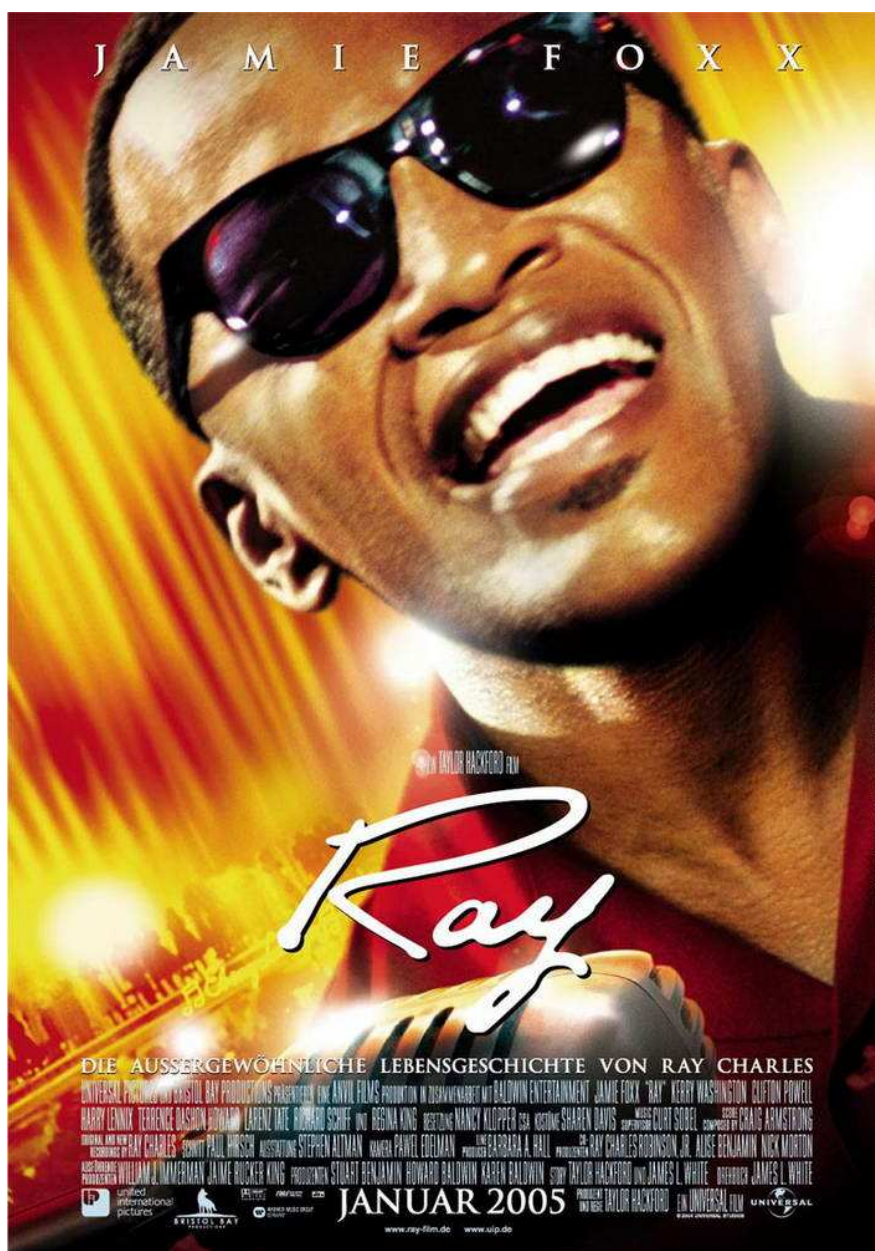


# CINEMA<sup>per a</sup>estudiants



## **Pel·lícula recomanada per a:**

Segon Cicle d' ESO. Batxillerats. Cicles Formatius i Formació d'Adults

## **Àrees i Temes:**

Educació Musical / Llengua Anglesa / Ciències Socials

## **DOSSIER**

- **Activitats en Català**
- **Activities in English**



Direcció: Taylor Hackford

Interprets: Jamie Foxx (Ray Charles), Kerry Washington (Della Bea Charles), Clifton Powell (Jeff Brown), Harry Lennix (Joe Adams), Terrence Dashon Howard (Gossie McKee), Larenz Tate (Quincy Jones), Richard Schiff (Jerry Wexler), Aunjanue Ellis (Mary Ann Fisher), Regina King (Margie Hendricks), Bokeem Woodbine (David), Sharon Warren (Aretha Ertegun).

Guió: James L. White; basat en un argument de Taylor Hackford i J. L. White.

Producció: Taylor Hackford, Stuart Benjamin, Howard Baldwin i Karen Baldwin.

Música: Craig Armstrong.

Fotografia: Pawel Edelman.

Muntatge: Paul Hirsch.

Disseny de producció: Stephen Altman.

Direcció artística: Scott Plauche.

Vestuari: Sharen Davis.

Gènere: Drama biogràfic. País:USA. Any d'estrena:2005. Durada: 152 minuts.

### **Sinopsi**

El film narra la vida de Ray Charles, músic nord-americà que va revolucionar el panorama musical mundial en fondre a les seves composicions ritmes tan diversos com el jazz, el rhythm & blues, el rock & roll, el gospel i el country.

## A History of Black North American Music



The birth of *Soul Music* is the result of a diversity of musical influences. It starts when the African slaves arrive in North America. The first group of slaves landed in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. At first they were few in number but with the development of the plantation system the number of slaves increased.

When slaves were working in the fields they tried to alleviate their misery by singing their traditional African folk songs. When these black workers started to convert to Christianity their songs became "*African Spirituals*". The first references to these African Spirituals are from about 1825-1850. These first songs had very strong relationships with West African songs and people sang them without harmony (examples: "Deep River" and "Roll Jordan Roll").

By the late 1800's *Black Gospel* songs displaced these Spirituals. *Gospel* is a kind of music that is played with a combination of hymns, black styles, and elements from the spirituals. **The songs are often merged into ecstatic dance** and are usually accompanied by a piano or an organ, tambourines and electric guitars.

Just before, and during *World War Two* many Blacks migrated from the agricultural south to the industrial Mid-Western, North-Eastern and West-Coast Cities. This group of black people developed a new style of music known as *R&B* (*rythm and blues*).

Two technological developments inspired this style: the invention of the electric guitar during the 1930's and the discovery of the *German Tape Recorder*. This new way of recording music was very cheap and simplified the sound recording process. Blacks started to have their own independent record companies for the first time. Companies as *Atlantic* or *Chess* were crucial in the production and distribution of *R&B*.





During the late 1940's many radio station owners sold them at **knockdown prices**. They thought that the invention of television would make their radio stations obsolete. Then black people bought these radio stations and could promote the sounds of *R&B*.

While the urbanised Blacks of the North were developing *R&B*, their

Southern **counterparts** were developing *Jazz*, their own music. *Jazz* comes from the musical traditions of American Blacks mixed with White European influences. Most early *Jazz* was played by small marching bands or by solo pianists. *Blues* and *Ragtime*, two other musical styles, rose independently of *Jazz*, but these genres influenced the style and forms of *Jazz*.

*Soul* did not developed until the early sixties when artists like *Sam Cooke*, *Bobby Bland* and *Ray Charles* merged traditional *Gospel* and *R&B* styles. Ray Charles went even further. He took religious songs such as "*I Got Religion*" and secularized them to become songs like "*I Got a Woman*". In the process he had the opposition of many religious blacks who thought his music was "the music of the devil".

In the early sixties the most important centres for *Soul* were Chicago, Memphis and Detroit. Each of them developed their own distinctive styles.

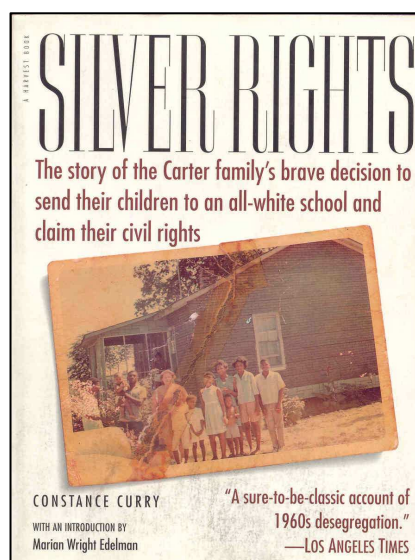




In Memphis the *Stax Records* **relied** on Gospel. In Detroit *Tamla Motown Records* produced the most commercial style of *Soul* and it was very successful. Chicago soul was between these two other companies. Its main player was *Curtis Mayfield* with his group "*The Impressions*". He often included semi-religious suggestions in his music.

By the 1970's however *Funk* substituted *Soul* as the most important form of Black Music. Traditional Soul had its roots in R&B, but the roots of Funk were in

Jazz and African Music. Although many Soul aficionados consider that *Funk* and *Soul* are different genres, the term "Soul" is now commonly used to include both styles and this can lead to confusion. Historically funk has been closely associated with Malcolm X and the Black Power movement, whereas Soul has been associated with Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement, the former being violent, the latter being peaceful. For this reason Funk has never achieved the same popularity with white audiences as Soul has done.



## VOCABULARY

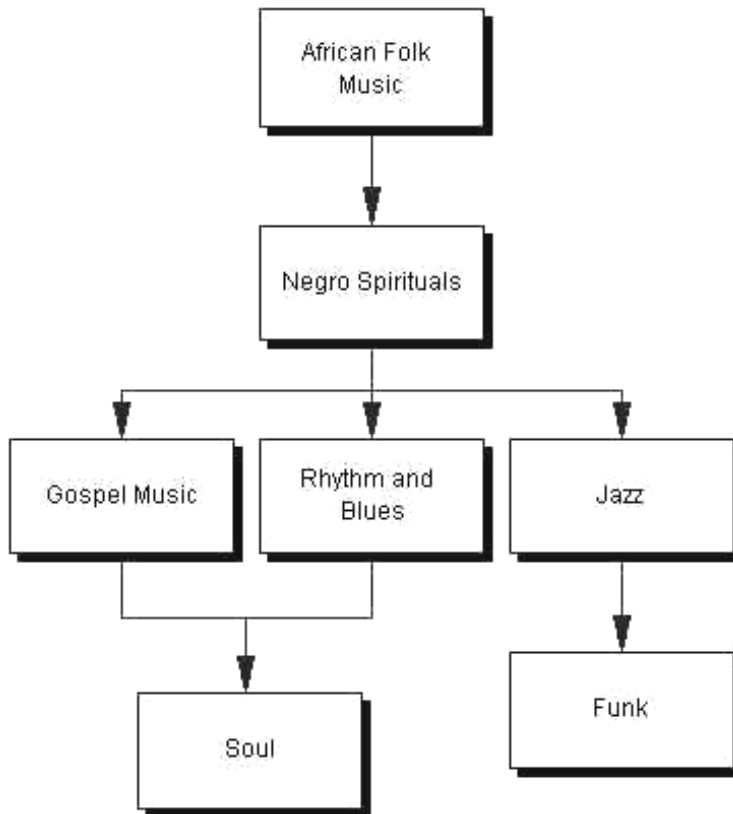
**the songs are often merged into ecstatic dance:** las canciones se combinan frecuentemente con danzas en éxtasis;

**knockdown prices:** a precios de ganga;

**counterparts:** homólogos;

**relied:** confiaba

## Els orígens del jazz



Ray Charles és considerat un cantant de *soul* que va saber fusionar a les seves cançons diferents gèneres musicals fins trobar el seu propi estil. Com veus en aquest quadre, alguns d'aquests gèneres, com el *rythm and blues*, el *gospel*, el *jazz* i el *blues*, tenen tots el mateix origen: els cants espirituals cantats per la població negra nord-americana. Altres gèneres utilitzats per ell, com el *country*, provenien d'influències externes a la seva comunitat.

Tots els gèneres musicals citats, però, han tingut la seva pròpia evolució. El naixement del jazz, per exemple, com molts moviments artístics i culturals de la història, va estar molt lligat a la relació entre persones de diferents orígens, cultures i tradicions. Unes persones que, obligades a conviure en la seva vida quotidiana, van acabar compartint experiències i maneres de fer en molts àmbits i entre ells, evidentment, també en el musical. El territori on es va donar aquesta fusió, aquest mestissatge social i cultural tan creatiu, va ser els Estats Units d'Amèrica en una època, el primer terç del segle XX, de grans moviments de població en aquell país.

Tot i que la població negra nord-americana ja havia obtingut la llibertat de moviments per tot el país, un cop finalitzada la guerra civil al segle XIX, no va ser fins els anys 20 del segle XX que aquesta llibertat va deixar de ser una idea abstracta i molts negres del sud van emigrar cap a les ciutats del nord on hi havia més possibilitats de trobar feina. A les grans ciutats, com Chicago o Nova York, es van crear les condicions per al naixement de noves formes musicals que fusionaven tres tradicions bàsiques: l'estil harmònic importat per la població emigrant europea, la complexitat rítmica de la música dels esclaus africans i la música tradicional americana.

**Llegeix aquest article sobre l'origen del jazz i contesta les següents preguntes:**

- 1. A partir de quins estils musicals es va originar el jazz?**
- 2. Què era el *minstrel show*? Quina relació tenia amb el jazz?**
- 3. Per què el jazz es va originar a Nova Orleans?**
- 4. Qui era Charles "Buddy" Bolden?**
- 5. Quins dos avanços tecnològics van ajudar a la difusió del jazz?**
- 6. Quin va ser el primer film sonor de la història?**



militars i la música per a enterraments.

El jazz és un estil musical basat en la improvisació, desenvolupat per afroamericans influenciats per l'estil harmònic europeu, la complexitat rítmica africana i la música tradicional americana. Resulta de la trobada, en l'espai i en el temps, d'aquests tres elements. Però també està molt influenciat per la música religiosa, el folklore africà, la música de ball, les marxes

Els antecedents del jazz són el ragtime, el blues i el minstrel show. El ragtime era un pre-jazz híbrid que combinava les harmonies europees amb els ritmes sincopats de la música negra. Un dels seus intèrprets més importants va ser Scott Joplin. El blues prové dels cants espirituals negres i de les cançons de treball que es cantaven en els camps de cotó i tabac on treballaven els esclaus. Els temes tenen un aire trist i molta càrrega emotiva. El minstrel show consistia en un espectacle musical, normalment interpretat per homes blancs, pintats de negre, dirigits per un director anomenat Mr. Interlocutor. Els músics es col·locaven, un per un, al centre de l'escenari i interpretaven solos amb els seus instruments, cantaven o ballaven i explicaven acudits.





Nova Orleans, a l'estat nord-americà de Louisiana, és el primer lloc d'on podem dir que en sortís jazz. Aquest territori va ser colònia francesa fins el 1803, per aquesta raó mantenia un aire més europeu que altres estats americans. Per altra banda, Nova Orleans era una ciutat amb una llarga tradició de mescla de races. Els esclaus que hi arribaven compensaven la seva falta de llibertat reunint-se a la Congo Square a les nits; allà improvisaven músiques combinant instruments africans i europeus, cantant els típics himnes africans de crida i resposta i aportant elements de les danses nord-europees a les seves danses africanes.

Es diu també que el vodú va sorgir d'aquestes trobades culturals, en barrejar-se el catolicisme amb les creences africanes. De manera més o menys paral·lela, aquestes expressions es van anar repetint en altres llocs dels Estats Units, com, per exemple, Kansas, Missouri, Chicago o Nova York. Els esclaus i els negres lliures van anar creant grups que tocaven pels carrers, en festes, bars i cabarets.



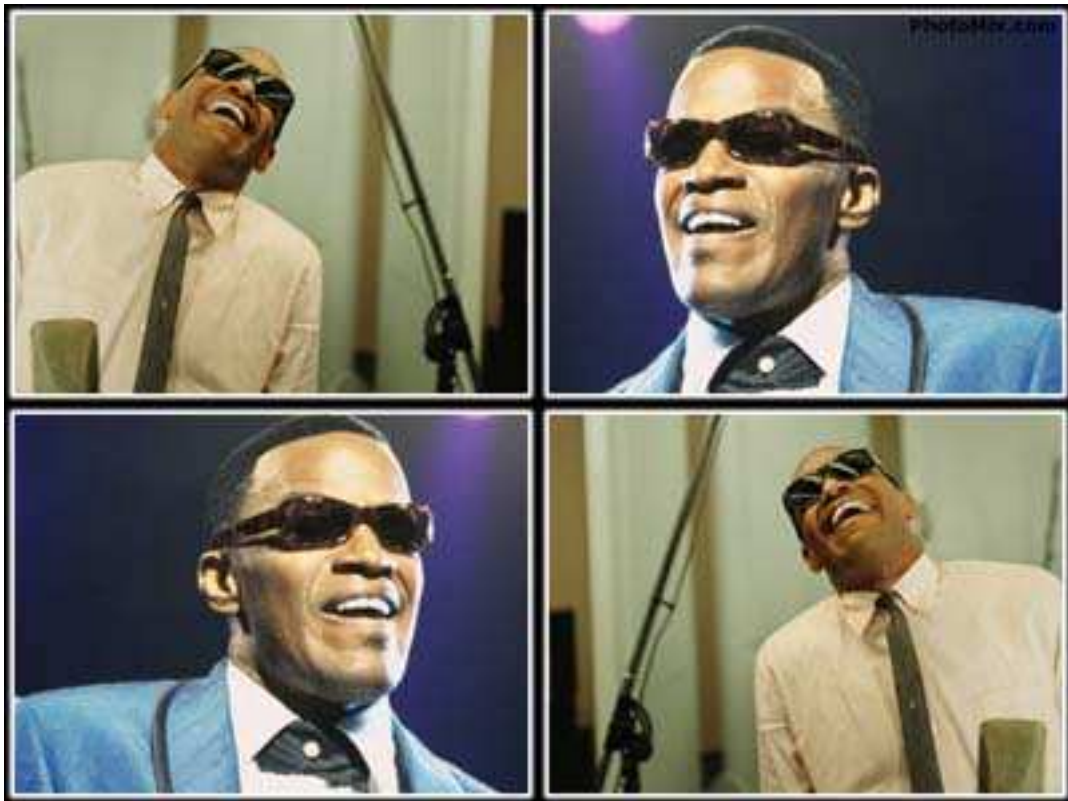
L'etapa de formació del jazz abasta gairebé 17 anys (1900-1917). El trompetista Charles "Buddy" Bolden va ser, a principis de segle, el primer director d'una banda de jazz. Però aquest nou estil musical no va adquirir popularitat fins el 1912, amb l'aparició de diferents bandes de dixieland, com per exemple l'Original Dixieland Jazz Band de Nick La Rocca.



Els dos elements més importants per a la difusió i la popularització del jazz foren les gravacions en disc i la ràdio. Gràcies a això, el nou estil musical es va estendre ràpidament per tots els Estats Units i Europa. Més endavant, concretament l'any 1927, s'estrena The Jazz Singer ("El cantant de jazz"). El primer film sonor de la història del cine, que explica la vida d'un músic de jazz negre (interpretat per un actor blanc pintat).

<http://www.tvcatalunya.com/elmeuavi/2003/>

Ray \_\_\_\_\_  
***Biography of Ray Charles***



***"I knew being blind was suddenly an aid. I never learned to stop at the skin. If I looked at a man or a woman, I wanted to see inside. Being distracted by shading or colouring is stupid. It gets in the way. It's something I just can't see."***

(Ray Charles)

## Read and translate this text about Ray Charles



Ray Charles Robinson was born in Albany (Georgia) on September 23, 1930. He was the first child of Aretha and Baily Robinson. When he was about three months, his parents moved to Greenville (Florida). It was the height of the Depression years and the Robinsons were very poor.

- "You hear **folks** talking about being poor," Charles recounts. "Even compared to other blacks... we were on the bottom of the ladder looking up at **everyone else**. Nothing below us except the ground."

FOTO <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/>

His first love was the music he heard in the community: blues, church gospel music, and country & western. That's why he loved country & western, because he heard a lot of it when he was a kid.

Ray Charles was not born blind. His illness started when he was four and took three years to develop. He had, therefore, almost seven years of vision before losing his sight. During that time he could see and learn the colours of the world, the beauty of the countryside and many other things, as the face of the most important person in his life, his mother, Aretha Robinson.

But the first major tragedy in his life was seeing his younger brother **drown**. Ray Charles was about five years old when his brother **tilted over** the rim of a tub and fell down. At first Ray thought he was still playing. When he tried to save his brother it was too late. **His clothes had gotten soaked through with water** and he was just too heavy for Ray.

Ray Charles was accepted as a charity student at St. Augustine, the Florida state school for the deaf and blind, where he learned to read Braille and improved his great gift of music. He also discovered mathematics and its correlation to music. He learned to compose and arrange music in his head, telling out the parts, one by one.

He remained at St. Augustine school until his mother's death. When he left school he travelled to Seattle where he became a minor celebrity in local clubs. There he met Quincy Jones, an even younger musician, and they became very good friends.



FOTO <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/>

In Seattle he also formed the McSon Trio -- Robin (son) and (Mc) Gee -- in 1948, with Gossady McGee. It was the first black group to have a sponsored TV show in the Pacific Northwest.

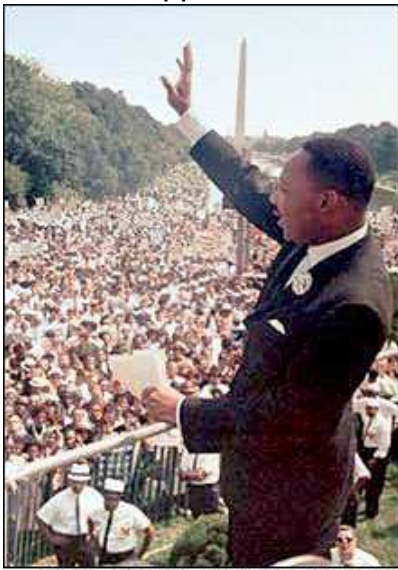
He went to Los Angeles to make his first professional recording. Along the way he shortened his name and, as Ray Charles, toured for about a year with Lowell Fulson's band. Then he formed a group and played with singer Ruth Brown. He also played at the Apollo, a theatre located in the New York community of Harlem. This place was the **landmark showcase** for black talent.

FOTO <http://www.bookrags.com/history/popculture/apollo-theater>



It was on the road in the 1950's that the realities of segregation, its injustices and its **ludicrous** moments became very evident to Charles and his troupe of travelling musicians. It was a concert day in Augusta (Georgia) and the promoter insisted that the blacks had to sit upstairs and the whites downstairs. Ray told the promoter that, after all, he was black too and it only made sense to have the black folk close to him.

This incident **propelled** Ray Charles into an active role in the **quest** for racial justice and the development of social consciousness. He gave moral and financial support to Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and in the 1960's when Martin Luther King went to jail, Ray Charles helped raise money for him to pay lawyers, legal research, court fees, etc.



SOURCE: ASSOCIATED PRESS/WORLD WIDE PHOTOS

By the early 1960's Ray Charles **accomplished** his dream. He got his first big hit record ("I Got A Woman") and became a famous musician. He also made his first triumphant European concert tour in 1960 (a feat which, except for 1965, he has repeated at least once a year ever since). In 1962, together with his long time friend and personal manager, Joe Adams, he **oversaw** construction of his own office building and recording studios in Los Angeles, RPM International.

FOTO <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/mlkbiospot.html>

One day in Philadelphia he met The Cookies a female group that sounded very well. The following week, they recorded together in New York and Ray asked the group to work with him all the time. That's when The Cookies became The Raelettes, the voices behind the great Ray Charles music.

FOTO <http://www.raycharles.com/>



He made more than 60 albums and won 12 Grammys. He was one of the participants in the historic *"We Are The World"* recording which raised many millions to help feed Africa's starving. He also earned a series of honours and influenced generations of singers. His last album was a collection of duets with Norah Jones, B. B. King, Willie Nelson, Bonnie Raitt, James Taylor, and others.



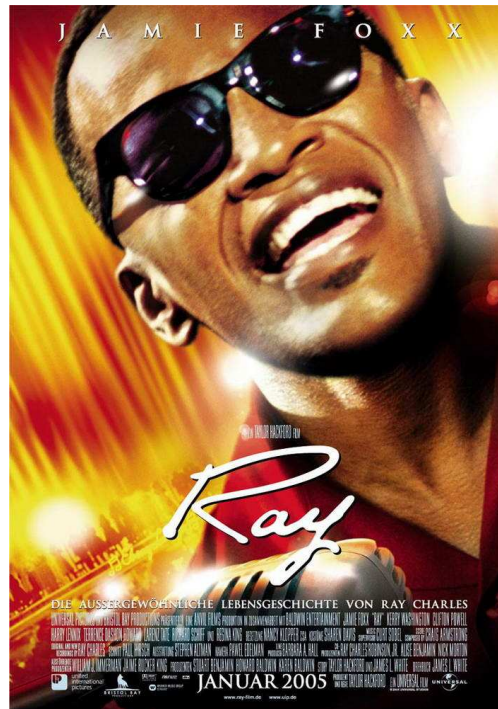
His private life was very complicated. Ray Charles was a lonely person with a heroin habit that lasted decades. He sometimes had troubles with his band members and background singers. He was divorced twice and fathered 12 children.

Even so Ray Charles remained a consummate performer almost to the very end of his life. He died at his home in Beverly Hills, California, on June 10, 2004, of liver disease. He was 73. His death **unleashed** a torrent of tributes, including this one from Ernestine Anderson: *"The gods were smiling on us when he came to Seattle"* (*The Seattle Times*).

FOTO <http://www.raycharles.com/>

## VOCABULARY

**folks:** (coloquial) gente; **everyone else:** todos los demás; **drown:** ahogarse, morir ahogado; **tilted over:** inclinarse; **his clothes had gotten soaked through with water:** sus ropas se habían empapado de agua; **landmark showcase:** importante plataforma, escaparate; **ludicrous:** ridículo, absurdo; **propelled:** impulsó; **quest:** búsqueda; **accomplished:** consiguió, hizo realidad; **oversaw:** supervisó; **unleashed:** desató.



# CINEMA<sup>per</sup>aestudiants

[info@cinemaperaestudiants.cat](mailto:info@cinemaperaestudiants.cat)