Flack, Roberta (1939-) Encyclopedia Article

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Flack, Roberta (1939—)

One of the most popular female singers of the early 1970s, Roberta Flack was critically praised for her impressively beautiful and classically controlled voice, as well as her performance style: powerful, yet intimate in its delivery. Flack was a musical prodigy, and achieved her mastery of song interpretation early on. After years of study and working as a music teacher, she began recording professionally in 1969. Her biggest success came in 1971 with the song "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face." By the following year, it was the number one song in America, popularized in part through its inclusion in the soundtrack of Clint Eastwood's *Play Misty for Me.* Over the next two decades Flack's successes were sporadic, but interest in her music surged again in the late 1990s, inspired by the Fugees' popular hip-hop remake of her 1973 song "Killing Me Softly."

Further Reading:

Whitburn, Joel. *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits.* New York, Billboard Publication, Inc., 1996.