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The Motortown Revue.



As Motown began hitting its creative stride, the freewheeling, personality- driven origins of rock & roll radio were yielding to more sharply defined formats. Music choices were made by programme directors, not individual disc jockeys. This was also a result of the **1959 payola scandal**: when the practice of paying DJs to play records became illegal, station owners began seeking more control over programming to avoid putting their licences at risk.

Audience research took on weight: records that proved popular on R&B stations were frequently picked up by Top 40 radio too.

This '**crossover**' route was a form of test marketing, and **Barney Ales** exploited it intensely. Moreover, the many distributors he cultivated had their own promotion people for the labels they handled. This was a circle of mutual interest, as Motown's tight '**quality control**' approach to music-making delivered a succession of popular artists, notably **The Miracles, The Marvelettes, Mary wells, The Contours, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, The Temptations, Martha & the Vandellas, The Four Tops** and **The Supremes**. At the same time, record sales were on the up, and the distributors of independent labels were among the beneficiaries.

Music publishing, in the form of **Jobete Music**, gave Gordy further leverage and a separate inflow of income. Jobete represented another self- sufficient stable of talent: in-house composers and lyricists pumping out hundreds of songs for Motown's artists to record in the west Grand studio. As with other areas of the business, Gordy gave responsibility for Jobete to family members: first **Loucy**, then brother **Robert**. Later, he turned to battle-hardened publishers who knew how to work the assets via cover versions, sheet music and other avenues.



Berry Gordy and his small workforce spent from 1959 into the early 1960s recruiting, recording, re-recording, coalescing, stumbling, recovering, refining. He was determined to build a self-sufficient enterprise, with its own creative team of musicians, songwriters and singers, its own music-publishing unit, and a small, but effective crew of backroom believers handling accounting, legal, sales and other business functions.

In the process, Gordy had to trust and delegate to others. He produced almost all of the singles released on Motown's various label imprints in 1959-61, and wrote (or co-wrote) many of them.



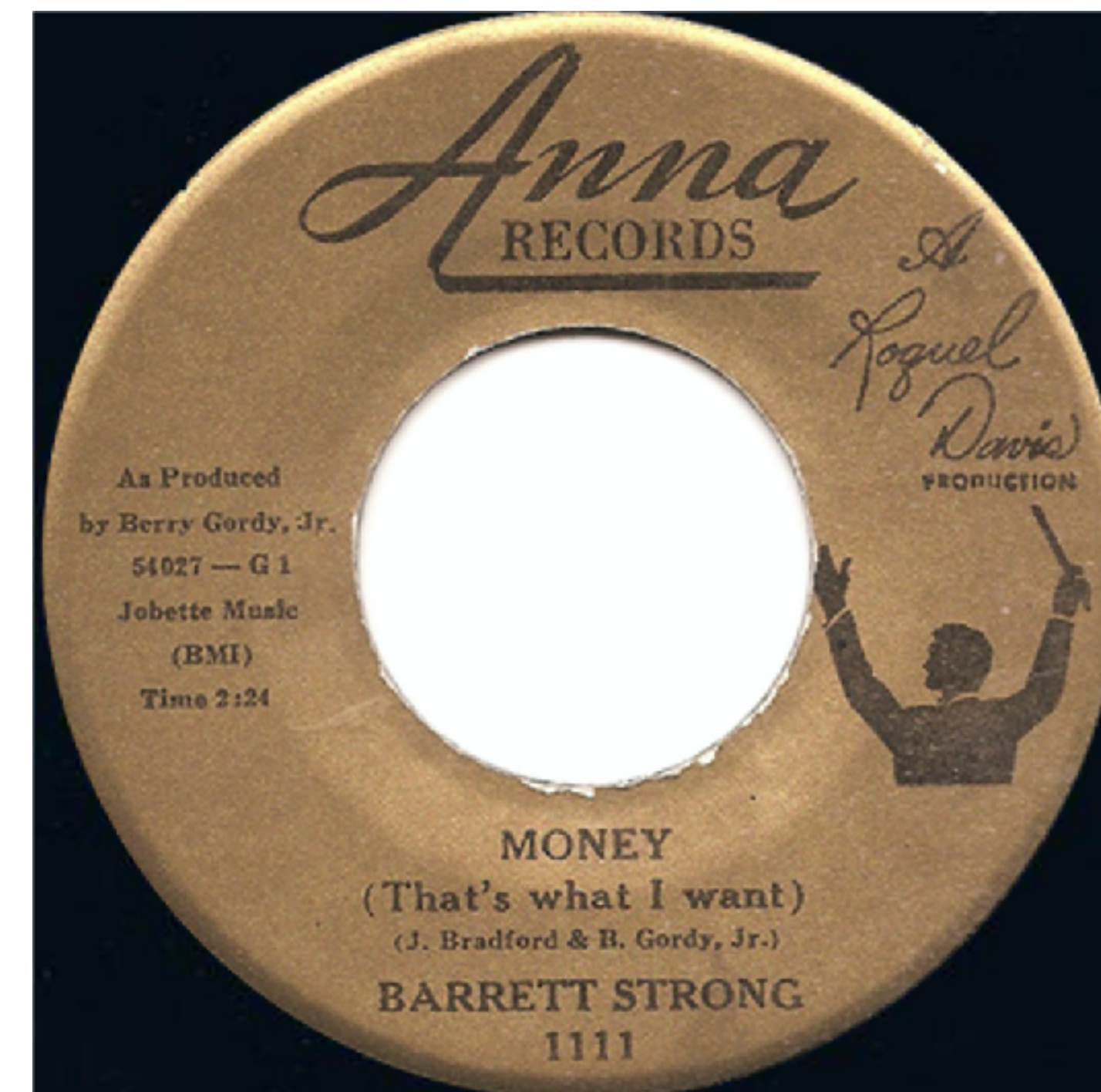
Money.

Money (That's What I Want), by Barrett Strong, became Motown's first hit in June 1960, making it to number two on the Hot R&B Sides chart and number 23 on the **Billboard Hot 100**.

Money (That's What I Want) among the first tracks recorded at Motown's studio at 2648 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit, in the summer of 1959. The opening piano motif – perhaps as recognizable as the song itself – was first played by **Berry Gordy**, who “had this riff going,” according to co-writer Janie Bradford. “We stood there and just kept writing and throwing out lyrics and improving on the melody, and the whole thing came together.”

“We were doing another session,” said Strong, “and I just happened to be sitting there playing the piano. I was playing ‘What’d I Say,’ by Ray Charles, and the groove spun off of that.” Other players at the session included Benny Benjamin on drums, Eugene Grew on guitar, and Brian Holland on tambourine. “**Money (That's What I Want)**” was released as a Tamla single in August of '59.

The local reaction was so strong that Gordy opted to lease the track to his sister Gwen's label, **Anna**, because it had national distribution via Chess Records. That additional reach helped the 45 become a smash on the R&B charts early in 1960, and it also crossed to the Billboard Hot 100.





BARRETT STRONG

Personal Management
BERRY GORDY, JR.

P.55B 62%

Berry Gordy said, "I was broke until the time I wrote "**Money**." Even though I had many hits and they were other writers who had many hits, we just didn't have profits. I'm coming from a business family, my father and mother always talked about the bottom line, and simple things, and the bottom line is profit. You know, are you making money or not?"

With **Raynoma Liles** and **Berry** providing the "that's what I want" gospel shout chorus, Strong sang over the piano riff and "**Money (That's What I Want)**" became a Motown template.

Putting the Team Together.



Smokey Robinson convinces Berry to start a full service record label.



Money was an artistic triumph, but for **Berry Gordy** it ended the 1950s on a bitter sweet note.

After years of indecision and unrest Gordy had found a way to make a living in music. Yet the return on his investment had yet to come in. He had hits. He had a name. He had the respect of the local music community and he had gone from spectator to songwriter with amazing ease.

Smokey Robinson took Berry aside and told him what had to be done next.

Noting the success **Anna Gordy** had with distribution, In 1959 the 19-year-old Robinson convinced Gordy to make Motown a full service company.

William “Mickey” Stevenson.



Given his inclination to perfectionism, too, this workload was extremely demanding. And so, after two years in business, he recruited **William "Mickey" Stevenson** as the company's artists & repertoire head.

In 1960, Stevenson was occupied with his own minor label, **Stepp Records**, and with membership of a vocal group, **the Mello-Dees**. He also gigged under his own name, shortly before joining Motown, with **Clarence Paul** – another important figure in the early years of Hitsville U.S.A.

Stevenson's value lay in his earlier experience as one of the **Hamptones**, **Lionel Hampton's** vocal group, in the late 1950s. Specifically, he watched the bandleader's wife, **Gladys**, run and rule the business.

"That was information acquired by not looking for it, just by being there," he explained. "I was amazed how his wife could move things around, and was controlling the musicians – not controlling, but they were given a certain amount of respect at the same time."

With Stevenson overseeing A&R and beginning to write and produce new material, Motown expanded its roster. In the first seven months of 1961, **the Supremes**, **the Temptations**, **the Marvelettes** and **Stevie Wonder** were all signed.

At the beginning of the year, **the Miracles** had delivered the firm's biggest hit with "Shop Around," rising to No. 2 on the *Billboard* Hot 100. By December, the Marvelettes became its first act to claim the top spot of that same chart, with "Please Mr. Postman." Revenues for Motown Records were now approaching \$1 million.

Norman Whitfield was known as a quiet young man who studied everything.

“Norman would sit there for a year, man. Norman watched everybody,” said pianist **Earl Van Dyke**.

Whitfield was paid \$15 a week to listen to records and became the first man in charge of what **Berry Gordy** termed “**Quality Control**” (a term Berry borrowed from the auto industry).

Whitfield wanted to be a Motown producer, and by 18 had produced a few local hits.

Like **Martha Reeves**, Whitfield rose through the Motown ranks, hoping to get noticed by the boss. (That’s Norman top left!)





Martha Reeves worked as a secretary for **Mickey Stevenson**.

Reeves had considerable musical training, having grown up singing in her father's Methodist church as well as classical music.

She had recorded for **Billy Davis'** label and sung background for a number of local singers.

"Martha would get the information across," said Stevenson, "We had a lot of artists and a lot of records and I had the sales department on my back, the executive department on my back, I got artists on one side and musicians on the other. I had to have people around me who knew what was happening and Martha was right in there."

Reeves was a secretary, back-up singer and member of the Motown family.

"The juices were flowing. The energy was new and fresh. '**Mickey's Monkey**' was recorded on the spur of the moment; Smokey came up with this idea and came up to the lobby where everyone was sitting and hanging around. He said 'Come on everybody, let's make a record!' When we got into the studio, he said 'All right! Is everybody ready?' It became part of the record."

- **Martha Reeves**

The Miracles.



MIRACLES
Vocal Group

Personal Management
BERRY GORDY, JR.

P.16

68%

Hi... We're the Miracles was the first album by Motown's first group, The Miracles, released on Motown's Tamla subsidiary label in the summer of 1961. It was the first album ever released by Motown. The album features several songs that played an important role in defining The Motown Sound and establishing Smokey Robinson.

For much of 1961, **the Miracles** were Motown's flagship act, pumping out R&B hits such as "**Ain't It, Baby**," "**Mighty Good Lovin'**" and "**Everybody's Gotta Pay Some Dues**," and playing concerts across the country.

The Miracles received their first gold record, presented for 1960's "**Shop Around**" at a Michigan state fair – and it was a complete surprise.

"We had sung a couple of songs," said Robinson, "and were getting ready to sing 'Shop Around,' and Berry interrupted the show and came up and presented us with the gold record. We were just flabbergasted. Come on, a million records! We were teenagers. This was our impossible dream coming true."



Title *Hi...We're The Miracles*
Released June 1961 US Chart — Cat No. Tamla 220



Title *Cookin' With The Miracles*
Released Nov 1961 US Chart — Cat No. Tamla 223



Title *I'll Try Something New*
Released July 1962 US Chart — Cat No. Tamla 230



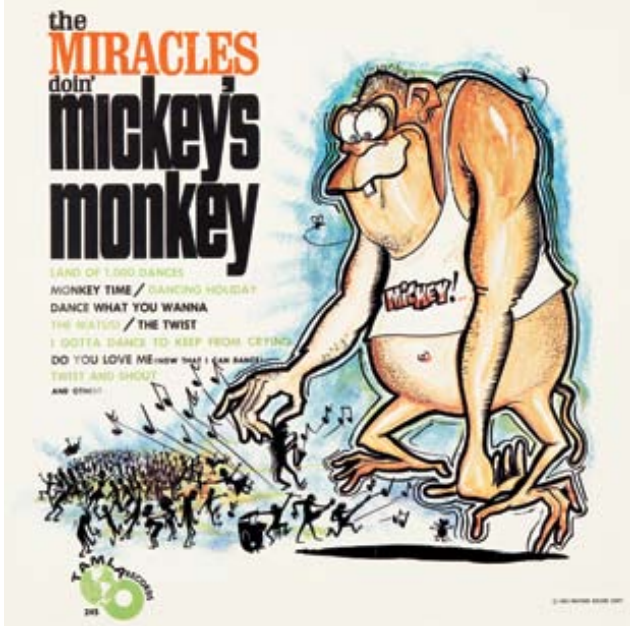
Title *The Fabulous Miracles*
Released May 1963 US Chart 118 Cat No. Tamla 238



Title *Recorded Live On Stage*
Released May 1963 US Chart 139 Cat No. Tamla 241



Title *Christmas With The Miracles*
Released Oct 1963 US Chart — Cat No. Tamla 236



Title *Doin' Mickey's Monkey*
Released Nov 1963 US Chart 113 Cat No. Tamla 245



Title *Greatest Hits From The Beginning*
Released Mar 1965 US Chart 21 Cat No. Tamla 254

The Funk Brothers.



The in-house musicians began to become an effective team, some brought aboard by Stevenson, some already familiar faces in the West Grand recording studio, such as Benny Benjamin. (The newly appointed A&R chief was also astute enough to know he needed backup musicians for every player, “especially the drummer.” For that, he looked to **Richard “Pistol” Allen** and **Uriel Jones**.)

The company’s first important bandleader and pianist was **Joe Hunter**; also invaluable were guitarists **Eddie Willis**, **Robert White** and **Joe Messina**, and sax man **Mike Terry**. Bass maestro **James Jamerson** had played on the Miracles’ 1959 near-hit, “Way Over There,” but subsequently took other income opportunities, including touring with Jackie Wilson’s band; he became more permanent at Hitsville in 1962.

“I gave him a weekly guarantee with more to come,” said **Mickey Stevenson**, “He got some respect from me for his talent and got paid for it, too. The brother was absolutely committed and hard to stop.” Jamerson also proved to be the link to keyboards whiz **Earl Van Dyke**, whom Stevenson hired (at \$150 a week) in ’62 almost as soon as he heard him. And when Joe Hunter decided to leave Motown, the A&R chief appointed Van Dyke as the new studio bandleader.





Many other sidemen stepped on board – including percussionists **Eddie “Bongo” Brown** and **Jack Ashford**, saxmen **Hank Cosby** and **Ron Wakefield**, horn players **Paul Riser** (soon to be indispensable as an arranger), **Ron Wakefield** and **Eli Fontaine** – as Motown’s hit ratio increased, and as producers other than Gordy started to earn their stripes. What had seemed to some of the musicians, particularly those with jazz backgrounds, as a useful way of earning some extra cash was now turning into a consistent income opportunity, complete with contracts. Even so, one or two of them were frustrated at the basic demands of the music being recorded.

Gordy remembered fighting with bassist **James Jamerson** on more than one occasion. “I would say, ‘Hey, **you can’t do that**, this is not a jazz session, man. We want to stay in the groove. We want to do some good things, we want the feeling to be there and all that, but **this is not a jazz session.**’ ”







In 1960, four 45s by black artists had reached the summit of the **Billboard Hot 100**. The following year, seven did so.

Not all of the '61 winners could be called sophisticated, the worldly-wise sentiments of **the Shirelles' "Will You Love Me Tomorrow"** offset by the entertaining vacuity of the **Marcel's' "Blue Moon,"** but the momentum had begun.

For his part, **Berry Gordy** was still accumulating resources, developing artists and following the market. He re-recorded another Miracles tune, "**Way Over There,**" after its initial commercial release, adding the gloss of strings to its tinge of gospel.

Smokey Robinson, whose song it was, said, "**The Drifters** had come out then, and they were using violins on all their records. **Everybody started jumping on the violin bandwagon.**

So Berry did, too."





Meanwhile, **Mickey Stevenson** was also proving his worth beyond running the A&R department. A pair of Tamla 45s released in July 1962 were largely his work: "**Beechwood 4-5789**," the Marvelettes' third pop chartbuster, and "**Stubborn Kind Of Fellow**," the first hit for **Marvin Gaye** after almost two years on the Motown books. Stevenson wrote both songs with Gaye and **George Gordy**; to boot, he produced them.

"THAT STUBBORN KINDA' FELLOW" MARVIN GAYE



INCLUDED
IN THIS
ALBUM

HITCH HIKE
SOLDIER'S PLEA
I'M YOURS, YOU'RE MINE
HELLO THERE ANGEL
GET MY HANDS ON
SOME LOVIN'
TAKING MY TIME
PRIDE AND JOY
WHEREVER I LAY MY HAT
IT HURT ME TOO

Mary Wells.



Mary Wells became Motown's most popular solo artist, signed at 17 after singing a self-written tune in front of Berry Gordy at a nightclub.

At the end of 1961, **Smokey Robinson** took on an additional task: that of producing and writing for **Mary Wells** – and it was transformational for both him and Motown.

The first hit of the union came immediately: "**The One Who Really Loves You,**" a Caribbean-flavoured midtempo ballad which exuded a sophisticated coolness in defiance of the youthfulness of its singer and songwriter. The outcome was Motown's third Top 10 success on the pop charts after "Shop Around" and "Please Mr. Postman," and the first of three – count 'em, three – consecutive Top 10 pop hits for Wells in 1962-63, all written and produced by Robinson.

For an independent, black-owned record company, this was a considerable achievement, earning industry attention as well as Motown's first Grammy nomination, for Wells' "**You Beat Me To The Punch.**"

Mary Wells and Smokey Robinson were Motown's first great producer/singer combination.

Eddie HOLLAND

Featuring
• If Cleopatra Took A Chance
• LAST NIGHT
• WHAT ABOUT ME
• **JAMIE**

EARL VAN DYKE AND THE SOUL BROTHERS
THAT MOTOWN SOUND

YOU'RE A WONDERFUL ONE
ALL FOR YOU
TRY IT BABY
BOONHOLE TO RAIN
CAN I GET A WITNESS
MY GIRL
TOO MERRY FISH IN THE SEA
COME SEE ABOUT ME
MONEY (THAT'S WHAT I WANT)
CAN YOU JERK LIKE ME
THE WAY YOU DO THE THINGS YOU DO
HOW SWEET IT IS TO BE LOVED BY YOU

INSTRUMENTAL VERSIONS OF THE HITS MADE FAMOUS BY: MARVIN GAYE - MARTHA AND THE VANDELLAS
THE TEMPTATIONS - BARRETT STRONG - THE MARVELETTES - THE SUPREMES - THE CONTOURS

SHOP AROUND *The Miracles*
BYE BYE, BABY *Mary Wells*
MONEY (THAT'S WHAT I WANT) *Barrett Strong*

WHO'S LOVIN' YOU - DEPEND ON ME - WAY OVER THERE
ON LOVER - PLEASE FORGIVE ME
I APOLOGIZE - THAT'S WHY I LOVE YOU SO MUCH

Produced by
BERRY GORDY, Jr.

MARY WELLS

The One Who Really Loves You

Featuring
YOU BEAT ME TO THE PUNCH

THE MARVELETTES
PLEASE Mr. Postman

Twistin' THE WORLD AROUND
WITH THE TWISTIN' KINGS

THE WHITE HORSE TWIST • OLD FASHI TWIST • CONGO TWIST • FLYING CIRCLE TWIST

THE MARVELETTES

Playboy

MADELETTES NOT HOME

AN ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK RECORDING
"NOTHING BUT A MAN"
STARRING IVAN DIXON • ABBEY LINCOLN • GLORIA FOSTER & JULIUS HARRIS

LOVE IS LIKE A HEAT WAVE / Martha & The Vandellas
YOU HEAT ME TO THE PUNCH / Mary Wells
THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL / Miracles
I'LL TRY SOMETHING NEW / Miracles

YOU'VE REALLY GOT A HOLD ON ME / Miracles
THIS IS WHEN I NEED YOU MOST / Martha & The Vandellas
COME ON HOME / Holland & Osier
BYE BYE BABY / Mary Wells
WAY OVER THERE / Marvelettes
MICKEY'S MONKEY / Miracles

DOUBLE PRIZE WINNER-VENICE FILM FESTIVAL

RALPH SHARON
modern innovations on country and western themes

The return of
AMOS MILBURN

"The blues boss"

"I'll make it up to you somehow."

- BAD, BAD WHISKEY
- IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT
- MY DAILY PRAYER
- HOLD ME BABY
- BABY YOU THRILL ME
- DON'T BE NO FOOL
- ONE SCOTCH, ONE BOURBON, ONE BEER
- IT'S A LONG LONG TIME • MONEY

WILLIE TYLER & LESTER

hello dummy!

BRENDA HOLLOWAY
every little bit hurts

I'VE BEEN GOOD TO YOU
LAND OF A THOUSAND BOYS
TOO PROUD TO CRY
EMBRACEABLE YOU
EVERY LITTLE BIT HURTS
WHO'S LOVING YOU

DEPEND ON ME
SUDDENLY
A FAVOR FOR A GIRL
UNCHAINED MELODY
CAN I
SAD SONG

Gordy 901 **"THE CONTOURS"**
DO YOU LOVE ME
(NOW THAT I CAN DANCE)

SHAKE SHERRIE
YOU BETTER GET IN LINE
WHOLE LOTTA WOMAN
IT MUST BE LOVE
CLAUDIA

OPPOSITE AND ABOVE Motown's early LP releases sought to capitalize on hit singles by artists such as Mary Wells, The Marvelettes and The Contours, while exploiting contemporary novelty trends or experimenting in other genres. In the latter category was an album by ventriloquist Willie Tyler, and a collection of country and western-themed instrumentals by Tony Bennett's accompanist, Ralph Sharon. Also shown here: Motown's first hits collection, *Tamla Special #1*, and its first movie soundtrack, *Nothing But A Man*.

Cholly Atkins and Maxine Powell.



“The good thing about Motown is the fact we were groomed. We had music theory. We had choreography by Cholly Atkins. And Mrs. Powell definitely made a difference in all the ladies lives; she worked with some of the guys, too, but the finishing course she gave us allowed us to go anywhere in the world and be accepted.” *Martha Reeves*

“In essence it was a good thing. There’s nothing wrong with learning a little etiquette...how to walk right if you slump or how to order wines and eat right. Those kinds of things all proved beneficial to the for all those people who went, `cos a lot of these guys just came out of the ghettos, and they were drinking apple Ripple and Thunderbird, Cold Duck. So when they went to that school they learned about Dom Perignon and lobster and creme brulee and all that kind of shit.” *Rick James*

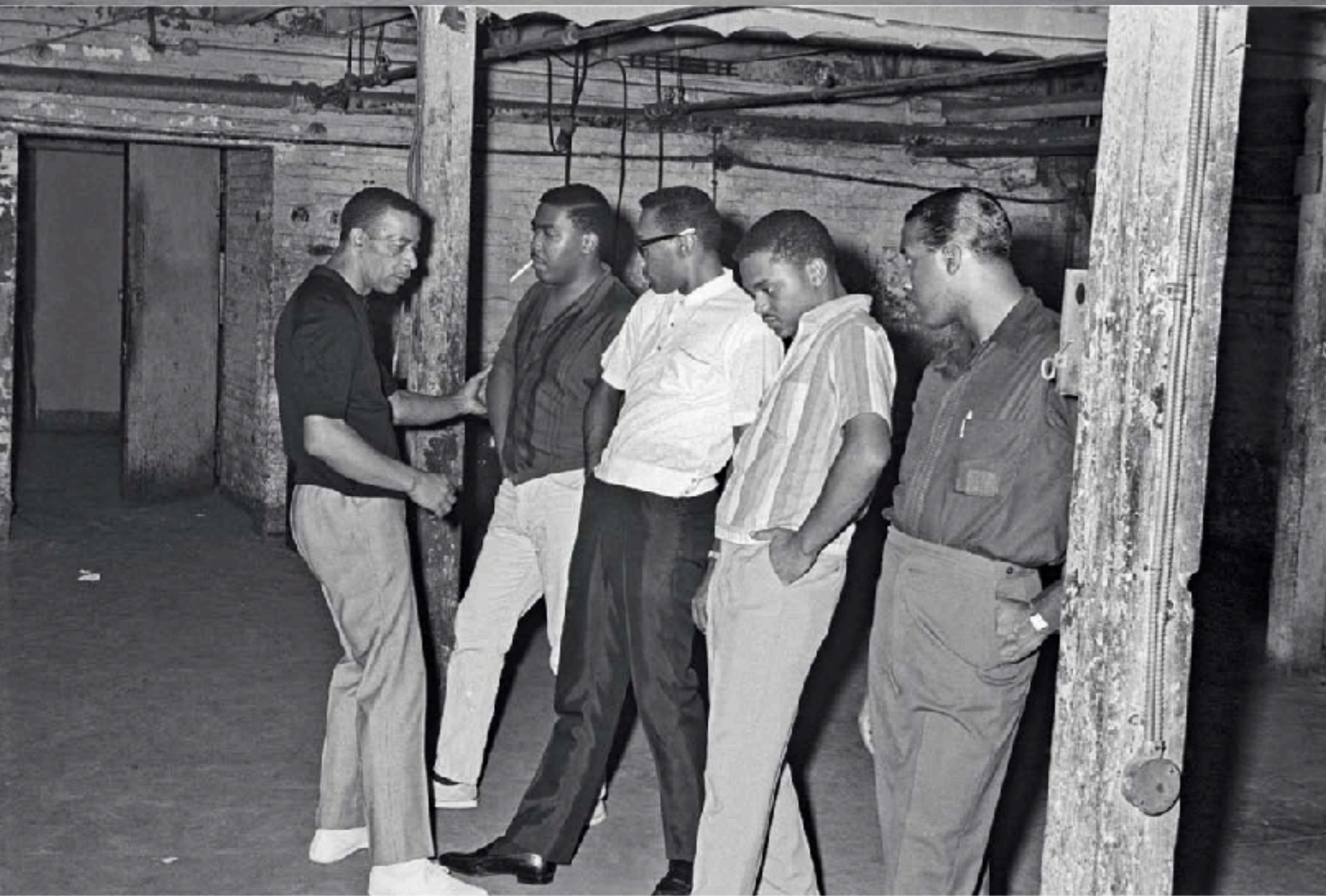
“Even today, if I think about how I’m sitting... Miss Powell taught us how to sit those legs in the right way when you’re sitting in front of people.” *Diana Ross*

“Berry Gordy told us: `You don’t need the diamonds, the Cadillacs. Save your money.”

Joe Billingslea, The Contours

“It was like a family. Motown had a family. We learned so much about writing a song and producing records...but they didn’t just record you. They taught you so many things, how to do interviews and stuff like that.” *Jackie Jackson*

“We had the best of the show business world because of the instruction.” *Martha Reeves*



Gordy realised that his performers would have greater career longevity if they could impress in the traditional temples of American show business, such as New York's Copacabana, and on network television. So he hired a mistress of etiquette, **Maxine Powell**, and a master of choreography, **Cholly Atkins**, to train his young hopefuls at another in-house unit, International Talent Management, Inc. (ITMI).

Atkins had been one of America's most celebrated tap dancers.

As the rock & roll era dawned, Atkins was working with various vocal groups, including **The Moonglows** and **Frankie Lymon & the Teenagers**.

He developed '**vocal choreography**', the discipline necessary for performers to handle set dance routines while singing. When The Moonglows disbanded, two of the group – leader **Harvey Fuqua** and a young **Marvin Gaye** – joined Motown.

It was Fuqua who convinced Gordy that he needed an artist development department, then Gordy hired Atkins.

Barney Ales' Sales Team.



From left to right, Motown salesmen **Phil Jones**, **Al Klein** and **Irv Biegel** are shown behind a seated **Barney Ales**

By 1962, **Barney Ales** started adding staff. His first hire was **Irv Biegel**, an engaging, 26-year-old salesman with a valuable list of contacts acquired while working for **Jay Kay Distributing**, where he handled regional promotion for **Dot Records**. This was a white-bread pop label – its biggest star was **Pat Boone**. Ales assigned singles sales and promotion to Biegel, then recruited another local music man, **Phil Jones**, 31, to do the same for albums.

Jones had spent most of the previous ten years working for a jukebox operator's one-stop business. He was friendly but tough and for hospitality, he was peerless. "If I wanted an out-of-town disc jockey taken care of while he was in Detroit," said Ales, "there was simply no one better than Phil."

Jones and Biegel became linchpins of the expanding business, the former accompanying Ales on some of his overseas trips, when the latter held the fort in Detroit. Another recruit *circa* 1963 was **Al Klein**, tasked with singles promotion and sales in southern states, working with the distributors there. Based in Dallas, he was the epitome of a long, tall Texan, with music industry stripes earned at Columbia and Warner Bros.

Ales met Klein at a Warner convention, when the two realised they had in common a taste for country & western music as well as an employer. But Klein had more on his resume: he was a songwriter and record producer, who had previously run his own small record label. "It always seemed to me that while pop music trends changed, country & western remained strong, especially in Detroit," said Ales. "That's when we decided to have **Mel-O-Dy** as a country label, and it was Al who brought in every one of those artists." Phil Jones recalled, "He was like a country boy. He used to make records for \$200, and we let him fool around with it for a while, then he did national singles sales out of Dallas. He brought in **Dorsey Burnette** and **Bruce Channel**." It was as well that Klein had another string to his fiddle: none of the Mel-O-Dy country singles sold in appreciable numbers. "Berry liked him very much, too," said Ales, "because he had a great personality."

Full Service.



An increasing headcount at Motown meant a need for more working space. The company only had one release climbing the *Billboard* Hot 100 in mid-April 1961, but Berry Gordy was optimistic enough to acquire a second property at that time, adjacent to Hitsville. Like its neighbour, **2644-46 West Grand** was a two-story family home, with residents still living on the second floor, served by a separate, outer staircase, when it was bought by Motown.

Into the ground floor moved the people responsible for **sales, billing, shipping, collections, publicity** and **music publishing**.

“I had an office in the back,” said Ales. “To my right were **Fay Hale** and **Ann Dozier**, who did inventory and billing. **Loucy** was in the front. We had no switchboard or anything. In those days, all the buildings had their own phones and their own numbers. Next door, there was a receptionist – **Janie Bradford** for a while – and then Berry hired **Rebecca Jiles**.” When the second building’s top floor was vacated by tenants, Ales moved upstairs to the front office, with Irv Biegel and Phil Jones in the back.



Stevie Wonder.



In 1961, when aged 11, **Stevie Wonder** sang his own composition, "**Lonely Boy**," to **Ronnie White** of the Miracles. White then took Wonder and his mother to an audition at Motown, where Berry Gordy signed Wonder to Motown's Tamla label.

Because of Wonder's age, the label drew up a rolling five-year contract in which royalties would be held in trust until he was 21. He and his mother would be paid a weekly stipend to cover their expenses: Wonder received \$2.50 (equivalent to \$21.39 in 2019) per week, and a private tutor was provided for when Wonder was on tour.

Creatively, Wonder was put in the care of producer and songwriter Clarence Paul, and for a year they worked together on two albums. **Tribute to Uncle Ray** was recorded first, when Wonder was still 11 years old. **The Jazz Soul of Little Stevie** was recorded next. The Berry Gordy song "**I Call It Pretty Music, But the Old People Call It the Blues**" was Wonder's début single, released in the summer of 1962, it almost broke into the Billboard Hot 100, spending one week of August at 101.

Two follow-up singles, "**Little Water Boy**" and "**Contract on Love**", both had no success, and the two albums, released in reverse order of recording—**The Jazz Soul of Little Stevie** in September 1962 and **Tribute to Uncle Ray** in October 1962—also met with little success.





At the end of 1962, Wonder joined the **Motortown Revue**, touring the "Chitlin' Circuit" of theaters across America that accepted black artists. At the Regal Theater, Chicago, his 20-minute performance was recorded and released in May 1963 as the album **Recorded Live: The 12 Year Old Genius**.

A single, "**Fingertips**", from the album was also released in May, and became a major hit. The song, featured a confident and enthusiastic Wonder returning for a spontaneous encore, and was a **No. 1 hit on the Billboard Hot 100** when Wonder was aged 13, making him the youngest artist ever to top the chart. The single was simultaneously No. 1 on the R&B chart, the first time that had occurred.

His next few recordings, however, were not successful; his voice was changing as he got older, and there was internal gossip that he might get dropped by Motown. To his rescue came songwriter **Sylvia Moy**, who worked with him on a return to form with "**Uptight (Everything's Alright)**."



The Supremes.





In Detroit in 1958, **Florence Ballard**, a junior high school student living in the Brewster-Douglass Housing Projects, met **Paul Williams** and **Eddie Kendricks**, who were two members of a Detroit singing group known as **the Primes**. Ballard sang, as did Paul Williams' girlfriend Betty McGlown, so Milton Jenkins, the Primes's manager, decided to create a sister group to be called **the Primettes**.

Ballard recruited her best friend **Mary Wilson**, who recruited classmate **Diana Ross**.

The quartet quickly earned a local fan following.

The girls crafted an age-appropriate style that was inspired by the collegiate dress of popular doo-wop group **Frankie Lymon & the Teenagers**; and, for the most part, Ballard, Ross and Wilson performed equal leads on songs. Within a few months, guitarist **Marvin Tarplin** was added to the Primettes' lineup—a move that helped distinguish the group from Detroit's many other aspiring acts by allowing the girls to sing live instead of lip-synching.

In 1960 **Diana Ross** asked an old neighbor, Miracles lead singer **Smokey Robinson**, to help the group land an audition for Motown executive Berry Gordy.

Robinson liked the girls and agreed to help, but he liked their guitarist even more; with the Primettes' permission he hired Tarplin, who became the guitarist for the Miracles. Robinson arranged for the Primettes to audition a cappella for Gordy—but Gordy, feeling the girls too young and inexperienced to be recording artists, encouraged them to return when they had graduated from high school.

Determined to leave an impression and join the stable of rising Motown stars, **the Primettes** hung around Hitsville U.S.A. every day after school. Eventually, they convinced Gordy to allow them to contribute hand claps and background vocals for the songs of other Motown artists including **Marvin Gaye** and **Mary Wells**. In January 1961, Gordy finally relented and agreed to sign the girls to his label – but under the condition that they change the name of their group. Ballard chose "**the Supremes**", a name that Ross initially disliked as she felt it too masculine. (**The Primes** had by this time combined with **Otis Williams & the Distant**s and would soon sign to Motown as **the Temptations**.)

In the spring of 1962, Martin left the group to start a family. Thus, the newly named Supremes continued as a trio. Between 1961 and 1963, the Supremes released six singles, none of which charted in the Top 40 positions of the Billboard Hot 100. Jokingly referred to as the "**no-hit Supremes**" around Motown's Hitsville U.S.A. offices, the group attempted to compensate for their lack of hits by taking on any work available at the studio, including providing hand claps and singing backup for Motown artists such as **Marvin Gaye** and **the Temptations**.

During these years, all three members took turns singing lead: Wilson favored soft ballads, Ballard favored soulful, hard-driving songs, and Ross favored mainstream pop songs. Most of their early material was written and produced by Gordy or Robinson, until their breakthrough at the hands of Motown's up-and-coming writing/producing team, **Holland/Dozier/Holland**.

The Temptations.



Four months after the **Primettes-turned-Supremes** signed to Motown, the **Primes-turned-Temptations** joined them at Hitsville, with their first release in July 1961, "**Oh Mother Of Mine**," written by founder member **Otis Williams** and A&R chief Mickey Stevenson.

Williams had recorded before as leader of a combo called **the Distant**s. When two of them quit, he realigned the group with the help of two of the Primes, and **the Temptations** were born: **Paul Williams** (no relation), **Elbridge "Al" Bryant**, **Melvin Franklin**, **Eddie Kendricks** and **Otis**.

Less than a year after joining Motown, the Temptations were chosen to be the first act on its newest subsidiary label, Gordy, with a single, "**(You're My) Dream Come True**," written and produced by Berry Gordy himself. This became the group's first chart entry in the spring of 1962.

Still, like the Supremes, it took a few more 45s before the Temptations truly connected with record buyers around the country. They had to wait until "**The Way You Do The Things You Do**," co-written and produced by **Smokey Robinson**, propelled the quintet – with David Ruffin now on board, replacing Al Bryant – to the top of the R&B charts, and to only one slot short of the Top 10 of the **Billboard Hot 100** in February 1964.

Marvin Gaye.

Harvey Fuqua discovered a quartet of teenagers from Washington DC called **the Marquees**. After auditioning for Fuqua in his hotel room, Fuqua was impressed particularly by one of the Marquees:

Marvin Gay (no "e" in Gaye... yet).

Raised by a Pentecostal minister transvestite father, Marvin Gay wanted to be an athlete, and found his calling singing "the devils music."

Fuqua taught Marvin about chords and harmony, and Marvin found work as a session musician on drums and toured with **the Miracles** as their drummer.

Anna Gordy took an immediate liking to **Marvin Gaye**. Gaye soon began working at **Anna Records** they began dating in 1960. After a three-year courtship, they married in June 1963, with Gaye becoming both **Harvey Fuqua and Berry Gordy's bother-in law**.

In July 1962 Mickey Stevenson and Marvin Gaye wrote "**Stubborn Kind of Fella**" and Marvin Gaye was no longer just a part of Motown's family, he was a star.



MARVIN GAYE
Tamla Recording Artist

Personal Management
Berry Gordy Jr. Enterprises, Inc.
Detroit 8, Mich.

The Motortown Revue.



IN PERSON MARY WELLS

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THE MIRACLES - CONTOURS - MARVELETTES
MARY JOHNSON - VANDELLAS - MARVIN GAYE

BILL MURRAY-LITTLE STEVIE WONDER
CHOKER CAMPBELL & ORCHESTRA

MARY WELLS
The MARVELETTES
The VANDELLAS
The MIRACLES
MARV JOHNSON
Little STEVIE WONDER
BILL MURRAY
The CONTOURS
MARVIN GAYE
CHOKER CAMPBELL AND ORCHESTRA

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MARY WELLS
THE MIRACLES
THE CONTOURS
THE MARVELETTES
MARY JOHNSON
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In the fall of 1962, Motown sent its artists on the road together in one legendary package tour, traversing the east coast of the United States, from Massachusetts to Florida. An early edition of that, touring on a more modest scale, came in February 1959, when the “**Gordy Star Attractions Show**” hit the road with **Marv Johnson, Eddie Holland, Mable John, the Rayber Voices, the Fideli-Tones, the Miracles** and **MC Joe Howard**.

Like so much at Motown, the best ideas were birthed at the beginning.

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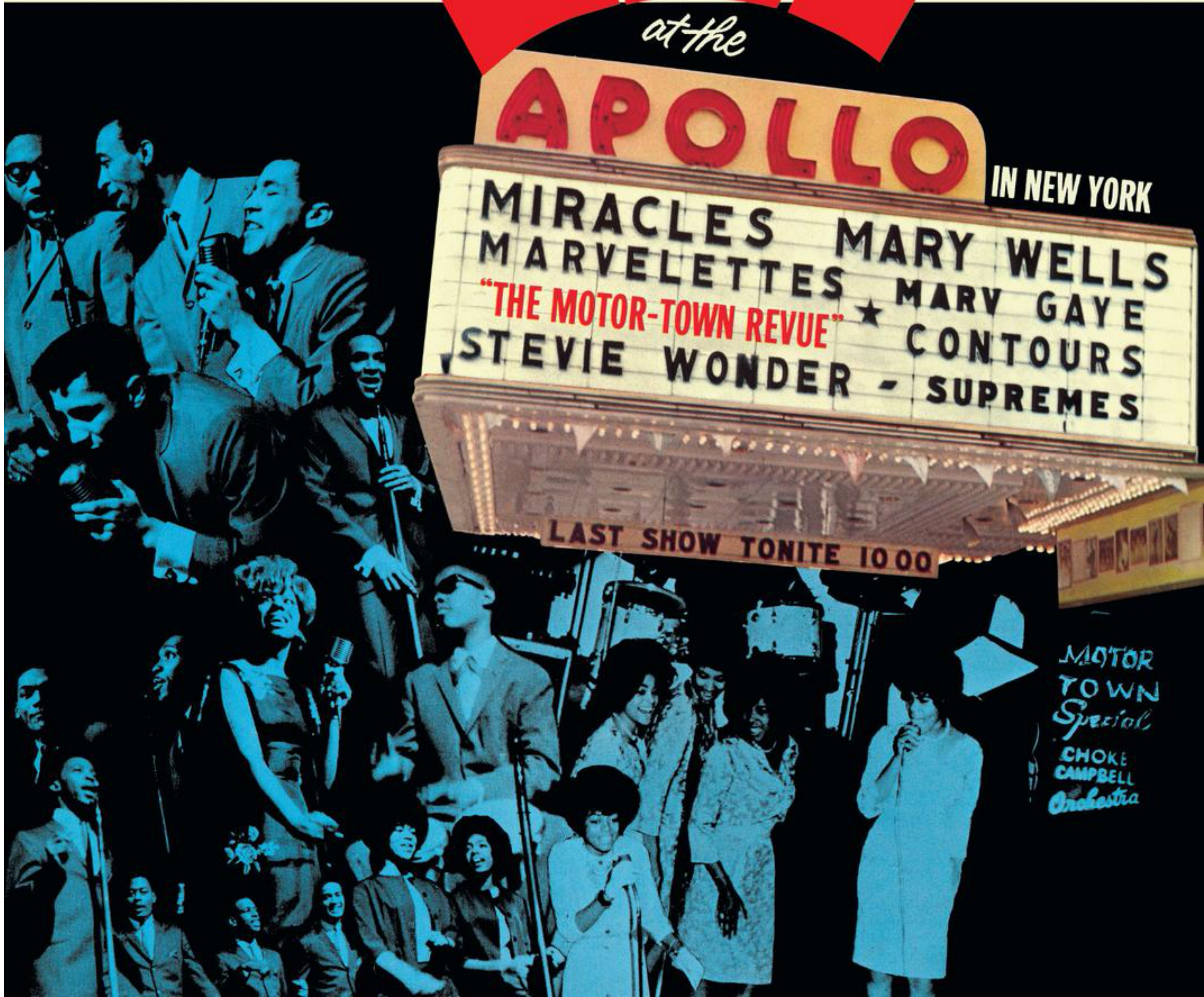
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MIRACLES MARY WELLS
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STEVIE WONDER - SUPREMES

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The Motortown Revue played one-nighters near and far from Detroit, and/or joining tours with other popular acts on the R&B circuit. This was not only a means of generating revenue, but also a vital form of promotion. Motown would send its acts to appear at record hops staged by popular radio disc jockeys, and do so without charge. The DJs would keep the money raised from ticket sales, but have an incentive to keep spinning Motown's record releases.

"We used to do a theatre show in the black community five shows a day – that was four and a midnight wrap-up," said influential DJ **"Jockey Jack" Gibson**. "We'd call the record company and let them know we were playing the hell out of their record, and they would send the artist down to us."











The stroke of genius was putting all Motown’s artists together into one roadshow. This first **Motortown Revue** was made possible by the firm’s steady flow of strong-selling singles in ‘62 by **the Marvelettes**, **Mary Wells**, **the Miracles** and **the Contours**. All those acts were assigned to the tour, together with **Sammy Ward**, the “no-hit” **Supremes**, **Marv Johnson**, **Marvin Gaye** and **the Vandellas**, each and every one backed by Choker Campbell and his “Show of Stars” band.

The itinerary was brutal, beginning October 26 with a week at the Howard Theatre in Washington, D.C., then a trio of shows in the northeast (Boston, New Haven, Buffalo), followed by a month down south through November and into December, including dates in Augusta, Birmingham, Atlanta, New Orleans, Jackson, Miami, Memphis and Nashville. Among the final shows: two weeks at New York’s Apollo Theatre from Dec. 7-16.

Berry Gordy was in Detroit for most of the time that the Revue was on the road, although he went to the opening date. When shots were fired at the tour bus two weeks later in Alabama, he wanted to cancel everything.

“I was devastated. We were all aware of how tough the racial conditions could be – the motels, restaurants, filling stations and bathrooms where blacks were refused service,” he wrote. “But my artists being shot at?”

Gordy was dissuaded from scrapping the tour by his sister **Esther**, and a second edition went out for six weeks in the fall of 1963. It played to capacity houses on almost half its dates. The wrap-up shows over two days at Detroit’s Fox Theater attracted standing-room-only audiences, and grossed some \$42,000 – the largest such take at the venue in five years.

IT'S WHAT'S IN THE GROOVE THAT COUNTS

Thanks, *Berry Gordy Jr. Barney Ales and Staff*

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the Fabulous
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MARY WELLS

Miss Hitmaker
MARY WELLS

EDDIE HOLLAND

MARY WELLS

TWO LOVERS

CHART SINGLES

MIRACLES
You've Really Got A Hold on Me
TAMLA 54073

MARVIN GAYE
Hitch Hike
TAMLA 54075

MARY WELLS
Laughing Boy
MOTOWN 1039

CONTOURS
Shoke Sherry
GORDY 7012

MARVELETTES
Strange I Know
TAMLA 54072

SUPREMES
Let Me Go the Right Way
MOTOWN 1034

MARY WELLS
Two Lovers
MOTOWN 1035

LITTLE STEVIE WONDER
Contract On Love
TAMLA 54074

NEW RELEASES

MARVELETTES
Locking Up My Heart
TAMLA 54077

SUPREMES
My Heart Can't Take It
No More
MOTOWN 1040

MARTHA & THE VANDALLAS
Come And Get These Memories
Gordy 7014

JUNIOR WALKER
ALL STARS
Good Rockin'
Harvey 119

CHUCK A LUCKS
Sugar Cane Curtain
MELODY 106

KIM WESTON
It Should Have Been Me
TAMLA 54076

EDDIE HOLLAND
Darling I Hum Our Song
MOTOWN 1036