

Black Music Month 2014: June 2 musical salute to The Staple Singers



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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?": The Staple Singers were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1999 and received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement award in 2005. Mavis Staples also made a name for herself working with other major artists, such as Aretha Franklin and Ray Charles, but the group as a whole proved

that gospel acts are just as fierce when they go secular.

My Connection/First Memory to Artist: I already adored "Let's Do It Again," but hearing a cover version from the Black Ensemble Theater "**The Story of Curtis Mayfield**" play made me love the song that much more. "I'll Take You There" is another classic that never gets old. Although they started in the late '60s before my time (born in '81), from what I observe they were at their finest when working as a group.

Numbers Don't Lie: The Staple Singers were no stranger to the Billboard charts. Although these songs didn't stay on the charts long (less than five weeks), they did crack the Top 100: "Why? (Am I Treated So Bad)," "For What It's Worth," "You've Got to Earn It" and "My Main Man."

However, other songs got nice and comfortable on the charts, including "Heavy Makes You Happy (Sha-Na-Boom Boom)" for 12 weeks and peaked at number 27, "Respect Yourself" for 14 weeks and peaked at number 12, "This World" for seven weeks and peaked at number 38, "Oh La De Da" for nine weeks and peaked at number 33, "Be What You Are" for six weeks and peaked at number 66, "If You're Ready (Come Go With Me)" for 16 weeks and peaked at number 9, "Touch a Hand, Make a Friend" for 13 weeks and peaked at number 23, "City in the Sky" for seven weeks and peaked at number 79, "I'll Take You There" for 15 weeks and peaked at number one, and "Let's Do It Again" for 15 weeks and peaked at number one.

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.*

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