

HAPPENINGS

"Endless Love": Lionel Richie



"Lionel Richie," the singer's latest album, can be purchased now at the House of Sound, 3606 N. Williams Ave. The album is on sale for \$5.97. Regular price of album was \$8.09. This price is good until stock runs out. So pick up your album today at House of Sound Now! While supplies last.

"I must keep moving 'til I find me," sings Lionel Richie in "Wandering Stranger," one of the pivotal songs from his long-awaited debut album as a solo artist, *Lionel Richie*, on Motown Records. It's a powerful moment—Richie doesn't simply sing the lyric but caresses it and the song moves beyond its own territory and acquires a compelling mythic quality. Without a doubt the new album marks an important new beginning for one of the most

distinguished singer-songwriter-instrumentalist-producers in contemporary music and an artist whose extraordinary success prompted *Rolling Stone* to headline an article, "Lionel Richie: King of the Pop Charts."

Given the influence Richie exerts on the contemporary music scene and his stylistic adventurousness—he moves easily from rhythm & blues to pop to country—the making of a solo album which fully underlined his talents and personal vision was inevitable.

As a member of the platinum group the Commodores, Richie has composed and sung the band's biggest hits—"Easy," "Three Times A Lady," "Sail On," and "Still." Stephen Holden, writing in *Rolling Stone*, called these songs "flowing ballads that have made him the contemporary equivalent of Nat King Cole." Richie's first assignment as a record producer outside the Commodores was Kenny Rogers' multi-million single, "Lady." Written by Richie, the song achieved the Number One position on the pop, soul, country and adult contemporary charts. Richie's first film credit was as composer and producer of two songs sung by Diana Ross and himself as duets in Franco Zeffirelli's *Endless Love*. Significantly, "Endless Love" holds the longest Number One position on *Billboard's* pop charts in Motown history for nine consecutive weeks.

Lionel Richie was born on June 20, 1949 on the campus of Tuskegee Institute near Montgomery, Alabama. Lionel was asked to join a band called the Jays while he was in his freshman year at Tuskegee and considered becoming either a marketing executive, fighter pilot or Episcopal priest.

During summer vacations, the group worked in Canada and Europe and recorded one album for Atlantic Records. They were signed as opening act for a series of Jackson 5 concerts and toured with the Jacksons for 2½ years. Motown Records, then the Jackson 5's label, eventually signed the group, later renamed the Commodores. Lionel became a protege of Motown songwriters Norman Whitfield and Hal Davis and by the time the Commodores were ready to record, they were equipped to cut hits.

As Richie's success as a composer won extensive recognition and other artists began covering songs like "Sail On" and "Still," he received numerous offers to produce outside acts. Perhaps the most surprising one came from Kenny Rogers. "You don't think of someone who's that successful keeping track of who's making hit records, and who's writing them," says Lionel. "But Kenny follows that very carefully and really knows and cares about music."

Well-prepared to cope with the never-ending pressures which come with stardom, Richie was recently described by the *Los Angeles Times* as "generous, bright, compassionate, modest, mild-mannered, dedicated and an unwavering positive thinker." With his wife Brenda, Lionel spends part of the year in Tuskegee and the rest in their Beverly Hills home.

With the arrival of his debut solo album, Lionel Richie has begun an exciting new chapter in his musical journal. "I used to think I knew this guy called Lionel Richie. Now I think I'm going to sit back and figure out who he is all over again because he's surprising me now. I thought I used to know my limitations. It's one thing to own a Ferrari and it's another to take it as fast as it can go. I've found that I've had this Ferrari for a long time, but I've only been going 60 miles per hour in it. I'm testing it now—to see how far it can really go."

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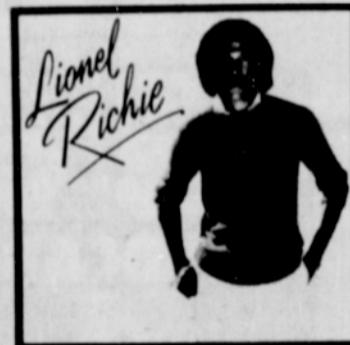
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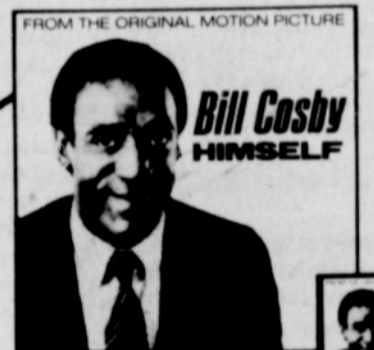
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