

Aretha Franklin - Ain't No Way

Written by bluelover

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Aretha Franklin is one of the giants of soul music, and indeed of American pop as a whole. More than any other performer, she epitomized soul at its most gospel-charged. Her astonishing run of late-'60s hits earned her the title "Lady Soul," which she has worn uncontested ever since. Yet as much of an international institution as she's become, much of her work is erratic and only fitfully inspired, making discretion a necessity when collecting her records.

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Franklin's roots in gospel ran extremely deep. With her sisters Carolyn and Erma (both of whom would also have recording careers), she sang at the Detroit church of her father, Reverend C.L. Franklin, while growing up in the 1950s. Years later, their church-honed harmonies would be heard on hits issued on Atlantic Records during Aretha Franklin's mid-'60s heyday. While her pumpin' million-sellers such as "Respect" and "Think" may be better known, "Ain't No Way" is one of the singer's best sides.



Father, Aretha & Carolyn Franklin

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"Ain't No Way" is a song written by singer-songwriter Carolyn Franklin for her elder sister Aretha. Inspired by her sisters' successes in the secular music field in the early 1960s, Carolyn followed Erma and Aretha into a secular recording career, first recording in 1963. Like Erma, Carolyn's modest success in the industry wasn't matched by Aretha's blockbuster breakthrough in the late 1960s. While struggling to release a hit, she began to work behind the scenes as a songwriter, mainly for sister Aretha's work.



Erma Franklin

Aretha and Carolyn's bond led to several collaborations between the two and Carolyn came up with several compositions that became classic hits including "Ain't No Way", recorded in 1968. The ballad single was the b-side to Aretha's top ten triumph, "(Sweet Sweet Baby) Since You've Been Gone". The song peaked at #16 on the Billboard Hot 100 and #9 on the Hot R&B Singles Chart in 1968. Carolyn and members of the Sweet Inspirations performed backing vocals on the track.



Sweet Sweet Baby - Aint No Way (single)

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The Sweet Inspirations were an American R&B girl group founded by Emily "Cissy" Houston, mother of Whitney Houston, and sister of Lee Warrick (herself the mother of well-known sisters Dee Dee and Dionne Warwick). The group sang backup for many stars, including Solomon Burke, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and Esther Phillips. On March 30, 1968, the group scored their first and only top forty hit on the Billboard Top 40 Pop Chart with the song "Sweet Inspiration" on Atlantic Records. The record was on the chart for ten weeks and peaked at number 18. Previously (December 19 and 20, 1967), the group did backing vocals for the Aretha Franklin song "Ain't No Way" which was later released on her acclaimed "Lady Soul" album.



The Sweet Inspirations

The album was her second R&B chart-topper, the follow-up to "Aretha Arrives" and included some of her biggest hit singles, "Chain of Fools" (#2 Pop), and "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman" (#8 Pop), and "(Sweet Sweet Baby) Since You've Been Gone" (#5 Pop). It eventually sold over a million copies in the United States alone. "Lady Soul" peaked at #1, #2 and #3 on Billboard's Black Albums, Pop Albums and Jazz Albums charts respectively. The Sweet Inspirations are credited as background vocals on several tracks, along with Aretha's sisters Carolyn and Erma Franklin. In 2003 the TV network VH1 named "Lady Soul" the 41st greatest album of all time. It is number 84 on Rolling Stone's list "The 500 Greatest Albums of All Time".

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ARETHA: LADY SOUL



Can't you feel the love that's in my heart? I'm a high, sparse one that highlights what gives the soul a vocal

lyrics: 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 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