Decided to Write Own Hits

By Wayne Edwards Special to the Chronicle

NEW YORK - The names that stature," Gene continof Gene McFadden and ues, "gave us a lot of John Whitehead should not confidence. While with the be new to anybody who has been even remotely connected with the music industry during the '70s because they have written and produced some of the most powerful R&B hits of this decade.

Although known primarily for their producing and composing abilities, McFadden and Whitehead have finally fulfilled a lifelong dream: they have now stepped out front as performing artists on their debut LP, McFadden & Whitehead, on Philadelphia International Records. Featuring eight brand new tunes written by this dynamic duo (along with Jerry Cohen), McFadden & Whitehead is a pulsating album that ranges from funk to disco to romantic ballads - while maintaining cohesiveness.

Ironically enough, they were first signed to Philly International as recording artists way back in 1969. It's taken ten long, but fruitful years for the two men who are often affectionately referred to as "the comedians of Philly" to reach this stage of their "Backstabbers" career.

been anxious to record weeks after its release. since we first teamed up years ago as kids in the Huff to listen to our lyrics,"

part of the famed Otis duos to emerge since Stevie Wonder. Redding Revue.

"Working with a man of Revue we were supposed to record the song Sweet Soul Music' which later became a big, big hit for Arthur Connelly with us singing

background." Despite being with Otis, however, the two young returned to the familiar setting of Philadelphia. Upon returning to Philly, McFadden & Whitehead signed as recording artists with Philly International but, becuase of their inexperience and lack of a track record, the venture was not as fruitful as anticipated. In fact, John ended up taking on assorted odd-jobs within the company.

"That was somewhat of a drag," he relates. "But it was good for both of us because while I was there I checked out how these cats were writing songs and I realized that Gene and I. had been writing songs all along but didn't know it." One night they finally sat down in John's kitchen

determined to create their first "official" song and the results were phenomenal.

McFadden & Whitehead's "Actually," says John, first song - became a num-"it's taken a long longer ber one across-the-board than that because we've smash for the O'Jays just

"It was hard getting Mr. streets of Philly. You can John laughs, "because we

Lennon & McCartney.

McFadden Want'

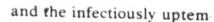
men eventually tired of the I'll Dance'' for Melba think it would have hurt our Gene. "You might hearconstant road travel and Moore; and "Bad Luck", morale: It would have Otis Redding, Bobby Where Are All My taken something away from Womack, Earth, Wind & Friends" and Wake Up us because, in all honest, Fire, Graham Central Sta-Everybody" for Harold despite the enormous suc- tion or anybody, if you dig Melvin & the Bluenotes. In addition they've posers and producers, our all." written and/or produced hearts were really into Although said jokingly. albums for Archie Bell & being - or at least attempt- you somehow get the The Drells, the Jacksons ing to be - performers." and Lou Rawls, as well as They are undoubtedly off there is a serious message perform with such head- to a flying start with a and, perhaps, maybe all of

Knight & the Pips, Sammy strong tunes like "Got To an eye on McFadden & Davis. James Brown and Change", "Mr. Music" Whitehead.

Love My Mama" for the Huff (mentors of the Philly it "the national anthem." Here" and "Pick Me Up, given us this opportunity I versatile," concludes-

cess we've had as com- what I mean. We can do it

feeling that underneath it liners as the O'Jays, Gladys debut album featuring these groups should keep



"That's why this album, po smash gold single & McFadden & Whitehead, is "Ain't No Stoppin' Us WEhitehead's credits now an important move for us," Now" which states to the include having written and says John. "For years utmost the philosophy that or produced "Easy, Easy we've poured our all into makes these two men click. (Got to Take it Easy)", making things happen for The lyrics, in fact, are sc "Cold Cold World", The other artists while all the poignant that the New More I Get, The More I time saying to ourselves, York's WBLS-FM, the top for Teddy 'hey, that could be us doing rated black-oriented station Pendergrass; "I'll Always our tunes.' If Gamble & in the country, has dubbed. intruders; "Standing Right International label) hadn't "Our album is very

McFadden and Whitehead





The Chronicle, Saturday, June 23, 1979 - Page 9

trace our beginnings all the were literally following him called The Epsilons."

them, the group became successful

way back to the tenth grade down the hallway reading when we formed a group the words to him. But we finally got to him because The Epsilons found mo- before we even finished he derate success when, after stopped by his office, appraoching the late great turned to us and said, Otis Redding with a propo- 'come in here.' '' That was sition that he manage the start of one of the most songwriting



Black Broadway

A virtuoso performance by 96-year old planist/composer, Euble Blake, marks a classic note as National Public Radio broadcasts live from the 1979 Newport Jazz Festival. Blake is one of many stars in the festival's production of "Black Broadway" to be broadcast by BPR member station WFDD.

Disco Down with TV

Discomania has hustled its way right off the dance floor and boogie-oogieoogied its way into America's heart. The fashions. the flash, the dancing and the beat are reverberating throughout the contemporary culture - and their appeal is irresistible. Whether or not you've caught the fever yet, you're invited to "get down and boogie" Monday, July 2 at 9:00 pm on UNC-TV Channels 4 & Club Max, one of Boston's

"Keep on Dancin'." The series will explore the entire range of the disco phenomenon, including interviews with deejays, top dancers, disco owners, fashion designers, special effects experts, musicians. record industry execs, and even a foot doctor - because you can't hustle when your feet hurt!

Dancing Disco will be recorded live on location at

hottest nightspots. In addi-26, with Dancing Disco. tion to lessons, each pro-The eight-part series will gram in the series will feature dance lessons from spotlight a top dancing teacher Randy Deats, who couple; so once you've mascan untangle the complex tered the basic steps, you'll moves of a Triple Hustle so be able to pick up some that even non-danceers will fancy flourishes from adsoon find themselves fastvanced dancers. stepping to the beat of



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