

BERT'S ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX PRESENTS

RHYTHM & BLUES HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY

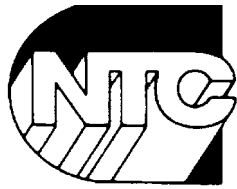
Gala & Concert



RHYTHM & BLUES HALL OF FAME 2016 INDUCTION CEREMONY

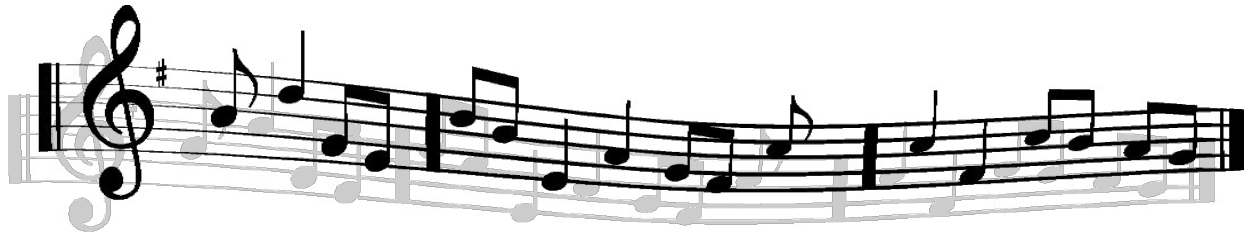


DEARBORN, MI • AUGUST 21, 2016



UAW-Chrysler National Training Center

Is honored to support the 4th Annual Rhythm & Blues
Music Hall of Fame Black Tie Affair 2016



*“A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer,
it sings because it has a song.”*

~Maya Angelou

For more than a century, Rhythm & Blues has been the largest influence on music all over the world. We join you this evening in honoring some of the most influential and innovative R&B performers whose creative genius has left an indelible mark on the industry. Their music is a testament to the proud legacy of this genre, and will spin in our hearts forever!



Norwood Jewell
Vice President & Director
Chrysler Department, UAW





FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Good Evening! Welcome to the 4th Annual Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. May we have a moment of silence for the memory of the members being inducted who are no longer with us, Thank you.

The work of the Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame continues and we hope that you will continue to support us. This year's program, as all the others to follow, is full of stars, memories and wonderful music. We will try not to bore you with too many speeches but rather let the artist & music speak for themselves.

Thank you for coming and have a wonderful time.

LaMont Showboat Robinson

Hoot McInerney's
STAR



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24350 West 12 Mile Road

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2016 INDUCTEES



SMOKEY ROBINSON



PRINCE



THE SUPREMES



DIONNE WARWICK



CATHY HUGHES



FATS DOMINO



THE ROYAL JOKERS



EDDIE HOLMAN



BETTYE LAVETTE



MILLER LONDON



THE FALCONS



JIMI HENDRIX



MACK RICE



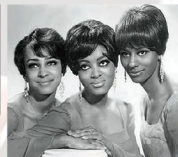
BOOTSY COLLINS



ROBERT BATEMAN



MICKEY STEVENSON



THE VELVETTES



RENA SCOTT



HERB KENT



SUGAR CHILE ROBINSON



EDDIE FLOYD



AL ABRAMS



WILSON PICKETT

Hosts



MARY WILSON



SPYDER TURNER



DAVID WASHINGTON

Special Awards



THE SUPREMES



CATHY HUGHES



GENE CHANDLER



JOHN MASON



MILDRED GADDIS

THE RHYTHM & BLUES MUSIC GROUP OF
THE 20TH CENTURY AWARD

THE SUPREMES

THE RHYTHM & BLUES MUSIC LIVING LEGENDS AWARD

CATHY HUGHES

RHYTHM & BLUES MUSIC PIONEER AWARD

GENE CHANDLER

THE RHYTHM & BLUES MUSIC RADIO
PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR AWARD

JOHN MASON

THE RHYTHM & BLUES BROADCAST
JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

MILDRED GADDIS

CATHY HUGHES



Radio maven Cathy Hughes was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1947. Beginning her career in radio in 1969, Hughes' first position was with KOWH, a black radio station in Omaha. Her successes there prompted the Howard University School of Communications to offer her a position as a lecturer and as Assistant to the Dean of Communications.

In 1973, Hughes was named general sales manager to WHUR-FM in Washington, D.C, and by 1975 was hired as the general manager of the station. Under her guidance, WHUR-FM, which had been struggling along with \$300,000 in annual sales revenues, increased its annual revenues to more than \$3.5 million. In 1978, Hughes left WHUR for WYCB Radio, where she served as the vice president and general manager of the station.

Hughes and her husband at the time, Dewey Hughes, decided they wanted to buy their own radio station in 1979, and after being rejected by thirty-two banks, they found a lender. With their loan, they purchased WOL, a small Washington, D.C. station and Radio One was born. While Hughes wanted a talk format for the station, the bank was pressing for music. A compromise was reached permitting Hughes to have a morning talk show program that was followed by music programming throughout the day.

Hughes' marriage ended shortly after purchasing the station and she began her path as a single mother. She purchased her husband's share in the station, but hard times soon forced she and her son, Alfred, to give up their apartment and move into the station to make ends meet. Over time, however, the station began turning a profit, largely due to the success of her talk show.

Since the early days of being a station owner, Hughes' rise has been remarkable. Today, Radio One owns 65 radio stations throughout every major market in the country, making the company the largest black-owned radio chain in the nation. In January of 2004, Hughes launched TV One, a cable television channel targeted at the African American community.

Today, Hughes has the distinction of being the first African American woman to head a media company publicly traded on the U.S. Stock Exchange, and she continues to serve as Chairperson of Radio One.



SMOKEY ROBINSON



Once pronounced by Bob Dylan as America's "greatest living poet," acclaimed singer-songwriter Smokey Robinson's career spans over 4 decades of hits. He has received numerous awards including the Grammy Living Legend Award, NARAS Lifetime Achievement Award, Honorary Doctorate (Howard University), Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts Award from the President of the United States. He has also been inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame and the Songwriters' Hall of Fame

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Robinson founded The Miracles while still in high school. The group was Berry Gordy's first vocal group, and it was at Robinson's suggestion that Gordy started the Motown Record dynasty. Their single of Robinson's "Shop Around" became Motown's first #1 hit on the R&B singles chart. In the years following, Robinson continued to pen hits for the group including "You've Really Got a Hold on Me," "Ooo

Baby Baby," "The Tracks of My Tears," "Going to a Go-Go," "More Love," "Tears of a Clown" (co-written with Stevie Wonder), and "I Second That Emotion."

The Miracles dominated the R&B scene throughout the 1960's and early 70's and Robinson became Vice President of Motown Records serving as in-house producer, talent scout and songwriter. In addition to writing hits for the Miracles, Robinson wrote and produced hits for other Motown greats including The Temptations, Mary Wells, Brenda Holloway, Marvin Gaye and others. "The Way You Do the Things You Do," "My Girl," "Get Ready," "You Beat Me to the Punch," "Don't Mess with Bill," "Ain't That Peculiar," and "My Guy" are just a few of his songwriting triumphs during those years.

John Lennon of The Beatles made countless remarks regarding Robinson's influence on his music. The Beatles had recorded Robinson and The Miracles' "You've Really Got A Hold On Me" in 1963 and in 1982 another popular British group, The Rolling Stones covered the Robinson and the Miracles' hit "Going To A Go-Go."

He later turned to a solo career where he continued his tradition of hitmaking with "Just to See Her," "Quiet Storm," "Cruisin'," and "Being with You," among others. He remained Vice President of Motown records until the sale of the company, shaping the label's success with friend and mentor Berry Gordy. Following his tenure at Motown, he continued his impressive touring career and released several successful solo albums.

During the course of his 50-year career in music, Robinson has accumulated more than 4,000 songs to his credit and continues to thrill sold-out audiences around the world with his high tenor voice, impeccable timing, and profound sense of lyric. Never resting on his laurels, Smokey Robinson remains a beloved icon in our musical heritage.



PRINCE



Few artists have created a body of work as rich and varied as Prince. During the '80s, he emerged as one of the most singular talents of the rock & roll era, capable of seamlessly tying together pop, funk, folk, and rock. Not only did he release a series of groundbreaking albums; he toured frequently, produced albums, and wrote songs for many other artists, and recorded hundreds of songs that still lie unreleased in his vaults. With each album he released, Prince showed remarkable stylistic growth and musical diversity, constantly experimenting with different sounds, textures, and genres. Occasionally, his music was inconsistent, in part because of his eclecticism, but his experiments frequently succeeded; no other contemporary artist blended so many diverse styles into a cohesive whole.

Prince's first two albums were solid, if unremarkable, late-'70s funk-pop. With 1980's *Dirty Mind*, he recorded his first masterpiece, a one-man tour de force of sex and music; it was hard funk, catchy Beatlesque melodies, sweet soul ballads, and rocking guitar pop, all at once. The follow-up, *Controversy*, was more of the same, but 1999

was brilliant. The album was a monster hit, selling over three million copies, but it was nothing compared to 1984's *Purple Rain*.

Purple Rain made Prince a superstar; it eventually sold over ten million copies in the U.S. and spent 24 weeks at number one. Partially recorded with his touring band, the Revolution, the record featured the most pop-oriented music he has ever made. Instead of continuing in this accessible direction, he veered off into the bizarre psycho-psychedelia of *Around the World in a Day*, which nevertheless sold over two million copies. In 1986, he released the even stranger *Parade*, which was in its own way as ambitious and intricate as any art rock of the '60s; however, no art rock was ever grounded with a hit as brilliant as the spare funk of "Kiss."

In 1991, Prince formed the New Power Generation, the best and most versatile and talented band he has ever assembled. With their first album, *Diamonds and Pearls*, Prince reasserted his mastery of contemporary R&B; it was his biggest hit since 1985. The following year, he released his 12th album, which was titled with a cryptic symbol; in 1993, Prince legally changed his name to the symbol. In 1994, after becoming embroiled in contract disagreements with Warner Bros., he independently released the single "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World," likely to illustrate what he would be capable of on his own; the song became his biggest hit in years. Later that summer, Warner released the somewhat halfhearted *Come* under the name of Prince; the record was a moderate success, going gold.

In November 1994, as part of a contractual obligation, Prince agreed to the official release of *The Black Album*. In early 1995, he immersed himself in another legal battle with Warner, proclaiming himself a slave and refusing to deliver his new record, *The Gold Experience*, for release.



THE SUPREMES

PREVIOUSLY INDUCTED IN 2013



America's most successful female vocal group of all time was formed by four Detroit schoolgirls in the late 50s. Diana Ross (26 March 1944, Detroit, Michigan, USA), Betty McGlown (b. 1943, Detroit, Michigan, USA), Florence Ballard (b. 30 June 1943, Rosetta, Mississippi, USA, d. 22 February 1976, Detroit, Michigan, USA) and Mary Wilson (b. 6 March 1944, Greenville, Mississippi, USA) named themselves the Primettes in tribute to the local male group, the Primes - who themselves found fame in the 60s as the Temptations. Having issued a solitary single on a small local label, the Primettes were signed to Berry Gordy's Motown Records stable, with Barbara Martin replacing McGlown and an enforced name change to the Supremes. The group initially found public acceptance hard to find. For more than two years, they issued a succession of flop singles, despite the best efforts of top

Motown writer/producer Smokey Robinson to find them a suitable vehicle for their unsophisticated talents.

The departure of the pregnant Martin reduced the line-up to a trio, but it was only when Ross supplanted Ballard as the group's regular lead vocalist, at Gordy's suggestion, did the Supremes break into the US charts. The dynamic 'When The Lovelight Starts Shining Through His Eyes', written by the newly formed Holland/Dozier/Holland writing and production team and modelled on the production style of Phil Spector, was the group's first hit in December 1963. The follow-up single 'Run, Run, Run' flopped, but then Holland/Dozier/Holland concocted the slight, but effervescent, 'Where Did Our Love Go' for the group, which topped the US charts and was also a major hit in Britain. This achievement inaugurated a remarkable run of successes for the group and their producers, as their next four releases - 'Baby Love', 'Come See About Me', 'Stop! In The Name Of Love' and 'Back In My Arms Again' - all topped the US singles charts, while 'Baby Love' became the only record by an American group to reach number 1 in Britain during the beat-dominated year of 1964. All these singles were hinged around insistent, very danceable rhythms with repetitive lyrics and melodies, which placed no great strain on Ross' fragile voice. With their girl-next-door looks and endearingly unsophisticated demeanour, the Supremes became role models for young black Americans and their name was used to promote a range of merchandising, even (ironically) a brand of white bread.

The rather perfunctory 'Nothing But Heartaches' broke the chart-topping sequence, which was immediately restored by the more ambitious 'I Hear A Symphony'. As Holland/Dozier/Holland moved into their prime, and Ross increased in confidence, the group's repertoire grew ever more mature.

Ballard left the group in mid-1967, and replaced by Cindy Birdsong (b. Cynthia Ann Birdsong, 15 December 1939, Mount Holly Township, New Jersey, USA); most fans simply did not notice. At the same time, Ross' prime position in the group's hierarchy was confirmed in public, when she was given individual credit on the group's records, a move that prompted a flurry of similar demands from the lead singers of other Motown groups.



DIONNE WARWICK



Dionne Warwick (born December 12, 1940 in East Orange, New Jersey, as Marie Dionne Warrick) is a five-time Grammy Award winning American singer, actress and television presenter. Having been in a partnership with songwriters Burt Bacharach and Hal David for years, Warwick ranks among the 40 biggest hit makers of the entire rock era (1955–2012), based on the Billboard Hot 100 Pop Singles Charts. As of January 2013, Warwick ranks second behind only Aretha Franklin (who has a total of 88 charted Billboard singles) as the most-charted female vocalist of all time with 56 of Dionne's singles making the Billboard Hot 100 between 1962 and 1998.

Known as the artist who “bridged the gap,” Warwick’s soulful blend of pop, gospel and R&B music transcended racial, cultural, national, and musical boundaries.

Throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s, Warwick collaborated with many of her musical peers, including Johnny Mathis, Smokey Robinson, Luther Vandross, Jeffrey Osbourne, Kashif and Stevie Wonder. Warwick was also host of the hit television music show, “Solid Gold.” In addition, she recorded several theme songs, including “Champagne Wishes & Caviar Dreams,” for the popular television series “Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous,” and “The Love Boat,” for the hit series from Aaron Spelling. More recently, Warwick recorded her first Christmas

album entitled “My Favorite Time of the Year” featured jazzy interpretations of many holiday classics. In 2007, Rhino Records re-released the CD with new cover art, a critically acclaimed Gospel album, “Why We Sing,” for Rhino/Warner Records, and a new jazz album, “Only Trust Your Heart,” a collection of standards, celebrating the music of legendary composer Sammy Cahn for Sony Red/MPCA Records.

Dionne Warwick has won 5 Grammy Awards during her music career:

- 1969: “Best Female Pop Vocal Performance” for the single, “Do You Know the Way to San Jose?”
- 1971: “Best Female Pop Vocal Performance” for the single, “I’ll Never Fall in Love Again”
- 1979: “Best Female R&B Vocal Performance” for the single, “Déjà Vu”
- 1979: “Best Female Pop Vocal Performance” for the single, “I’ll Never Love This Way Again”
- 1986: “Best Pop Performance By a Duo or Group With Vocal” for the single, “That’s What Friends Are For”

Dionne Warwick was born in a musical family of which numerous superstars arose.

Warwick’s sister Dee Dee Warwick had a successful singing career, Warwick’s aunt is gospel singer Cissy Houston, and one of Warwick’s cousins is Whitney Houston.

FATS DOMINO



With more than 65 million record sales to his credit, New Orleans singer and pianist Fats Domino outsold every 1950s rock & roll pioneer except Elvis Presley, leaving a profound impact on subsequent generations of musicians. In 1986 he was among the first inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Born into a musical family in New Orleans on February 26, 1928, Antoine Domino began playing piano at nine and a year later was playing for pennies in honky-tonks like the Hideaway Club, where bandleader Bill Diamond accurately nicknamed him Fats. At 14 Domino quit school to work in a bedspring factory so he could play the bars at night. Soon he was playing alongside such New Orleans legends as Professor Longhair and Amos Milburn. He also heard the stride and boogie-woogie piano techniques of Fats Waller and Albert Ammons. He mastered the classic New Orleans R&B piano style — easy-rolling left-hand patterns anchoring right-hand

arpeggios. By age 20 he was married and a father, had survived a near-fatal car crash, and had almost lost his hand in a factory accident.

In the mid-1940s Domino joined trumpeter Dave Bartholomew's band. It was soon apparent, however, that Domino was more than a sideman, and Bartholomew helped arrange his contract with Imperial and became his producer. Their first session in 1949 produced "The Fat Man," which eventually sold a million and whetted the national appetite for the "New Orleans sound." Bartholomew and Domino co-wrote most of Domino's material. By the time the rock & roll boom began in the mid-1950s, Fats was already an established R&B hitmaker ("Goin' Home," 1952; "Going to the River," 1953), his records regularly selling between half million and a million copies apiece. His pounding piano style was easily adapted to the nascent rock sound, although he proved less personally magnetic than contemporaries like Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, or Jerry Lee Lewis, all of whom recorded Domino material.

Domino's big breakthrough came in mid-1955, when the Top Ten "Ain't That a Shame" established him with white teenagers. (The song was quickly re-recorded by Pat Boone, whose watered-down version reached Number One that same year; it was revived in the late-Seventies by Cheap Trick.) For the next five years Domino struck gold with "I'm in Love Again" (Number Three), "Blueberry Hill" (Number Two), and "Blue Monday" (Number Five, 1956), "I'm Walkin'" (Number Four, 1957); "Whole Lotta Loving" (Number Six, 1958); and many others. He eventually collected 23 gold singles. His last million-seller came in 1960 with "Walkin' to New Orleans." He left Imperial for ABC in 1963 and subsequently switched to Mercury, Warner Bros., Atlantic, and Broadmoor, all with less success.

In 1968 Domino released a rollicking cover of the Beatles' "Lady Madonna." The Beatles consistently sang the Fat Man's praises, noting that "Birthday" on The Beatles did little more than sort through the old Domino-Bartholomew bag of riffs and tricks. Through the mid-Seventies Fats played six to eight months a year. In 1980 he performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Domino continues to tour sporadically.

BETTYE LAVETTE



Perennial cult favorite in Northern soul circles, singer Bettye LaVette was born in Muskegon, MI, on January 29, 1946. Raised primarily across the state in Detroit, at 16 she cut her first sides for the local Lupine label, with a test pressing of the disc making its way to Atlantic Records. After signing with Atlantic, she scored an R&B Top Ten hit out of the box with her debut single, "My Man -- He's a Loving Man," only to fail to reach the same commercial heights again. After one more Atlantic release, 1963's "You'll Never Change," LaVette moved back to Lupine for her third record, "Witchcraft in the Air." After a stint as a featured vocalist with the Don Gardner & Dee Dee Ford Revue, she recorded the long-unreleased "One Thin Dime" for Scepter before resurfacing on Calla with the

1965 lost classic "Let Me Down Easy," her only other record to crack the R&B Top 20. Two more Calla efforts -- the fine "Only Your Love Can Save Me" and "I'm Just a Fool for You" -- preceded a shift to Big Wheel, where after just one single, "I'm Holding On," LaVette again moved along, this time to the Karen imprint for "Hey Love."

Following stays at Silver Fox ("He Made a Woman Out of Me," "Do Your Duty"), SSS International ("Take Another Piece of My Heart"), and her own TCA imprint ("Never My Love"), LaVette returned to Atlantic, signing to their Atco division for 1972's Neil Young cover "Heart of Gold." An LP, *Child of the Seventies*, was also recorded at Muscle Shoals Studios, but Atco opted against its release after the failure of the single "Your Turn to Cry" (the album was reissued, complete with bonus tracks, in limited copies by Rhino in 2006). After joining the touring company of the Broadway musical *Bubbling Brown Sugar*, LaVette briefly signed to West End for a disco effort, 1978's "Doin' the Best I Can."

She did not record again until 1982, landing at Motown and rechristening herself "Bettye." However, despite a heavy promotional push, neither the LP *Tell Me a Lie* nor the single "Right in the Middle (Of Falling in Love)" proved her long-awaited chart breakthrough, and outside of a handful of recordings for Motor City during the '90s, she focused primarily on live appearances in the years to follow. The 2000s found her in the recording studio more frequently with new albums *A Woman Like Me* being released by the Blues Express label in 2003 followed by *I've Got My Own Hell to Raise* in 2005 on the Anti label. In 2006, *Take Another Little Piece of My Heart*, a collection of Silver Fox singles as well as other material, all of which had been recorded in Memphis between 1969 and 1970, came out on Varèse Sarabande. *The Scene of the Crime* appeared on Anti in 2007.

LaVette next tackled classic songs by the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, and the Who, among others, on 2010's *Interpretations: The British Rock Songbook*, which she co-produced with Rob Mathes and Michael Stevens. LaVette celebrated her 50th year as a performer in 2012 by releasing *Thankful 'n' Thoughtful*, covering songs by the Black Keys, Sly Stone, Tom Waits, Neil Young, and Bob Dylan, among others, and also issued her autobiography, *A Woman Like Me*. LaVette reunited with producer Joe Henry, who was behind the controls for *The Scene of the Crime*, for 2015's *Worthy*, her first album for the British Cherry Red label

JIMI HENDRIX



Widely recognized as one of the most creative and influential musicians of the 20th century, Jimi Hendrix pioneered the explosive possibilities of the electric guitar. Hendrix's innovative style of combining fuzz, feedback and controlled distortion created a new musical form. Because he was unable to read or write music, it is nothing short of remarkable that Jimi Hendrix's meteoric rise in the music took place in just four short years. His musical language continues to influence a host of modern musicians, from George Clinton to Miles Davis, and Steve Vai to Jonny Lang.

Jimi Hendrix, born Johnny Allen Hendrix at 10:15 a.m. on November 27, 1942, at Seattle's King County Hospital, was later renamed James Marshall by his father, James "Al" Hendrix. Young Jimmy (as he was referred to at the time) took an interest in music, drawing influence from virtually every major artist at the time, including B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Buddy Holly, and Robert Johnson. Entirely self-taught, Jimmy's inability to read music made him concentrate even harder on the music he heard.

Al took notice of Jimmy's interest in the guitar, recalling, "I used to have Jimmy clean up the bedroom all the time while I was gone, and when I would come home I would find a lot of broom straws around the foot of the bed. I'd say to him, 'Well didn't you sweep up the floor?' and he'd say, 'Oh yeah,' he did. But I'd find out later that he used to be sitting at the end of the bed there and strumming the broom like he was playing a guitar." Al found an old one-string ukulele, which he gave to Jimmy to play a huge improvement over the broom.

By the summer of 1958, Al had purchased Jimmy a five-dollar, second-hand acoustic guitar from one of his friends. Shortly thereafter, Jimmy joined his first band, The Velvetones. After a three-month stint with the group, Jimmy left to pursue his own interests. The following summer, Al purchased Jimmy his first electric guitar, a Supro Ozark 1560S; Jimi used it when he joined The Rocking Kings.

In 1961, Jimmy left home to enlist in the United States Army and in November 1962 earned the right to wear the "Screaming Eagles" patch for the paratroop division. While stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Jimmy formed The King Casuals with bassist Billy Cox. After being discharged due to an injury he received during a parachute jump, Jimmy began working as a session guitarist under the name Jimmy James. By the end of 1965, Jimmy had played with several marquee acts, including Ike and Tina Turner, Sam Cooke, the Isley Brothers, and Little Richard. Jimmy parted ways with Little Richard to form his own band, Jimmy James and the Blue Flames, shedding the role of back-line guitarist for the spotlight of lead guitar.

BOOTSY COLLINS



Bootsy Collins is one of the all-time great funk and R&B bassists, besides being a consummate character. Born in Cincinnati, Collins formed the Pacesetters during the '60s, a unit that not only included vocalist Philippe Wynne (later of Spinners fame), but also George Clinton as a sideman. Collins and Clinton soon established a lifelong personal and musical friendship, and Collins and his comrades became part of the JB's, James Brown's backing band, from 1969 to 1971.

Collins' inspired, clever progressions and patterns were a vital part of such records as "Get Up, I Feel Like Being a Sex Machine." The group became the House Guests after

departing the JB's, until Collins joined Clinton's Parliament/Funkadelic empire in 1971. He co-wrote "Tear the Roof Off the Sucker" with Clinton and Jerome Brailey and established himself so effectively that Clinton urged him to form his own band. Bootsy's Rubber Band emerged in 1976, a spirited ensemble that included Collins' brother Phelps ("Catfish"), as well as fellow James Brown bandmembers Fred Wesley and Maceo Parker, Joel Johnson, Gary Cooper, Rick Gardner, and Richard Griffiths. (Collins also featured his alter egos "Bootzilla" and "Casper, the Friendly Ghost" as part of the stage act.)

Their debut LP, *Stretchin' Out* in Bootsy's Rubber Band, and their second release, *Ahh...The Name Is Bootsy, Baby!* equalled anything issued during Clinton's peak period for idiomatic diversity, clever, bizarre humor, and outrageous lyrics. Both *Ahh...* and the third LP, *Bootsy? Player of the Year*, earned gold records and made it into the Top 20 on the pop charts. The single "Bootzilla" was his lone R&B chart topper in 1978, although "The Pinocchio Theory" also made the Top Ten.

Collins recorded as both a solo artist and with the Rubber Band in the '80s. He also did some special projects, such as a 1984 collaboration with Jerry Harrison of Talking Heads -- using the name Bonzo Goes to Washington -- that produced "5 Minutes (C-C-C-Club Mix)," featuring Ronald Reagan declaring nuclear war on the Soviet Union over a skittering rhythm track. In 1988, he returned on Columbia with the appropriately named *What's Bootsy Doin'?* In 1989, Bootsy was a member of the Bootzilla Orchestra on Malcolm McLaren's album *Waltz Dancing*. One year later, he became a featured guitarist and bassist with the dance music trio Deee-Lite, signed with 4th and Broadway, and also toured England with a group co-led by Parker and Wesley.

Bootsy's New Rubber Band released *Blasters of the Universe* in 1994, and *Fresh Outta 'P' University* followed four years later. Numerous Collins live shows and reissues appeared as the 21st century opened, and in 2006, the bassist actually released a Christmas album, *Christmas Is 4 Ever*, on Shout Records. In 2011, a conceptual album, *The Funk Capital of the World*, landed, featuring everyone from Ice Cube to Samuel L. Jackson on the guest list.

MICKEY STEVENSON



Songwriter and producer William “Mickey” Stevenson was one of the unsung heroes behind the extraordinary success of the Motown sound. As the label’s first A&R director, he not only recruited major stars like Martha Reeves, but also assembled the company’s legendary roster of studio musicians, additionally authoring a number of perennial hits for acts including Marvin Gaye and wife Kim Weston. Stevenson began his career in gospel and doo wop before joining the Tamla/Motown staff in 1959; in addition to co-producing and arranging records for Marv Johnson, the label’s first recording artist, his earliest duties included organizing the company’s house band. Installing pianist “Ivory” Joe Hunter as bandleader, Stevenson brought together a truly remarkable (albeit relatively unknown) group of Detroit-area jazz and club musicians, including bassist James Jamerson, guitarists Robert White and Joe Messina, and drummer Benny Benjamin. Though their lineup changed frequently in the years to follow, the so-called “Funk Brothers” remained the bedrock of the Motown sound throughout the company’s golden age.

In 1961, Stevenson teamed with co-writer Barrett Strong to score his first major hit, Eddie Holland’s “Jamie.” For the Marvelettes’ “Beechwood 4-5789,” he partnered with Motown founder Berry Gordy, Jr., as well as recent roster addition Marvin Gaye. Weeks later, Motown released Gaye’s first hit single, “Stubborn Kind of Fellow,” which Stevenson co-wrote as well. Backing vocals on the record were contributed by Martha Reeves, then Stevenson’s secretary, and her group the Vandellas; when singer Mary Wells failed to show up for a subsequent session, Stevenson cut a record with Martha & the Vandellas instead, resulting in the group’s 1963 debut “I’ll Have to Let Him Go.” That same year, the producer inspired the Miracles’ smash “Mickey’s Monkey.” In 1964, Stevenson, Gaye, and Ivy Hunter collaborated on Martha & the Vandellas’ “Dancing in the Street,” his biggest songwriting hit for the label. Equally important, and around that same time, he hired Norman Whitfield as his A&R assistant, launching the career of one of Motown’s most influential and successful staff producers.

Stevenson’s last major hit for Motown was 1966’s classic “It Takes Two,” a duet between Gaye and the producer’s wife, Kim Weston. In early 1967, both Stevenson and Weston left Motown to form their own label, People. That spring, Weston signed to MGM and her husband was offered a reported million-dollar deal to assume control of the company’s floundering Venture subsidiary. The Midas touch Stevenson possessed in the past soon dissipated, however, so in 1969 he shifted gears and scored the film *Changes*. He went on to write and produce a series of theatrical musicals, including *Swann*, *Showgirls*, *Wings and Things*, *The Gospel Truth*, *TKO*, and *Chocolate City*. For 1999’s *Sang, Sista, Sang* -- a tribute to legendary vocalists like Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, and Josephine Baker -- he reunited with fellow Motown alum Smokey Robinson.

THE VELVETTES



The Velvelettes had three chart hits for Motown in the mid-'60s, including "He Was Really Sayin' Somethin'," revived with great success in Britain by Bananarama in the early '80s, and "Needle in a Haystack," which almost made the pop Top 40. Very much in the Motown girl-group mold shared by the Marvelettes, Martha & the Vandellas, and the Supremes, they never broke out as those other groups did. In part, this was because they didn't carve as identifiable a sound as any of those other acts had, and in part it was because the group's personnel changed rapidly before they disbanded around 1970. The Velvelettes were formed by Bertha Barbee at Western Michigan University in the early '60s, with Cal Gill ending up as the lead singer, although

she was only 14 years old when she joined. With encouragement from one of Berry Gordy's nephews, they auditioned for Motown and released their first single on the label in 1963. Several of Motown's biggest guns wrote and produced for the group between 1963 and 1967, including Norman Whitfield, Mickey Stevenson, and Sylvia Moy, although one original member (Betty Kelly) left to join Martha & the Vandellas for several years in 1964. However, the Velvelettes only did about a half-dozen singles for Motown in the '60s, and although an album was scheduled for release, it never came out. Cal Gill brought in two new singers to keep the group going at the end of 1967, but they broke up shortly afterwards. A reformed version of the Velvelettes began playing in 1984, around the country and a compilation of their '60s Motown material came out on CD in 2010.

MILDRED GADDIS

BROADCAST JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR



Described by the Detroit Free Press as one of 10 African Americans to watch in Detroit, Gaddis' no-nonsense sometimes hard hitting, yet still warm and inspiring style has made her a force to be reckoned with and admired by politicians, journalists and residents throughout Metro Detroit and beyond. For 40 years, Mildred Gaddis has successfully remained a relevant and essential voice in Detroit's media landscape, addressing life-affecting issues such as politics, finances, health and careers while offering a variety of notable guests and memorable caller comments. She doesn't have to seek out major news figures, they call her!

She is consistently relied upon to deliver trusted news. She is a regular on Detroit Fox 2's "Let it Rip," has been featured on Wilmer Leon's XM radio Show and has been frequently called upon by Lou Dobbs as a Political Expert in Detroit to discuss national & local political issues. She has also appeared on MSNBC, INSIDE EDI-

TION and NBC with Peter Jennings.

Mildred's career began in at KENR FM/Country Radio in 1976, before graduating from Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas, where she received a dual degree in Journalism and Communications. KYOY and MAJIC 102 were also career stops along the way. She was news director at KMJM/MAJIC 108 in St. Louis and KATZ Radio.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, and reared in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, the Southern University graduate began in Detroit. She is happily married and the mother of one daughter.

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HERB KENT



Radio: Kent began his career as the host of a classical music show on WBEZ/Chicago. During the 1940s, Kent could be heard on WGRY/Gary as well as in radio dramas aired on WMAQ/Chicago. In 1952, Kent went to work for WGES/Chicago, the city's largest black-programmed station.

From 1955 until 1960, Kent worked at WBEE/Chicago. Other gigs included WJOB/Hammond and WHFC/Chicago. In 1962, Kent was hired at WVON/Chicago where he worked for 8 years. Since 1988, Kent has worked at WVAZ-FM/Chicago.

Herb Kent Herb Kent can now be heard Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon on WVAZ-FM. Claim to Fame: In 2009, the Guinness World Records certified Herb Kent as the longest tenured deejay, having at that time spent 66 years on the airwaves in Chicago.

Awards: Herb Kent was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 1995.

Online: Herb Kent has a page at the WVAZ V103 (102.7) website.

JOHN MASON

RADIO PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR



John Mason born: Earnest Wooten is the public address announcer for the Detroit Pistons games at The Palace of Auburn Hills. He is known for his colorful introductions, and is credited with coining the popular chant "Deeeeee-troit basketball!" [1] Mason's flamboyant voice has been requested at many sporting events, and he was chosen to serve as the PA announcer at the 2007 NBA All-Star Game in Las Vegas. In addition, he also served as the announcer for the international ALL-STAR game in Cyprus & Turkey in 2005. Mason is very popular with his announcing during nationally televised games. When the NBA on ESPN or the NBA on ABC features a Detroit Pistons home game, both networks put him on TV when he introduces the starting lineups.

Mason is also a radio personality in Detroit, Michigan. He was the host of the extremely Popular "Mason in The Morning" on WJLB for 18 years. He was also host of his own radio show on 102.7/105.9 KISS-FM (WDMK). Mason left WDMK in July 2006 as his contract had expired. Mason was offered an intriguing contract from the Cleveland Cavaliers, his former hometown. He declined the offer, saying the Pistons gave him the raw shot to craft his art in their gym. The Pistons have also given Mason the opportunity to serve as PA announcer for an NBA title contender. Ever since Mason replaced long-time Pistons PA announcer Ken Calvert before the start of the 2001-02 NBA season, Detroit has been a perennial contender for the NBA Championship. Mason saw the Pistons win back-to-back NBA Eastern Conference titles in 2004 & 2005, and most notably saw them win the NBA title in 2004, upsetting the Los Angeles Lakers in 5 games. From 2003 to 2008, Mason saw his Detroit Pistons make an impressive 6 consecutive appearances in the NBA Eastern Conference Finals. Mason independently owns his morning show, MASON RADIO INC. Mason is perhaps the only morning show personality in a major market to own his own show. Mason's morning show is a syndicated program, which can be heard live from Detroit on the 50 thousand watt powerhouse 107.5 WGPR.

THE FALCONS



This R&B vocal group from Detroit, Michigan, USA, helped define soul music in the early 60s. The great legacy of music left by the Falcons has unfortunately been obscured by the group's reputation as the genesis of so many great talents. The group has at one time claimed as members Eddie Floyd (25 June 1935, Montgomery, Alabama, USA), Wilson Pickett (b. 18 March 1941, Prattville, Alabama, USA, d. 19 January 2006, Reston, Virginia, USA), Joe Stubbs (b. Joseph Stubbs, 1942, USA, d. 19 January 1998, USA), brother of the Four Tops' Levi Stubbs and later a member of the Contours and then the Originals, Bonny 'Mack' Rice, the original singer of 'Mustang Sally', and guitarists Lance Finnie and Robert Ward successively, whose bluesy guitar work helped immeasurably to raise the reputation of the group. The Falcons' chart success was surprisingly slim, with only five releases making the chart, the best-known being

'You're So Fine', a proto-soul number led by Stubbs that went to number 2 R&B (number 17 pop) in 1959, and 'I Found A Love', the incredibly torrid secular gospel number led by Wilson Pickett that went to number 6 R&B (number 75 pop) in 1962.

The original Falcons was formed in 1955 and comprised lead Eddie Floyd, Bob Manardo (b. Robert Manardo, 1937, d. 6 March 2004, Warren, USA), Arnett Robinson, Tom Shetler, and Willie Schofield. Manardo and Shetler were only present on 'Baby That's It'/'This Day' before being drafted and volunteering for the army respectively. In 1956, the group met Detroit producer Robert West and for the next three years issued releases by the Falcons on several labels, including his own Flick label, but without achieving any national success. The group now featured Joe Stubbs, Bonny 'Mack' Rice and guitarist Lance Finnie, and this classic line-up blended gospel fervour to rhythm and blues harmony, as reflected in their 'You're So Fine' hit of 1959. They managed two more hits with Stubbs as lead with 'Just For Your Love' (number 26 R&B 1959) and 'The Teacher' (number 18 R&B 1960), before Wilson Pickett replaced Stubbs in 1960.

LITTLE WILLIE JOHN

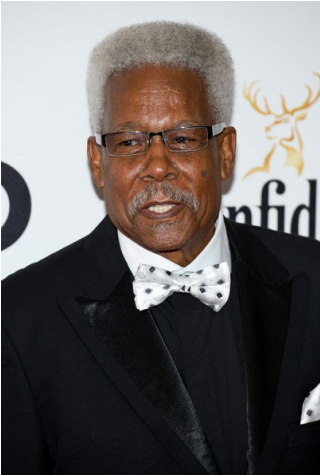
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He never received the accolades given to the likes of Sam Cooke, Clyde McPhatter, and James Brown, but Little Willie John ranks as one of R&B's most influential performers. His muscular high timbre and enormous technical and emotional range belied his young age (his first hit came when he was 18), but his mid-'50s work for Syd Nathan's King label would play a great part in the way soul music would sound. Everyone from Cooke, McPhatter, and Brown to Jackie Wilson, B.B. King, and Al Green has acknowledged his debt to this most overlooked of rock and soul pioneers.

His debut recording, a smoking version of Titus Turner's "All Around the World" from 1955, set the pattern for a remarkable string of hits: "Need Your Love So Bad," "Suffering with the Blues," "Fever," "Let Them Talk," and his last, "Sleep," from 1961. His version of "Fever" was copied note for note by Peggy Lee and Elvis Presley, both of whom had bigger hits with it; John's version, however, remains definitive. His second hit, "Need Your Love So Bad," contains one of the most intimate, tear-jerking vocals ever caught on tape.

EDDIE FLOYD



Edward Lee “Eddie” Floyd (born June 25, 1937] is an American soul/R&B singer and songwriter, best known for his work on the Stax record label in the 1960s and 1970s and the song “Knock on Wood. Floyd was born in Montgomery, Alabama, and grew up in Detroit, Michigan. He founded The Falcons, which also featured Mack Rice. They were forerunners to future Detroit vocal groups such as The Temptations and The Four Tops. Their most successful songs included “You’re So Fine” and later, when Wilson Pickett was recruited into the group as the lead singer, “I Found a Love”. Pickett then embarked on a solo career, and The Falcons disbanded.

Floyd signed a contract with the Memphis based Stax Records as a songwriter in 1965. He wrote a hit song, “Comfort Me” recorded by Carla Thomas. He then teamed with Stax’s guitarist Steve Cropper to write songs for Wilson Pickett, now signed to Atlantic Records. Atlantic distributed Stax and Jerry Wexler brought Pickett down from New York City to work with Booker T. & the MGs. The Pickett sessions were successful, yielding several pop and R&B hits, including the Floyd co-written “Ninety-Nine and a Half (Won’t Do)” and “634-5789 (Soulsville, U.S.A.)”.

In 1966, Floyd recorded a song initially written for Otis Redding. Wexler convinced Stax president Jim Stewart to release Floyd’s version. The Steve Cropper/Eddie Floyd “Knock on Wood” launched Floyd’s solo career, and has been cut by over a hundred different artists from David Bowie to Count Basie. Eventually, Redding would cut an R&B hit version of the song in 1967 as a duet with Carla Thomas. It became a disco hit for Amii Stewart in 1979. Floyd was one of Stax’s most consistent and versatile artists. He scored several more hits on his own, including “I’ve Never Found a Girl (To Love Me Like You Do)” and “Raise Your Hand”, which was covered by both Janis Joplin and Bruce Springsteen.

The song “Big Bird” (featuring Booker T. Jones on organ and guitar, Al Jackson, Jr. on drums, and Donald “Duck” Dunn on bass) was written while Floyd waited in a London airport for a plane back to the United States for Otis Redding’s funeral. Although not a US hit, it became an underground favorite in the UK, was later covered by The Jam, and was featured on the video game Test Drive Unlimited.

Floyd’s career did not keep him from being one of the label’s most productive writers. Virtually every Stax artist recorded Floyd material, often co-written with either Cropper or Jones, including Sam & Dave (“You Don’t Know What You Mean to Me”), Rufus Thomas (“The Breakdown”), Otis Redding (“I Love You More Than Words Can Say”), and Johnnie Taylor’s “Just the One (I’ve Been Looking For)”. The latter played during the opening credits of director Harold Ramis’s film *Bedazzled*.

Floyd, in 1980, also released material on the UK record label I-Spy Records owned and created by the UK band Secret Affair. He joined old Stax collaborators Cropper and Dunn, and fronted The Blues Brothers Band on a series of world tours, and in 1998, Floyd and former Falcon Wilson Pickett appeared on screen dueting on “634-5789” in *Blues Brothers 2000*. As well as singing with The Blues Brothers Band, Floyd has been the special guest with former Rolling Stone Bill Wyman’s Rhythm Kings on several dates in the US and the UK.

In 2008, Floyd returned to Stax Records which is now owned by Concord Music Group. His first new album in six years, *Eddie Loves You So*, was released in July 2008. In December 2012, Eddie Floyd released a new album at Christmas Time. Eddie also has a son Anthony Floyd that also sings with him. In July 2013, Eddie Floyd released *Down by the Sea*.

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WILSON PICKETT



Of the major '60s soul stars, Wilson Pickett was one of the roughest and sweatiest, working up some of the decade's hottest dancefloor grooves on hits like "In the Midnight Hour," "Land of 1000 Dances," "Mustang Sally," and "Funky Broadway." Although he tends to be held in somewhat lower esteem than more versatile talents like Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin, he is often a preferred alternative of fans who like their soul on the rawer side. He also did a good deal to establish the sound of Southern soul with his early hits, which were often written and recorded with the cream of the session musicians in Memphis and Muscle Shoals.

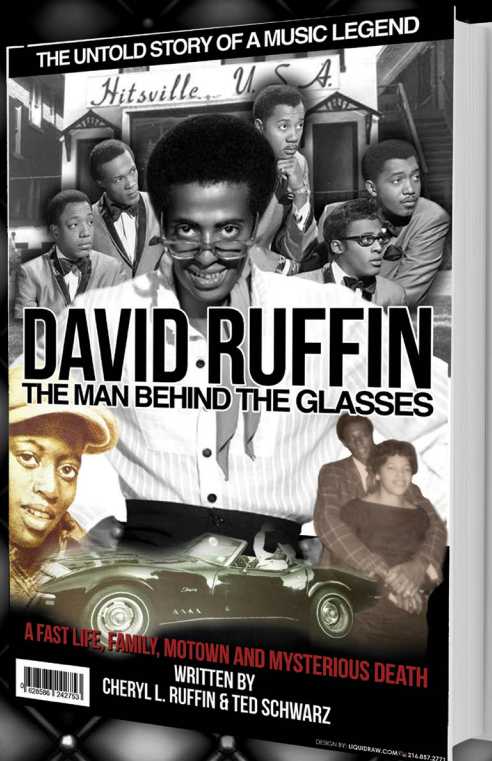
Before establishing himself as a solo artist, Pickett sang with the Falcons, who had a Top Ten R&B hit in 1962 with "I Found a

Love." "If You Need Me" (covered by the Rolling Stones) and "It's Too Late" were R&B hits for the singer before he hooked up with Atlantic Records, who sent him to record at Stax in Memphis in 1965. One early result was "In the Midnight Hour," whose chugging horn line, loping funky beats, and impassioned vocals combined into a key transitional performance that brought R&B into the soul age. It was an R&B chart-topper and a substantial pop hit (number 21), though its influence was stronger than that respectable position might indicate: thousands of bands, black and white, covered "In the Midnight Hour" on-stage and record in the 1960s.

Pickett had a flurry of other galvanizing soul hits over the next few years, including "634-5789," "Mustang Sally," and "Funky Broadway," all of which, like "In the Midnight Hour," were frequently adapted by other bands as dance-ready numbers. The king of that hill, though, had to be "Land of 1000 Dances," Pickett's biggest pop hit (number six), a soul anthem of sorts with its roll call of popular dances, and covered by almost as many acts as "Midnight Hour" was.

Pickett didn't confine himself to the environs of Stax for long; soon he was also cutting tracks at Muscle Shoals. He recorded several early songs by Bobby Womack. He used Duane Allman as a session guitarist on a hit cover of the Beatles' "Hey Jude." He cut some hits in Philadelphia with Gamble & Huff productions in the early '70s. He even did a hit version of the Archies' "Sugar, Sugar." The hits kept rolling through the early '70s, including "Don't Knock My Love" and "Get Me Back on Time, Engine Number 9."

One of the corollaries of '60s soul is that if a performer rose to fame with Motown or Atlantic, he or she would produce little of note after leaving the label. Pickett, unfortunately, did not prove an exception to the rule. His last big hit was "Fire and Water," in 1972. He continued to be active on the tour circuit; his most essential music, all from the 1960s and early '70s, was assembled for the superb Rhino double-CD anthology *A Man and a Half. It's Harder Now*, his first new material in over a decade, followed in 1999. Pickett spent the early part of the 2000s performing, before retiring in late 2004 due to ill health. He passed away on January 19, 2006, following a heart attack.



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This was the first racially integrated women's band and it lasted for over a decade, playing to primarily black audiences in theaters and ball-rooms across the country. At the Howard Theater in Washington, D.C., the band set a new box office record of 35,000 patrons in one week of 1941.

The band was founded in 1937 at the Piney Woods Country Life School for poor and orphaned black children in Mississippi. The intent was for the group to be a profit-making enterprise to support the school. However, by 1941 the Sweethearts severed their ties with the school, moved to Virginia and recruited some seasoned

professionals. One of these new members was Anna Mae Winburn. Anna Mae had been singing with and directing a professional male orchestra; however, many of the musicians were lost to the draft because of World War II.

The Sweethearts were a group of women trying to make a place in a world ruled by gender and racial prejudice. In those times, it was easier for women to play together in a racially integrated band than to perform as musicians in a band that included men. They had a relaxed way of approaching the music-their beat was different from more uptight white rhythm bands.

In order to obtain this unique rhythm, many of the all white male bands of the time used black arrangers for their music, but would not include black musicians in their performances. "Being a mixed group with different nationalities (which eventually included Mexican, White and Asian women), well, we didn't have the exposure that [other groups] had," recalls Anna Mae, "We were exposed a lot to the black people." The Sweethearts did not book many engagements in the Deep South because they were an integrated group. The group had three or four white women who traveled with them. These ladies would paint their faces dark so the police wouldn't come and take them off the band stand or arrest them. The Sweethearts were often labeled a novelty band (much to their dislike) because women were not expected to go into that sort of business. The ladies considered themselves equal to, if not better than most male musicians. Some well-known musicians did appreciate the Sweethearts' talent. Eddie Durham of the Count Basie band coached them, and Louis Armstrong also took a personal interest. According to Anna Mae, "They would come and stand in the wings of the Apollo Theater and listen to the band. And I could see them back there smiling when the girls would take off on their instruments." Eventually, Armstrong would even attempt to steal trumpet player Tiny Davis away from the Sweethearts by offering her about 10 times her current salary. However, Tiny did not go.

The original personnel consisted of: Anna Mae Winburn on vocals, Ernestine "Tiny" Davis, Ray Carter, Johnnie Mae Stansbury, and Edna Williams on Trumpets; Marge Pettiford, Amy Garrison, Helen Saine, Grace Bayron; Viola Burnside, and Willie Mae Wong on saxophones; Judy Bayron, Helen Jones and Ina Bell Byrd on Trombones; The rhythm was supplied by Lucille Dixon on bass; Roxanna Lucas on Guitar; Johnnie Mae Rice on Piano; and Pauline Braddy on the Drums. The vocalists included Evelyn McGee, and Carline Ray.

THE ROYAL JOKERS



From The Billboard, November 1954:The Royals, the latest group by that name, and who have been recording for Venus Records, have changed their name to the Royal Jokers. The group is managed by Chuck Darwin. The latter also manages Carolyn Hayes, new blues singer out of Detroit, who is also signed to Venus Records....

From The Billboard, March 1955:The Royal Jokers, Detroit vocal group co-managed by Al (Flame Show Bar) Green and Chuck Darwin, have signed with the Gale Agency....

From Pittsburgh Courier, March 1956:Detroit's Royal Jokers soon to leave for England....

FRANKIE "SUGAR CHILE" ROBINSON



Born in Detroit, MI, in 1940, little Frankie Robinson began toying with the piano as soon as he was big enough to sit on the bench and reach the keyboard. Legend has it he managed to play something resembling "Tuxedo Junction" on the ivories before he'd attained the age of three. Frankie Carle claimed to have discovered the kid in 1945, and a meteoric career was set in motion when the precocious child performed at the White House for President Harry S. Truman. He also sat in with Lionel Hampton's orchestra. In 1946, cast as the "boy piano player," Robinson sang and played "No Leave, No Love" in Charles Martin's MGM motion picture of the same name. This welterweight comedy also starred Van Johnson, Guy Lombardo, Keenan Wynn, and British actress Patricia Kirkwood.

Now billed as "Sugar Chile" Robinson, Frankie started making records in Los Angeles for the Capitol label in 1949, backed on his first session by bassist Leonard Bibb and drummer Zutty Singleton. "Numbers Boogie" was his big hit, climbing to number four on Billboard's R&B chart by the end of the year. "Caldonia" crested at number 14. Robinson was now a national act, and he toured the U.S. playing in front of packed houses coast to coast. He also cut eight more sides for Capitol, this time accompanied by Jimmy Richardson and Red Saunders. Later that year the young star went on the road with Count Basie and appeared in a 15-minute film with that bandleader's sextet and Billie Holiday, among others. The staging was as contrived as anything else in this boy's career. Basie sat playing the piano as Robinson stalked in wearing cowboy hat and holsters, cap guns drawn. Forcing the Count away from his instrument at gunpoint, Sugar Chile sat down and demonstrated remarkable musical ability for a lad of ten years. He appeared on radio and television, played the London Palladium, and swept through Europe in 1951. At the age of 12 Robinson made his best and most mature recordings -- also using organ and celeste -- in June of 1952.

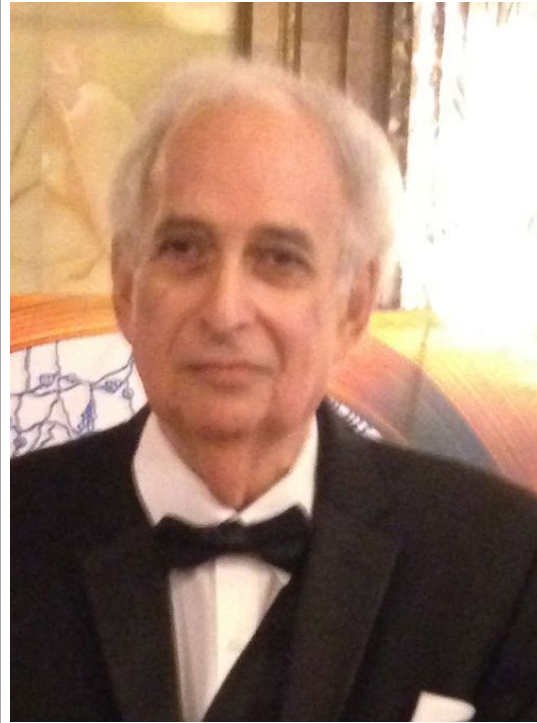
MILLER LONDON



Publisher/CEO/Owner of the Urban Network Magazine, Mr. London served as President of the publication for 9 years before acquiring it from broadcasting's largest company, Clear Channel Communications in 2003. He served at the legendary A&M Records as Executive VP / GM of Urban Music Division at the legendary A&M Records working such major artists as Barry White, Lo-Key, Mint Condition, CeCe Peniston, also Grammy Award-winning producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis.

Miller held various positions at RCA Records from Vice President of product development to Vice President Sales and Marketing. His 21 years at Motown Records in various capacities including Senior VP /GM, has afforded him the vantage point of seeing the music business as few have, working closely with Motown Founder Berry Gordy.

AL ABRAMS



AL ABRAMS was born in Detroit. On May 30, 1959, he became the first employee of what was to become Berry Gordy, Jr.'s Motown Record Corporation. Working originally as National Promotion Director, he

later became the company's Director of Public Relations through the glory years of 1964-66.

After leaving Motown, Abrams established his own PR firm, Al Abrams Associates, and worked with Stax-Volt Records. He served as PR Director for Holland-Dozier-Holland's classic Invictus and Hot Wax Records, represented former Supreme Flo Ballard in her solo career with ABC Records, and worked for and with James Brown, Aretha Franklin and many others.

Author of 11 books, he was an award-winning investigative reporter for the Windsor Star in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Abrams has been a freelance reporter and publicist since 1994. Abrams is also the executive producer and creator of Memories of Motown, which was produced in Berlin's Estrel Festival Center, January 7 to February 1, 2009. This was the only international show recognizing the 50th birthday of the iconic record label, and celebrated both Motown's golden anniversary and its global musical legacy.

Abrams was inducted into the Michigan Rock and Roll Legends Hall of Fame in 2011.

SIR MACK RICE



A Detroit vocalist and composer, Sir Mack Rice was involved in the R&B/soul scene beginning in the late '50s. He was a member of the 5 Scalders vocal group in 1956 and then joined the Falcons from 1957 to 1963. Rice was later road manager for the new Falcons before becoming a solo vocalist. Rice wrote several selections, the most famous of which is "Mustang Sally," a number that has been recorded by many artists, including Wilson Pickett and the Young Rascals. Rice's version reached number 15 on the R&B charts in 1965, and was the only hit he ever enjoyed as a solo performer.

ROBERT BATEMAN



L TO R - AL ABRAMS, JOHNNY JONES, BERRY GORDY, JACKIE WILSON, ROBERT BATEMAN (CLEVELAND, OH 1959)

Robert Bateman played a key part in the early success of Motown Records having been a staff producer, a talent scout, and engineer with the label in the early '60s. He also co-wrote the million-selling "Please Mr. Postman," Motown's first number one pop smash. "... Postman" hit number one two times performed by two different acts. Bateman also co-wrote the classic ballad "If You Need Me" with Wilson Pickett and Sonny Sanders. Solomon Burke's version parked at number two R&B for five weeks and "Right Now and Not Later" was recorded by the Shangri-Las.

Bateman was the uncle of singer/songwriter/producer Jeffree Perry whose credits include the steppers classic "Love's Gonna Last," "100 Proof Aged in Soul," Diana Ross' "One Love in My Lifetime," and Jackie Wilson's Beautiful Day." He co-produced several Motown acts with Brian Holland under their condensed pseudonym of Brianbert. A friend of Marvelettes member Georgia Dobbins offered a blues song called "Please Mr. Postman." Dobbins rewrote the song, retaining only the title. Teaching the rest of the group to sing, Dobbins retired from the group to care for her ailing mother. She was replaced by Wanda Young.

The group took the song to producers Bateman and Holland. The group rehearsed for two weeks before recording "Please Mr. Postman" with a 22-year-old drummer named Marvin Gaye. The Marvelettes' "Please Mr. Postman" b/w "So Long Baby" went gold, holding the number one R&B spot for seven weeks and went to number one pop on Billboard's charts in fall 1961. Bateman also co-wrote its follow-ups, "Twistin' Postman" and the number four R&B hit "Playboy." Flushed with the success of "Please Mr. Postman," Bateman trekked to New York for find bigger opportunities. Nothing major developed and Bateman found himself back in Detroit. He produced one of the few solo singles of founding Supremes member Florence Ballard, "Love Ain't Love" on ABC Records.

"Please Mr. Postman" was covered by the Carpenters on their Horizon album. Released as a single, it went to number one pop in early 1975. The Beatles' version can be found on The Complete BBC Sessions.

RENA SCOTT



Rena Scott what more can be said of a singer extraordinary who has national and international acclaim? Plenty! As one-time back-up singer for Aretha Franklin, Rena Scott who has recorded and/or toured with such greats as the Jazz Crusaders, David Ruffin, Bobby Womack, and Michael Henderson; has had movie and theatre acting roles; and whose voice has been heard on movie soundtracks, and commercial jingles; is still on the move! The career of Rena Scott continues to evolve, and with her new CD titled “Take Me Away” on her own Amor Records label, she shows no sign of stopping. This 13-song set – contains songs that Rena co-wrote and co-produced with Lloyd Tolbert. It also contains four cover songs that are some of her all-time favorites like “Dr. Feelgood”, and “Don’t Ask My Neighbors”.

Fans are in for a treat! Songs from Rena’s last CD/DVD (combo) set titled “Let Me Love You” were featured in a blockbuster movie called “Love and Action in Chicago” which was shown on the HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, Starz, ABC, and BET networks. It starred Regina King, Courtney Vance, Kathleen Turner, and Ed Asner. She charted in three categories on the Billboard Charts with a song from the same set titled “Remember”. It peaked at # 9 in the Hot Pop Singles Sales; # 5 in the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Single Sales; and # 80 in the top 100 R&B/Hip-Hop Songs. Another song from the set, “A Love Thang”, reached # 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Single Sales chart and # 17 on the Hot Pop Single Sales. She remained and held strong on the charts for 18 weeks.

Without a doubt, Rena Scott’s skilled vocals are richly seasoned and as strong as ever. With her signature style of blending Soul, Pop, and Gospel, she has all the ingredients to float her star right to the very top.

EDDIE HOLMON



Eddie Holman’s 1970 number two smash “Hey There Lonely Girl,” with its creamy falsetto vocals and lush Philly soul arrangement, is one of the most well-remembered one-shot soul hits. Actually, Holman had been recording since the early ‘60s, scoring some minor hits with “This Can’t Be True” (1965) and “Am I a Loser (From the Start)” (1966). In 1969, he hooked up with Philadelphia producer Peter De Angelis, best known for his work with teen idols Fabian and Frankie Avalon.

His arrangements for Holman, however, rivaled Gamble-Huff’s in quality, yielding some other minor R&B hits in 1969 and 1970 with “I Love You,” “Don’t Stop Now,” and “Cathy Called,” as well as an album in 1970. Most identified with his rich falsetto, Holman actually sang in a much more traditional vocal range on much of his material, some of which was written by himself or his wife, Sheila.

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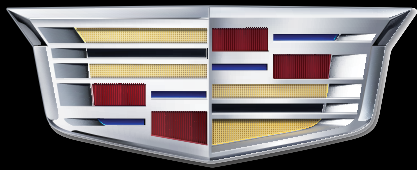
To learn more about UAW-Ford Community, visit us on the web at: www.uawfordcommunity.org

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