“DANCING IN THE STREET: THE MUSIC OF MOTOWN” SHOW NOTES

The Cape Symphony Orchestra opens its 2024/25 CapePOPS! series with “Dancing in the Street: The Music of Motown” on Saturday, October 19 at 3:00 PM and 7:30 PM and Sunday, October 20 at 3:00 PM at the Barnstable Performing Arts Center.

Cape Symphony

Troy Quinn, Guest Conductor
Cape Symphony Musicians

Guest Artists

Terron Brooks, Vocals
Crystal Monee Hall, Vocals
Jesse Nager, Vocals

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Please note the program is subject to change.

About Today's Program

Motown is a storied American record label founded by Berry Gordy Jr. in 1959. A portmanteau of "motor" and "town," Motown has become a nickname for Detroit, where it all began. "The Motown sound" developed as a carefully curated style of soul music with mainstream pop appeal and huge commercial successes.

"The Motown sound to me is not an audible sound," Smokey Robinson has said. "It's spiritual, and it comes from the people that make it happen." Important Motown songwriters included Robinson, Marvin Gaye, Brian Holland, Nickolas Ashford & Valerie Simpson, and Stevie Wonder, all of whom are represented in today's program.

Motown's cultural impact is profound. Said Robinson in a 2014 interview, "Into the 1960s, I was still not of a frame of mind that we were not only making music, we were making history. But I did recognize the impact because acts were going all over the world at that time. I recognized the bridges that we crossed, the racial problems and the barriers that we broke down with music. I recognized that because I lived it. I would come to the South in the early days of Motown and the audiences would be segregated. Then they started to get the Motown music and we would go back and the audiences were integrated and the kids were dancing together and holding hands. It was a wonderful thing to witness."

Each piece in our program was arranged for orchestral performance by Jeff Tyzik, whose arrangements of popular and jazz tunes for full orchestra have been widely performed to high acclaim. He is Principal Pops Conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, the Oregon Symphony and the Florida Orchestra.

Here is some of the best of Motown and beyond. Let's Groove!

DANCING IN THE STREET
Marvin Gaye, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Our concert's title tune became popular in 1964 when recorded by Martha and the Vandellas, whose version hit No. 2 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart. It is one of Motown's signature songs. Martha Reeves recalls that Marvin Gaye first recorded the song as though for a lover, but that her vision of block parties won over the song's producers. The song was recorded in two takes. It was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999. Notable covers include Van Halen's in 1982 and the 1985 duet by David Bowie and Mick Jagger.

YOU'VE REALLY GOT A HOLD ON ME
Smokey Robinson, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

"If a great writer is a poet, and a great poet is a genius, then Smokey Robinson is a miracle," says Diana Ross. This song, a top 10 hit single for the Miracles and one of their most covered tunes, was recorded in 1962 in the Hitsville USA studio. It received a Grammy Hall of Fame Award in 1988, and has been selected as one of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's 500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll. The Beatles recorded it for their second album, *With the Beatles* (1963).

IT'S A MAN'S MAN'S MAN'S WORLD
James Brown & Betty Jean Newsome, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This song's title is a play on the 1963 film *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. In naming it one of the 500 greatest of all time, *Rolling Stone* called its lyrics "biblically chauvinistic." Betty Jean Newsome is said to have based them on her own observations. With its slow, simmering groove, the song became a stable of Brown's performances and live albums. It was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2010.

James Brown was not a Motown artist, despite Berry Gordy's efforts to recruit him. Brown refused, reflecting later that "I was way too raw for the kind of polished music they were willing to do."

REACH OUT I'LL BE THERE
Brian Holland, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Recorded by the Four Tops in 1966, this is considered their signature song. It topped the charts in the US and the UK. Trade magazine *Cashbox* called it "a hard-driving, pulsating pop-R&B romancer about a very much in love guy who claims that he'll always be at his gal's beck and call."

Detroit native Brian Holland was part of a songwriting and production team responsible for much of the Motown sound and many hit records recorded by Martha and the Vandellas, The Supremes, the Four Tops and The Isley Brothers.

TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING
Ron Miller & Michael Masser, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Diana Ross recorded this 1973 song in very early morning hours, which as a young mother is when she had time to do it. The experience was reportedly so draining that it caused her several near-breakdowns. The result, though, was amazing. The song hit No. 1 on the *Billboard* chart and reinvigorated her singing career.

JUST TO SEE HER
Jimmy George & Lou Pardini, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Smokey Robinson recorded this song for his 1987 album *One Heartbeat*, and won his first Grammy award for Best Male R&B Vocal Performance. The song peaked at No. 8 on the *Billboard* Hot 100, and reached No. 2 on the R&B chart and No. 1 on the Adult Contemporary chart.

HOW SWEET IT IS
Brian Holland, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This 1964 song, with its title inspired by one of Jackie Gleason's signature phrases, was recorded by Marvin Gaye for his fifth studio album. Critic Jason Ankeny called it a "radiant pop confection," appreciating its soulfulness, piano riff, and its being a "straightforward love song." The tune was famously covered by James Taylor as the lead single from his 1975 album *Gorilla*, with backing vocals by Carly Simon.

AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH
Nickolas Ashford & Valerie Simpson, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Ashford and Simpson wrote this song before they joined Motown, hoping it would be their entry to the label, and it worked! It was recorded in 1966 by Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell in their first session together, and again in 1970 by Diana Ross as a solo effort. The Gaye/Terrell recording was a top 20 hit and became their signature duet. *Billboard* called it a "pulsating fast smash." Diana Ross's recording reworked the song with gospel and classical elements and spoken word passages, and earned her a Grammy nomination.

A SONG FOR YOU
Leon Russell, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Originally released by Leon Russell in 1970, The Temptations covered "A Song For You" in 1975 on an album of the same name under the Motown label. It's a powerful, plaintive plea for forgiveness and understanding, delivered in sweet, wistful harmony. The song has also been covered by Andy Williams, Willie Nelson, Cher, Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, Whitney Houston, and Amy Winehouse, among many others.

SUPERSTITION
Stevie Wonder, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

"Superstition" was the lead single on Stevie Wonder's fifteenth studio album, *Talking Book*. That iconic opening drum beat was devised by Jeff Beck, as the two were in the studio between *Talking Book* recording sessions. Stevie reportedly told Jeff to keep going with it, while he improvised most of the song over the top, right then and there. "Superstition" hit No. 1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 and on the soul singles chart. In 2021, Rolling Stone ranked it number 12 of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. The song earned Wonder Grammy awards for Best R&B Song and Best R&B Vocal Performance, and was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1998. Stevie and Jeff performed the song together at the 25th Anniversary of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2009.

~Intermission~

LET'S GROOVE
Maurice White & Wayne Vaughan, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Earth, Wind & Fire's smash hit "Let's Groove" was released in 1981 under the Columbia label. The *Baltimore Sun* called it "quite possibly the funkiest thing to come out of the early 1980s." The single sold over a million copies in the US; evidently the growing anti-disco sentiment of the time could not keep this groove down! The video for "Let's Groove" was the first ever to be played on BET's *Video Soul*. If you see its influence in Bruno Mars's more recent work, you're not alone.

I GOT YOU (I FEEL GOOD)
James Brown, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This is James Brown's highest-charting song and perhaps his best-known. Recorded in 1965, it was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2013. Those horns! That sax! That bass! Stop reading this right now and get dancing… you know you want to.

MY GUY
Smokey Robinson, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Mary Wells recorded this Motown hit in 1964. *Cashbox* called it "a tantalizing shuffle-twist hand-clapper that the lark and her combo-choral support serve up in most attractive fashion." Wells was Motown's first female star, and "My Guy" became her biggest hit, topping the *Billboard* charts. It has been covered by many, including Sister Sledge, who also performed it on a 1984 episode of *The Jeffersons*. The song was transformed into a gospel number ("My God") for *Sister Act*, starring Whoopi Goldberg.

MY GIRL
Smokey Robinson & Ronald White, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Written by Miracles members Smokey Robinson and Ronald White for their own band, "My Girl" was recorded on the Temptations' 1965 album *The Temptations Sing Smokey* after Robinson decided David Ruffin's voice was better suited to it. "My Girl" became the Temptations' first U.S. No. 1 single. With its instantly recognizable opening bass notes, Robinson says, "I can be in a foreign country where people don't speak English and the audience will start cheering before I even start singing." The song is preserved in the National Recording Registry.

ENDLESS LOVE
Lionel Richie, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

Billboard called this tender ballad, recorded in 1981 by Lionel Richie and Diana Ross, the greatest duet of all time. It was the theme for the Franco Zeffirelli film of the same name. The film was a modest success; the song, a smash hit. It has since been recorded by Luther Vandross and Mariah Carey, and Lionel Richie and Shania Twain.

COULD IT BE I'M FALLING IN LOVE
Melvin & Mervin Steals, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This song was recorded by The Spinners on the Atlantic label in 1972. "The 70s yielded countless songs about falling in love," raved *Pitchfork*, "but few are as blissful as this." *Record World* called it a "beautiful smash R&B ballad which spins a guaranteed success," and succeed it did. The song hit No. 1 on the R&B chart and No. 4 on the *Billboard* Pop Singles chart, and sold over a million copies.

DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY
Kenneth Gamble, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

"Don't Leave Me This Way" was originally written for Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes. When Thelma Houston covered it in 1976, the song soared to the top of the disco chart and was featured on the soundtrack to *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*. Houston's rendition won her a Grammy.

HIGHER AND HIGHER
Gary Jackson & Carl Smith, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This No. 1 R&B Jackie Wilson hit was released in 1967 on Brunswick Records. The musicians he recorded it with were reportedly moonlighting from the Motown house band. The song was famously remade with a more moderate tempo by Rita Coolidge in 1977 as "(Your Love Has Lifted Me) Higher and Higher."

ALL NIGHT LONG
Lionel Richie, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

"All Night Long" is a pleasing staple of mid-1980s FM radio. Its Caribbean influences give it a vacation vibe. *Cashbox* wrote that "Richie's command of these diverse musical elements and shifts in melodic direction is as impressive as it is pleasurable." The music video for the song was produced by Michael Nesmith of "The Monkees" fame.

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED (I'M YOURS)
Stevie Wonder, Arr. Jeff Tyzik

This song was the first that the then-20-year-old Wonder produced on his own. Released in 1970, it spent six weeks at No. 1 on the US R&B chart, and earned Wonder his sixth Grammy nomination. *Billboard* called it a "funky beat swinger." *Rolling Stone* calls it #203 of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. We call it the culmination of a truly incredible concert.

Tickets for "Dancing in the Street: The Music of Motown"

"Dancing in the Street: The Music of Motown" will be performed at the Barnstable Performing Arts Center, 744 West Main Street, Hyannis on Saturday, October 19, 2024 at 3:00 PM and 7:30 PM and Sunday, October 20, 2024 at 3:00 PM. Limited tickets are available for Saturday's performances; Sunday's is sold out.

For more information and to purchase any remaining tickets, visit capesymphony.org, call the Box Office at 508.362.1111, email tickets@capesymphony.org, or visit us at 2235 Iyannough Road in West Barnstable, MA. The Box Office is open Monday – Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. During concert weekend, we can only be reached by email.

Only tickets purchased on Cape Symphony's secure website or through the Cape Symphony Box Office are legitimate, guaranteed, and eligible for exchanges or credits in accordance with our ticket policies.

Behind the Scenes

Cape Symphony Board of Trustees and Staff

Thanks to Wikipedia, classicmotown.com, ronthibodeaux.com, smokeyrobinson.com, revcom.us.