

# Movie review: 'Ray'

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Special to The Michigan Citizen

Ray Charles (1930-2004) was one of the most innovating and talented musicians to ever be in the music business. The musical biographical drama "Ray," is the extraordinary life story of legendary blues singer Ray Charles, a man who fought harder and went farther than anyone thought possible.

Taylor Hackford ("An Officer and A Gentleman," and "Proof of Life") directs the movie, and Ray Charles recorded the soundtrack, "Genius Loves Company," with various artists before he died.

Jamie Foxx ("Collateral," "Ali" and "Any Given Sunday") leads an outstanding cast, which includes Regina King, Kerry Washington, Curtis Armstrong, Richard Schiff, Larenz Tate, Clifton Powell, Bokeem Woodbine, Chris Thomas King, Aunjanue Ellis, Terrence Dashon Howard, and Sharon Warren, making her feature debut playing the role of Aretha Robinson, Ray Charles' fiercely independent mother. The whole cast provides exceptional and convincing presentations.

Foxx renders a brilliant performance as Ray Charles. It's the kind of acting that warrants an Academy Award. He is dazzling from the time he enters the movie until the

film credits start to roll. Not only does Foxx act like Ray Charles, he looks exactly like him; smiling and swaying behind the piano, grunting, moaning, foot moving and all. He displays his extensive acting range. Foxx gives us a relaxed front-seat ride, into all that transpired within the life of Ray Charles.

The movie chronicles Charles' struggles through poverty, blindness, death, segregation, drug addiction, and adultery. It also reflects his unrelenting loyalty to his family. The words "No matter what, I'm not leaving my family!" came up twice. It also showcases his success and the friends that Ray Charles met along the way. This film is a wonderful history lesson for the generations that didn't get the chance to experience Charles alive.

Go see this movie; you won't be disappointed. Word to the wise — if you take children, be prepared for drug-use scenes.

**Overall I rate the movie  
Excellent (4.5 stars)  
Rated PG-13**



**Jamie Foxx is "Ray."**