Billie Holiday

7 April 1915 - 17 July 1959
American jazz singer

Private life
* grew up in Baltimore
* turbulent childhood
* married twice
* addicted to alcohol and drugs
* 1947: arrested for possessing narcotics
* died of cirrhosis of the liver

Career:
• began singing in nightclubs around Harlem
• was signed to Brunswick Records in 1935
  • Hit: "What a little moonlight can do"
• mainstream success throughout the 1930s and 1940s
• labels: Decca Records, Columbia Records
• 1948: played Carnegie Hall to a sold-out crowd
• 1954: hugely successful tour of Europe
• 1956: autobiography "Lady sings the Blues"

Which songs to remember?
# 1st major release: « Riffin the scotch » (5000 copies)
* popular jazz standard « Summertime »
# 16 best selling songs in 1937: « Carelessly », « I’ve got my love to keep me warm »
* 1939: biggest selling record « Strange Fruit »