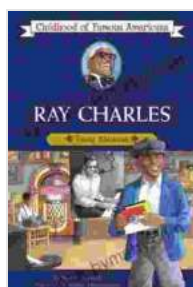
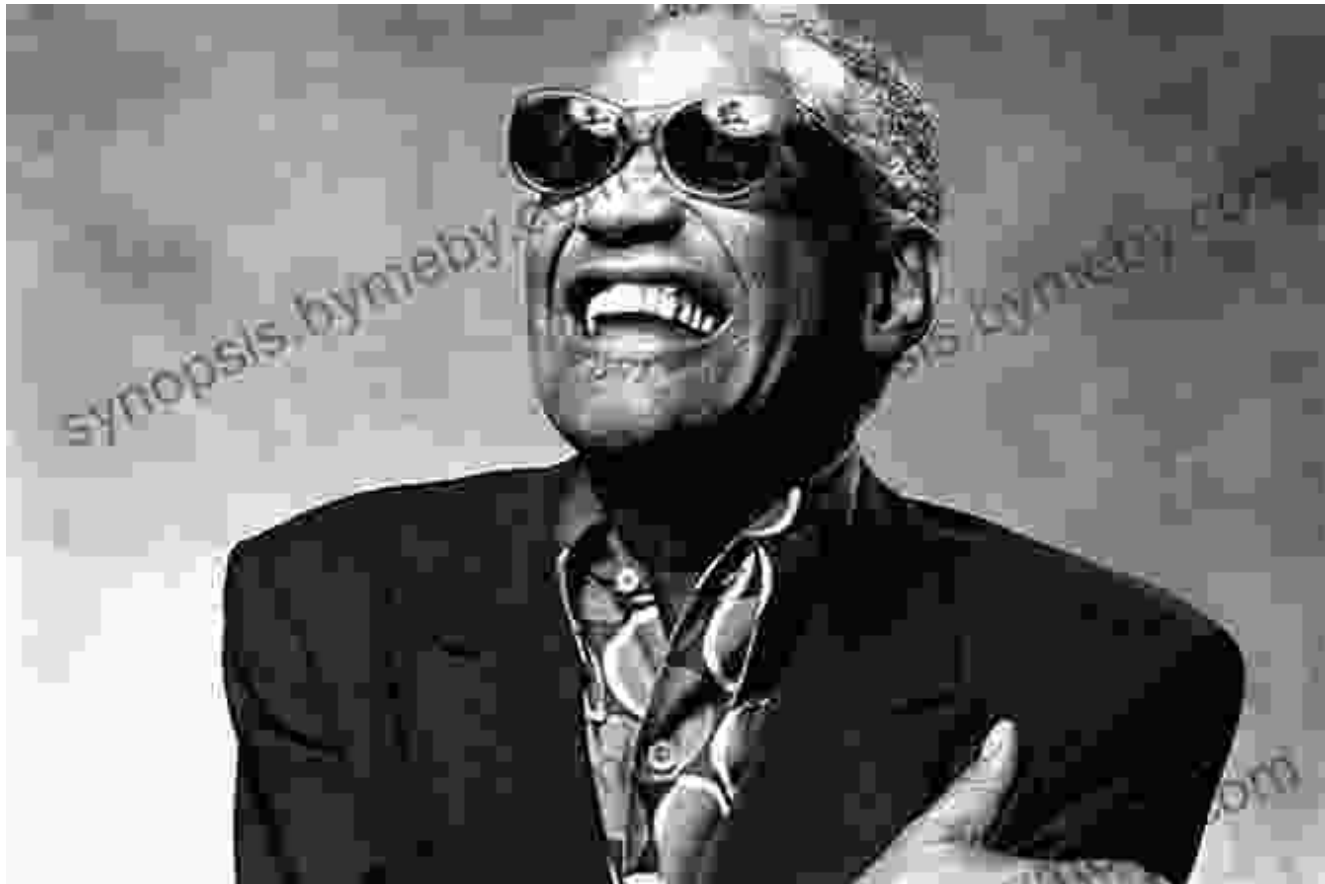


Ray Charles Young Musician: The Inspiring Childhood of an American Icon



Ray Charles: Young Musician (Childhood of Famous Americans) by Susan Sloate

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 3799 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 180 pages



Ray Charles, the legendary musician and pioneer of rhythm and blues, soul, and jazz, had a childhood marked by both adversity and extraordinary talent. From his humble beginnings in a small town in Florida to his rise to stardom, Charles's journey is an inspiring story of resilience, determination, and the transformative power of music.

Early Life and Family

Born Ray Charles Robinson on September 23, 1930, in Albany, Georgia, Charles was the son of Bertha Robinson, an itinerant farmworker, and Bailey Robinson, a mechanic. His early life was characterized by poverty and instability. His family moved frequently, and Charles often faced discrimination due to his race and his father's absence.

Despite these challenges, Charles's musical talent emerged at an early age. At the age of three, he began playing the piano, displaying an innate ability and a passion for music. However, at the age of seven, Charles contracted glaucoma, a condition that would eventually lead to blindness.

Early Musical Influences

Despite his visual impairment, Charles's determination to pursue music only grew stronger. He was deeply influenced by the gospel music of his church, as well as the blues, jazz, and country music that he heard on the radio. Charles also found inspiration in the music of Fats Domino, Nat King Cole, and Louis Armstrong.

As a young musician, Charles began performing at local talent shows and clubs. He quickly gained recognition for his extraordinary piano skills and his soulful vocals. At the age of 15, he moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where he formed his own band, the Ray Charles Trio.

Rise to Stardom



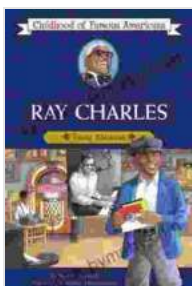
Charles's career took off in the 1950s when he signed with Atlantic Records. He released a series of hit singles, including "I Got a Woman" and "What'd I Say," which showcased his innovative blend of rhythm and blues, gospel, and jazz. Charles's music became a beacon of hope and inspiration for millions of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement.

Throughout his career, Charles continued to break down barriers and push musical boundaries. He became the first African American artist to win a Grammy Award and the first to headline a major concert hall at Carnegie Hall.

Legacy and Impact

Ray Charles died in 2004 at the age of 73, leaving behind a legacy as one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century. His music has inspired generations of musicians and continues to be celebrated today. Charles's story is a testament to the power of determination, resilience, and the transformative power of art.

Ray Charles Young Musician offers a fascinating glimpse into the childhood of a musical icon. Through his struggles and triumphs, Charles's story teaches us about the importance of perseverance, creativity, and the power of music to overcome adversity.

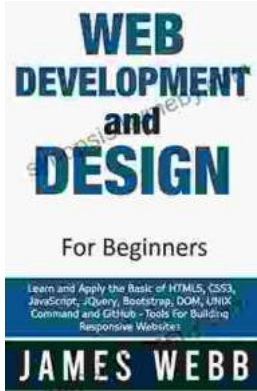


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