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## ■ Jackson, Mahalia

**Identification** American gospel singer

**Born** October 26, 1911; New Orleans, Louisiana

**Died** January 27, 1972; Evergreen Park, Illinois  
(near Chicago)

*Jackson was an inspirational gospel singer who touched the hearts of many people through her spirit-filled singing and religious passion. After launching her recording career in 1946, her unique singing style captivated listeners and made her the most influential gospel singer of her era.*

At an early age, Mahalia Jackson became committed to singing gospel music, which she believed could heal the soul. She spent hours listening to popular blues singers, trying to capture their nuances and tone quantity and eventually molded her own voice into a powerful and distinct timbre filled with religious passion. She used this gift to uplift people. Her unique vocal techniques fascinated audiences, as her full-throated singing, bent pitches, and high soprano tones helped many people forget their troubles. Mahalia's emotional singing made audiences cheer, cry, and sometimes even faint.

During the Depression years, World War II, and the civil rights era, people flocked to churches for spiritual healing. Jackson sang for congregations and public engagements. Her expressive voice moved leaders such as the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and President John F. Kennedy.

During the 1940's, Jackson became one of the leading African American gospel singers. She began her recording career in October, 1946. Her initial recordings sold poorly, but in September, 1947, she first made gospel music history with her recording of "Move On Up a Little Higher," which would sell more than one million records. This success secured her bookings on weekly radio shows and moved her career forward.

**Impact** During the 1940's, Mahalia Jackson launched an influential recording career that included a contract with Columbia Records and popu-



*Photograph of Mahalia Jackson made by Carl Van Vechten in 1962. (Library of Congress)*

larity that transcended racial lines. She was one of several important African American performers to bring gospel music into the mainstream of the U.S. recording industry. As the first gospel singer to broadcast pure sanctified gospel music, she earned the title Queen of Gospel Song.

*Monica T. Tripp-Roberson*

### **Further Reading**

Goreau, Laurraine. *Just Mahalia, Baby: The Mahalia Jackson Story*. Gretna, La.: Pelican, 1984.

Gourse, Leslie. *Mahalia Jackson: Queen of Gospel Song*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1996.

Jackson, Mahalia, with Evan McLeod Wylie. *Movin' On Up*. New York: Avon Books, 1969.  
 Orgill, Roxane. *Mahalia: A Life in Gospel Music*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2002.

**See also** African Americans; American Negro Exposition; Dorsey, Tommy; Music: Jazz; Music: Popular; Women's roles and rights in the United States.

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## ■ Jackson, Shirley

**Identification** American author of the 1948 short story "The Lottery"

**Born** December 14, 1916; San Francisco, California

**Died** August 8, 1965; North Bennington, Vermont

*Jackson's short story "The Lottery" caused a sensation by emphasizing the ease with which otherwise ordinary people can be led to commit heinous acts.*

For a readership coming to terms with the effects of Nazism and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and dealing with xenophobia and the rising tensions over civil rights, Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" defined the capacity for brutality as central to each individual but particularly alluring to unthinking mobs. The story, in which a small town conducts an annual murder of a member of its citizenry, underscores the dangers that arise when prejudices and ritualized activities are left unexamined by an apathetic public. Thus, it inspired heated debate about the ways in which dominant cultures disenfranchise individuals based on their race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Its 1948 publication in *The New Yorker* inspired more letters than any story the magazine had published to date, and it remains Jackson's most anthologized work.

**Impact** A successful novelist, dramatist, lecturer, autobiographer, and short-story writer, Jackson is often recognized for her complex psychological portraits and influence on the female Gothic genre. However, she remains best known for "The Lottery" and its poignant depiction of the dangers of mob mentality.

*Priscilla Glanville*

### Further Reading

Hattenhauer, Darryl. *Shirley Jackson's American Gothic*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.

Murphy, Bernice M., ed. *Shirley Jackson: Essays on the Literary Legacy*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2005.  
 Oppenheimer, Judy. *Private Demons: The Life of Shirley Jackson*. New York: Putnam, 1988.

**See also** Civil rights and liberties; Literature in the United States; Lynching and hate crime; Racial discrimination; Women's roles and rights in the United States; World War II.

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## ■ Jackson Hole National Monument

**Identification** New national monument

**Date** Established on March 15, 1943

**Place** Jackson Hole, Wyoming

*The creation of Jackson Hole National Monument served to protect a valley of exceptional natural beauty from commercial development.*

Jackson Hole is the scenic valley bordering the east side of the dramatic Teton Range. Through the years, attempts were made to add this region to Grand Teton National Park. Established in 1929, the park itself included only the Teton Range and six adjacent lakes. However, many local residents and ranchers were against enlarging the park.

Philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr., visited the area during the 1920's, and had become concerned about its protection. He eventually purchased 35,000 acres in the region, planning to give this land to the federal government to expand Grand Teton National Park. For years, legal actions blocked his efforts. Finally, at the urging of Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, and using powers granted him by the Antiquities Act of 1906, President Franklin D. Roosevelt accepted the gift for the park service and declared the valley Jackson Hole National Monument on March 15, 1943. Legal challenges were finally resolved by the end of the decade.

**Impact** Although a coalition of landowners attempted to block the monument's creation, Roosevelt was successful. Congress passed a bill abolishing the monument, but the president vetoed it. On September 14, 1950, President Harry S. Truman signed a bill that merged most of Jackson Hole National Monument with Grand Teton National Park.

*Russell N. Carney*