

FACT SHEET

Folk protest artists

Woody Guthrie

Born in 1912, Woody Guthrie spent his early years travelling around the US singing on street corners. He was greatly affected by the poverty of the Great Depression in the 1930s, and wrote simple political songs including 'Talking Dustbowl Blues', 'This Land Is Your Land' and 'Ludlow Massacre'. He became the voice of the common people.

Joan Baez

A politically active folk singer, Joan Baez was distinctive with her sweeping soprano voice and intense sound. Her song 'We Shall Overcome' is arguably her best known protest song and she is also known for her humanitarian work.

Pete Seegar

The son of a musicologist who collected American folksongs, Pete Seegar grew up performing songs his father collected. He formed the Almanac Singers in 1941, singing traditional songs with newly written social and political lyrics. He enjoyed success with The Weavers in 1948 and later as a solo artist, with songs such as 'Goodnight Irene', 'Where Have All the Flowers Gone' and 'If I Had a Hammer'.

Joni Mitchell

Many of her songs were penned during the height of the Hippie movement and reflect the mood of the time. Joni Mitchell typified the moral clash between commercial acceptance and artistic integrity, and her hits include 'Big Yellow Taxi' and 'Both Sides Now'.

Simon and Garfunkel

The duo of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel began singing together at high school by covering Bob Dylan songs. They quickly developed their own style through the song writing talent of Paul Simon and were famous for the accuracy and purity of their harmonies. Their hits include 'The Sound Of Silence', 'Bridge Over Troubled Water' and 'I Am A Rock'.

Folk rock artists

The Byrds

Formed in 1964, The Byrds melded the British Invasion sound with folk music. Their songs were distinctive for their close harmony vocals and jangling guitar sounds, and hits include 'Turn, Turn, Turn', 'Eight Miles High', 'Mr Tambourine Man' and 'I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better'.

Buffalo Springfield

Although only together from 1966–1968, Buffalo Springfield combined rock, folk and country music, and launched the careers of Stephen Stills and Neil Young. Their hit ‘For What It’s Worth’ became a political anthem in the late 1960s.

Mamas & The Papas

From Los Angeles, the Mamas & The Papas successfully blended folk and popular music in the late 1960s. With highly crafted vocals and high production values, their hits include ‘California Dreaming’, ‘Monday, Monday’ and ‘Safe In My Garden’.

Crosby, Stills & Nash

Also known occasionally as Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young (when joined by Neil Young), they successfully combined rock with folk, country, blues and even jazz, packaged with tight vocal harmonies. After a number of hits including ‘Marrakesh Express’, ‘Teach Your Children’, and ‘Wooden Ships’, the band members took up solo careers.