

Lee Charles 45, they don't exist and even "Sitting On A Time Bomb" (Invictus 257 1260), his last known recording in 1974, whilst being funky, is still an essential side.

### Detroit

Motown's final stages of relocation to the West Coast were completed by 1971 and this temporarily ripped the heart out of the Detroit recording scene. Musicians, producers, writers and technicians had to eat and the dilemma posed by such a large conglomerate as Motown upping its roots for the sunnier climes of Los Angeles left a bitter aftertaste for those who had no option but to stay. Hot Wax and Invictus, spurred on by ex-Motown staff writers **Eddie & Brian Holland** and **Lamont Dozier**, were making in-roads, but it was hard work - soul's boom years had passed and the coming onslaught of disco and the rising spectre of jazz/funk was putting the smooth lines of "traditional" Detroit soul in the shade. An assessment of "crossover" soul shows 1969 to be a key year, epitomising the genre through **David Ruffin's "My Whole World Ended (The Moment You Left Me)"** and **Bobby Taylor's superb "Taylor Made Soul" LP (Gordy GS942)** which is probably one of the strongest collections of drifters and floaters the label put out by one of their 'lesser' lights.

In terms of volume, the Eastbound/Westbound set-up with ex-Motowners **The Fantastic 4**, plus **The Magictones**, **The Superlatives** and **Emanuel Laskey** is an obvious candidate and certainly some of the releases on the earlier series of Westbound are superb. Lasky, a rasping, gritty voiced singer, had cut his teeth with **Thelma Records** making solid Detroit soul but it's his **"More Love (Where This Came From)" (Westbound 143)** that is attracting attention now. Actually a far better side is **"Just The Way (I Want Her To Be)" (Music Now DS 2880)** which is a great floater with Laskey's raw and raucous vocals being baited by muted percussion and strings all peppered by the occasional burst of brass. Another side on Music Now (MN 2881) worthy of a mention of **June Taylor's "Pick Up The Pieces"**, barely midtempo but with all the necessary ingredients.

There's also **Will Hatcher's "Have A Heart Girl"**, leased to Cotillion (44014) plus his **Wheelsville** in-demand **"You Haven't Seen Nothing Yet"** (Wheelsville 001), a little label obscurity **"I Lost You Girl"** by **Sir George** - presumably **Gino Washington** - on G&G (0001), the **Wylie/Hestor** magic of **Roz Ryan** on Volt (4040) with **"You're My Only Temptation"** and, on the same label **"Since I've Been In Love"** by **The Dramatics** (Volt 4029). The latter was written by **Fred Bridges**, **Richard Knight** and **Bob Eaton**, a highly talented trio who wrote, produced, arranged and recorded, usually as **The Brothers Of Soul**. They were remarkably consistent in both their own output on Detroit indies like **Boo** and **Shock** and writing for people like **Ruby Andrews**. As a group, **"I Guess That Don't Make Me A Loser"** (Boo 1004) was a reasonable R&B

hit in 1968, but it was **Andrews** who hit nationally with their composition **"You Made A Believer (Out Of Me)" (Zodiac 1015)** in 1969. The marriage of these writers to the sultry **Ms Andrews** resulted in a true classic crossover soul side - **"Just Loving You"** (Zodiac 1010). The well drilled backing with strings sweetening the rigid bass lines and **Ruby** stylising effortlessly make a particularly harmonious side. Slightly earlier than this is another **Bridges/Knight/Eaton** song, **"Footsteps"** by **The Creations** (Zodiac 1005), a sprightly and very fluid mover that found favour on the Northern scene recently. The backing track was also used on **"Dream"** (Shock 1313) by **The Brothers Of Soul**, a record with a history of sporadic 'modern' spins. Chicken or the egg?

### Southern Watering Holes

Even in amongst the gritty wailers from Atlanta, Memphis and Birmingham, the search for appropriately sounding floaters and lurching beat ballads goes on. Some well known examples are **Bobby Patterson's "I'm In Love With You"** (Jetstar), **Tommie Young's "Hit And Run Lover"** (Soul Power) and **George Perkins' "I'm So Glad You're Mine"** (Royal Shield). Among a lengthy list of fast rising 'Southern' sides are **The Naturals "Da-Da-Da-Da (I Love You)" (Quadron)**, a silky group floater; **Charlie 'Cole Black' Brown "I've Got Your Love"** (Jewel) slightly jerky, but the free flowing strings take the edge off any pretensions it has to being too funky; **James Fry "Still Around"** (Hi), marvellously understated, a compulsive hard-edged midtempo side that oozes soul, solid percussion and tight horns lay a gritty trail that Fry rides in style; **Eddie Floyd & Mavis Staples "Never, Never Let You Go"** (Stax).

Stax, the South's pride and joy had fallen under Paramount's spell by mid-'69, but **Eddie And Mavis** out-do Detroit on this sublime dancer from the **"Boy Meets Girl" LP**. **Willie Charles Gray** is a name probably not on the lips of many as yet, but his **"I'm Gonna Be A Winner"** (Mercury 72608) may change all that. Caught between a rock and a hard place, Gray grafts hard against a decidedly punchy 'Southern' backing (Shelby Singleton produces) to get across his predicament. laced as it is with horns and storyline lyrics, a spicy little 45 that proves being with a big label proves nothing (Topics, Aristocrats, Carl Hall, etc).

The Carolinas gave birth to a number of 45's that fall into this ill-defined category but two to search for are **"Looking For My Baby"** 'Sensational' Little Doc & His **Rhythm Express** - an out-and-out stormer with sweeping strings (Music-Go-Round 001) from Charlotte and **Cornelius & Carol**, alias **Cornelius Crawford and Carol Humphries** on Entertainment Enterprises (EE-101) with **"So I Can Love You"**, a crawling beater that oozes soul.

### West Coast Revivals

Los Angeles had emerged as a musical centre by the early 70's and with a large →

