera stage.

Lawrence Tibbett
1896 - 1960



Lawrence Tibbett began his career singing in church choirs and at funerals. After service in World War I, he began singing as a prologue to silent films at Grauman's Theater in Los Angeles. He studied voice in New York and at 25 got a contract with the Metropolitan Opera, where his roles steadily improved and he began to achieve national recognition. In the 1930s he appeared in five films and also had a radio program that was sponsored by Packard autos. With violinist Jascha Heifitz, he founded the American Guild of Performing Artists, a labor union for soloists. In later years, he performed in shows and musicals and hosted a show featuring operatic recordings.

Rosa Ponselle
1897 - 1961



Rosa Ponselle was an American operatic soprano who sang mainly at the Metropolitan Opera. She is considered to be one of the greatest sopranos of the twentieth century. Without any training, she began singing between reels at silent movie theaters and she also played the piano accompaniment. From 1915 to 1918 she appeared with sister Carmela in a vaudeville act. She then began voice lessons, and her manager was so impressed that he had her audition for Enrico Caruso and was awarded a contract. Her Met debut as Leonora in Verdi's *La forza del destino*, despite her nervousness, was an immense success and she went on to a long string of lead roles in New York. She made several tours in London and once in Florence, but never again outside the United States. Her last role was the lead in *Carmen* in 1937, after which problems with Met management denying her the roles she desired caused her retirement.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Leopold Stokowski
1882 - 1977



A British orchestra leader, Leopold Stokowski became one of the leading conductors of the early and mid-twentieth century. He is known for his long association with the Philadelphia Orchestra and was in the film *Fantasia*. He had a penchant for free-hand conducting rather than the use of a baton, and for obtaining a characteristically lush sound from his orchestra. He also performed with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra and the Symphony of the Air. He was the founder of the All-American Youth Orchestra, the New York City Symphony and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra. He was a lifelong champion of many contemporary composers, giving many premiers of new music. His career lasted 60 years, ending only months prior to his death at 95.

Fiedler was the long time conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra, which specializes in light classical and popular music. He was a native Bostonian, but moved to Vienna with his parents in 1910, then Berlin in 1911. He studied violin there for four years and moved back to the United States in 1915 at the start of World War I. He formed the Boston Sinfonietta in 1924, giving outdoor concerts. He became the Pops conductor in 1930 and made it his life's work, spending over fifty years in that position. His recordings with RCA Victor began in 1935, including the million-seller *Jalousie*, and in 1950 their first LP classical album, *Gaité Parisienne*. He made the Pops the world's most-recorded orchestra, with over fifty million dollars in sales. He switched to Deutsche Grammophon for classical recordings in 1960 and then London Records. Fiedler was regularly featured on the PBS TV show *Evening at Pops*, and also spent 26 summers associated with the San Francisco Pops Orchestra.

Arthur Fiedler
1894 - 1979



George Szell was a Hungarian-born composer and conductor. He began his musical training at an early age and by age eleven he was touring Europe as a composer and pianist. By seventeen he performed as composer, pianist and conductor with the Berlin Philharmonic. He was befriended by Richard Strauss, who applauded his performances of his works. He remained in the U.S. after a world tour in 1939 due to the start of World War II. A series of guest appearances, including the NBC Symphony and Metropolitan Opera, he took a position in Cleveland, where he spent most of his career as music director of the Cleveland Orchestra until his death. From his start there in 1946, he turned the orchestra into what was critically acclaimed as the "world's keenest symphonic instrument." Widely believed to be one of the best twentieth century conductors, Szell's compositions are little known, and his legacy is the reputation of the Cleveland Orchestra recordings.

George Szell
1897 - 1970



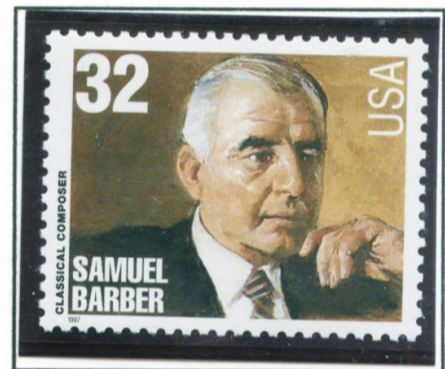
Musicians on United States Stamps

Eugene Ormandy
1899 - 1985



A Hungarian-born violinist and composer, Ormandy began studying violin in Budapest at the age of five. He gave his first concert at seven and graduated with a master's degree at fourteen. He moved to New York in 1921, was hired as a violinist at the Capitol Theater, and was raised to concert master five days later, and conductor soon afterward. He became conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony in 1931, then began a forty-four year term with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy developed the lush sounding style like Stokowski's for which the orchestra is known and often conducted from memory and without a baton. Under his direction, the works of many American composers were premiered in Philadelphia. The orchestra made a number of foreign tours, and after retirement in 1980, Ormandy made many guest appearances.

Samuel Barber
1910 - 1981



Samuel Barber was an American composer of orchestral, opera, choral and piano music, and is one of the most celebrated composers of the twentieth century. He was awarded two Pulitzer prizes, for the opera *Vanessa* and his *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*. Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, which premiered in 1936 has since become a standard in the repertoire of many orchestras. Nearly all of his compositions have been recorded. He was active in his later years with UNESCO, where he tried to help ameliorate the conditions faced by musicians and musical organizations worldwide.

Ferde Grofé
1892 - 1972



An American composer, arranger and pianist, Grofé came from four generations of musicians. He studied piano, viola and composition abroad in Leipzig, and later became proficient with baritone horn, alto horn and cornet. This range gave him the background he needed to become an arranger of other composer's music and later a composer himself. Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* is most often heard today in Ferde Grofé's arrangement for Paul Whiteman's orchestra. At that time, he was called the "Prime Minister of Jazz", Whiteman being the "King". He composed *Mississippi Suite* in 1925, but his name is most often associated with his *Grand Canyon Suite*, written in 1935. He appeared on radio many times, and conducted at Carnegie Hall on two occasions

Musicians on United States Stamps

Charles Ives
1874 - 1954



Charles Ives was a modernist composer, one of the first Americans to achieve international recognition. His music was largely ignored during his lifetime, and many works were not performed until years later. He combined church music with European music, and had a systematic program of experimental music, using polytonality, polyrhythm, tone clusters and quarter tones, forerunners of twentieth century musical innovations. His early works include a lot of church music. At Yale, he studied music and also was a prominent athlete. His Symphony #1 was his senior thesis. His symphonies and sonatas were always at the forefront of experimentation, as his *Central Park in the Dark* was the first really radical piece of the twentieth century. His style became established with *The Unanswered Question*. Oddly enough, his life-long profession was in the insurance business, at which he was innovative and very successful throughout his life.

Gottschalk was an American composer and pianist, best known for his virtuoso performances of his own works. Born in New Orleans, he played piano at an early age and was recognized as a prodigy at eleven. He went to Europe for classical training, though rejected by the Paris Conservatoire on the basis of being American. He gradually achieved his goal and returned to the U.S. in 1853. In 1854 he began a series of tours through the Americas and by 1860 was the best known pianist in the New World. He left the U.S. in 1865 due to a scandalous affair in California and never returned. He continued to give concerts in South America, and he collapsed during a concert in Rio de Janeiro due to malaria and never recovered, his death being attributed to an overdose of quinine. His best known works are *Bamboula*, *La Savane* and *La Mancenillier*.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk
1829 - 1869



Lead Belly
1881 - 1949



Huddie Ledbetter was an American folk and blues musician noted for his strong vocals and virtuosity on the twelve string guitar, as well as a songbook of folk standards he introduced. He also played the piano, mandolin, harmonica, violin and accordion. The subjects of his music include gospel songs, blues, liquor, prison and racism, as well as songs about the news headlines of the time, such as Franklin Roosevelt, Adolf Hitler, Howard Hughes and Jean Harlow. By the time he was twenty-three, he was already a singer and guitarist of note. He was performing in Shreveport on Fannin Street, a notorious district of saloons, brothels and dance halls, and exposure to the music there helped him develop his personal style. In and out of prison in his later years, his songs recorded there made his reputation, such as *Midnight Special*, *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*, *Let It Shine on Me* and *Titanic*. He spent the latter part of his career in New York giving concerts, as he was not very popular with the black club audiences in Harlem.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Woodie Guthrie
1912 - 1967



Woodie Guthrie was an American singer, songwriter and folk musician who left as his legacy hundreds of traditional, political, children's songs and ballads. Other songwriters such as Bob Dylan, John Mellencamp, Bruce Springsteen and Pete Seeger have acknowledged Guthrie as a major influence on the genre. His best known song by far is *This Land Is Your Land*. Many of his songs are based on his experiences in the Dust Bowl during the Depression era. He had a long history of association with the Communist Party, though never a member, and the better part of his political songs embraced their values. Today they would be labeled protest songs. In later years his health began to fail, but he and his songs were rediscovered by a new audience during the 1960s Folk Revival, partly due to Pete Seeger and son Arlo, also a folk singer.

Sonny Terry was a blind Piedmont blues musician, well known for his energetic harmonica style. He learned to play blues harp as a young man, and after he lost his sight in his teens he was forced to make his living through music. He joined a Piedmont blues trio and was invited to play at the first Carnegie Hall *From Spirituals to Swing* concert in 1938. His first commercial recordings were in 1940. Terry's best known songs are *Old Jabo* and *Lost John*. He established a long-time relationship with Brownie McGhee and they made numerous recordings together. Together the pair became well known to white audiences during the folk revival of the 1950s and 1960s. He appeared in the original cast of *Finian's Rainbow* on Broadway as well as the films *The Color Purple* and *The Jerk*.

Sonny Terry
1911 - 1986



Josh White
1914 - 1969



Josh White was an American singer, guitarist, songwriter, actor and civil rights activist. Growing up in the South during the 1920s and 1930s, he produced many "race records" in the blues, gospel and social protest genres. He moved to New York in 1931 and he began to include urban blues, jazz and traditional folk songs in his repertoire. He soon was in demand on Broadway and as a radio and film actor. His works were an inspiration to many upcoming performers in the revival of folk music in the 1960s. He was a close friend of Franklin D. Roosevelt, but this did not prevent him from being involved in the Communist scare when he was blacklisted by the McCarthyites from 1947 through the 1960s due to the content of many of his songs. This did serious damage to his career, and he was only removed from the television blacklist in 1963 when invited to appear on *Dinner With the President* with John F. Kennedy.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Mahalia Jackson
1911 - 1972



An American gospel singer, she often was referred to as "The Queen of Gospel". Raised by her aunt after the death of her mother when she was five, she never attended school and learned her music at church, where she loved to sing. At sixteen, she moved to Chicago and began to tour with the *Johnson Gospel Singers*, an early professional group. She met composer Thomas Dorsey, the "Father of Gospel Music", who gave her musical advice, and they had a fourteen year association beginning in the 1930s, with her singing his songs. His *Take My Hand, Precious Lord* became her signature song. During her career, she recorded over 30 albums and had a dozen million-seller 45 RPM records. Her *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and *His Eye Is on the Sparrow* were also very popular. During the 1950 - 1970 period she was considered the world's best gospel singer, and toured extensively worldwide. She ended her career in 1971 and became very active in the civil rights movement thereafter.

Roberta Martin was a gospel composer, singer, pianist and arranger who helped launch the careers of many other artists through her group, The Roberta Martin Singers. Beginning piano lessons at ten looking toward a career as such, her interest changed to gospel music after listening to church choirs. She met Thomas Dorsey, and with his help organized the Martin-Frye Quartet with Theodore Frye. In 1933 the group was renamed the Roberta Martin Singers and expanded greatly through the 1940s. Their recordings were very successful, and most of them had been published by her Roberta Martin Studio of Music. *Only a Look* became their theme song and was always sung at the beginning of a concert. She accompanied the group on piano. She briefly left the music scene due to cancer, but returned to do her final album, *Praise God*. The group disbanded after her death, but still continues to do reunion concerts.

Roberta Martin
1907 - 1969



Clara Ward
1924 - 1973



Clara Ward was a gospel artist who achieved great success during the 1940s and 1950s as leader of *The Famous Ward Singers*, successor to a family group founded by her mother. She made her first solo recording in 1940. The group began touring nationally in 1943, but the addition of Marion Williams, a soprano with a broad range and powerful voice, aided their popularity greatly when they began recording in 1948. They toured coast to coast in 1949, appearing in Hollywood and on TV. 1950 saw them at Carnegie Hall, sharing the stage with Mahalia Jackson at the *Negro Music Festival*, and again in 1952. Williams left in 1958 after a salary dispute, and most of the group left with her. That, along with her performing in Las Vegas and other secular venues cost her much of her audience. She began to sing with her sister's background group during the 1960s, and toured Vietnam for the USO in 1968 and 1969. Her group toured the U.S. and Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, and were frequently seen on television specials before her retirement due to her health soon after.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Sister Rosetta
1915 - 1973



Sister Rosetta Tharpe was a singer, songwriter, guitarist and recording artist. She became very popular in the 1930s - 1940s with her gospel records, which were a combination of spiritual lyrics and early rock rhythm. She was gospel's first "crossover" singer, and was an influence on Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis Presley and Little Richard. Her willingness to perform in secular venues led to gospel being pushed into mainstream music, led by her *This Train* in 1939. *Down by the Riverside* in 1944 was a great hit, and in 1945 *Strange Things Are Happening Every Day* was the first gospel record to cross over, hitting #2 on the R & B chart. It is considered a rock and roll precursor by many. Recording for Decca in 1938, her first releases, including *Lonesome Road*, were instant hits. She toured through the 1940s, but her career took a downturn when she turned to blues in the 1950s. She regained her popularity in the 1960s, but a stroke ended her career in 1970.

Max Steiner was an Austrian-born composer of music for films and theater. Trained by Brahms and Robert Fuchs, he was a prodigy who conducted an operetta at twelve and became a professional composer, arranger and conductor at fifteen. He worked in England and on Broadway before turning to Hollywood in 1929, becoming one of the first composers of film scores. Working with Waxman, Korngold and Newman, he had a major role in creating a tradition of film scores. He wrote over 300 scores and was nominated 24 times for Oscars, and winning three. He was the recipient of the first Golden Globe for Best Film Score, for *Life With Father*. Other works include *King Kong*, *Little Women*, *Casablanca*, *Jezebel* and *Gone With the Wind*.

Max Steiner
1888 - 1971



Dimitri Tiomkin
1894 - 1979



Tiomkin was a Ukrainian-born composer and conductor. He was nominated for 22 Oscars and won four. He is considered one of the giants of movie music, and was best known for his many scores for westerns. He moved to Berlin after the Russian revolution, then to Paris in 1923. He was invited to New York in 1925 to accompany a ballet troupe. After the market crash in 1929 there was little work for classical musicians and he went to Hollywood as supervisor of dance numbers in MGM musicals. His big break was writing the score for Frank Capra's *Lost Horizon*. He went on to compose scores for *You Can't Take It With You*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's a Wonderful Life* for Capra. His other well-known film scores of the period include *High Noon*, *The High and the Mighty*, *Dial M for Murder*, *Giant* and *Town Without Pity*. He also wrote for television, and the themes from *Rawhide* and *Gunslinger* are his compositions.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Bernard Herrmann
1911 - 1975



Bernard Herrmann was an American composer particularly noted for his work in films. Born in New York, he studied violin and won a composition prize at thirteen. He studied with Percy Grainger and Philip James before going on to the Juilliard School of Music, and formed the New Chamber Music Orchestra of New York at age twenty. He performed on many radio programs in the 1930s and 1940s and collaborated with Orson Welles, notably on his 1938 *War of the Worlds* broadcast. He soon began composing for films, and his first score was for *Citizen Kane*. He was closely associated with Alfred Hitchcock and wrote most of his film scores, including *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and *Psycho*. He won an Oscar in 1941 for *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. He also composed for many TV shows, including *The Twilight Zone* and *Have Gun - Will Travel*.

Primarily a film composer, Waxman began studying at the Dresden Music Academy, and began writing for movies, including *Blue Angel* in 1930. His works came under attack by the Nazi government, and he then left Germany for France in 1934 and Hollywood soon after. Waxman wrote the scores for *The Bride of Frankenstein*, *Rebecca* and *Rear Window*. He also composed many concert works, notably his masterpiece, *Terezin*, based on poetry by children in the Theresienstadt concentration camp during World War II. In 1947, he founded the Los Angeles Music Festival, where he conducted a number of premieres of music by both film and concert composers, and served as director for twenty years. He won Oscars two years in succession for *Sunset Boulevard* in 1950 and *A Place in the Sun* in 1951. *Taras Bulba* was his final major work for film, but he worked on *Gunsmoke* and many other television shows in his later years.

Franz Waxman
1906 - 1967



Alfred Newman
1901 - 1970



Alfred Newman was a composer, arranger and conductor of film scores. He was head of a family of noted Hollywood composers which included his two brothers, two sons and a nephew. His career lasted over forty years and he composed scores for more than 200 films and he is considered one of the finest composers of film music. He won nine Academy Awards, second only to Walt Disney, and he was nominated 45 times, with only Disney and John Williams having more. He was noted for his adaptations of Broadway musicals to film, such as *The King and I*, *Camelot*, *Call Me Madam*, and all but three of the Rodgers and Hammerstein productions. Their film, *State Fair*, was written specifically for his music. Some of his other works include the music for *Wuthering Heights*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Gunga Din*, *Beau Geste*, *How the West Was Won* and *Airport*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Erich Korngold
1897 - 1957



Korngold was an Austrian composer of romantic and film music. In his later years, his style was considered passé, but has recovered some of its popularity, and he is known as one of the founders of the film music genre. His scores for *Anthony Adverse* in 1936 and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* in 1938 earned him Academy Awards. He was considered a child prodigy and at the age nine his cantata, *Gold*, was hailed by Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss. He was at the peak of his career at twenty-three and his works were performed throughout Europe with great success. In 1938 he was asked to come to Hollywood to work on the adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and again for *Robin Hood*. The treatment of Jews in Germany decided him against returning, and he spent his remaining years writing film scores and romantic music.

George Gershwin was both a pianist and composer in the popular and classical genres as well as musical theater. *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris* and *Porgy and Bess* are those works most often associated with him. He eventually moved to Hollywood, where he composed many film scores in the latter part of his career. George frequently collaborated with his brother Ira. Ira was a lyricist and together they created over a dozen Broadway shows. Often overshadowed by George, he was a great artist in his own right and wrote the libretto for *Porgy and Bess*, *Long Ago and Far Away*, *The Man I Love*, *Fascinatin' Rhythm* and *Someone to Watch Over Me*. After George's untimely death from a brain tumor in 1937, Ira did not write again for three years, then collaborated with Jerome Kern, Kurt Weill, Harold Arlen and others, but *A Star Is Born* in 1954 is felt to be his only major success after George's death.

George Gershwin
1898 - 1937
Ira Gershwin
1896 - 1983



Alan Jay Lerner
1918 - 1986
Frederick Loewe
1901 - 1988



Alan Jay Lerner was a lyricist and librettist. He partnered with composer Frederick Loewe, and won 3 Oscars and 3 Tonys for his musicals, both on stage and on film. They were extremely popular and they include *Brigadoon* and *Paint Your Wagon*. *Gigi* and *My Fair Lady* remain their most familiar and enduring shows. Lerner also wrote the lyrics for *An American in Paris*. *Gigi* won all nine Oscars for which it was nominated and a special one for Maurice Chevalier. During the production of *Camelot* in 1960, director Moss Hart suffered a heart attack, Lerner had ulcers and Loewe had continuing heart problems. The stress was enough to break up the partnership, but in 1973 Lerner persuaded Loewe to collaborate on a stage version of *Gigi*. Afterward, Loewe returned to retirement, while death claimed Lerner's life while he was writing lyrics for *Phantom of the Opera*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Lorenz Hart
1895 - 1943



Lorenz Hart was part of the Broadway songwriting pair, Rodgers and Hart. He was the lyricist while Richard Rodgers, whom he met at Columbia University, composed the melodies. Together they wrote the music for twenty-six shows in their twenty year plus partnership, which ended only with Hart's death at age 48. His best known shows were *Babes in Arms* and *Pal Joey*. Some of his more famous song lyrics are *Blue Moon*, *Mountain Greenery*, *The Lady Is a Tramp*, *Where or When*, *Bewitched*, *Bothered and Bewildered* and *With a Song in My Heart*.

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein were a very successful and influential team of Broadway show writers. Hammerstein was a lyricist who had prior success collaborating with Rudolf Friml on *Rose Marie* and Sigmund Romberg on *Desert Song* and *The New Moon*. Rodgers had worked with Lorenz Hart for over twenty years prior to Hart's death in 1943. Together they created the fabulously successful musicals, *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I* and *The Sound of Music*. The Broadway productions and their film versions gained them a Pulitzer Prize, thirty-four Tony awards, fifteen Academy Awards and two Grammy Awards. *State Fair* and *Flower Drum Song* were also hits, though not on a scale with the previously listed five. They also collaborated on *Cinderella*, which was written solely for television presentation. Audio recordings of their works are still very popular. Rodgers also wrote the sound track for the long-running TV series, *Victory at Sea*, about United States Navy actions during World War II, for which video and audio recordings are still available.

Richard Rodgers
1902 - 1979

Oscar Hammerstein
1895 - 1960



Meredith Willson
1902 - 1984



Meredith Willson was an American composer, songwriter, playwright and conductor. He played flute and piccolo and was a member of John Philip Sousa's band and the New York Philharmonic early in his career. Although he wrote three other Broadway shows, several symphonies and some popular music, his reputation is inseparable from the show, *The Music Man*, for which he wrote the book, music and lyrics. This was followed in 1960 by *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, another success which was made into a movie in 1964 which starred Debbie Reynolds. His only other well-known piece is the song, *May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You*, written for Tallulah Bankhead's radio program, *The Big Show*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Frank Loesser
1910 - 1969



Frank Loesser was an American songwriter who specialized in songs for Broadway shows as well as Tin Pan Alley. He wrote both music and lyrics. His best known works are *Guys and Dolls*, *The Most Happy Fella* and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, for both of which he was awarded separate Tonys for music and lyrics as well as a Pulitzer prize for *How to Succeed...* Early in his career, in 1934, he had two hit songs, *Junk Man* and *I Wish I Were Twins*, which in later years he never mentioned. Among his other pop music hits were the lyrics for *Two Sleepy People*, *Heart and Soul* and *I Hear Music*. *Baby, It's Cold Outside* earned him an Academy Award for Best Original Song in 1949.

The Beatles, an English rock band, was formed in 1960 by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr and George Harrison. Their music was originally rooted in 1950s rock, but later included other genres including pop ballads and psychedelic rock. They built their reputation in Liverpool clubs and their first hit was in 1962, *Love Me Do*. By 1964 they were internationally popular and their music entered the US pop market. Between 1966 and 1969 they released their best material, and hold the record of 20 releases on *Billboard Magazine's Hot 100* list of artists and remain the top-selling band in the US with 117 million records sold. Their popularity in the US began with the hit, *I Want to Hold Your Hand* in 1963, and in 1964 they appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* with 73 million viewers, the largest television audience ever. At one time they had twelve songs on the *Hot 100* list, including the top five. *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *Yesterday*, *Penny Lane*, *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Band* and *Yellow Submarine* are among their best known songs. After exhausting international tours, they agreed that they were tired of performing together and broke up in 1970. Lennon was shot to death in 1980 and Ringo Starr died of cancer, but Harrison and McCartney are still active musically.

The Beatles
1960 - 1970



Leonard Bernstein
1918 - 1990



Leonard Bernstein was a composer, conductor and pianist, one of the first conductors born in the United States to be acclaimed worldwide. He also gave lectures on classical music on television beginning in 1954 and continuing to his death. He achieved national recognition upon taking over conducting at Carnegie Hall with no rehearsals when Bruno Walter suddenly became ill, receiving rave reviews. He became famous for his long association with the New York Philharmonic and as a guest conductor with major orchestras. His music for *West Side Story*, *Candide*, *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town* proved his genius in the composing field as well. His works spanned a multitude of genres. He stepped down from the New York Philharmonic in 1969 in order to dedicate more time to composing without the rigors of a schedule, and he continued to perform and lecture through the end of his life.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Irving Berlin
1888 - 1989



Irving Berlin, of Belarusian Jewish origin, is considered one of the greatest songwriters, both of music and lyrics, in American History. He published his first song in 1907. His first major international hit was *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, in 1911. He wrote over fifteen hundred songs during his sixty-year career, which made him a legend before he was thirty. He composed the music for nineteen Broadway shows and eighteen films, including classics such as *White Christmas*, *Easter Parade*, and *There's No Business Like Show Business*. His first musical and film, *This Is the Army*, with Kate Smith singing *God Bless America* appeared in 1942. His songs have topped the charts twenty-five times, recorded by top name vocalists, and George Gershwin called him "the greatest songwriter that has ever lived".

Roy Acuff was an American country singer, fiddler and promoter. Known as the "King of Country Music", he is credited with bringing the string band and hoedown format to its present singer-based style of performance. He formed The Smoky Mountain Boys and joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1938. While his singing career languished in the 1940s, he remained a key figure as a promoter for the Opry for over forty years. In 1962, he was first living inductee into the Country Music Hall of Fame. In 1942, he and Fred Rose formed Acuff-Rose Music, which soon became the most important publishing house of country music. He appeared in the film *Grand Ole Opry* and made several other movies in the 1940s. In 1991 he was awarded the National Medal of Arts and given a lifetime achievement award by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the first country music act to be so honored.

Roy Acuff
1903 - 1992



Paul Robeson
1898 - 1976



Paul Robeson was an African-American singer with a rich bass voice and actor who early became involved with the civil rights movement. An All-American football player and class valedictorian at Rutgers, he went on to an international career singing, as well as acting. He played in the National Football League and obtained a law degree from Columbia. He appeared as Othello at the Savoy Theater and became an international star with his performance in *Showboat*. He became politically involved in response to the Spanish Civil War, fascism and social injustice. His criticism of the United States government and association with the Communist Party caused him to be blacklisted during the McCarthy era. He refused to recant his beliefs and that, along with poor health brought his retirement soon afterward. His performance of *Ol' Man River* is considered the benchmark for the song. He did a royal command performance at Buckingham Palace, and *Showboat* ran for 350 performances in London, and as of 2001 was still the Royal's most profitable venture.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Henry Mancini
1924 - 1994



Enrico "Henry" Mancini was an American composer, conductor and arranger best remembered for his film and television scores. His best known works are *The Pink Panther* and *Peter Gunn* themes. He won a record number of Grammy awards. He took piccolo lessons at eight and piano at twelve, and attended the Julliard School of Music until drafted in 1943. He became an arranger for the Glenn Miller Band in 1946 and joined Universal Pictures in 1952, where he wrote scores for over a hundred films. He left Universal in 1958 and scored the *Peter Gunn* TV series for Blake Edwards. Subsequent scores for Edwards included *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Days of Wine and Roses* and *The Pink Panther*. He scored many TV movies and television themes. His songs were a staple of the "easy listening" genre during the 1960s through 1980s, and he recorded over ninety albums.

Martha Graham was an American dancer and choreographer and her influence on modern dance has been compared to that of Picasso as an artist, Stravinsky on music and Frank Lloyd Wright on Architecture. She began her studies at the Denishawn School and remained there until 1923. She established the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance in 1926. Graham was among the first to introduce current themes into her work, basing her *Chronicle* on the Spanish Civil War, the Wall Street crash of 1929 and the Depression. The defining work of her seventy-year plus career was her only full-length ballet, *Clytemnestra*, in 1958. She was the first choreographer invited to the White House, and was awarded many honors by other nations.

Martha Graham
1893 - 1991



Alvin Ailey
1931 - 1989



Alvin Ailey was an African-American choreographer. Interested since his teens, he became serious about dance in 1949 and joined Lester Horton's studio. He performed in several films and studied all aspects of dance, and took over as the studio's artistic director at age twenty-two upon Horton's death. He was invited to dance on Broadway, and did so in *House of Flowers*, *Sing, Man, Sing* and *Jamaica*. Unhappy with then-current styles, he created his own works, choreographing seventy-nine pieces. His first original work, *Blues Suite*, expressing the pain and anger of blacks, was an instant success. *Revelations* is his masterpiece and his most performed work. Ailey popularized modern dance and expanded black participation in it. His dance company was called the "Cultural Ambassador to the World" due to his numerous overseas tours.

Musicians on United States Stamps

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Musicians on United States Stamps

Agnes de Mille
1909 - 1983



Agnes de Mille was an American choreographer and dancer who in her childhood wanted to be an actress, but she was not “pretty enough” according to her parents. She turned to dance, but it was considered an “activity”, not a career in that period. She began to take ballet classes after college, but was considered to have poor technique and little flexibility. She taught herself dance by watching the actresses perform in her father’s (William C. de Mille) films. De Mille had a part in *Cleopatra* in 1934, but her first significant work was in Aaron Copland’s *Rodeo* in 1942. She also worked on the choreography of *Oklahoma*, *Carousel*, *Fall River Legend*, *Brigadoon*, *Paint Your Wagon* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Her final work was *The Other* in 1992.

George Balanchine was a Russian-born choreographer who began his studies at the Imperial Ballet School. He and his family were forced to flee to Paris. From 1924 to 1929, he choreographed nine ballets in London and Monte Carlo, working with a number of major composers. During a period as guest choreographer on Broadway and Hollywood, he began to integrate his classic training with contemporary dance styles. Balanchine and Lincoln Kerstein together founded the School of American Ballet in 1933. Joined by Jerome Robbins, they founded the New York City Ballet, where Balanchine was ballet master for thirty-five years. In 1938 he moved to Hollywood, where he choreographed five films, but returned to New York where in 1946 he assisted in the design of the Lincoln Center, and presented almost forty ballets there which include *Stars and Stripes*, *Vienna Waltzes*, *Don Quixote*, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* and *Symphony in Three Movements*.

George Ballanchine
1904 - 1983



Marian Anderson
1897 -1993



Marian Anderson was an African-American contralto and one of the most celebrated singers of the twentieth century. Most of her career was spent performing in concerts and recitals and with famous orchestras throughout the United States and Europe. She declined any opera affiliations, as she claimed no acting experience. She became an important figure in the struggle for black civil rights when the DAR refused her permission to perform before an integrated audience at Constitution Hall in 1939. As a result, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt arranged for her to perform an open-air concert on the steps of the Lincoln memorial to a crowd of over 75,000 people. She also became the first black person of any nationality to perform at the Metropolitan Opera, the only time she ever performed an operatic role on stage. She was a delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Committee and a “goodwill ambassador” for the State Department and gave concerts world-wide, and she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1963 and the National Medal of Arts in 1986.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Edgar "Yip" Harburg
1896 - 1981



Called "Yip" after his middle name, Yipsel, Harburg was an American lyricist who worked with many famous composers. He wrote the lyrics to *Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?*, *April in Paris*, *Old Devil Moon* and *It's Only a Paper Moon* as well as all the songs from *The Wizard of Oz*. He attended high school and early college with Ira Gershwin. He was a part owner of an electrical appliance company which went bankrupt, at which point Gershwin suggested he should write song lyrics. He worked on Hollywood films, but kept on with Broadway and his best known show is *Finian's Rainbow*, which was the first Broadway show with an integrated chorus line. Blacklisted during the McCarthy era, he was blocked from work from 1950 to 1962, though he denied any involvement with Communism or totalitarianism.

Hattie McDaniel was an actress, singer, songwriter, comedian and radio and TV performer. Born of slave parents, she began her career with her brother's minstrel show. She then began singing with the *Melody Hounds*, a touring black ensemble in the 1920s which was also on radio. She then recorded ten sessions, of which only four were issued. In 1929 she began singing in Milwaukee's *Club Madrid*, where she soon became a regular. In 1931 she moved to Los Angeles and appeared in many minor film roles, but by 1936 had graduated to major parts, appearing in *Showboat*, *Saratoga* and *The Shopworn Angel*. Clark Gable recommended her to play "Mammy" in *Gone With the Wind* in 1939, the role for which she is best known, and she was the first black to win an Academy Award, as Best Supporting Actress in 1940. She continued her film career until 1949, but had her own radio show, *Beulah*, in which she starred until cancer forced her retirement and ultimately her death.

Hattie McDaniel
1895 - 1952



Judy Garland
1922 - 1969



An actress, singer and vaudevillian, Judy Garland was described by Fred Astaire as "the greatest entertainer who ever lived". Her career began as a teenager and spanned forty years as a recording artist, and performer in musical and dramatic roles, and she was an international favorite. She made over two dozen films, nine with Mickey Rooney, and in 1939 starred as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, the role for which she is best known. Judy starred in *Meet Me in St. Louis*, in which she introduced three standards, *The Trolley Song*, *The Boy Next Door* and *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*. She was released by Metro-Goldwyn Mayer after fifteen years, but returned to prominence through her popular concert appearances and new films, such as the remake of *A Star Is Born*. Throughout her career, she was troubled by enormous debt, alcohol and drugs, leading to her death in 1969.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Ella Fitzgerald
1917 - 1996



Called the “First Lady of Song” and the “Queen of Jazz”, Ella Fitzgerald was a jazz vocalist with a vocal range of three octaves, great improvisational ability as particularly noted in her scat singing, and excellent diction. Her career lasted 59 years and she made over seventy albums, selling more than forty million copies. She also won thirteen Grammy Awards. She made her singing debut at the *Apollo Theater* in Harlem, where in their Amateur Night competition she won first prize, not as a dancer as she first intended, but as a singer. She began singing with Chick Webb’s orchestra in 1935, but it was her rendition of *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*, which she co-wrote that brought her national attention. She made over 150 recordings after taking over the orchestra on Webb’s death. In 1942 she began a solo career, and also recorded with *The Ink Spots* and *The Delta Rhythm Boys*. Her style turned to bebop in the mid 1940s and she introduced scat singing to her work. *Flying Home* and *Lady Be Good* were major hits for her. A turning point for her was the release of the first two of eight sets of *The American Songbook*, featuring the songs of Cole Porter and Duke Ellington. The *Songbook* is considered her major contribution to American culture and led to the establishment of the pop album as a serious vehicle for music.

“Ol’ Blue Eyes” began his career at the age of eight, singing for tips while standing on a bar in a club in Hoboken, NJ. His “rowdy behavior” got him expelled from high school after less than three months. His interest in big-band jazz led to his professional debut in his teens. In 1939 he got a one-year contract with Harry James, and released ten records, the first being *From the Bottom of My Heart*. Sinatra signed with the Tommy Dorsey band in 1940, and released forty songs that year, with *I’ll Never Smile Again* topping the charts for 12 weeks. In 1943, *All or Nothing at All* topped that with 18 weeks. He frequently worked with the Andrews Sisters and Bing Crosby during the war, and in 1945 began his film career with Gene Kelly in *Anchors Aweigh*. His star began fading in the late 1940s, but he worked in Las Vegas in the 1950s and 1960s. *From Here to Eternity* in 1953 revived his film career. In 1971, he announced his retirement, but in 1973 was back with *Send in the Clowns*, another major hit. His later performances included many tours, and he retired for good on his 80th birthday in 1995.

Frank Sinatra
1915 - 1998



Duke Ellington
1899 - 1974



“Duke” Ellington was a composer, pianist and band leader. His rating as a black recording artist is equalled only by Count Basie. In a fifty year-plus career, he wrote or co-wrote over a thousand songs, primarily jazz, but also in the blues, gospel, popular, classical and film score genres. His works form the world’s largest jazz legacy, and he helped jazz become recognized as a distinct art form. He composed many pieces for specific musicians in his band to showcase their talent, and also recorded many songs written by them. *Caravan* and *Perdido* are examples of these. He also appeared in films, starring with an all-black cast in *Black and Tan* in 1929. His career began its rise with an engagement at the Cotton Club in Harlem, and some of his major hits come shortly after, including *Mood Indigo*, *Sophisticated Lady*, *Solitude*, *It Don’t Mean a Thing* and *Sentimental Mood*.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Louis Jordan
1908 - 1975



Louis Jordan was an American songwriter, musician and bandleader who had his greatest popularity from about 1936 through the early 1950s, though he performed till 1962. Popular with both white and black audiences, he was known as the "King of Swing" for his big band era swing numbers. He led his own band, was a talented singer with a comedic flair and wrote many of his own songs. He also was a popular black film actor. Jordan appeared in cameo parts in many films, but starred in two musical films created especially for him. The stamp at left features that aspect of his career. He is still the top black recording artist of all time in terms of the number of weeks in the #1 position on the R & B charts. A few of his hits were *Caldonia*, *Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens*, *Choo Choo Ch'Boogie*, and finally in 1950, *Saturday Night Fish Fry*. The latter is often considered to be the first rock and roll song, and it had a direct influence on Bill Haley.

Josephine Baker was an American-born French dancer, singer, actress, and in later life a civil rights activist. She was the first black woman to integrate a concert hall, star in a major motion picture or become a world-famous entertainer. She left school at twelve, and was recruited for a vaudeville act in St. Louis at fifteen because of her street dancing. She moved to New York and starred in *Shuffle Along* and *Chocolate Dandies*. In 1925 she went to France and starred in *La Revue Nègre* in Paris. Her erotic dancing made her an instant hit, as she danced almost nude. After a long European tour, she returned to the Folies Bergères. Baker also starred in three French films in the 1930s. Her most famous song was *J'ai deux amours*. In 1934 she took voice lessons, which transformed her into the most popular entertainer in France. She married in France and became a French citizen, and during World War II was greatly involved with the Resistance, and was awarded the Croix de Guerre and made a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur. She spent the balance of her career on international tours.

Josephine Baker
1906 - 1975



Kate Smith
1907 - 1986



Kate Smith was an American singer who had a radio, television and recording career spanning more than fifty years, reaching its height in the 1940s. She is best known for her recording of *God Bless America*. She started on radio in 1931 and her biggest hits were *River*, *Stay Way From My Door*, *The Woodpecker Song*, *The White Cliffs of Dover*, *I Don't Want to Walk Without You*, *Rose O'Day*, *Seems Like Old Times*, and *Now Is the Hour*. Her theme was *When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain*, and her radio show was on six days a week. She also had television shows which ran from 1950 through 1960. An unusual part of her career began when the Philadelphia Flyers began playing her recording of *God Bless America* before each game, as they considered her their good luck token and they usually won when it was played.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Carmen Miranda
1909 - 1955



Carmen Miranda was a Portuguese-born Brazilian samba singer, dancer, Broadway actress and film star who was quite popular during the 1940s and 1950s. She established herself as a singer and actress in Brazil. Lee Shubert signed her to a contract in 1939 and she made her American stage debut, then moved to Hollywood to perform in films. Nicknamed "The Brazilian Bombshell", she is noted for her signature fruit hat which she wore in the 1943 movie, *The Gang's All Here*. By 1945, she was the highest paid woman in the United States at \$200,000. She made fourteen films, but she became less popular by the late 1940s, and she tried to shed the Bombshell stereotype with little success. She made one last film in 1945. As popular as she was in the United States, she was severely criticized in Latin America as not portraying Latin culture as it was and being too Americanized.

Celia Cruz was a Cuban-American salsa performer. She was one of the most successful salsa artists and made 23 gold albums and was called "The Queen of Salsa" internationally. She was influenced by a lot of Cuban musicians, and her aunt encouraged her to become a cabaret singer. One of her teachers told her she could earn in an evening a month's salary for a teacher. She soon began singing on a Havana radio station, frequently winning contests. She made her first recording in Venezuela in 1948. She became lead singer for a famous Cuban band for fifteen years, and toured all of Latin America. With the band, she made some cameo appearances in Mexican films. She and her husband refused to return to Castro's Cuba and they became U.S. citizens. Cruz and Tito Puente made eight albums together. She made many European and Latin American tours in the 1980s, doing concerts and TV shows wherever she went. She continued performing, mainly in New York, till she succumbed to cancer in 2003.

Celia Cruz
1925 - 2003



Carlos Gardel
1890 - 1935



A singer, songwriter, composer and actor who is probably the most prominent figure in the history of tango. The dramatic phrasing of his lyrics and his baritone voice made works of art of his tango recordings, which ran to the hundreds. With collaborator Alfredo La Pera, he wrote a number of classic tangos, including *Quiereme*, *Golondrinas*, *Volver* and *Soledad*. Born out of wedlock, he and his mother emigrated to Argentina in 1893 to avoid the stigma. His singing career began by performing in bars and private parties, but his recording of *Mi Noche Triste* sold over 10,000 copies and he became a star all over Latin America. He went on tour in South America, New York, Paris and Spain in 1928 and sold 70,000 records in three months. While touring in Colombia in 1935 at the height of his career, he, La Pera, two guitarists and business associates as well as the crew were killed in a plane crash at Medellin, Colombia.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Tito Puente
1923 - 2000



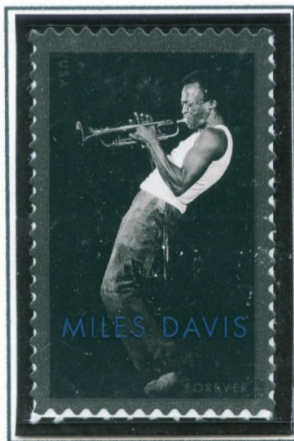
Tito Puente was a Latin jazz and salsa musician and composer. Son of Puerto Rican parents, he grew up in New York's Spanish Harlem. He has been called "The Musical Pope" and "King of Latin Music". His mambo and Latin jazz compositions span a fifty year long career, and he appeared in such films as *Mambo Kings* and *Calle 54*. He has made guest appearances on television, including *Sesame Street*, *The Cosby Show* and *The Simpsons*. He served in the Navy in World War II, and thus was able to pursue musical studies at the Juilliard School of Music through the G.I. Bill. He was at the height of his popularity in the 1950s with his Caribbean and Afro-Cuban rhythms, mambo and cha-cha-cha. *Dance Mania* is his best known album. In 2003 he was post-humously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Selena Quintanilla-Pérez was a songwriter, singer and a fashion designer. She released her first LP at twelve with her band, *Selena y Los Dinos*. At sixteen, she won the Female Vocalist of the Year award at the Tejano Music Awards, and eight times thereafter. Her *Como La Flor* in 1992 launched her Mexican tour and widely expanded her fan base. It became her signature song. *Live!* brought her a Grammy award for Best Mexican/American Album in 1993. She opened a boutique in Corpus Christi which was very successful that year, managed by Yolanda Salvidar. Later hits include *Amor Prohibido*, *Bidi Bidi Bom Bom*, *No Me Queda Más* and *Fotos y Recuerdos* in 1994 and 1995. She was then called "The Queen of Tejano Music". In early 1995, it was discovered that Salvidar had been embezzling. Salvidar repeatedly refused to turn over records, and on March 31, 1995 when Selena confronted her at a motel, she pulled a pistol and shot her, hitting an artery which caused Selena's death at age twenty-three.

Selena
1971 - 1995



Miles Davis
1926 - 1991



Davis was an American jazz musician, trumpeter, band leader and composer. Considered one of the most influential jazz musicians of the century, he was always in the forefront of developments in jazz, such as bebop, cool jazz, hard bop, modal jazz and jazz fusion. In 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution commemorating his 1959 album, *Kind of Blue*, on its fiftieth anniversary "honoring the masterpiece and reaffirming jazz as a national treasure". He had a great influence on French musicians, and this stamp was issued with the one below for Edith Piaf, a French singer who had much the same degree of influence on Americans. The stamps were issued jointly with France in the same designs.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Edith Piaf
1915 - 1963



Born Édith Gassion in France, Edith Piaf was a singer who was widely regarded as France's national diva, as well as being an international star. Raised by her grandmother, she began singing in the streets with Simone Berteaut, a companion for life who may have been her half-sister. She was discovered in 1935 by a night club owner who persuaded her to sing despite her nervousness and stature, 4'8". This inspired her nickname, "Piaf", colloquial French for "Little Sparrow". She starred in a play in 1936, leading to friendships with prominent people like Maurice Chevalier. She met Yves Montand and made him part of her act, and became the most popular singer in France. After World War II, she toured Europe, the United States and South America. Her popularity grew to where she appeared at Carnegie Hall twice and on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. During her career, she recorded hundreds of songs, including her signature song, *Lie vie en rose* and *Milord*.

Isadora Duncan, an American choreographer and dancer, began her dance career at the tender age of six, by giving lessons at home through her teens after her father's bankruptcy. She auditioned for a number of dance companies, finally joining Augustin Daly in New York City. Duncan felt restricted there, and left for London in 1898, where she performed privately for wealthy individuals. She frequently drew her inspiration from ancient artistic graphics and her style of natural movement was popular with the public, but not the critics, and she became a role model for other dancers. She disliked public performances and returned to New York in 1914, saying that teaching dance was her life. In 1921 she was exiled for her leftist leanings and moved to the Soviet Union, but the government reneged on a promise of support for her art and she moved to Europe for the balance of her career.

Isadora Duncan
1877 - 1927



José Limón
1908 - 1972



José Limón was born in Mexico as the eldest of twelve children. Limón's family moved to Los Angeles when he was seven. Inspired by a dance concert he saw, he began his dance studies and performed on Broadway a year later. His best known work is *The Moor's Pavane*, based on Shakespeare's *Othello*. This was followed by his *Etude in D Minor* shortly thereafter. José Limón's first major work was *Danzas Mexicanas*. He continued his choreography career throughout his lifetime, and his troupe toured Mexico, Europe, the Near East, Central and South America. He was invited to the White House to perform for President Lyndon Johnson and the King of Morocco.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Katherine Dunham 1909 - 2006



Katherine Dunham was an author, dancer and choreographer, and had one of the most successful dance careers of the twentieth century. While majoring in anthropology in college, she learned that much of American black culture had its roots in Africa, and her interests then focused on native dance. The range of her studies covered Africa, Jamaica, Trinidad and particularly Haiti. Upon graduation she had to choose between dance and academia, and opted for the former. She had her own dance company for many years, and was an innovator in modern ethnic dance. Dunham has been called "Katherine the Great" and "The Queen Mother of Black Dance". Among her ninety works are *Rara Tonga*, *Woman With Cigar*, *The Emperor Jones* and the black musical, *Stormy Weather*. Her tour of *Tropical Review*, noted for its racy costumes and exotic sexuality, received rave reviews in many cities but was banned in Boston by censors after one day.

Bob Fosse was an actor, dancer, musical theater choreographer, screen writer and film director. Early in his career, he teamed with Charles Grass as "The Riff Brothers" and they toured in the Chicago area. While in the service, he performed throughout the Pacific Theater at Army and Navy bases in *Tough Situation*. After the war, he was in *Call Me Mister* with his wife, Mary Ann Niles, and they became regulars on *Your Hit Parade* in 1950 and 1951, where they were spotted by Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. They scheduled them for the *Colgate Comedy Hour*. An MGM contract in 1954 saw him dancing in *Give a Girl a Break*, *The Affairs of Dobie Gillis* and *Kiss Me Kate*. A move to Broadway had him choreographing *Pajama Game*, *Damn Yankees* and *New Girl in Town*. He also directed five films in which include *Sweet Charity*, *All That Jazz* and *Cabaret*, for which he won an Oscar. He also won nine Tonys during his career. Fosse was noted for his stylistic trademarks: turned-in knees, sideways shuffle, rolled shoulders and "jazz hands" (fingers splayed and palms toward the audience). His props frequently included chairs, canes, gloves and a bowler hat.

Bob Fosse 1927 - 1987



Musicians on United States Stamps

Lydia Mendoza
1916 - 2007

With Die Cuts



No Die Cuts



Lydia Mendoza was an American guitarist and singer of tejano, conjunto and traditional Mexican-American music. She has been called “La Alondra de la Frontera” (Lark of the Border, in English). She learned to play stringed instruments from both her mother and grandmother, and as part of the *Cuarteto Carta Blanca*, a family group, made her first recordings in 1928 for Okeh Records. Her live radio performances led to a contract with Bluebird and her *Mal Hombre* was an instant success, leading to an intense schedule of recording and tours. She recorded for many of the major Mexican-American labels, especially in Texas, after World War II. In 1988, she suffered a stroke which greatly slowed her activities. Mendoza received National Heritage Fellowship and the National Endowment for the Arts awards, and the Texas Medal of the Arts in 2003.

Johnny Cash
1932 - 2003

With Die Cuts



No Die Cuts

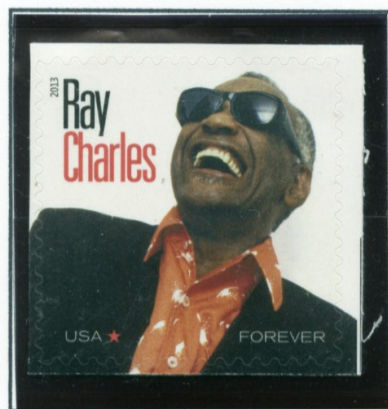


Johnny Cash, “The Man in Black”, was a singer, songwriter, and actor. He is often considered one of the 20th century’s most influential musicians. While his primary genre was country, his music included gospel, rock and roll, rock-a-billy, folk and blues. Due to this, he was named to the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Gospel Music Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, a rare combination. He was noted for his deep bass-baritone voice, his somber disposition and clothing and for providing free concerts in prisons. His most popular numbers were *I Walk the Line*, *Folsom Prison Blues* and *Ring of Fire*, as well as the comedic *One Piece at a Time* and *A Boy Named Sue*. *Jackson*, a duet with his wife June Carter, *Hey, Porter* and *Rock Island Line* were also major hits for Cash. Johnny and June toured together for thirty-five years until her death in 2003, followed by him 4 months later.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Ray Charles
1930 - 2004

With Die Cuts



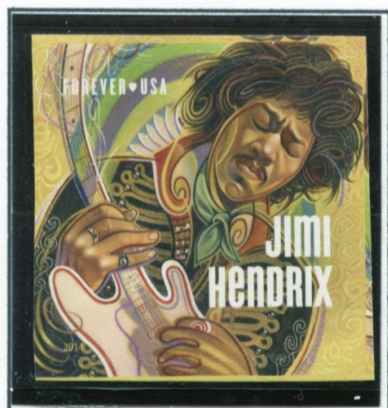
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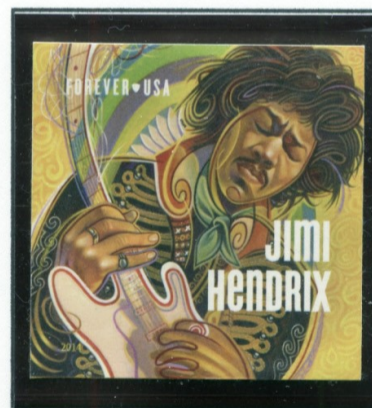
Ray Charles was an American songwriter, singer, composer and pianist. In the 1950s, he combined rhythm and blues, gospel and blues into what became known as the "soul" genre. The major influences on his style were jazz, blues, R & B and country music. *Rolling Stone* ranked him number two and ten on their lists of "Greatest Singers of All Time" And "Greatist Artists of All Time" respectively. Charles lost his sight totally by the age of seven and attended school at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind from 1937 to 1945, where he developed his talent for music. After the death of his mother he moved to Jacksonville, where he played piano for bands, then to Orlando and later Tampa, where he developed the habit of wearing sunglasses. He always wanted his own band, and moved "as far from Florida as he could get", to Seattle, where he recorded for Downbeat and achieved his first hit, *Confession Blues*, which went to #2 on the charts. After a spell with Atlantic, he recorded *Georgia on My Mind* for ABC-Paramount and later *Hit the Road, Jack. I Can't Stop Loving You* in 1961 stayed #1 for five weeks. In 1965 his career began to decline after a third arrest for drug addiction, and *Here We Go Again* in 1967 was his last big hit.

Jimi Hendrix
1942 - 1970

With Die Cuts



No Die Cuts



An American musician, singer and songwriter, Jimi Hendrix was cited by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as possibly "the greatest instrumentalist in the history of rock music." He is regarded as one of the most influential electric guitarists in popular music history. Hendrix began playing at fifteen, and after his army service started playing in 1962 with the Isley Brothers and later Little Richard. He moved to England in 1966 and within a few months had three top ten hits, *Purple Haze*, *Hey, Joe* and *The Wind Cries Mary* with his band, *The Jimi Hendrix Experience*. As the world's highest-paid performer, he was a headliner at Woodstock and the Isle of Wight Festival before his death at the age of twenty-seven due to drug abuse.

Musicians on United States Stamps

Janis Joplin
1943 - 1970

With Die Cuts



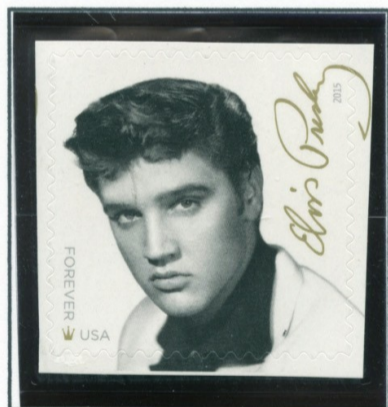
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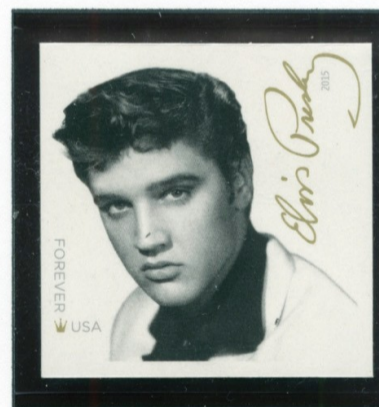
Janis Joplin was a singer and songwriter who rose to popularity in the late 1960s. Her first real break in the music business was as the lead singer for the band *Big Brother and the Holding Company*, from 1966 through 1968. She then recorded with several other big bands. Her first large scale public performance was at the Monterey Pop Festival. She became so popular at this point that she was billed as a headliner at Woodstock, though she had never heard of it, and was persuaded to perform there. Throughout most of her career she was a heavy drinker and had a large heroin habit, and the use of these at Woodstock contributed to an unspectacular performance there. She was nicknamed "The Queen of Psychedelic Soul". Some of her hits were *Summertime*, *Cry Baby*, *Down on Me*, *Mercedes Benz*, and her only number one release, *Me and Bobby McGee*. She was found dead of a heroin overdose in 1970 after failing to appear for a recording session.

Elvis Presley
1935 - 1977

With Die Cuts



No Die Cuts



After appearing on two earlier postage stamps, Elvis Presley made his third appearance in 2015. Rumors of his appearance at the First Day of Issue ceremony have not been substantiated. Known as the "King of Rock and Roll", his first RCA record, *Heartbreak Hotel*, immediately became a number one hit. His song interpretations and uninhibited performance style made him tremendously popular. His appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* generated a huge amount of controversy due to his gyrations on stage, earning him the nickname "Elvis the Pelvis". He acted in his first film, *Love Me Tender*, in 1956, and he is generally regarded as the most important figure in 20th century pop culture. Elvis is still the best-selling solo artist in the history of popular music. Abuse of prescription drugs eventually destroyed his health and he died suddenly at the age of forty-two as a result.

(The sale of sheets without die cutting was discontinued after 2016.)

Musicians on United States Stamps

Sarah Vaughan
1930 - 2004



Sarah Vaughan, nicknamed “The Divine One” and “Sassy”, was mainly a jazz singer who has been described as having “one of the most wondrous voices of the 20th century. The National Endowment for the arts bestowed the NEA Jazz Masters Award, its highest honor, on her. Her musical talent first appeared in her church, and her love for popular music saw her performing illegally as a pianist and singer in nightclubs in Newark, New Jersey. She was heard at Harlem’s Apollo Theater by Earl “Fatha” Hines and Billy Eckstine. She sang with their bands, and some of her best known numbers are *Tenderly*, *It’s Magic*, *Don’t Blame Me* and *Whatever Lola Wants*. Many of her hits were duets with Billy Eckstine, one of which was *Easter Parade*. Her career began to fade in the 1960s, but recovered in the late ‘70s. She remained active until her final album in 1987, after which her health began to fail and she passed away in 1990.

Lena Horne began her musical career as a dancer in a chorus line at Harlem’s Cotton Club while in her teens. She made her Broadway debut in 1934 in *Dance With Your Gods*. She performed in nightclubs and toured with Charlie Barnet’s orchestra, where she drew the notice of record companies with her jazz vocals, and Lena appeared in film musicals throughout the 1940s. Her vocal of *Stormy Weather* from the film of the same name became a major hit, and was adopted as her signature number. During World War 2 she performed for the USO until banned because of her outspokenness and protests against discrimination against black soldiers and interned Japanese. She continued with nightclub appearances during her recording career and became a popular television personality as well. Lena Horne won three Grammy awards, and in 1981 received a special Tony award for her one-woman Broadway revue, *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music*. After World War II, she became very active in civil rights and participated in multiple campaigns to bring justice and equality to black people through the later years of her life, being cited by President Obama for her efforts in 2010 upon her death.

Lena Horne
1917 - 2010



Musicians on United States Stamps

John Lennon
1940 - 1980

John Lennon, born in Liverpool, England, appears on a vertical strip of four stamps with identical images but differing colors. Lennon is best known as a songwriter and performer for the Beatles, and later had a solo career. He married Yoko Ono in 1969 and they recorded songs together, and both were active in the peace movement of the 1960s and 1970s. He moved permanently to the United States in 1971, and was murdered in New York City on December 8, 1980. His mother taught him to play the banjo and guitar and he later played piano and harmonica too. Lennon formed his first musical group, *The Countrymen*, in 1956, while in his teens, along with two other guitarists, Paul McCartney and George Harrison. Drummer Ringo Starr was added later and they renamed themselves *The Beatles*. After years of playing clubs and small gigs their big break came in 1962 with *Love me Do*, written by Lennon and McCartney. Within months they became a national sensation, and later in the United States as well, where the group appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Most of the band's great hits were written by McCartney and John Lennon and as individuals, though some were collaborations. Some of the group's most famous songs are *Help*, *Ticket to Ride*, *All You Need Is Love*, *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *When I'm Sixty-four* and *Michelle*. John Lennon also appears on a 1993 stamp honoring *The Beatles* as a group.



Musicians on United States Stamps

Greg Hines
1946 - 2003



Greg Hines played a number of roles in his career in the music industry. His name is usually associated with his tap dancing, as he is usually acknowledged as the leading performer of his generation in that field. However, he was also a celebrated actor, as well as a singer, musician, film director and producer. He was born in New York City, and by the age of five he was dancing professionally with his older brother, Maurice. He was featured in the musical *Eubie* and nominated for a Tony in 1979, and won one as best actor in *Jelly's Last Jam* in 1992. His film career began with Mel Brooks' comedy, *History of the World Part I*, then he had starring roles with Mikhail Baryshnikov in *White Nights* and Billy Crystal in *Running Scared*, and in 1992 played Billy "Bojangles" Robinson, a TV biography. As a singer, his duet with Luther Vandross, *There's Nothing Better than Love* reached number 1 on the *Hot R&B Singles* chart in 1986. His outstanding career was cut short by his death of cancer at age 57.

Marvin Gaye is considered one of the most influential musical performers of his generation. Known as "The Prince of Soul," he was a strong influence on the Motown record label in the 1960s, and he broadened the scope of rhythm and blues music in the 1970s. His 1971 recording, *What's Going On* has been called one of the greatest recordings in the history of the genre. He was born in Washington, DC and at an early age sang in his church choir and learned to play drums and piano. He sang with several vocal groups in high school, then after leaving the Air Force began his professional career with the *Moonglows*. Motown Records signed him up in 1961 and he was frequently heard on duets, but his big breakthrough as a solo artist was with *I Heard It on the Grapevine* in 1968. *What's Going On* established him as a voice for social change, with the album having three Top Ten singles. After 21 years with Motown, Gaye left to record the album *Midnight Love* for Columbia Records in 1982, winning two Grammy awards for the single *Sexual Healing*. Marvin Gaye had a life-long stormy relationship with his father and was shot and killed by him after an argument between them. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987, and a number of his songs are in the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry.

Marvin Gaye
1939 - 1984



THE END