



openly programme these at the more hardcore venues. Perhaps if a top Northern DJ spun, say, **Emmett Garner's "So Much Better"** or **LaShawn Collins' "What You Gonna Do Now"**, it would be tantamount to admitting quality 60's unknowns were drying up in the eyes of his contemporaries. But recent remarks in Pete Lawson's Northern Soul magazine ("The Gospel According To Dave Godin"), suggest it might only take the right combination, the programming of sympathetic 70's sounds (Jo Armstead's "There's Not Too Many More" has already made inroads) to lay a solid framework on which to build.

Most of this is pure conjecture, because as someone who deals in records for a living, I'm being made increasingly aware it's younger soul fans who are constantly requesting **Johnny Moore** on Blue Rock, **Bobby Hutton's** Philips output or **Elsie Strong's** "Ask The Lonely" on Sounds International. These self-same collectors are purchasing these obscurities alongside new imports by **Jimmy Scott**, **Rov'Ve** and **Brotherly Love**, so it's fairly obvious as some work backwards to pick up releases cut around the same time they were born, others are becoming increasingly besotted by releases only a couple of years outside the previous time limits imposed on them by the nature of the clubs they frequent. Isn't it obvious that eventually they'll hit common ground and once this bridge has been successfully traversed a lowering of further barriers may be possible?

It became obvious to me much earlier than the heated exchange of vitriolic letters in BLACKBEAT in 1984 that Northern Soul and Modern Soul are completely incompatible as long as they both pulled in different directions. When the Mecca absorbed 70's soul release onto the playlist there was, at least in some cases, a continuity of rhythm and overall feel. Given that the 'stompers only' crowd rejected 70's then, how could you possibly expect them to welcome records like **Ike Noble** "Shake It Loose", **Chuck Strong** "Doin' It 'Cause It Feels Good" or **Family Of Eve** "I Wanna Be Loved By You" (all early big 'Modern' records), because to someone only into 60's, these would sound no different to anything they heard in a normal disco. 'Crossover' soul allows the breathing space in-between....

By the end of 1967, the basic four-beats-to-the-bar formula which Holland-Dozier-Holland had perfected, broke down and re-assembled to provide hit after hit for **The Four Tops**, **The Supremes** and **Martha & The Vandellas** had faded. Motown's pop hits had become half-way houses like "Yesterday's Dreams", "Walk Away Renee", "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me", "I Wish It Would Rain" and "Cloud Nine". In 1968 Motown wasn't positively 'funky' but Mr Gordy figured (with odd exceptions) he'd done the end of the "I Can't Help Myself"-production line. But some writers and producers were still scoring with a rough approximation of

it, albeit modified and padded out here and there. The basic trick was to slow down the rhythm and make it more jerky but still retain the atmosphere, vibes, banks of strings, rattlin' tambourines and howling saxophones provoked. The beat now tended to lurch along but it still had that snappy uptown big city feel; it still smacked of mohair suits, slick dance steps and tightly choreographed routines. It was as if the music was a desperate man grasping at a crumbling cliff side, not wanting to slide head first into the realms of funk or disco. It produced, albeit in hindsight, some quite remarkable sides.

The term 'crossover' soul originally referred to the lapping over of 60's flavoured records into the 70's, but as word has seeped out, it has taken on different connotations. It is now used to describe the stepping stones being laid down between Northern Soul and Modern Soul. With little fresh blood coming into either scene there seems to be an uneasy truce with early 70's some kind of mist-enshrouded no-man's-land. Media attention has never sat easily with some British soul fans. Like nomads breaking camp during the dead of night, a whiff of commercialisation and they're gone, moving on to more greener, virgin pastures. But the more underground elements of the British club scene are so far removed from public gaze or media attention now, it seems the only problems it encounters are from within. Quite whether the olive branch that is crossover soul will be the catalyst that brings unity (and with it strength in numbers) remains to be seen, but at least for people like **Barbara Acklin**, **Gerald Sims**, **Richard Parker**, **Terry Callier**, and **Na Allen** there could be a new group of admirers able to appreciate their writing and production work from afar. At last one of soul music's missing links, a largely forgotten era is being re-evaluated and analysed in a positive light.

THE SOUND OF CROSSOVER SOUL....

Windy City Themes

Three names leap up as obvious non-attenders at our earlier roll-call of illustrious Windy City names, they are of course **Curtis Mayfield**, **Donny Hathaway** and **Leroy Hutson**. Yet, conveniently, their paths cross alongside a master vocalist on a number that cuts into the very life vein of crossover soul, the haunting "I'll Never Forget You" (Thomas TH802), an atmospheric beat ballad with a Cecil B DeMille of a production. **Nolan Chance** is the voice but it's that production that's the star with pregnant pauses whilst the strings and percussion get their acts together, but Chance, give him his due, sticks to his task with admiral aplomb particularly when bombarded by a barrage of backing singer, rising horns and rattling tambourines. What does it compare to? Well it's the bastard child of **Bobby Sheen's** "Something New To Do" and **Ray Pollard's** "The Drifter" but with a dull, clumping beat that breaks off to force sev-