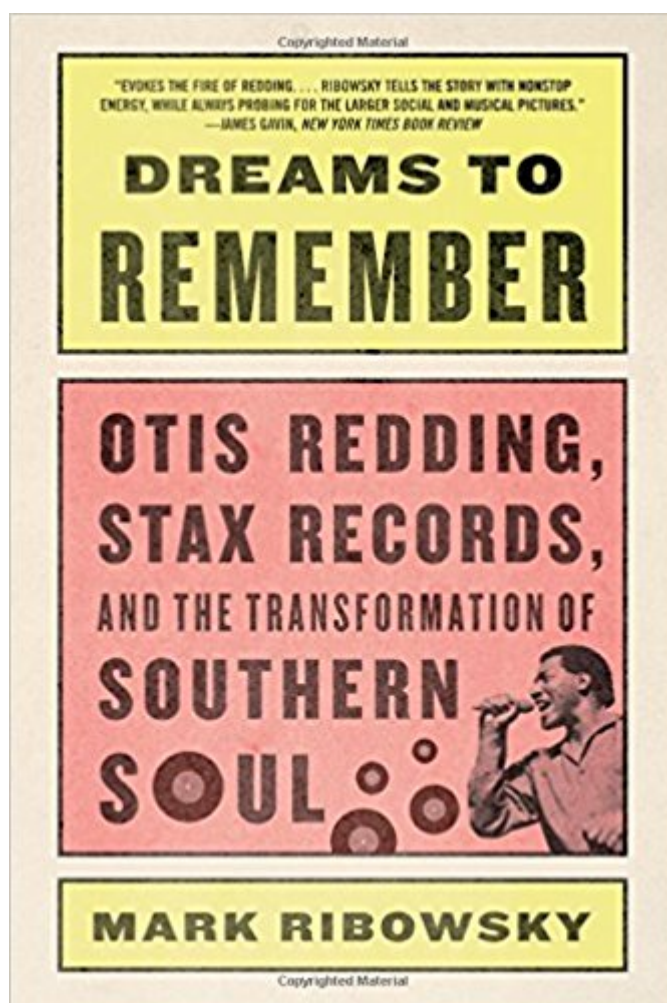


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Dreams To Remember: Otis Redding, Stax Records, And The Transformation Of Southern Soul



Synopsis

“Evokes the fire of Redding. . . . Ribowsky tells the story with nonstop energy, while always probing for the larger social and musical pictures.” • New York Times Book Review

When he died in one of rock’s string of tragic plane crashes, Otis Redding was only twenty-six, yet already the avatar of a new kind of soul music. The beating heart of Memphis-based Stax Records, he had risen to fame belting out gospel-flecked blues in stage performances that seemed to ignite not only a room but an entire generation. If Berry Gordy’s black-owned kingdom in Motown showed the way in soul music, Redding made his own way, going where not even his two role models who had preceded him out of Macon, Georgia—Little Richard and James Brown—had gone. Now, in this transformative work, New York Times Notable Book author Mark Ribowsky contextualizes his subject’s short career within the larger cultural and social movements of the era, tracing the crooner’s rise from preacher’s son to a preacher of three-minute soul sermons. And what a quick rise it was. At the tender age of twenty-one, Redding needed only a single unscheduled performance to earn a record deal, his voice so “utterly unique” (Atlantic) that it catapulted him on a path to stardom and turned a Memphis theater-turned-studio into a music mecca. Soon he was playing at sold-out venues across the world, from Finsbury Park in London to his ultimate conquest, the 1967 Monterrey Pop Festival in California, where he finally won over the flower-power crowd. Still, Redding was not always the affable, big-hearted man’s man the PR material painted him to be. Based on numerous new interviews and prodigious research, *Dreams to Remember* reintroduces an incredibly talented yet impulsive man, one who once even risked his career by shooting a man in the leg. But that temperament masked a deep vulnerability that was only exacerbated by an industry that refused him a Grammy until he was in his grave—even as he shaped the other Stax soul men around him, like Wilson Pickett, Sam and Dave, and Booker T. and The MG’s. As a result, this requiem is one of great conquest but also grand tragedy: a soul king of truth, a mortal man with an immortal voice and a pain in his heart. Now he, and the forces that shaped his incomparable sound, are reclaimed, giving us a panoramic of an American original who would come to define an entire era, yet only wanted what all men deserve—a modicum of respect and a place to watch the ships roll in and away again. 8 pages of photographs

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Customer Reviews

“Subtly passionate. . . . What Mark Ribowsky has done here is to describe someone who was, not divine, but as godlike as a human can be.” - David Kirby, Wall Street

Journal “A fascinating tale of the artist and his musical era.” - Dave Shiflett,

Washington Post “Ribowsky has labored hard to get at [Redding’s] emotional center. Unlike other performers who died far too young, Redding’s death did not come out of abuse, and though he suffered, it was a universal human suffering—a pain in the heart

that, partnered with unerring musical instinct, personal strength, and a little tenderness, he transformed into art. Ribowsky goes into the seamy side of the record business but also the sheer beauty and magic of the sixties soul music that Redding epitomized.” - Mark Levine,

Booklist “[A]n engaging account of Redding’s rise to stardom and the parallel story of Stax/Volt. . . . Insightful and informative.” - Michelle Jones, Dallas Morning

News “A rousing storyteller, Ribowsky energetically chronicles Redding’s rise from local singer to the King of Soul. . . . A fast-paced and entertaining tale of a man, a time and a place where black and white musicians, in spite of the racial tensions swirling around them, came together simply by playing the sweet soul music that transcends any divisions.” - Henry L. Carrigan

Jr., Bookpage.com “The definitive look at the life and career of Otis Redding thus far. More importantly, [Ribowsky] offers a sort of parallel book about the political and social implications of Southern Soul music in the 60s, as well as the story of Stax Records, Redding’s label where he was also the undisputed marquee artist. . . . Listeners can find a new appreciation for this “King of Soul” whose reign was all too brief.” - Bob Ruggiero, Houston Press “The best. . . . Otis Redding biography to date. . . . The soul and R&B singers and rappers who have come along in the nearly half-century since

[Redding’s] death owe him a huge debt of gratitude.” - George de Stefano,

Mark Ribowsky is the author of fifteen books, including *Ain't Too Proud to Beg: The Troubled Lives and Enduring Soul of the Temptations*, the New York Times Notable Book *Don't Look Back: Satchel Paige in the Shadows of Baseball*, and, most recently, *Dreams to Remember: Otis Redding, Stax Records, and the Transformation of Southern Soul*. He lives in Florida.

I received my copy today. I am an enormous Redding fan. I have a keen knowledge of his public life and times, as well. Thus, for me Otis Redding was much more than just music! This book (though I have only glimpsed bits here and there) is what disciples and devotees have awaited for so long. It has the substance of a block buster film trilogy . I give it 5 star's for effort, substance and passion!!

Absolutely loved the book. The narrator, not so much. He sounded too much like one of those dramatic doc or mock doc narrators that are so lampooned. But, what a great story! There are a lot of names and a lot of details that are hard to keep straight at times, but that's how it is if a comprehensive story of someone's life is to be told. It made me even more aware of what a loss to the music world Otis' early death was/is!

Bought this after hearing Mr. Ribowsky on the Diahne Rehm show on WAMU 88.5 (NPR). Haven't been able to get past the first chapter. Clearly Ribowsky is enamoured with his subject but I can't seem to stick with this book. Not sure why.

Fantastic history of soul music in the South (Macon, Memphis, etc).....great read for those that loved Otis, Sam & Dave, Little Richard, James Brown, Aretha Franklin, et al.....

a really in depth book, enjoying the history,

the story was okay a little long in the events part. Half way I began to skip parts of the book.

An excellent look at Otis' life but even more, the context in which it was lived and the role music played in America's culture at the time.

I grew up in Macon, Georgia and have always been a huge fan of Otis. Excellent treatment of the

facts of Otis' life.

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