

SUPERHITS 1968



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

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- 1 **A Beautiful Morning** The Rascals
- 2 **Spooky** Classics IV
- 3 **Light My Fire** José Feliciano
- 4 **The Look of Love**
Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66
- 5 **Like to Get to Know You**
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- 10 **Do You Know the Way to San Jose**
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Otis Redding

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SUPERHITS 1968

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

SUD-02
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- 1 A Beautiful Morning 2 Spooky 3 Light My Fire 4 The Look of Love 5 Like to Get to Know You 6 Classical Gas 7 Angel of the Morning 8 I Wish It Would Rain 9 Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing 10 Do You Know the Way to San Jose 11 Honey 12 Hooked on a Feeling 13 Stoned Soul Picnic 14 Goin' out of My Head/Can't Take My Eyes off You 15 Grazing in the Grass 16 Turn Around, Look at Me 17 Wichita Lineman 18 (Theme from) Valley of the Dolls 19 Dream a Little Dream of Me 20 Abraham, Martin and John 21 I Heard It through the Grapevine 22 (Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay

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By 1968, a vibrant sense of experimentation permeated all aspects of rock and pop. The sheer variety of music on the radio—AM as well as the newly utilized FM—was broader than ever, and some unlikely singles were becoming hits. Surprisingly, this wide-open scene included even soft pop, or middle-of-the-road music, up to that time the most constricted form of all.

Consider just the top instrumentals. Brazilian pianist Sergio Mendes, who had settled in the United States in the mid-1960s, was a leader of the bossa nova movement, and his records were considered instrumentals even when they used voices. He had legitimate jazz credentials—his sidemen had included bossa nova guitarist Antonio Carlos Jobim and trumpet and flügelhorn player Art Farmer—but his biggest success came when he covered pop hits like **The Look of Love**, introduced the year before by Dusty Springfield in the James Bond spoof *Casino Royale*.

Hugh Masekela, the son of a South African sculptor, took up trumpet at

the age of 13 after seeing Kirk Douglas in the movie *Young Man with a Horn*. A veteran of various Johannesburg jazz groups, including one with pianist Dollar Brand, Masekela earned a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music in London that allowed him to escape apartheid. Then he went to the Manhattan School of Music, where Harry Belafonte found him and began promoting his career. By the mid-1960s, Masekela was married to folk singer Miriam Makeba, a fellow South African expatriate, and running his own production company in Los Angeles. Masekela's jazz-Afropop fusion **Grazing in the Grass** sold four million worldwide.

The most off-the-wall instrumental of the bunch was Mason Williams' **Classical Gas**. An Oklahoma folkie, Williams completed a navy hitch and then headed for Los Angeles, where he met Glenn Yarbrough, who was a member of the Limelighters (and later became a solo artist best known for *Baby the Rain Must Fall*). Yarbrough introduced him to the Smothers Brothers, then playing his club, and Williams



became the comedy team's guitarist and writer. (Williams also worked in other media: he wrote and designed books, and one unusual example of his artistic abilities was displayed in the New York Museum of Modern Art.) He was writing for the Smothers Brothers' controversial TV show when he made his recording debut with an LP, *The Mason Williams Phonograph Record*; its No. 2 single incorporates everything from classical passages to bluegrass breaks, and it won the guitarist three Grammys.

Dionne Warwick's **(Theme from) Valley of the Dolls**, written by André and Dory Previn, was the flip side of *I Say a Little Prayer*, and together they became her biggest two-sided single ever. But Otis Redding's **(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay** and Marvin Gaye's **I Heard It through the Grapevine** were the two epochal soul records that year.

Redding wrote the former shortly after his historic performance at the Monterey Pop Festival and a follow-up appearance at the Fillmore West in

San Francisco, where he floored the hippies with his raw voice and uninhibited heart. Resting in the morning sun on a houseboat in Sausalito, across the bay from San Francisco, Otis was inspired to create this folk-flavored meditation on his life and travels.

His manager, Phil Walden, was skeptical about its chances, but Stax guitarist Steve Cropper, a frequent Redding collaborator, loved the tune. Cropper helped him polish it up before they cut it in Memphis on December 7, 1967. Three days later, the singer's private plane crashed into an icy Wisconsin lake, killing him and all but one of his band members. *Dock of the Bay* posthumously became a two-time Grammy winner and Redding's first No. 1 pop hit.

I Heard It through the Grapevine was cut by three Motown acts before Marvin Gaye. The Isley Brothers' version stayed in the can, and Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' version wasn't released until around the same time as Gaye's. Gladys Knight and the Pips took it to No. 2 pop (and the top of



the soul charts) in 1967.

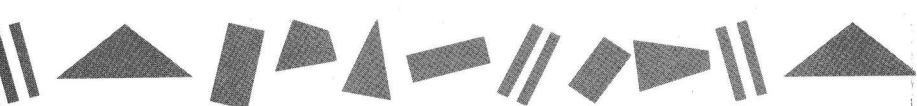
But when Gaye cut the Barrett Strong-Norman Whitfield song with Whitfield producing, he brought a personal urgency to the session. His seven-year marriage to Motown president Berry Gordy's sister Anna (17 years older than Marvin) was falling apart; each partner was cheating compulsively on the other. Marvin poured all his passion and paranoia into the performance, and he wound up selling four million copies and creating a standard that has entered the *Billboard* Hot 100 four times since then (by King Curtis, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Roger and the California Raisins).

Gaye's labelmates the Temptations had another Strong-Whitfield gem in **I Wish It Would Rain**. David Ruffin's unforgettable reading made the song stand out from the Broadway ballads that dominated the Tempts' *In a Mellow Mood* album. The 5th Dimension was a pop-soul group that made a career out of smooth harmonizing, usually on songs by Jimmy Webb or Laura Nyro, who wrote **Stoned Soul Picnic**. With

A Beautiful Morning, an obvious attempt to recapture the success of its 1967 chart topper *Groovin'*, the nation's leading "blue-eyed" soul band changed its name from the Young Rascals to the Rascals.

Dion and José Feliciano were folk-rock surprises. Dion fled his native Bronx for Miami in 1968 to kick heroin, which had kept his career on hold much of the decade. During that period, he also became a huge blues fan. Dick Holler wrote **Abraham, Martin and John** as a blues shuffle the day after Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. Producer Phil Gernhard and Dion spent nearly three weeks reworking it into this form, which Dion insisted was *his* form of blues even if everyone else considered it topical folk-pop; the single also marked his return to Laurie, the label where he and the Belmonts had their early hits.

Feliciano was born blind in Puerto Rico, and his family moved to New York's Spanish Harlem when he was a child. He made his first appearances on the Hispanic circuit but quickly



moved downtown to Greenwich Village folk clubs. In addition to singing, he played guitar, bass and congas on his remake of the Doors' **Light My Fire**, which marked his first foray into the pop-rock world.

Spanky and Our Gang (**Like to Get to Know You**) were Chicago's answer to the Mamas and the Papas; leader Elaine "Spanky" McFarlane even sang the late Mama Cass Elliot's parts in the mid-1980s re-formed version of that group. Merrilee Rush went top 10 with **Angel of the Morning** after Evie Sands's version failed because Cameo, her label, went out of business two weeks after releasing it in 1966. When Rush began getting some attention in her native Pacific Northwest, songwriter Chip Taylor, who had penned *Angel* in a 10-minute burst that ended a half-day of false starts, hired his own promo man to make it a nationwide hit.

The Vogues, who were originally the Val-Aires but dressed so sharp that they had to change their name, broke out of their native Pittsburgh by work-

ing up two different shows, one for teens and one for parents. **Turn Around, Look at Me** managed to please both audiences. The members of Classics IV were from Jacksonville, Florida, but their **Spooky** broke first in Louisville, Kentucky; remnants of the group later evolved into the Atlanta Rhythm Section, purveyors of mid-1970s Southern boogie. Glen Campbell continued his crossover success with the atmospheric **Wichita Lineman**, one in a series of country place-name songs written for him by Jimmy Webb.

Bobby Goldsboro, a Southerner who had never enjoyed country hits before, had an even bigger crossover with **Honey**, written by Bobby Russell (*Little Green Apples*, *The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia*). After deciding at the last minute to stay home one weekend night, Russell started contemplating how much the tree in his front yard had grown in the last four years, and somehow from that observation he built this ballad about the death of a young bride.

—John Morthland



DISCOGRAPHY

*Indicates highest Billboard chart position

1. A Beautiful Morning The Rascals • Music and lyrics by Felix Cavaliere and Edward Brigati Jr. Delicious Apple Music Corp./Purple Records Distributing Corp./Fun City Music Corp. ASCAP. Atlantic 2493. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 3*

2. Spooky Classics IV • Music and lyrics by Mike Shapiro, Harry Middlebrooks, Buddy Buie and James Cobb. Lowery Music Co., Inc. BMI. Imperial 66259. Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 3*

3. Light My Fire José Feliciano • Music and lyrics by Jim Morrison, Raymond Manzarek, Robert Krieger and John Densmore. Nipper Music. ASCAP. RCA Victor 9550. Courtesy of RCA Records, a label of BMG Music. No. 3*

4. The Look of Love Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66 • Music by Burt Bacharach, lyrics by Hal David. Colgems-EMI Music Inc. ASCAP. A&M 924. Courtesy of A&M Records, Inc. No. 4*

5. Like to Get to Know You Spanky and Our Gang • Music and lyrics by Stuart Scharf. Takya Music Inc. ASCAP. Mercury 72795. Courtesy of PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 17*

6. Classical Gas Mason Williams • Music by Mason Williams. Irving Music Inc. BMI. Warner Bros. 7190. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 2*

7. Angel of the Morning Merrilee Rush and the Turnabouts • Music and lyrics by Chip Taylor. EMI-Blackwood Music Inc. BMI. Bell 705. Produced under license from Arista Records, Inc. No. 7*

8. I Wish It Would Rain The Temptations • Music and lyrics by Barrett Strong, Roger Penzabene and Norman Whitfield. Stone Agate Music. BMI. Gordy 7068. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 4*

9. Ain't Nothing like the Real Thing Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell • Music and lyrics by Nicholas Ashford and Valerie Simpson. Jobete Music Co., Inc. ASCAP. Tamla 54163. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 8*

10. Do You Know the Way to San Jose Dionne Warwick • Music by Burt Bacharach, lyrics by Hal David. Blue Seas Music, Inc./Jac Music Co., Inc. ASCAP. Scepter 12216. Courtesy of Dionne Warwick, Jac Music Co., Inc., and Blue Seas Music, Inc. No. 10*

11. Honey Bobby Goldsboro • Music and lyrics by Robert L. Russell. PolyGram International Songs. ASCAP. United Artists 50283. Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 1*

12. Hooked on a Feeling B. J. Thomas • Music and lyrics by Mark James. Screen Gems-EMI Music Inc. BMI. Scepter 12230. Courtesy of Gusto Records. No. 5*

13. Stoned Soul Picnic The 5th Dimension • Music and lyrics by Laura Nyro. SBK Blackwood Music Inc. BMI. Soul City 766. Produced under license from Arista Records, Inc. No. 3*

14. Goin' out of My Head/Can't Take My Eyes off You The Lettermen • Music and lyrics by Teddy Randazzo and Bobby Weinstein; music and lyrics by Bob Crewe and Bob Gaudio. Vogue Music c/o Welk Music/Saturday Music/Season Four Music Corp. BMI. Capitol 2054. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 7*

15. Grazing in the Grass Hugh Masekela • *Music* by Phileman Hou. Cherio Corp. BMI. Uni 55066. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 1*

16. Turn Around, Look at Me The Vogues • *Music and lyrics* by Jerry Capehart. Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp./Unichappell Music Inc. BMI. Reprise 0686. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 7*

17. Wichita Lineman Glen Campbell • *Music and lyrics* by Jim Webb. Canopy Music Inc. ASCAP. Capitol 2302. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 3*

18. (Theme from) Valley of the Dolls Dionne Warwick • *Music* by André Previn, lyrics by Dory Previn. WB Music Corp. ASCAP. Scepter 12203. Courtesy of Jac Music Co., Inc./Blue Seas Music, Inc./December 12 Inc. of Nevada. No. 2*

19. Dream a Little Dream of Me Mama Cass • *Music and lyrics* by Gus Kahn, Wilbur Schwandt and Fabian Andre. Words and Music Inc. ASCAP. Dunhill 4145. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 12*

20. Abraham, Martin and John Dion • *Music and lyrics* by Dick Holler. Goodman Group. BMI. Laurie 3464. © 1979 Laurie Productions, Inc. Released by arrangement with 3C Records. No. 4*

21. I Heard It through the Grapevine Marvin Gaye • *Music and lyrics* by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong. Stone Agate Music. BMI. Tamla 54176. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 1*

22. (Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay Otis Redding • *Music and lyrics* by Otis Redding and Steve Cropper. Irving Music, Inc./Cotillion Music, Inc. BMI. Volt 157. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 1*



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Raised hemlines, which used to raise eyebrows at England's tradition-bound Ascot racecourse, had become almost ho-hum by 1968.