



THE JACKSONS

Blame it on the boggie, or just chalk it up to hard work, the Jacksons first decade in music has been an exceptional one. The singing group has played to audiences around the world, on radio, television and lately, with Michael Jackson's starring role in the "The Wiz" as the Scarecrow, begun to find a home in films. But the crowning achievement for the group in 1978 is DESTINY, their third album for Epic and the culmination of years of hard work and dreaming. One day, the Jacksons looked forward to a time when their recording projects would become wholly a family affair.

The Jacksons illustrious career in music began in 1969 in Gary, Indiana when Joseph and Katherine Jackson and five sons began to informally sing as the Jackson Family. By the time the act left their livingroom, however, the group had been pared to five sons—Marlon, Michael, Jermaine, Tito and Jackie. The quintet earned a substantial local reputation, and it spread rapidly as they took their show to the Apollo in New York and the Uptown in Philadelphia. In 1970 they were signed to Motown Records, then a Detroit based label boasting Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, Stevie Wonder and the Supremes. Lead by their father, who is a keen business manager, and matched by the son's constant dedication, the Jackson 5 enjoyed four consecutive number one singles beginning with "I Want You Back" (1970) "ABC" (Grammy Award Winner for Best Pop Song of 1971), "The Love You Save" and "I'll Be There." Successful albums followed suit, among them Diana Ross Present the Jackson 5, ABC, The Jackson 5's Greatest Hits and Moving Violation.

Along the way to stardom, the brothers didn't neglect their parents early examples as honest, well-spoken people. In 1972 they received commendations from the United States Senate and House of Representatives for "contributions to American Youth." Later, they took their polished act as far afield as Great Britain's Silver Jubilee performing for Queen Elizabeth at King's Hall in Glasgow, Scotland. After Randy joined in 1973 (followed by the three Jackson sisters entrance a year later for the bigger shows) the Jackson 5 progressed in expertise, variety and talent to be able to handle almost any entertainment environment. They've headlined the Celebrity Room at MGM's Grand Hotel in Las Vegas (breaking house records), starred on a very successful CBS-TV summer replacement show and appeared on numerous other television bills.

By the time the Jacksons move to Epic in March, 1976 the family act was ready for another leap forward. Brother Jermaine had chosen to stay with Motown (he married Hazel Gordy, daughter of Motown's Berry Gordy). And, the Los Angeles pop style of the Jackson 5 was ripe for the Philadelphia smooth veterans of O'Jays and MFSB hits, Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff. Their first collaboration was The Jacksons, released in 1976. "Enjoy Yourself" was the LP's hit.

Destiny represents another important stage in the unique lives of the Jacksons. Success can be measured in numerous ways. For a singing group that began its professional life with four consecutive number one singles, achievement cannot any longer be calculated in sales figures alone. The satisfaction derived from conceiving, writing, singing and producing Destiny has been great, and a feeling of that special energy can be heard and felt throughout the album.



L.T.D.

L.T.D.'s story begins in North Carolina, where in 1968, Jimmie Davis (keyboardist and musical director), Jake Riley (trombone), Lorenzo Carnegie (saxes), Carle Vickers (trumpet, flugelhorn and flute) and Abraham "Onion" Miller (saxes) banded together to make music, working the Top-40 music scenes of the East Coast and Florida to pay the rent and more importantly, to develop their personal sound. Times were hard; the Top-40 club circuit is not where a musician makes his millions. Yet, this quintet managed to survive, held together by vivid dreams of "Making It."

The rewards for their endurance came in 1973 when A&M heard their demo tape and signed the group. By the end of the year L.T.D. had recorded their first LP, Love, Togetherness and Devotion. That album got the band a spot on a Bobby Womack tour that exposed them to a national audience. Momentum was building. The release of Gitin' Down, their second album, found L.T.D. opening for the O'Jays, Bob Seger, Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes and Aerosmith. In the meantime, there were still members to be added. Guitarist John T. McGhee auditioned for the band. His splintering rhythm licks went well with Davis' bass work and he was just in time to join sessions for L.T.D.'s third album, Love To The World.

It was "Love Ballad," the single from that LP that finally broke the band into the national charts. "Love Ballad" bolted to the number 1 position on the R&B charts and number 19 on the pop charts.

For their next album, L.T.D., now under the guidance of manager Ron Nadel, teamed with renowned producer/arranger Bobby Martin, another Nadel client. The results of the union was the platinum Something To Love LP, which spawned the monster-gold single, "Back In Love Again" and "Party Hearty." Then came the platinum-plus Togetherness, armed with its three hit singles, "Jam," "We Both Deserve Each Other's Love" and "Holding On."

The new album, Devotion, completes the trilogy the band began with Something To Love. The musicianship and vocals, as usual, are all theirs. However, every song on Devotion is either singularly or collectively composed by L.T.D. Tracks like the groove anthem "Stand Up L.T.D.," and "Dancin' n Singin'" exemplify the band's ability to come up with rhythmic, bottom-heavy funk extravaganzas, while the melodic "Share My Love" and "Stranger", a somber, gospel-edged love song, exhibit L.T.D.'s power with beautiful ballads, long a special strength of theirs.

Thus, the message that was clear with the creation of Togetherness is only magnified by now—L.T.D. is a premier musical power. And this is only the beginning.

Why not the Black heroes?

by Mark Hyman

Blacks have been watching white heroes romp across American movie and television screens for decades; heroes whose daring exploits excited our children and made them believe there were no Black people worthy of this adoration. Not so. There are thousands of incidents from American Black History which equal, and sometimes surpass, anything shown to date. For instance: The story about Black David Lamson.

As the American Revolution was getting underway, especially on chilly April 19 in 1775, a stomach-twisting fear gripped the little village of Menotomy, Mass. Reason? All the able-bodied men had marched off toward Lexington with Captain Benjamin Locke . . . leaving only the old men home to watch for the Redcoats. A Black man named David Lamson organized the old guys into an alarm company and issued muskets. On April 19th the Battle of Lexington had taken place and the old fellows just knew the British would be rushing men and supplies through to Lexington. Lamson and the old troopers saw and heard Paul Revere come through the village yelling, "The British are coming!" And stomachs got tighter with fear.

Lamson deployed the contingent about the village; behind big boulders, trees and earthworks. Some had been directed to rip the planks on the bridge south of the town to slow the Redcoats down.

The British came. Under Lamson's direction, the home guard darted from behind the First Parish Church and captured the supply wagons. Others jammed muskets into the ribs of the Redcoats and held them at bay. Fighting broke out and the British fled. Lamson and his senior-citizens detail were credited with keeping the men and supplies from Lexington . . . but also cited for capturing the first British supplies and men in the war. Now that would be a terrific movie!

And what about James Armistead and his role as a double agent in the Revolution? He was a Virginia slave who could not be a soldier, but his master let him serve as a double agent. He moved in and out of the British headquarters camp and all over, getting English smiles and courtesy. Why? Because he was a spy for the British . . . supposedly giving information about the Americans. He walked in and out of the American headquarters camp because he was supposed to be giving dope on the British. This went on until the British were defeated. After Yorktown, Cornwallis came into the American's camp, saw Armistead and almost blew his cool. The Black man had been true to the Americans. Virginia's legislature appropriated funds to buy Armistead's freedom in 1786.

Years after the war, in 1824, the Marquis de Lafayette visited America. He traveled to Richmond to visit the former slave and respected undercover agent. They must have laughed heartily about the look on Cornwallis' face when he saw Armistead in the American camp. To think he had been taken by a Black man! Think the movies or TV would go to that one?

Then there was Isaiah Dorman, interpreter for psychotic General George Armstrong Custer, head of the fateful Seventh U.S. Cavalry. Several days before the needless Battle of the Little Big Horn, Black Isaiah Dorman told General Custer the time was not right to fight the Sioux Indians, that the mood among the Indians was restless and their numbers too great.

Who in the hell was Black Isaiah to tell Custer when to fight . . . and about the Sioux? Only that Dorman had lived among the Sioux most of his life; he spoke the language and knew the customs and the feelings. He had worked as a scout and guide through the boondocks for the Northern Pacific Railroad, worked for the U.S. government as a courier, riding between Wadsworth and Fort Rice in the Dakotas. He had been the interpreter. The Sioux respected Dorman and forgave him for working for the white man. But the Indians knew, like the Blacks today, that the brother had to make a living. And they respected their friend, "Teat". After the battle, when all the Americans were either dead or dying, Dorman lay pinned under his horse, breathing his last. Sitting Bull himself stooped and talked with him in his native Sioux. He gave Dorman a

drink of water from his leather water pouch. When the Americans came to see the disaster, Dorman's body was the only one free of scalping and mutilation.

This last story should really be seen on TV during Black History Month . . . at least. This Black kid was named Percy and he wanted to be a chemist? A chemist? This was in 1913 and this kid had to be out of his skull. His parents told him to forget it. Be a preacher, a schoolteacher or something. Black boys had no future in chemistry. This was during the days when the Magnolia Myth was still fresh and parents, loving their children, were fearful of any other profession or occupation. But this Black kid was stubborn and he entered DePauw University after high school. In high school his teachers had said, "A chemist? Boy, take something else." At DePauw, kindly white professors said politely, "A chemist?" You see, there was no future for a colored boy in the field.

But Percy Julian finally became involved in the perfection and mass production of cortisone, for which millions of arthritis sufferers throughout the world are grateful. He also synthesized a drug called *physostigmine* which is used to treat Glaucoma, an eye disease which results in blindness. He worked wonders with the soy bean and formed his own chemical company which he sold for millions of dollars.

And the TV camera, as the story ends, should pan across the faces of the poor Black folk in 1916, and the nice high school counselors, and the kindly dean at the university. Each of these nice folk should be holding in one hand the printed achievements of Percy Julian: such as his master's degree from Harvard, his PhD from the University of Vienna and the honors universities throughout the world have given him. With the other hand, all of the people on the screen should be eating little chocolate crows.

When you mention more related programming to your local TV stations, or your favorite movie company, tell them they don't have to look any more for suitable Black stories. Dr. Carter Woodson's book is full of them.

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