

Black Music Month 2014: June 24 musical salute to Smokey Robinson



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It's Black Music Month. Enjoy the 2014 series. Support the artists. Buy their licensed music. And turn up as you dance along.

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Brief history: *In 2010, I wrote a music series honoring Black Music Month on Associated Content's site (republished on Examiner). The focus was to honor new R&B singers, veteran R&B singers, solo rappers, and evenly split the musical salute between female and male rappers. The only artists I was not willing to split up were Salt n' Pepa because they worked as a unit. In 2014, it's about time to salute more artists, but in the spirit of Salt n' Pepa's legacy, R&B groups and rap groups will be included. The pattern in 2014 will be newer R&B singers (from 2000 to present), R&B and/or hip-hop groups, veteran R&B singers, and then solo rappers, still evenly split between women and men.*

Black Music Month Turn Up Factor "Turn down for what?": Smokey has written over 1,000 songs, according to the **Songwriters Hall of Fame**, and considering how much they dominated the charts, it's no wonder why he was so much in demand. Every songwriter isn't necessarily the best singer, but Smokey was one of those talented people who could do one as well as the other, and it certainly didn't hurt that he **looked like this** while pursuing his musical passions. The Motown producer, songwriter and talent scout was acknowledged for his talents by his peers and in the **Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1987**.

My Connection/First Memory to Artist: I listened to a lot of Motown growing up, but I wasn't aware that many of my favorite songs were written by Smokey, including The Miracles' "You've Really Got a Hold On Me," The Temptations' "The Way You Do the Things You Do" and "My Girl," Marvin Gaye's "Ain't That Peculiar" and "I'll Be Doggone," and **more**. But it wasn't until I watched "**Live from Daryl's House**" featuring Smokey Robinson that I realized how much of a fan I was of him in particular, not just songs he'd written for everybody else. I almost wanted to laugh when I heard "Sara Smile" because I had no idea where Tom from **Adult Swim's "The Boondocks"** got that song from. Then I listened to D'Angelo's "Cruisin'" and realized I liked Smokey's version just as much. These snippets made me reevaluate almost every song I liked and wonder how he'd sing the ones he'd written. That lead me onto a sound-friendly search of listening to Smokey's version of *everything*.

Numbers Don't Lie: Several of his songs made it to Billboard's Top 100, but the ones that made it to the top 10 and left the biggest lasting impression were "Cruisin'" (25 weeks, peaked at number four), "Being With You" (25 weeks, peaked at number two), "Just to See Her" (21 weeks, peaked at number eight) and "One Heartbeat" (19 weeks, peaked at number 10). On Top R&B/Hip-Hop Songs, other songs did remarkably well, including "Everything You Touch" (16 weeks, peaked at number four), "One Heartbeat" again (18 weeks, peaked at number three) and "Just to See Her" (again) (19 weeks, peaked at number two).

For the first series of Black Music Month artists republished on Examiner (originally on Associated Content), [click here](#) to see all 30.

*Shamontiel is also **The Wire Examiner**, and for the gladiators, she's the **Scandal Examiner**, too.*