

ENTERTAINMENT

HAPPENINGS

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JANICE LEARNS TO SING AT NINE MONTHS OLD

Philadelphia-born vocalist Janice McClain just experienced the thrill of her first record release, "Smack Dab In The Middle," on Warner/RFC Records. Janice herself could tell you that she's been working at it for over 14 years, and while it's not unusual for a performer to strive a long time for that first big break, Janice's case is a bit unusual—she's only fifteen years old.

Janice started singing songs she heard on the radio at nine months, according to her mother Sandra. Janice was fortunate that Sandra was a singer who could coach her young voice. Janice's mother was also understanding of other needs of the young and talented. She herself had first recorded at 15, while Janice's father had made his recording debut at 13.

Janice had people watching over her, but the most important person watching Janice grow was Janice herself. The mirror became the focus of her fantasies. "At two or three I'd stand in front of a full-length mirror with makeup and a wig and my mother's long dress and sing Stevie Wonder's "High Heeled Sneakers." Janice remembers. By second grade, her role models were Freda Payne and Diana Ross. "Now," says Janice, "I look into myself to see who I am and find my own style."

And she certainly has found it. Milton Tennant, another member of Janice's musical family, took her into the studio a few months ago to record "Smack Dab In The Middle," a song he wrote especially for her. It resonates with the best Philly R&B traditions: tight rhythm, horns, and the little girl's three-octave voice soaring above it all.

When the record was previewed at New York City's Paradise Garage Disco, 2,000 people danced to it for one and a half hours straight, then stopped in their tracks to applaud the performance. Fourteen years of youthful dreams are on their way to becoming an adult career.



RAY, GOODMAN & BROWN

Polydor records recording artist James Brown (at far right) greets the newest additions to the Polydor roster, veteran soul trio Ray, Goodman & Brown, backstage after their recent performance at the Town Hill Theater in Brooklyn. Formerly the Moments, Harry Ray, Al Goodman and Billy Brown have had a string of hits throughout the years, including *Love On A Two-Way Street*, *Sexy Mama*, *Look At Me and Girls*. Their just-released, self-titled debut album includes the rapidly-rising hit single, *Special Lady*. As for the Godfather, he proved he has not lost a step of spins, splits and twirls. Brown's upcoming album, once again produced by Brad Shapiro, is due out after the first of the year. Pictured backstage at the Town Hill Theater are (from left to right): Billy Brown, Al Goodman, Harry Ray and James Brown.



Blues singer Alberta Hunter, performs songs that encourage people to stay happy and not fret about mistakes, in "One Hundred Years From Today", on CAMERA THREE. Jan 3, 1980, 9:30 pm, channel 10 KOAP.

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