



SOUNDS OF THE  
1970  
SEVENTIES

TIME  
LIFE  
MUSIC

# SOUNDS OF THE SEVENTIES • 1970: TAKE TWO

- 1 **I Want You Back**  
The Jackson Five
- 2 **Ball of Confusion (That's What the World Is Today)** The Temptations
- 3 **Get Ready** Rare Earth
- 4 **Mississippi Queen** Mountain
- 5 **Evil Ways** Santana
- 6 **Spill the Wine**  
Eric Burdon and War
- 7 **Venus** The Shocking Blue
- 8 **No Time** The Guess Who
- 9 **Closer to Home**  
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- 10 **Question** The Moody Blues
- 11 **Let's Work Together** Canned Heat
- 12 **Walk a Mile in My Shoes**  
Joe South
- 13 **Up on Cripple Creek** The Band
- 14 **In the Summertime** Mungo Jerry
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Brook Benton

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1970

COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO

SOD-11 OPCD-2601

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- 3 Get Ready
- 4 Mississippi Queen
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The Jackson Five's **I Want You Back** exploded across the airwaves and hit No. 1 in January 1970 to become one of the most galvanizing debut singles ever. The song was originally titled *I Wanna Be Free*, had completely different lyrics and was intended for Gladys Knight and the Pips. It was written by Fonce Mizell, Freddie Perren and Deke Richards soon after they arrived in Los Angeles, where Motown had recently relocated from the Motor City. The trio had entrée to the label via Richards, who already worked there. They took their tune to Motown president Berry Gordy, who changed the words and much of the arrangement with the idea of giving the song to the Jackson Five. *I Want You Back* was thus co-written and co-produced by no less than four men, collectively dubbed The Corporation by Gordy.



Gordy's promotional plan was to present the Jackson Five as the discovery of Diana Ross, who had recently broken up the Supremes to go solo. The new kiddie group, consisting of five brothers from Gary, Indiana, was actually discovered by Bobby Taylor of the integrated

Motown group the Vandouvers. But under Ross' sponsorship, the Jackson Five, fronted by 11-year-old Michael Jackson, gained instant access to the television exposure Ross had enjoyed, particularly on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

The entire Jackson family was moved to Hollywood, and the boys were groomed and choreographed by Motown vice-president-to-be Suzanne De Passe. Their debut topped the pop charts just four weeks after Ross and the Supremes had their 12th and last No. 1 single, *Someday We'll Be Together*.

With its rattling guitar lines, *I Want You Back* was Motown's pop response to the innovative Sly Stone sound; the Temptations' **Ball of Confusion (That's What the World Is Today)** was another. The Temps had come to Motown as a group with five singers who took turns as lead vocalist, and they soon reverted to the more conventional lead-with-backups style. Producer-writers Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong took them back to the five-leads approach on *Cloud Nine* in 1968 and kept them in that groove, writing increasingly topical lyrics in further emulation of Sly Stone for the next two years. *Ball of Confusion* was one of the last and most popular of those songs.

Motown also engineered a successful foray into white progressive rock with Rare Earth's single version of Smokey Robinson's **Get Ready**, a 1966 Temps hit. Known originally as the Sunliners and recommended to Gordy by session guitarist Dennis Coffey, the group was renamed Rare Earth after its label, a Motown subsidiary.

During this era, many arena-rock groups were making their reputations by recording long album tracks that were

cut down for release as singles or by jamming in concert for 20 minutes on songs originally released as short singles. Mountain, founded by bassist Felix Pappalardi (a folk veteran who had moved on to produce Cream and other improvisational hard-rock bands), used **Mississippi Queen** as such a vehicle for guitarist Leslie West. Grand Funk Railroad was known to devote half a concert to **Closer to Home**, the title tune from the band's third album.

For all the talk about experimental rock, 1970 was at least as remarkable a year for traditional black music. Tyrone Davis, originally from Mississippi where as a child he had performed as Tyrone the Wonder Boy, was helping create middle-class soul with deeply remorseful efforts such as **Turn Back the Hands of Time**. Eddie Holman, a Virginian who'd gone north to study music in New York and Pennsylvania, revamped Ruby and the Romantics' 1963 hit *Hey There Lonely Boy* as **Hey There Lonely Girl**, the only top-10 record of his career. Brook Benton, whose early-'60s Nashville sides had made him one of the fathers of country-soul, had his first million seller in nearly a

decade with a smooth, stirring interpretation of Tony Joe White's **Rainy Night in Georgia**. And Aretha Franklin revived Ben E. King's 1962 solo hit, **Don't Play That Song**, with a fervor that overwhelmed the original.

Even bluesman B. B. King parlayed his triumphs on the rock ballroom circuit into his biggest pop hit (and only his third top-40 hit in 21 years). Authorship of **The Thrill Is Gone** has been claimed by half a dozen men, but the song was first done in 1951 by Roy Hawkins, an obscure Oakland blues pianist who had his two most popular recordings (*Why Do Things Happen to Me* followed by *The Thrill Is Gone*) only after an auto accident had paralyzed him. King shaped the song in his own style after his wife, a younger woman who had been trying in vain to reform both his lifestyle and his business affairs, filed for divorce. She was bluffing, and ready for reconciliation, but King was so stung by her actions that he cut this song in response and went through with the divorce.

White rockers took several approaches to adapting blues to their own sounds. Canned Heat, featuring harp player

Al Wilton and vocalist Bob Hite, remade **Let's Work Together**, a 1969 hit for one-man band Wilbert Harrison (whose *Kansas City* had been a No. 1 record in 1959) that glowed with the peace-and-love ethic. Joe Cocker had broken up his Grease Band and canceled a tour when Leon Russell persuaded him to front the infamous Mad Dogs and Englishmen aggregation for a grueling 65 gigs in 57 days. It was Russell's idea for Cocker to do Julie London's 1953 hit **Cry Me a River** as a gospel song. Eric Burdon had broken up the bluesy Animals and moved to Laurel Canyon in California to pursue a film career when he saw the Long Beach funk group Night Shift, featuring a Danish harmonica player backed by five black men. Burdon promptly changed the group's name to War, cut an album called *Eric Burdon Declares War* and resumed his career as a pop star. The group's **Spill the Wine** soon climbed to No. 3.

The Band and Joe South had as many funky roots as any blues band but took them in different directions, perhaps due to their ties to Bob Dylan. The Band—four Canadians and an Ameri-

can who evolved out of rockabilly Ronnie Hawkins' backup unit—had accompanied Dylan on his epochal 1964-1965 world tour, when the folk singer went electric with a vengeance. After his motorcycle accident in 1966, they had retreated with him to Woodstock, where they wove traditional American songs into their rock style to create a timeless new sound on their 1968 album, *Music from Big Pink*. **Up on Cripple Creek**, taken from their 1969 follow-up LP, *The Band*, proved to be their only top-30 hit, though the group was perhaps the most influential and admired band of the early '70s. South, a Nashville sideman who played on Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* album before returning to his native Georgia and writing hits for Billy Joe Royal and others, showed a remarkable gift for taking current catchphrases, as with **Walk a Mile in My Shoes**, and turning them into rock songs.

On the pop front, the Shocking Blue was a Dutch group formed by guitarist Robbie van Leeuwen that took off in Europe when singer Mariska Veres, the German-Hungarian daughter of a gypsy violinist, joined in 1968. They scored in

America with **Venus** on the new Colosus label. **Question**, the first Moody Blues single on Threshold, was their biggest hit since *Go Now!* **Vehicle** was a near-perfect Blood, Sweat and Tears imitation by the Ides of March, a suburban Chicago group whose lead singer James Peterik would resurface in 1982 with *Survivor* and *Eye of the Tiger*.

And **In the Summertime** marked the debut of a London skiffle band called Mungo Jerry whose success in England ("Mungomania!" the press screamed) was widely perceived as a sign that Britain was ready to return to acoustic sounds as America was already doing. To some extent this proved true, though Mungomania itself didn't last the summer and the group never hit the American top 40 again.

—John Morthland

## DISCOGRAPHY

*\*Indicates highest Billboard chart position*

- 1. I Want You Back** The Jackson Five • Music and lyrics by Frederick Perren, Alphonso Mizell, Deke Richards and Berry Gordy Jr. Jobete Music Company. ASCAP. Motown 1157. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 1\*
- 2. Ball of Confusion (That's What the World Is Today)** The Temptations • Music and lyrics by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong. Stone Gate Music. BMI. Gordy 7099. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 3\*
- 3. Get Ready** Rare Earth • Music and lyrics by William Robinson. Jobete Music Company. ASCAP. Rare Earth 5012. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P. No. 4\*
- 4. Mississippi Queen** Mountain • Music and lyrics by Lawrence Laing, Felix Pappalardi, David Rea and Leslie Weinstein. Uptall Music Corp. ASCAP. Windfall 532. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 21\*
- 5. Evil Ways** Santana • Music and lyrics by Clarence Henry, Gibson Music and Sah Music. BMI. Columbia 45069. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 9\*
- 6. Spill the Wine** Eric Burdon and War • Music and lyrics by Howard Scott, Morris Dickerson, Harold R. Brown, Charles W. Miller, Leroy "Lonnie" Jordan, Sylvester Allen and Lee Oscar Levitan. TMC Music Inc./Far Out Music Inc. ASCAP. MGM 14118. Courtesy of Avenue Records/Far Out Productions. No. 3\*
- 7. Venus** The Shocking Blue • Music and lyrics by Robert V. Leeuwen. Dayglow Music Inc. ASCAP. Colossus 108. Courtesy of Janus Records, Inc. No. 1\*
- 8. No Time** The Guess Who • Music and lyrics by Randall Bachman and Burton Cummings. Shillelagh Music Co. PROC-CAN. RCA Victor 0300. Courtesy of RCA Records, a label of BMG Music. No. 5\*
- 9. Closer to Home** Grand Funk Railroad • Music and lyrics by Mark Farner. Cram Renraft Co. BMI. Capitol 2877. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 22\*
- 10. Question** The Moody Blues • Music and lyrics by Justin Hayward. Essex Music Inc. ASCAP. Threshold 67004. Produced under license from PolyGram Special Products, a Division of PolyGram Records, Inc. No. 21\*
- 11. Let's Work Together** Canned Heat • Music and lyrics by Wilbert Harrison. ABZ Music Corp. BMI. Liberty 56151. Courtesy of EMI, under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 26\*
- 12. Walk a Mile in My Shoes** Joe South • Music and lyrics by Joe South. Lowery Music Co., Inc. BMI. Capitol 2704. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 12\*
- 13. Up on Cripple Creek** The Band • Music and lyrics by J.R. Robertson. Canaan Music Inc. ASCAP. Capitol 2635. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 25\*
- 14. In the Summertime** Mungo Jerry • Music and lyrics by Ray Dorset. ATV Music Corp. BMI/Our Music Ltd. PRS. Janus 125. Courtesy of Castle Communications PLC. No. 3\*



**15. Vehicle** The Ides of March • Music and lyrics by Jim Peterik. Bald Medusa Music Co. ASCAP. Warner Bros. 7378. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 2\*

**16. Hey There Lonely Girl** Eddie Holman • Music and lyrics by Leon Carr and Earl Shuman. Famous Music Corp. ASCAP. ABC 11240. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 2\*

**17. Turn Back the Hands of Time** Tyrone Davis • Music and lyrics by Jack Daniels and Bonnie Thompson. Warner-Tamerlane Pub. Corp./Unichappell Music/Jaydan Music Co. BMI. Dakar 616. Under license from Brunswick Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 3\*

**18. Cry Me a River** Joe Cocker • Music and lyrics by Arthur Hamilton. Saunders Publications Inc. ASCAP. A&M 1200. Courtesy of A&M Records, Inc. No. 11\*

**19. The Thrill Is Gone** B. B. King • Music and lyrics by Roy Hawkins and Rick Darnell. Powerforce Music/Sound of Lucille Inc. BMI. BluesWay 61032. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 15\*

**20. Don't Play That Song** Aretha Franklin • Music and lyrics by Ahmel M. Ertegun and Betty Nelson. Unichappell Music Inc. BMI. Atlantic 2751. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 11\*

**21. Rainy Night in Georgia** Brook Benton • Music and lyrics by Tony Joe White. Combine Music Corp. BMI. Catillon 44057. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 4\*



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