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SHORE THINGS

# 'Godfather of Soul' still rocks 'n' rolls

By NICOLE PENSIERO  
For the Courier-Post

He's been called everything from "the hardest working man in show business" to the "Godfather of Soul," and after more than 40 years of touring and recording, James Brown shows no signs of slowing down.

"I'm still on the road six months out of the year," said Brown, 62, in a recent telephone interview from his Augusta, Ga., office. "I love being in front of people and I do my best so that people who see me say, 'That was dynamic, that was energy!'"

A two-time Grammy Award winner and charter member of the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame, Brown has been a part of the American music culture for more than four decades.

At age 20, his career was launched as a member of the Gospel Starlighters, headed by friend and gospel singer Bobby Byrd. The group soon changed its style to rhythm and blues, becoming James Brown and the



**JAMES BROWN**  
... rocking for four decades

**Famous Flames.** Playing as many as 350 one-nighters each year, Brown formed a full-scale touring group, the James Brown Revue.

Beginning with the release of *I'll Go Crazy* in 1960, almost every James Brown single was a hit, and he hit the top of the charts 17 times. With more than 50 million records sold, Brown, has had more pop

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James Brown performs at the Mark J. Etess Arena at Trump Taj Mahal, 10 p.m. tonight and 9 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$37.50 and \$30 on the day of show. Call 800-736-1420.

singles on the charts than any other artist in history, with the exception of Elvis Presley.

Songs like *I Got You (I Feel Good)*, *Papa's Got a Band New Bag*, and *Living in America* are classic examples of Brown's impassioned, emotional singing style. And even 30 years after some of his hits were first released, they remain decidedly cool with fans of all ages.

He recently released a new album on his own Geographical label, *Respect Me*, which he said "continues the tradition of soulful music James Brown is known for."

Throughout the 1960s, Brown's humanitarian instincts led to his involvement in causes benefiting the poor. He became such an important figure in the black community that, in 1969, Brown was the focus of a *Look* magazine cover story, which asked, "This Is The Most

Important Man in America?"

Brown made several trips to Vietnam to entertain troops during the war, and in April will perform in Vietnam to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the fall of Saigon before a massive group of veterans.

"I was there for them then, so I'm honored to be there for them now," said Brown. "I'm just so happy that I can still go out there and make people happy and that I have my health, so I can do so."

The 25 months that Brown served in a South Carolina prison after failing to stop his car for a police officer has been behind him since his release in February 1991. And Brown is

continually looking toward the future.

"I don't know when God's gonna stop me or even slow me down, but for everything I have, I can say, 'God Almighty gave it to me,'" said Brown.

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