

# Weekend

The Arts, Leisure, Music, Columns

## Osborne: Nonstop with 'Don't Stop'

Jeffrey Osborne's remarkable career has followed a path perhaps best described as one of consolidation and expansion.

With "Jeffrey Osborne," his 1982 solo debut, he cemented the appeal he'd developed in his ten years as lead singer of the group LTD, while at the same time stretching his sound and repertoire to attract a new, more broadly-based audience. With "Stay With Me Tonight," his 1983 follow-up, Osborne took that strategy a giant step further, maintaining the foundation he'd already solidified while also incorporating new sounds and styles that made the album an across-the-board platinum smash.

*"I'm not out to impress people anymore with how well I can sing. The key here is the song; I'm not over-singing, but simply doing what it takes to make the song happen."*

— Jeffrey Osborne

Jeffrey Osborne, then, has long since achieved a delicate balance, whereby he both keeps his audience happy and satisfies his own need for artistic growth. Now comes the latest and most impressive chapter in Osborne's solo saga: "Don't Stop," his third album for A&M.

"With each new album, of course, you at least want to come up to the level of your previous record," says Jeffrey, "and you hope to do better. With 'Stay With Me Tonight,' I didn't want to play it safe; I wanted to keep the same elements that provided me with my base in the first place, but I also wanted to show genuine growth. It's the best of both worlds, really — I try to satisfy old

fans and attract new ones."

For "Don't Stop," Osborne again worked with producer George Duke, engineer Tommy Vicari, musicians like guitarist Mike Sembello, and songwriters like Don Freeman, David "Hawk" Wolinski, Raymond Jones and Geoff Leib, all of whom have contributed to Jeffrey's albums. Osborne's own attitude, however, has undergone some subtle changes since "Stay With Me Tonight" (highlighted by the singles "Don't You Get So Mad," the title song, "We're Going All the Way" and the 12-inch "Plane Love") established him as a singer equally at home in pop, rock, R&B and other styles.

"I approached the songs as songs this time," Osborne says, "not so much as showcases for my individual performances. I'm not out to impress people anymore with how well I can sing. The key here is the song; I'm not over-singing, but simply doing what it takes to make the song happen."

"On Side One," Osborne adds, "the songs take up where 'Stay With Me Tonight' left off. Instead of ending up with that European fusion of pop, rock and R&B, I started from that point, and worked at developing a really contemporary pop-rock sound."

The material on the first side of "Don't Stop" includes the title song, written by Dan Sembello and David Barreau; "Let Me Know" ("to me, my best vocal performance on the album"), a ballad by Osborne and Geoff Leib (who co-wrote "I'll Make Believe" and "Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right" from the last LP); "Borderline," a song about two lovers whose respective countries won't allow them to be together, written by Raymond

Please see page B7



### 15 And Counting

The secret to their 15-year marriage, says singing stars Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr., is honesty. "We support one another in the goals of each other's careers," McCoo says.

"We're both born-again Christians. And I feel the Lord has played a very important role in helping to stabilize our relation-



ship." The former Fifth Dimensions will be guests on "Essence, The Television Program," on WXII-TV on Sunday, at 11:30 a.m. Also featured on the program will be dancer, actor, designer Geoffrey Holder, social-worker-turned-actress Marsha Michaels, how to make bakeless yogurt fruit pies and much more.

### Ask Yolonda

## Is mom going crazy?

By YOLONDA GAYLES  
Syndicated Columnist

Dear Yolonda: My problem is my mother -- I'm starting to wonder if she's losing her mind, or if she's working on making us lose ours. For some reason, my mother runs everyone away from her. I'm 20, and I no longer live at home because of her constant nagging and fussing. My father and older brother left for the same reason. The only one left in the house with her is my youngest sister, who's now 11, and she tells me that she's ready to leave, even if it means running away.

No one is able to communicate with our mother. Even if she stops the hollering and nagging, she's back at it in a few hours. We've all tried to tell her how nerve-racking she is, but she feels that we are her kids, and she can talk to us

anyway she chooses. Please tell me what I should do to help my little sister.

Caren

Dear Caren: Your mom may not listen to you or her other kids, but she just might listen to her sister or a good friend, so have a heart-to-heart talk with one of them, and have them intervene on your sister's behalf.

Here's another tip that's been successful in this area: Try recording family conversations all day long. Then, with everyone present, play the tape back. Oftentimes people are unaware that the way they communicate is a major contribution to the confusion. Perhaps when your mother hears herself, she'll vow to make some changes.

Got a problem or gripe? Ask Yolonda Gayles, P.O. Box 19112, Chicago, Ill., 60619.

## "Jukebox" is rocket for Dazz Band

First came the Grammy-winning "Let It Whip" on the gold album, "Keep It Live." Then they followed it with "On the One." They topped that with "Joystick." Now, with the release of "Jukebox," the Dazz Band realizes even more of its potential as one of the brightest young R&B bands in music today.

"Jukebox," according to leader and musical director Bobby Harris, "is another collective step we've taken, quite different from anything else we've ever done. This is the one that will lead us to the next musical plateau."

The journey to that plateau began back in 1974 when Harris formed a local band in Cleveland, Ohio, that evolved into the Kinsman Dazz. Later came a recording contract with 20th Century and two albums produced by Earth, Wind & Fire's Phillip Bailey. In 1980, the eight members signed with Motown, changed their name to the Dazz Band, and self-produced the critically-acclaimed "Invitation To Love." Their next effort, "Let the Music Play," which began their long association with producer Reggie Andrews, earned them more of an audience with "Knock, Knock" and the title track. Then came "Keep It Live."

Not only did the album go gold, its smash single "Let it Whip" earned them one award after another, from Billboard's "R&B Song of the Year" to the West Coast's No. 1 dance song to a

Grammy for "Best R&B Vocal Performance by a Duo or Group."

Successful tours followed, with the Dazz Band commanding large, enthusiastic crowds both in the United States and Europe. Whether they were headliners or shared the bill with acts like Cameo, Rick James and the O-Jays, the group satisfied fans everywhere with their slick stage presence and heavy emphasis on their music.

At this point, achieving international status, the Dazz Band kept its momentum going with "On the One," which saw it expand to its present nine members, and followed up with 1983's successful "Joystick," which featured the hits "Swoop (I'm Yours)" and the title track.

Now firmly established as a force in the music industry, releasing chartbound singles, and playing to over 60 cities a year, the Dazz Band resigned with Motown and returned to the studios after yet another major tour (this time with Kool & The Gang). The result is "Jukebox."

Featured once again are Harris (tenor and alto sax, lead and background vocals), Sennie "Skip" Martin III (trumpet, lead and background vocals), Pierre DeMudd (trumpet, lead and background vocals), Steve Cox (keyboards), Keith Harrison (keyboards, lead and background vocals), Eric Fearman (guitars), Kenny Pettus (percussion, lead

Please see page B7



**DAZZ BAND**

