



TIME  
LIFE  
MUSIC

# SOUNDS OF THE SEVENTIES • 1972: TAKE TWO

- 1 **Clean Up Woman** Betty Wright
- 2 **Too Late to Turn Back Now**  
Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose
- 3 **I'm Still in Love with You**  
Al Green
- 4 **Mother and Child Reunion**  
Paul Simon
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WARNER  
SPECIAL PRODUCTS

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1972  
SEVENTIES

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Rock was in serious flux in the early '70s. The supergroups of the previous decade had broken up or mutated into new bands. Soft-rock and acoustic singer-songwriters were taking over the charts, while heavy-metal groups were becoming strong contenders. And sexually ambivalent glitter-rock was going strong in England while making inroads in America. One result of this shifting of musical values was that many acts that had been around for ages finally surfaced as commercial forces, however briefly.

Mott the Hoople and T. Rex rode the glitter bandwagon, a movement built around pop sounds and androgynous images. Mott was a hard-rock group that didn't seem to fit into any specific style for most of its lifetime. When leader Ian Hunter called David Bowie, glitter's figurehead, to say that

Mott was breaking up, Bowie suggested that the group stick together and offered them a couple of his own unrecorded songs. After rejecting *Suffragette City*, Mott cut **All the Young**

**Dudes**, an anthem about sticking together, which Bowie produced and sang on. Always more popular in England than in America, Mott had its only stateside top-40 hit with this single, and the band lasted only a couple more years.

T. Rex was fronted by Marc Bolan, a veteran of flower power, the *Lord of the Rings*-inspired group John's Children and the psychedelic folkies Tyrannosaurus

Rex. After shortening the group's name to T. Rex and hardening its sound, Bolan claimed his band would be bigger than the Beatles or Elvis. In England, *Get It On*, as the Chuck Berry-styled single was titled, went to No. 1. It



did nearly as well in the U.S., though the title had to be changed to **Bang a Gong (Get It On)** because the Vegas jazz-rock band Chase had placed another *Get It On* in the top 40 in 1971. Alas, for all Bolan's big talk, this proved T. Rex's only big hit.

Paul Gadd entered show business in London in 1958 at the age of 14. Throughout the '60s he recorded for several labels under various names and with meager results; his cover of Dionne Warwick's *Walk on By*, for example, was a big hit in the Middle East but nowhere else. In 1971, after appearing on the *Jesus Christ Superstar* album billed as Paul Raven and flopping with George Harrison's *Here Comes the Sun* as Paul Monday, Gadd officially became Gary Glitter. The name was given to him by Mike Leander, his co-writer and manager, who helped him reduce glitter-rock to a big beat, simplistic melodies and lots of chants. **Rock and Roll Part 2** broke out of the U.K. discos to sell more than three million records, but Glitter disappeared from the world of American pop soon after.

Jim Seals and Dash Crofts were Texans

who had worked together since 1954, most profitably after they joined the Champs, who'd had a No. 1 record with *Tequila* in 1958. When Seals and Crofts left to go with the Dawnbreakers, they converted, like all members of that group, to Baha'i, a religion founded by a 19th-century Persian prophet. In 1969 they became a duo, and Baha'i figured in the lyrics of most of their songs. **Summer Breeze**, Seals and Crofts' first hit, was pulled from their debut album and was later revived by the Isley Brothers.

Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, with lead singer Teddy Pendergrass, were Philadelphia teenagers when they cut their first record in 1956. For the next 15 years, the vocal group played supper clubs in places such as Las Vegas, Puerto Rico and Miami. They then signed with Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff's Philadelphia International outfit, since the pair had been friends with Melvin since high school. **If You Don't Know Me by Now** was a watershed in putting the fledgling Philly Sound on the map.

Bill Withers, the Main Ingredient, Al Green, and Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose were all black artists who, in differ-

ent ways, were late bloomers. Withers, a shy stutterer, was 30 before he took a stab at the record biz, and he made up for lost time. **Use Me** was his third top-10 hit within the period of a year. The Main Ingredient, previously known as the Poets and then the Insiders, finally got a break when MGM's Tom Wilson, a black producer, financed a demo and hooked them up with RCA. Unsuccessful at first, they changed their name to the Main Ingredient (after reading the words on a bottle of Coca-Cola) and came back strong in 1971. **Everybody Plays the Fool** was their first release after lead singer Don McPherson died of leukemia and was replaced by Cuba Gooding. It was also the vocal trio's first top-10 pop hit and first gold record.

Al Green was no stranger to those measures of success. After enjoying a modest hit in 1967 and enduring a dry spell until 1971, he racked up his third straight million-seller with **I'm Still in Love with You**. Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose was a Miami gospel group called the Split Tones before going secular in 1971. **Too Late to Turn Back Now** was their second hit, following a year's layoff

caused by an accident during their tour in support of their top-10 debut, *Treat Her Like a Lady*.

Betty Wright was only 18 years old (albeit a three-year veteran of the Miami soul scene) when her sizzling **Clean Up Woman** climbed the charts and stuck her with a nickname. Curtis Mayfield had been around for years as the leader of the Impressions and, since 1970, as a solo act when **Freddie's Dead (Theme from Superfly)**, from the sound track of the blaxploitation film, summed up the inner-city drug scene with terrifying truthfulness. The Temptations' album version of **Papa Was a Rollin' Stone**, writer-producer Norman Whitfield's ambitious project, was 11 minutes and 45 seconds long, an unprecedented length for a Motown recording. Cut down for single release, the record's B side won a Grammy as best R & B instrumental. The song's power, however, derived from the vocals of Dennis Edwards, and no wonder: His own father, a preacher, had died on the third day of September, just like the irresponsible character in the song.

Among the white groups, Looking Glass was the big sleeper of 1972.

**Brandy (You're a Fine Girl)** was written by singer-guitarist Elliott Lurie with his high-school sweetheart, Randy, in mind. The song turned out to be Looking Glass' sole top-10 hit, presumably because the carefully arranged pop tune was unrepresentative of how the hard-rock bar band sounded live. The group America had no such problem. Army brats living in London when they recorded their debut album and its *Horse with No Name* hit, they moved to Los Angeles in time to cut their second LP, which yielded **Ventura Highway**. **Hot Rod Lincoln** proved a fluke hit off the debut LP of Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen, a boogie-woogie, country-rock outfit from Ann Arbor, Michigan, by way of the East Bay region near San Francisco. The song, a 1960 country and rock 'n' roll hit for its writer, Charlie Ryan, was atypical of the band's output in that the piano-pounding Cody (George Frayne) usually did his gruff "talking" vocals on only one song per album.

A pair of American singer-songwriters made commercial breakthroughs in 1972 as solo performers. Jim Croce had worked the fringes of the East Coast

folk scene since his college days at Villanova in the early '60s, but didn't click until more than a decade later, when he signed on with the production team of Tommy West (an old college chum) and Terry Cashman. **You Don't Mess Around with Jim**, a tongue-in-cheek blues boast, launched a career that was still on the rise when Croce was killed in a 1973 plane crash. **Mother and Child Reunion**, one of the first white reggae records, was also the first solo hit for Paul Simon. The song was inspired by the name of a dish on the menu at a Chinese restaurant, but Simon swore it was actually written after his dog was killed by a car. "It was the first death I had ever experienced personally," he told an interviewer, "I can't for the life of me remember a sadder day."

—John Morthland

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## DISCOGRAPHY

*\*Indicates highest Billboard chart position*

1. **Clean Up Woman** Betty Wright • Music and lyrics by Clarence Reid and Willie Clarke. *Longitude*

*Music Co. BMI. Alston 4601. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 6\**

**2. Too Late to Turn Back Now** Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose • *Music and lyrics by Eddie Cornelius. CBS Unart Catalog Inc./Stage Door Music Publ. BMI. United Artists 50910. © 1972 EMI. Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capital Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 2\**

**3. I'm Still in Love with You** Al Green • *Music and lyrics by Al Green, Willie Mitchell and Al Jackson. Al Green Music Inc./Irving Music, Inc. BMI. HI 2216. © 1972 HI Records. Courtesy of Cream/Hi Records. No. 3\**

**4. Mother and Child Reunion** Paul Simon • *Music and lyrics by Paul Simon. Paul Simon Music. BMI. Columbia 45547. © 1974 Paul Simon. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 4\**

**5. Brandy (You're a Fine Girl)** Looking Glass • *Music and lyrics by Elliott Lurie. Chappell and Co., Inc./Evie Music, Inc./Spruce Run Music. ASCAP. Epic 10874. © 1972 CBS Records Inc. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 1\**

**6. Tight Rope** Leon Russell • *Music and lyrics by Leon Russell. Skyhill Publishing Co., Inc. BMI. Shelter 7325. Courtesy of DCC Compact Classics. No. 11\**

**7. Hot Rod Lincoln** Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen • *Music and lyrics by Charles Ryan and W.S. Stevenson. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. BMI. Paramount 0146. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 9\**

**8. Rock and Roll Part 2** Gary Glitter • *Music and lyrics by Gary Glitter and Mike Leander. Music Cor-*

*poration of America, Inc. BMI. Bell 45237. Courtesy of Laurence Myers Prods. LTD. No. 7\**

**9. Bang a Gong (Get It On)** T. Rex • *Music and lyrics by Marc Bolan. Essex Music Inc. ASCAP. Reprise 1032. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 10\**

**10. All the Young Dudes** Mott the Hoople • *Music and lyrics by David Bowie. Chrysalis Songs/Screen Gems-EMI Music, Inc. BMI./Jones Music America, ASCAP. Columbia 45673. © 1972 CBS Records Inc. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 37\**

**11. If You Don't Know Me by Now** Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes • *Music and lyrics by Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff. Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. BMI. Phil. Int. 3520. © 1972 CBS Records Inc. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 3\**

**12. Papa Was a Rollin' Stone** The Temptations • *Music and lyrics by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong. Stone Diamond Music Corp. BMI. Gordy 7121. © 1972 Motown Record Company, L.P. Courtesy of Motown Record Company. L.P. No. 7\**

**13. Freddie's Dead (Theme from Superfly)** Curtis Mayfield • *Music and lyrics by Curtis Mayfield. Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. BMI. Curtom 1975. Courtesy of Curtom Records of Atlanta, Inc. No. 4\**

**14. You Don't Mess Around with Jim** Jim Croce • *Music and lyrics by Jim Croce. DenJac Music/MCA Music Publishing, a Division of MCA, Inc. ASCAP.*



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**15. Use Me** Bill Withers • Music and lyrics by Bill Withers. Interior Music. BMI. Sussex 241. © 1972 CBS Records Inc. Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 2\*

**16. Everybody Plays the Fool** The Main Ingredient • Music and lyrics by Rudy Clark, Jim Bailey and Kenneth Williams. Giant Enterprise. BMI. RCA Victor 0731. Courtesy of BMG Music/the RCA Record Label, under license from BMG Direct Marketing, Inc. No. 3\*

**17. Summer Breeze** Seals and Crofts • Music and lyrics by James Seals and Dash Crofts. Dawn-breaker Music. BMI. Warner Bros. 7606. © 1972 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 6\*

**18. Ventura Highway America** • Music and lyrics by Dewey Bunnell, WB Music Corp. ASCAP. Warner Bros. 7641. © 1972 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced under license from Warner Bros. Records Inc. No. 8\*

**19. Roundabout Yes** • Music and lyrics by Jon Anderson and Steve Howe. Cotillion Music, Inc. BMI./WB Music Corp. ASCAP. Atlantic 2854. © 1972 Atlantic Recording Corp. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 13\*

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