

Sounds

Richards CD shows maturity

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PEACHES & HERB

formats to this day.

The same can be said for Ray, Goodman and Brown's "Special Lady." A No. 1 r&b smash and No. 5 pop hit, the song established the trio once known as The Moments ("Sexy Mama," "I Found Love On a Two-Way Street") and cross-over threat.

There are other gems included, such as the just as slick "Inside You," "Happy Anniversary" and "My Prayer," but "Special Lady" outshines everything else. And that's a

pretty massive feat considering how good the rest of this set is.

Deleon Richards
My Life
Fred Hammond, Jerry Peters, Oliver Wells, and Michael-Anthony Tate, producers
Instersound

☆☆☆ 1/2

Remember little Deleon Richards, the cute little girl

who did bouncy inspirational tunes? She's all grown up with a grown-up voice and so is her testimony.

Richards has a great group of producers to work with her more-adult voice. Fred Hammond makes wonderful use of it on "Fountain Filled With Mercy" and "I Want To Worship You." Jerry Peters does wonders with Richards on "I'll Praise Him," which leaves you with a warm, fuzzy feeling.

A few times Richards stretches beyond her range with mixed results, but not often. This set hits the mark 98 percent of the time. She's blossomed into an attractive young woman and powerful singer.

Ratings:

☆☆☆☆ Classic;

☆☆☆☆ Excellent;

☆☆☆ Good;

☆☆ Fair;

☆ Why?

No Stars Given - Please, Spare Me

'Cold Medina' is a good read

Continued from 1B

and dealers. It is a hard novel to put down. Hardwick manages to keep the identity of his Handyman a secret until the climatic end. Everyone is a suspect and even the identity of the Handyman, when uncovered, has an ingenious twist.

"Cold Medina" works because Hardwick is talented and found his inspiration for

the novel in a 1988 news story that detailed the plight of urban youth who died before the age of 21 because of the drug trade. Reading the article, Hardwick was moved to tears. "Crack cocaine was hitting the city very hard...The violence just slammed into me."

"Medina" treads no new territory - shades of "The Silence of The Lambs" and "New Jack

City" abound. Hardwick could also do more with the storyline as well as tying up a few loose ends, but the novel is still an excellent first offering. Hardwick does a good job of balancing his plot and subplots.

If you are looking for a good psychological thriller, that happens to focus on African Americans, "Cold Medina" will more than fill the bill.

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