



# TRACY CHAPMAN



Timeline							
1964	1967	1972	1982	1986	1988	2008	2015
Born March 30 <sup>th</sup> in Ohio, U.S.A.	Was given a ukulele to play by her mother	Learned to play the guitar and write songs	Studied Anthropology and African Studies at university	Recorded and released her first song	Released her hit single 'Fast Car' and performed at Nelson Mandela's 70 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Tribute concert	Released her 8 <sup>th</sup> studio album and went on a European tour	Released her Greatest Hits album and still performs

## Key Songs

For My Lover	1986 – Tracy's first officially released song which came free with a magazine.
Baby Can I Hold You	1988 – All about how sometimes we do not have the right words at the right time and simply holding someone may just help instead.
Fast Car	1988 - Written from her own experiences all about poverty and escaping from it.
Talkin' About a Revolution	1988 – Sung at Nelson Mandela's 70 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Tribute and a song all about the unfairness of poverty.
Crossroads	1989 – About how objects/things cannot make her happy and people of power/money will not change her.
All That You Have is Your Soul	1989 - A song about staying true to yourself, even in a difficult and sometimes cruel world.
Bang, Bang, Bang	1993 – A song about poverty and violence.
The Promise	1995 – A heart-warming song about a love that lasts.
Change	2005 – A song which asks the question to the listener, that if you knew what the consequences of your actions were going to have, would you change how you behave?
Sing For You	2008 – A song about how singing and music is a true and important part of everybody's lives.



### DID YOU KNOW?



When Tracy Chapman recorded her first album, her record label loved it but thought it would only sell 50,000 copies. It went on to sell 13 million copies instead.

## The Importance of Tracy

Her Music  
Tracy Chapman's music is utterly honest and real. She didn't go out and say, 'I want to be a star, sell albums, and make money.' She made music that meant something to her and that represented her life experience, whether it was to sell or not.

Charity Work  
*"I'm approached by lots of organisations and lots of people who want me to support their various charitable efforts in some way. And I look at those requests and I basically try to do what I can. And I have certain interests of my own, generally an interest in human rights."* In 1988, she performed in London as part of a worldwide concert tour to celebrate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Private Life  
*"I have a public life that's my work life and I have my personal life. In some ways, the decision to keep the two things separate relates to the work I do."* Tracy has never shared her private life with the media. Often these days, we know everything about celebrities and musicians, and this reminds us that many musicians only want to be known for their music.

## Important Events

Racism  
When she was thirteen years old, schools in Ohio began putting black and white students into mixed race schools. Tracy was beaten up by a group of white students, one of whom had a gun. The experience caused her great upset but later helped form some of the lyrics in her songs and also led to her escape her life to go to university.

Nelson Mandela  
It was at Nelson Mandela's globally televised 70th Birthday Tribute that Tracy Chapman captured the hearts of millions. She took to the stage and sang, "poor people gonna rise up, and get their share, poor people gonna rise up, and take what's theirs". Legend has it that it was a fault with Stevie Wonder's equipment which led Tracy, with only a guitar in hand, to take to the stage during a main slot. The rest as they say, is history. Chapman also dedicated her 1989 song "Freedom Now" to Mandela.

Grammy Awards  
Tracy has won 4 Grammy Awards. These are very highly regarded awards by the Recording Academy which recognise achievements in the music industry.