

Scott Joplin (c. 1868 – April 1, 1917)

Scott Joplin was a seminal American composer and pianist, renowned for his pioneering work in ragtime music. Born in Texas, Joplin showed early musical talent, studying piano and composition from a young age. His innovative compositions played a key role in popularizing ragtime, a genre characterized by its syncopated rhythms and vibrant melodies.

Joplin's most famous piece, "Maple Leaf Rag" (1899), became a defining work of ragtime and brought him significant acclaim. He also composed "The Entertainer" (1902), which further cemented his reputation. In addition to his ragtime compositions, Joplin made significant contributions to music with his operatic work, *Treemonisha* (1911), which sought to elevate ragtime to the opera stage and integrate it with classical forms.

Despite his early death at the age of 49, Joplin's work left a lasting impact on American music, influencing both his contemporaries and later generations. His compositions are still celebrated for their technical innovation and enduring appeal.