

## WHOOPI



Whoopi Goldberg has emerged as a combination Moms Mabley-Richard Pryor. In a one-woman Broadway act, Whoopi changes characters right before the audience's eyes. Sometimes she's a black junkie with a doctorate degree and other times she's a white valley girl who botches an abortion. "Those people who inhabit my body actually are full-blooded people," said Whoopi, who won't reveal her real name. "I just kind of sit back and watch what they're up to. I become part of the audience." For more on Whoopi, read this month's *Ebony* and *Essence* magazines.

### Up Close

## Michael plus Prince equal Rockwell

Rarely has any recording artist, in the first stage of his career, displayed such a command of music's aural and visual elements as Rockwell. His initial Motown release, the million-selling "Somebody's Watching Me," demonstrated an uncanny mastery of pop and funk craftsmanship, a blend of the classic and the exotic. And this year's follow-up LP, "Captured," continues the trend, but with more dynamism and sensuality

than has been heard in years.

Rockwell has arrived, and the rhythm wave will surely be of tidal proportions.

At the heart of this phenomenon lies the basic attitude and eclecticism that sets the 21-year-old singer/composer apart



Rockwell: Berry's son

form his contemporaries.

"Music is visual, to me," says Rockwell. "I don't think of it in mathematical terms. My music represents my deepest thoughts and fantasies. First, I envision a scene in my mind, and then I develop the concept."

Along with the obvious excitement over his latest album, one can sense the dedication of a studied musician who strives constantly to refine his art. In fact, during his early years as a piano student, Rockwell could practically learn faster than his tutor could teach him.

"I was always free to experiment with music at home," he says. "My piano lessons began when I was 7 years old, and I learned lots of standards, show tunes and classical pieces. But as with

everything I do, I don't let it become a routine, as if I'm following a rule book. I could never become a robot."

He needn't consider it, as the muscular young performer is now a bonafide star, with a worldwide tour in the works. His immediate success occurred not only in the U.S., but in Britain and Europe, as well.

Rockwell was born in Detroit, Mich., and moved to Los Angeles with his father, Berry Gordy Jr., while still a young boy. His father's prominence in the music industry assured him of steady contact with the show business elite, but Rockwell insists he was not forced into his new career.

"Michael Jackson was the only person close to my age who was really exciting to me," says Rockwell. "When I moved out to L.A., we lived in a house once owned by the Jacksons. I saw them a lot and it inspired me to learn to dance like him."

"But I always listened to a wide variety of music: hard rock, funk and classical. I never knew that's what I wanted to do. I just knew I wanted to take it further than anybody else."

"Captured" fulfills that intent magnificently. Co-produced by Rockwell and Curtis Anthony Nolen, it is an experience of near-cinematic scope, filled with suspense and sounds found in a world of romance and intrigue. "Peeping Tom" is, in a way, a restatement of his earlier smash, but with a decidedly lurid slant. Like the title cut, it is expertly punctuated by a ferocious rhythm arrangement and deft keyboard playing. "He's a Cobra" demonstrates Rockwell's remarkable emotional breadth, as he tears into the big sound along with background vocalist Stevie Wonder. "T.V. Psychology" and "Tokyo" are bristling with energy -- and more than a hint of humor -- that makes their pointed statements a treat.

To his credit, Rockwell and Nolen have managed to combine songwriting and skill and modern dub technology in very exciting ways. And like his first album, which contained a powerful ballad,

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With the release of her new home video, Tina Turner, with her Class A legs, can now be seen as well as heard.

### Musical Notes

## Tina visits homes with video cassette

Tina Turner has climbed to the top of the record charts in the last year. Now she's about to visit your video cassette recorder. Lovely Tina just released her first short form home video cassette, a four-song Video 45 from Sony. The \$16.95 Sony Video is studded with hits like the title song "Private Dancer," "Better Be Good To Me," "Let's Stay Together" and "What's Love Got To Do With It." With legs like hers, the video can't miss.

Singer-songwriter-producer Luther Vandross recently commissioned songwriter (Earth, Wind & Fire's "Boogie Wonderland") and visual artist Allee Willis to do a rather strange piece of artwork for his wall. Explains Vandross -- who has written and produced hits for Aretha Franklin and

Dionne Warwick, and whose other idol is Diana Ross -- "the painting will have Aretha, Dionne and Diana dressed to the nines -- with minks, high heels... and boxing gloves! Allee makes these things so they'll move. I asked her to set it up so that when Diana knocks down Dionne, a Billboard chart pops up with 'Baby Love' at number one. And when Aretha knocks down Diana, up pops the chart with 'Respect.'"

Aretha Franklin ran into Luther in LA and heard his artistic concepts, then demanded one small modification in the piece. "You tell that artist," said the Queen of Soul, "that it's going to take the two of them to knock me down!"

The upcoming Daryl Hall and John Oates video Please see page B10

### Ask Yolonda

## Husband's relationship with daughter may end present marriage

By YOLONDA GAYLES  
Syndicated Columnist

**Dear Yolonda:** I've been married for four years. The man I married has a daughter from his first marriage who is a beautiful, intelligent young woman of 19. But she is a problem that eventually may break up my marriage. My husband spoils her to death. It goes past being a good financial and emotional supporter to her. My husband puts her on a pedestal. She can do no wrong.

For example, although she lives with her mother, she has a door key and she is always here visiting. Whenever we go out, she accompanies us. Sometimes she tries to bring a male friend along, but because nobody is good enough for her, according to her father, she usually comes along unescorted.

Her father keeps her dressed to kill. He gives her money, buys her clothes, and she always looks like a model. What irks me the most, I guess, is

that she doesn't even have to ask him for money. If she wants something, she simply goes into his pocket and gets it. Furthermore, when we're in public, they walk arm in arm -- it's as if they're dating. When I'm in their company, sometimes I feel like a chauffeur.

I have tried to talk with both my stepdaughter and my husband about this situation, but nothing works. What should I do?

Lillian C.

**Dear Lillian:** Your problem begins and ends not with your stepdaughter, but with your husband.

It's up to you to tell your husband how his actions seem to you. Be candid.

But if you've said all, and things still don't change, the question you must ask yourself is: "Can I be happy as a chauffeur?"

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