

For Immediate Release:

Bettye Jean Crutcher Barnes
September 16, 1939 — October 20, 2022

Los Angeles, CA—It is with a heavy heart that Craft Recordings and Stax Records announce the passing of acclaimed songwriter, producer, and singer, Bettye Crutcher, following a period of illness. A native of Memphis, TN, Crutcher was an integral member of Stax and shone as a prolific songwriter for the legendary soul label's biggest acts.

Crutcher developed an early passion for writing and could be found composing poems and song lyrics throughout her youth. As a young woman, Crutcher pursued her dreams of becoming a songwriter, despite the fact that it was a role primarily dominated by men in the '60s. Her perseverance paid off in 1967, however, when she auditioned for Stax's house composer, David Porter. Porter, a pioneering songwriter and producer, was highly impressed with Crutcher's talent, and immediately brought her into the label's fold.

Throughout her time at Stax, Crutcher wrote and co-wrote hundreds of songs, including Carla Thomas' 1969 Top Ten R&B track "I Like What You're Doing (To Me)" and Johnnie Taylor's GRAMMY®-nominated 1968 hit, "Who's Making Love," which went to No.1 on the *Billboard* R&B chart and No.5 on the Hot 100. Crutcher also formed the best-selling writing trio We Three, along with Homer Banks (1941–2003) and Raymond Jackson (1941–1972).

Crutcher's numerous credits also included songs for the Staple Singers, Sam & Dave, Booker T. & The M.G.'s, William Bell, Albert King, Shirley Brown, Delaney & Bonnie, Etta James, the Mad Lads, the Temprees, Little Sonny, and the Sweet Inspirations, among many others. Beyond the Stax orbit, Crutcher also wrote for the likes of B.B. King, Sammy Davis Jr., Barbara Mason, Brenton Wood, Ben E. King, and Ted Taylor.

A talented singer in her own right, Crutcher released a solo album in 1974, *Long as You Love Me (I'll Be Alright)* (Enterprise/Stax). Several of the songs were co-written with another frequent-collaborator, Mack Rice, who co-produced the album with Crutcher. Backed by the iconic Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, with strings and horns from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Crutcher shone as a solo artist, as she sang irresistible, soulful tunes like "Sugar Daddy," "Sleepy People," "Sunday Morning's Gonna Find Us in Love," and the title track, "Long as You Love Me." While *Long as You Love Me (I'll Be Alright)* would be Crutcher's only album, it remains a gem in the Stax catalog—long sought-after by crate diggers and hip-hop producers, and joyfully discovered by fans of classic soul.

In the '80s, Crutcher relocated to Nashville, TN to pursue new opportunities as a songwriter, and would remain there for the rest of her life. In her final years, Crutcher remained an active force in the community—not only continuing her work as a writer but also teaching her craft to budding lyricists. Crutcher's talents also extended to the visual arts. In the late '70s, she engaged in the interior design and antiques businesses, while in more recent years, Crutcher

found joy in creating her own jewelry, as well as designing promotional items for the Stax Museum of American Soul Music.

Today, Crutcher's timeless songs continue to be interpreted by new generations of artists. There is no doubt that her legacy, and her indelible imprint on the musical landscape, will continue to live on for many years to come.

Crutcher is survived by her two sons Perri Montez Crutcher and Dejuano Curlin Crutcher and her five sisters Nellie Louise Ward, Carolyn Ann Walker, Dr. Doris, Arnette Fields, Sandra Dell Fields-Taylor, Lucille Vernice Rainey.

Bettye Crutcher Spotify Link -

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/2rl5AdbYMS5wg5Zzsq4niL?si=VbxTM6uHSEGob9dZH029CQ>

STAX RECORDS

STAX RECORDS, now owned by Concord, was founded by Jim Stewart in 1957 in Memphis, Tennessee. It rose from a small, family-operated company to become one of the most influential record labels in the world, helping create "The Memphis Sound" and launching the careers of icons such as Otis Redding, Isaac Hayes, Booker T. & The M.G.'s, the Staple Singers, Sam & Dave, Rufus and Carla Thomas, The Bar-Kays, and dozens of other artists who helped change popular culture forever. In all, Stax placed 167 hit songs in the Top 100 in Pop and 243 hits in the Top 100 in R&B.