

1 SOUL TO FUNK

- Development connected to the civil rights movement and the development of African American identity
- When part of a marginalized group, representation becomes much more important
- Late 1950's – growing anticipation of civil rights
- Rejection of blues as the sound of the past, rural south, slavery
- New sound of the urban – soul music
- Fusion of:
 - 1) Vocal style from Gospel
 - 2) Rhythm beat of R&B
 - 3) Arrangements and lyric styles from TPA
- Important locations for soul music:
 - 1) Motown – Detroit (Hitsville USA, Motown Records)
 - 2) Stax – Memphis (Soulsville USA, Stax Records)

1.1 Motown

- Founded by Berry Gordy
 - First important label owned by an African American
- Starts in 1959 – based on Gordy's experience in automotive plants

1.1.1 Assembly Line – Everything under one roof

- Song writers: Holland/Dozier/Holland, Smokey Robinson
- Maxine Powell: Finishing school
- Cholly Atkins: Choreographer
- The Funk Brothers: House band
- Result is absolute consistency of product

1.1.2 “You’d Better Shop Around” (Smokey and the Miracles, 1960)

- Polished, restrained presentation – sophistication

- This was intentional in order to appeal to the middle-class white audience

1.1.3 “Stop in the Name of Love” (The Supremes, 1965)

- Gospel influence
- Idealized romance lyrics
- A dancing beat – intended for dance
- A vibraphone (usually found in Jazz)
- Sound and production practice:
 - Focus on arrangement
 - Clarity of sound
 - Accuracy of performance
 - “Quality Control” – comparison to other hit records
- Motown was a very successful operation even though it came under criticism for whitening the artists

1.2 Stax

- Formed in 1959 – Satellite Records (Stax, 1961)
- Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton
- House Band: Booker T and the M.G’s
- Approach to recording:
 - Collective decision making
 - Less emphasis on arrangements than Motown
 - Focus on energy of performance over accuracy

1.2.1 “Try a Little Tenderness” (Otis Redding, 1966)

- AABA – TPA song written in the 1920’s
- Hit for Bing Crosby in 1933
- Less self-conscious than Motown artists
- Cathartic performance – unrestrained energy in performance
- In late 1967, his career was cut short when he died in a plane crash while on a tour with the Bar-Kays

1.2.2 “Soul Man” (Sam and Dave, 1967)

- Still the optimistic sound
- “Soul” as a term for black culture
- Stax focused on producing good soul music and did not tailor their songs to target middle-class white audiences like Motown

1.3 1966 – Atlantic begins working at FAME

1.3.1 “Respect” (Aretha Franklin, 1967)

- Beginning of a more militant sound
- Her version becomes an anthem for civil rights movement
- Very strong gospel influence, distortion, energy, etc. (like Stax)

1.3.2 James Brown

- Soul brother #1 godfather of soul
- First hit – 1956, “Please, Please, Please”
 - Is Considered R&B
 - Music historians say that it’s sometime around this song when soul started breaking away from R&B
- 1963 – “Live at the Apollo”
 - Apollo is in NYC
 - One of the first albums by an African American artist to sell over one million copies
- 1965 – “Papa’s Got a Brand-New Bag” crossover hit
- “I Feel Good” (recorded in 1964) becomes Brown’s biggest pop hit (#3) after “Papa’s Got a Brand-New Bag”
 - Apart from being a hit among his African American audience, this song was also very popular among white audience
 - Has an AABA structure and 12 bar blues

1.4 1965 – 1967: Inner City Riots

- 1967 was called the long hot summer
- In Detroit

- Martin Luther King Jr., assassinated April 4th, 1968 on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee
- The Black Panthers
- The re-Africanization of culture
 - Black people started making cultural changes to separate themselves from white culture
 - Changes in diet, clothing, hairstyle, etc. to become closer to West African culture
 - James Brown applied the same idea to music
- Cold Sweat (1967) introduces a new style
- “Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Sex Machine” (1970)
 - Deprivileged of melody and harmony
 - Privilege of rhythm (also articulation)
 - Interlock groove - based on African Drum Groups Community
 - Combining a bunch of simple instruments being played which combine to make something much more complicated
 - Involvement of community is an important part of the song where we can hear the band talking back to James during the beginning of the song
 - Riff-based composition – this is where simple riff structure came back, and it always stays to date
 - Tremendously successful with African Americans but virtually no success with white audience
 - Cyclical – pleasure in repetition
 - Open-ended forms – cyclical vs. linear
 - This is the kind of style which formed the genre known as punk