

# THE SUPREMES: 1963-1969



TIME  
LIFE  
MUSIC

*The*  
**ROCK'N'ROLL**  
ERA

Digital Remaster

# THE SUPREMES: 1963-1969

- 1 **Baby Love** (2:34) 1964
- 2 **When The Lovelight Starts Shining through His Eyes** (2:59) 1963
- 3 **Come See about Me** (2:39) 1964
- 4 **Nothing but Heartaches** (2:41) 1965
- 5 **In and Out of Love** (2:37) 1967
- 6 **Back in My Arms Again** (2:50) 1965
- 7 **Stop! In the Name of Love** (2:51) 1965
- 8 **My World Is Empty without You** (2:33) 1966
- 9 **Love Is like an Itching in My Heart** (2:53) 1966
- 10 **I Hear a Symphony** (2:41) 1965
- 11 **The Happening** (2:50) 1967
- 12 **You Keep Me Hangin' On** (2:45) 1966
- 13 **Forever Came Today** (2:59) 1968
- 14 **You Can't Hurry Love** (2:49) 1966
- 15 **Some Things You Never Get Used To** (2:23) 1968
- 16 **I'm Livin' in Shame** (2:57) 1969
- 17 **Someday We'll Be Together** (3:15) 1969
- 18 **Reflections** (2:50) 1967
- 19 **The Composer** (2:55) 1969
- 20 **Love Is Here and Now You're Gone** (2:35) 1967
- 21 **No Matter What Sign You Are** (2:38) 1969
- 22 **Love Child** (2:59) 1968

The high resolution of this compact disc may reveal limitations inherent in the original analog recordings.

WARNING: Copyright subsists in all recordings issued under this label. Any unauthorized rental, broadcasting, public performance, copying or recording in any manner whatsoever will constitute infringement of such copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action at law. In case there is a perception institution in the relevant country entitled to grant licenses for the use of recordings for public performance or broadcasting, such licenses may be obtained from such institution.



Manufactured for Time-Life Music by Warner Special Products, a Warner Communications Company © 1987 Warner Special Products  
OPCD-2540



WARNER  
SPECIAL PRODUCTS

MANUFACTURED BY WARNER SPECIAL PRODUCTS, A DIVISION OF WARNER COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

*The*  
**ROCK'N'ROLL**  
•ERA•

**THE SUPREMES: 1963-1969**

COMPACT  
**disc**  
DIGITAL AUDIO

2RNR-12 **TIME**  
OPCD-2540 **LIFE**  
STEREO **MUSIC**

- 1 Baby Love 2 When the Lovelight Starts Shining through His Eyes 3 Come See about Me 4 Nothing but Heartaches 5 In and Out of Love 6 Back in My Arms Again 7 Stop! In the Name of Love 8 My World Is Empty without You 9 Love Is like an Itching in My Heart 10 I Hear a Symphony 11 The Happening 12 You Keep Me Hangin' On 13 Forever Came Today 14 You Can't Hurry Love 15 Some Things You Never Get Used To 16 I'm Livin' in Shame 17 Someday We'll Be Together 18 Reflections 19 The Composer 20 Love Is Here and Now You're Gone 21 No Matter What Sign You Are 22 Love Child

© 1987 WARNER SPECIAL PRODUCTS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORIZED DUPLICATION IS A VIOLATION OF ALL APPLICABLE LAWS. MADE IN U.S.A.



*Cindy Birdsong, Diana Ross  
and Mary Wilson, c. 1969*

## THE SUPREMES: 1963-1969

In the beginning — before they embodied the Motown sound, before they took girl-group rock to its esthetic and commercial apex, before Diane Ross became DIANA ROSS!, before they unwittingly provided the models for the Broadway hit *Dreamgirls*, before they became icons of a nostalgic *Big Chill* generation — the Supremes were Florence Ballard's group. Flo had grown up with 11 brothers and sisters in Detroit's Brewster-Douglass housing project, hardly the worst place for urban blacks to live, but still a ghetto environment.

In 1959, Flo began singing with Eddie Kendricks and Paul Williams of the Primes, a popular neighborhood group. Urged by them to form her own group, she recruited her neighbors Barbara Martin, Betty Travis and the irrepressible Mary Wilson. They were known as the Primettes, and opened shows locally for their male counterparts.

When Travis dropped out, Flo enlisted Diane Ross, who even then had a reputation as a Goody Two-shoes with a lot of airs. Diane also had abundant charm and drive; it was she who got the quartet their first audition in 1960 by badgering her neighbor Smokey Robinson, lead singer of the Miracles. Motown president Berry Gordy Jr. told them to come back after they finished high school, so the group sang backups and recorded for the small Lupine label. Once the Primes signed with Motown and became the Temptations, the Primettes hung around Gordy's studios more persistently.

In 1961 the Primettes — who were all of 16 or 17 — signed with Motown and changed their name to the Supremes (Flo's idea). Martin soon married and quit the group. At this point Flo, who had a crystalline tenor, and Diane, whose voice was higher and more nasal, split most of the lead vocals. The trio's first six records made little impression, so late in 1963 Gordy paired them with

the song-writing and production team of Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Eddie Holland (H-D-H).

Brian Holland was smitten with symphonic music, while brother Eddie had a way with words. Dozier worked well with rhythm sections and polished Eddie's lyrics. As they refined their sound, their records became more dramatic, featuring sudden rhythmic changes, and darting horn and string passages to complement the unbeatable vocal hooks. H-D-H grabbed the listener right off with startling intros, usually built around the bass lines of sessions whiz James Jamerson. Their first effort with the Supremes, **When the Lovelight Starts Shining through His Eyes**, went to No. 23 on the pop charts in 1964. The follow-up flopped, after which the two trios unleashed a dazzling streak of hits.

When *Where Did Our Love Go* (included in *Time-Life's 1964* album) was released in July of 1964, the Supremes were an opening act, indifferently received on a Dick Clark *Cavalcade of Stars* tour. But when the song shot to No. 1 on the pop charts, they finished the tour as headliners. By the middle of 1965, they had churned out four more No. 1 hits in a row: **Baby Love, Come See about Me, Stop! In the Name of Love** and **Back in My Arms Again**. Their next release, **Nothing but Heartaches**, peaked at No. 11, so H-D-H went baroque and re-claimed the top of the charts by the end of the year with **I Hear a Symphony**.

Although Mary had originally been set to sing lead on *Where Did Our Love Go*, the song went instead to Diane (who officially became Diana after it hit). This decision, reached by Gordy and two of the three producers, reflected the "pop" nature of Ross' voice — soft, sweet, anxious, vulnerable — the perfect vehicle for putting across innocent teen songs about the wonders of good love and the frustrations of bad love. The move also re-

flected Gordy's belief that the vivacious, ambitious Diana could become a mainstream pop star.

Motown's "Sound of Young America" was largely the sound of young black artists pursuing upward mobility and cultural assimilation without reservation. While black rock artists had been successful with white audiences before, Motown represented the first sustained and concerted crossover success, and the Supremes were its exemplar. The success had much to do with Gordy's perfectionism. He supervised every aspect of his acts' careers: their records and stage shows, their clothes and grooming — even what they said in interviews.

Because of his special (but still largely undefined) relationship with Ross, Gordy gave the Supremes extra-special treatment, and it paid off. By 1965, they were the most successful girl group in history, and America's chief rivals to the Beatles and other British Invasion bands. The Supremes appeared widely on network TV variety programs, a first for black artists, who had previously been confined mostly to teen-oriented rock shows. They opened the Astrodome with Judy Garland, marketed their own brand of white bread and took their glossy act into the supper clubs. Alongside the immaculate rock singles, they recorded schlocky albums of standards and country hits, or tributes to the Beatles and Sam Cooke, all made with equal care.

As Diana eagerly gobbled up more and more of the spotlight, Mary, the consummate role player, accepted her fate gracefully, staying in the background and cooing her parts obediently. Flo, who had all but lost her grip on the group, fought back, her rebellion taking two forms: She frequently ignored Motown's rigid regulations and she began drinking heavily.

After *I Hear a Symphony* in 1965 came a pair of top-10 hits, **My World Is Empty without You** and **Love Is like an Itching in My Heart**. In 1966 and 1967, the Supremes reeled off four consecutive No. 1 songs with **You**





Left to right: Florence Ballard,  
Mary Wilson and Diana Ross

### **Can't Hurry Love, You Keep Me Hangin' On, Love Is Here and Now You're Gone and The Happening.**

On the last, they were billed as Diana Ross and the Supremes, and Gordy openly began building a solo career for his glamor-girl lead singer.

With 1967's faintly psychedelic **Reflections**, the unrepentant Flo Ballard was replaced by Cindy Birdsong, a veteran of Patti LaBelle and the BlueBelles. This marked the beginning of Flo's nightmarish descent. She went to court against Motown, and what little she won in the way of severance was frittered away by her attorney. She never had a solo career to speak of, and by 1975 had pawned her jewels, been robbed and mugged, was separated from her husband, and was living with her two kids on welfare. In 1976, she died of cardiac arrest, brought on by pills and alcohol; she was all of 32.

The classic Supremes/H-D-H singles are often criticized for sounding alike, a charge that ignores such distinct individual glories as the easy gait of *You Can't Hurry Love*, the urgent command to *Stop! In the Name of Love* or Diana's genuinely pained vocal on *You Keep Me Hangin' On*. H-D-H's innovations were conservative but effective — consider the ominous oscillator (a forerunner of the modern synthesizer) on *Reflections*. There was pop magic in these tracks, though it lasted only as long as the three men and three women worked together.

H-D-H left Motown in 1967; **In and Out of Love** was their last effort with the Supremes. The girls stayed on the charts for several more years (**Love Child**, the guilt-racked cry of an illegitimate ghetto waif, even topped the charts in 1968) but the magic was gone. The group had become a vehicle for Ross, and there was nothing left for her to do but go solo, which she did in January 1970. The Supremes' swan song was a No. 1, **Someday We'll Be Together**; you can hear producer-writer Johnny Bristol prodding Diana in the background.

Ross was replaced by Jean Terrell (sister of boxer Er-

nie Terrell), the first in a flurry of personnel changes for the group, which still enjoyed some success through 1977. During this period, H-D-H formed their own record companies, Invictus and Hot Wax. They started off with hits by the Honey Cones, Laura Lee and Freda Payne, but soon floundered and went under. The production geniuses turned out to be as rudderless without the Supremes as the Supremes were without them.

Diana Ross is now famous as much for being famous as for anything she sang or acted. Mary Wilson is a journeywoman singer with a lot of good memories. Berry Gordy, who moved Motown to L.A. around the time Diana went solo, is a wealthy and respected entertainment mogul, though Motown is no longer the musical force it once was. As this collection confirms, the heyday of Motown and the Supremes was no fluke. Rather, it was a product of their time and place, vision and talent.

— John Morthland





## DISCOGRAPHY

\* Indicates highest Billboard chart position

- 1. Baby Love** (2:34) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded July 24, 1964, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1066. No. 1\**
- 2. When the Lovelight Starts Shining through His Eyes** (2:59) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded 1963, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1051. No. 23\**
- 3. Come See about Me** (2:39) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded July 13, 1964, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1068. No. 1\**
- 4. Nothing but Heartaches** (2:41) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded May 13, 1965, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1080. No. 11\**
- 5. In and Out of Love** (2:37) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded April 20, 1967, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1116. No. 9\**
- 6. Back in My Arms Again** (2:50) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded December 11, 1964, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1075. No. 1\**
- 7. Stop! In the Name of Love** (2:51) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded January 5, 1965, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1074. No. 1\**
- 8. My World Is Empty without You** (2:33) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded October 28, 1965, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1089. No. 5\**
- 9. Love Is like an Itching in My Heart** (2:53) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded June 24, 1965, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1094. No. 9\**
- 10. I Hear a Symphony** (2:41) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded September 1965, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1083. No. 1\**
- 11. The Happening** (2:50) *Music and lyrics by Frank De Vol, Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded February 24, 1967, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1107. No. 1\**
- 12. You Keep Me Hangin' On** (2:45) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded June 30,*

*1966, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1101. No. 1\**

- 13. Forever Came Today** (2:59) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded November 1967, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1122. No. 28\**
- 14. You Can't Hurry Love** (2:49) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded June 11, 1966, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1097. No. 1\**
- 15. Some Things You Never Get Used To** (2:23) *Music and lyrics by Nicholas Ashford and Valerie Simpson. Recorded April 15, 1968, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1126. No. 30\**
- 16. I'm Livin' in Shame** (2:57) *Music and lyrics by Pam Sawyer, R. Dean Taylor, Frank Wilson, Berry Gordy and Henry Cosby. Recorded November 26, 1968, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1139. No. 10\**
- 17. Someday We'll Be Together** (3:15) *Music and lyrics by Jackie Beavers, Johnny Bristol and Harvey Fuqua. Recorded June 1969, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1156. No. 1\**
- 18. Reflections** (2:50) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded March 2, 1967, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1111. No. 2\**
- 19. The Composer** (2:55) *Music and lyrics by William Robinson. Recorded December 28, 1968, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1146. No. 27\**
- 20. Love Is Here and Now You're Gone** (2:35) *Music and lyrics by Brian Holland, Lamont Dozier and Edward Holland Jr. Recorded November 1966, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1103. No. 1\**
- 21. No Matter What Sign You Are** (2:38) *Music and lyrics by Berry Gordy and Henry Cosby. Recorded January 1969, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1148. No. 31\**
- 22. Love Child** (2:59) *Music and lyrics by Pam Sawyer, R. Dean Taylor, Frank Wilson and Deke Richards. Recorded September 17, 1968, Detroit. Original issue: Motown 1135. No. 1\**

All selections courtesy of Motown Record Corp.

## THE SUPREMES: 1963-1969

- 1 **Baby Love** (1964)
- 2 **When the Lovelight Starts Shining through His Eyes** (1963)
- 3 **Come See about Me** (1964)
- 4 **Nothing but Heartaches** (1965)
- 5 **In and Out of Love** (1967)
- 6 **Back in My Arms Again** (1965)
- 7 **Stop! In the Name of Love** (1965)
- 8 **My World Is Empty without You** (1966)
- 9 **Love Is like an Itching in My Heart** (1966)
- 10 **I Hear a Symphony** (1965)
- 11 **The Happening** (1967)
- 12 **You Keep Me Hangin' On** (1966)
- 13 **Forever Came Today** (1968)
- 14 **You Can't Hurry Love** (1966)
- 15 **Some Things You Never Get Used To** (1968)
- 16 **I'm Livin' in Shame** (1969)
- 17 **Someday We'll Be Together** (1969)
- 18 **Reflections** (1967)
- 19 **The Composer** (1969)
- 20 **Love Is Here and Now You're Gone** (1967)
- 21 **No Matter What Sign You Are** (1969)
- 22 **Love Child** (1968)



**President:** Paul R. Stewart

**Vice President:** Terry Furlong

**Executive Producer:** Douglas B. Graham

**Executive Committee:** Marla Hoskins, Jerry Rendich, Richard G. Scheiner

**Recording Producers:** Bill Fry, Joe Sasfy

**Art Director:** Don Sheldon

**Chief Consultant:** Joe Sasfy

**Special Contributors:** Charles McCardell (text editor), Brian Miller (copy coordinator), Betty H. Weatherley (pictures), Edwina C. Smith (art studio)

**The Supremes** was produced by Time-Life Music in cooperation with Warner Special Products. Proprietary equipment, engineering and mastering by Fry Systems, Arlington, Va., using AEG professional audio tape recorders. Cutting engineer: Alan Moy, Masterdisk, New York.

**The Author:** John Morthland, a former editor-in-chief at *Cream* and associate editor for *Rolling Stone*, is a freelance writer based in Austin, Texas. He is currently a contributing editor to *Country Music* and *High Fidelity*.

Time-Life Music wishes to thank William L. Schurk of the Music Library and Sound Recordings Archives, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, for providing valuable reference material.

TIME-LIFE MUSIC is a division of Time-Life Books Inc.

© 1987 Time-Life Books Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

TIME-LIFE is a trademark of Time Incorporated U.S.A.

Cover art by Ann Meisel. © 1987 Time-Life Books Inc.

**Folder picture credits:** page 2: James J. Kriegsmann, courtesy Frank Driggs Collection. 4-5, 6: Movie Still Archives.

Manufactured for Time-Life Music by Warner Special Products, a Warner Communications Company.

© 1987 Warner Special Products.