

FREDDIE HUGHES BACKGROUND NOTES:

Three years have elapsed since Freddie and I got together for this article during which time he has suffered incoming and outgoing managers and promoters, plus an almost constant struggle to stay in the business. On the upside, Freddie has always managed to find dedicated people willing enough to support him and it is good to see CD product finally hitting the streets. Maybe, through article exposure such as this Freddie Hughes will finally get his dues.

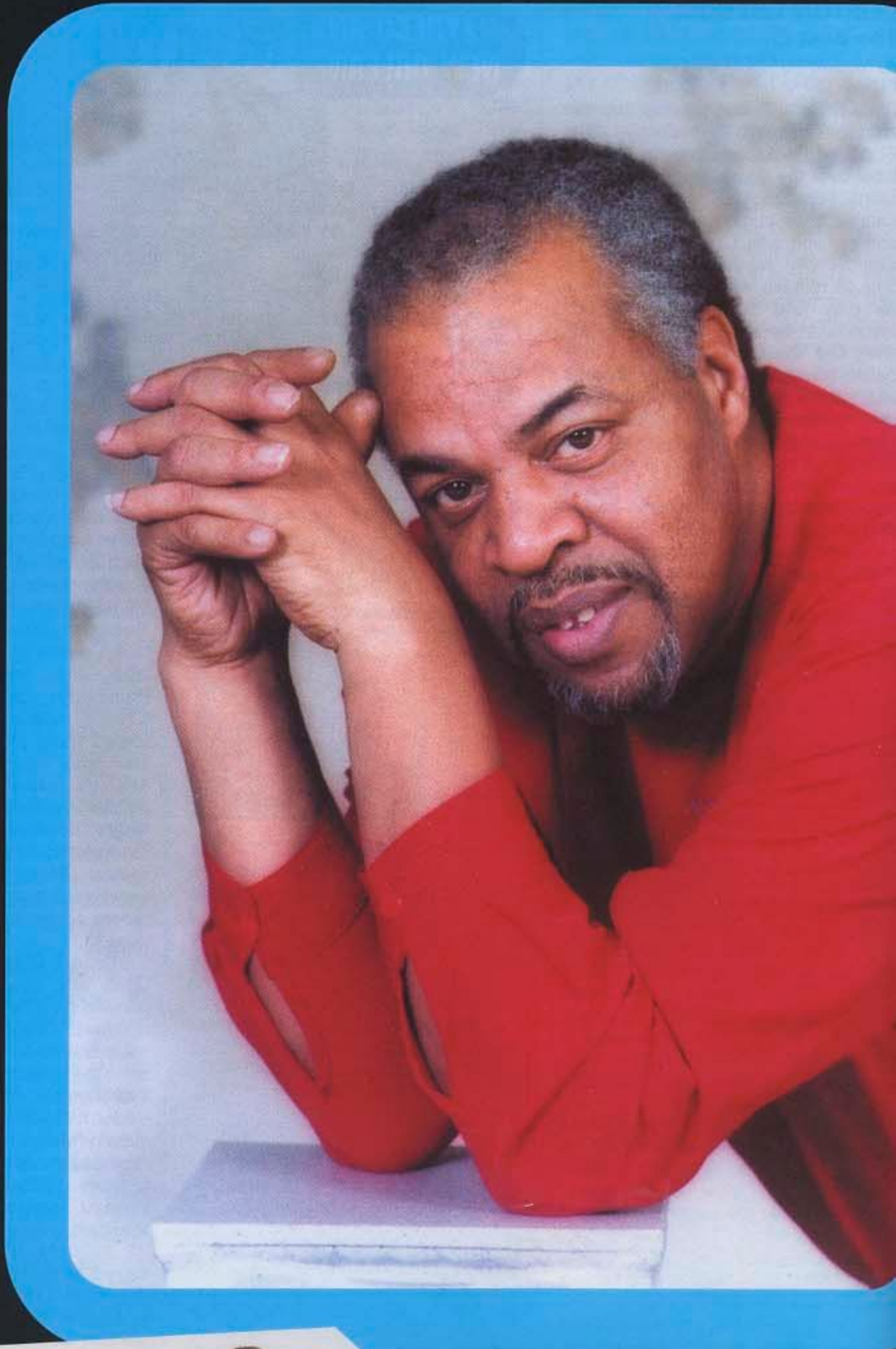
Soul journeyman Freddie Hughes, who vaulted up the R&B charts in July 1968 with his smooth, infectious ballad, 'Send My Baby Back' (Wee 1006, Wand 1182), suffers from confusion surrounding his name. Namesake Fred Hughes enjoyed two sizeable hits on Vee-Jay in 1965. He moved on to Brunswick in 1969 where he stayed in the upper reaches of the Billboard charts for a while.

Our subject was born Fred W. Hughes Jr and delivered at Herrick Hospital (Berkeley General) on August 20, 1943. His father, Fred W. Hughes Sr, an only child, was born and raised in Couplan, Texas and was educated in the Fort Worth public school system. He met and consequently married Lola Mae Anderson on September 23, 1936. They had five children, two girls and three boys. Fred Jr was the couple's second son. Lola Mae was from a well-heeled family in Oakwood, Texas.

Fred Jr, who we will call by his professional name, Freddie, possessed a remarkable high tenor voice not unlike the chops of his two heroes, Donnie Elbert and Ted Taylor. Soon after the move west, Fred Sr got a longshoreman's job working for the ILWU in both Oakland and San Francisco. Freddie attended Woodrow Wilson Jr High on 43rd and Telegraph where he grabbed every opportunity to sing in talent shows. Lola Mae became a missionary out of the 8th and Peralta C.O.G.I.C. which later relocated to 8th and Grove Streets where it evolved into the Good Samaritan C.O.G.I.C. under the late Bishop Isaac Finley.

At Junior High, Freddie hitched up with an unnamed all-women's vocal group. The aggregation often held forth at the Bushrod Recreational Center on 59th Street in North Oakland. Freddie began writing songs for the group to perform. He was also called to sing solos at his family church, the Good Samaritan. This church gave birth to a wealth of talent — blues guitarist Johnny Talbot, Edwin Hawkins and family, and Betty Watson with the Watson Sisters, just to name a few. Johnny Talbot's father was minister for the church for a while.

At age 15, Freddie along with a handful of school buddies organized a vocal group called the Markeets. The Markeets were composed of George Aubrey, baritone (who later became road manager for the Whispers), tenor 'Butch' Harlinda Newton who had a voice remarkably like Smokey Robinson's, Robert Shands who sang bass, and Freddie who assumed tenor lead and filled in on backgrounds. The quartet sang around the Oakland school system but never opted to go professional, preferring day-jobs instead. Freddie and the Markeets did not get along too well as Freddie was often criticized for sounding too 'churchy.'



In 1958, group manager Billy Dunley Barnes took the fellas to the tiny Melatone label based in Compton, CA where they recorded the beautiful 'Teardrops' on which Freddie's lead singing is a joy to hear. His melismatic, gospel-sounding vocabulary is so rich; one never really encounters it as much on his later recordings. The single (currently valued around five hundred dollars) failed to click and was soon forgotten. 'Teardrops,' loosely based on Donnie Elbert's smash 'What Could I Do,' could well pass for an early Joe Simon & the Goldentones record, as its arrangement and overall delivery suggest as much. It is unfortunate that the Markeets disbanded soon after the release.

main photo courtesy Dave Williams

left: **The Four Rivers on Josie**, left to right bottom: **Connie Bailey, Wiley Trass**; standing: keyboardist **Van Pleasents, Kenneth Pleasents** and **Freddie Hughes** photo courtesy Opal Louis Nations

The Freddie Hughes Story

Something In My Eye

by Opal Louis Nations

*below: The Holidays of which Freddie was a sometime member
left to right: Elton Stevens, Kenneth Pleasents, John Foster (also of The Ballads), Stan Harris and Isaiah Brown at The Golden Recreation Center, Berkeley, CA, c. 1958 photo courtesy Opal Louis Nations*

Like most kids growing up in the Bay Area with an interest in music, Freddie tuned into radio KSAN and KDIA. He was a regular listener to Bob White, Sly Stone and Jumpin' George's programs. Little Willie John's music was a particular favorite at the time. Now and again, when needed, Freddie sang on gigs as one of the Holidays. Ken Pleasents, who had organized the Holidays in 1955 at Oakland High, was a friend of Freddie's. Both had sung as guest soloists in church under the direction of Ola Andrews and Ernestine Cleveland.

Out of the Ephesian Church Of God In Christ (at 1709 Alcatraz Avenue in Berkeley) of which Ken Pleasents was a member, arose the Five Disciples, composed of ex-Holiday baritone Billy Harrison, ex-Holiday tenor Pleasents, ex-(occasional) Holiday baritone and second tenor Wylie Trass, tenor and keyboard player for the Good Samaritan C.O.G.I.C. Marcellus Mathews, and tenor lead Freddie Hughes. Like most gospel quartet singers, all switched leads and covered for each other. But both Hughes and Pleasents took on most of the lead work. The Five Disciples, according to Ken Pleasents, sang most of the popular gospel songs of the day but never really took the time to pen any charts of their own. Nevertheless, the group's degree of professionalism was considered superior to that of later reconfigurations of the outfit.

By the summer of 1960, Freddie, Ken and Wylie had their hearts set on

returning to 'the devil's music'. By the spring of 1961, the original Five Disciples had split up. With the addition of Connie Bailey, formerly of the Five Crystals on Music City (of 'Path Of Broken Hearts' fame), Freddie, Ken, Wylie and Connie became the Soul Brothers. Connie was a first class choreographer who soon became an indispensable asset to the quartet. He made showmen of them all: Ray Dobard of Music City Records on Alcatraz Avenue became the Soul Brothers' manager, Teddy Vann was enlisted as musical director, and deejay Magnificent Montague was assigned the task of finding good material.

Legally speaking, the group had no recording contract or official manager at this time. Being suspicious of the characters with whom they had now become involved, the fellas felt safer without legally binding agreements. Although Montague came up with songs he deemed suitable for the quartet to



record, those keyboard-arranged by Ken turned out to work best for the group.

All four Soul Brothers shared in lyric-writing. 'I Confess' (formerly entitled 'Matilda' and based on the Sensational Nightingales' arrangement of 'Morning Train'), backed by 'Sooner Or Later' lifted from Spencer Taylor & the Highway QCs' reading of 'Way Up The Hill,' plus a song remembered as 'Constantly In My Mind,' were recorded at the Music City Studio without the group under contract. Ken recalls that Donald Warden, deejay and lawyer friend of Ray Dobard, played the band track (without vocal overdubs) of 'Constantly On My Mind' as the theme for his weekly radio show. However, the Soul Brothers' version never saw release.

Donald Warden went on to garner greater fame in the Bay Area when, in 1965, he recorded the 'Burn Baby Burn' album in response to the Watts riots. Freddie Hughes preached, hollered, screamed and sang lead on both 'Sooner Or Later' and 'I Confess.' Both were label-credited as written by Teddy Vann and N. Nathan (a pseudonym for M. Montague). Claiming they sounded too 'churchy' for the R&B market, Montague initially refused to release the two songs. He was also against using the Soul Brothers moniker. Put out a little by Montague's inaction, the foursome headed south in search of a contract with a larger label.

The quartet landed up at Capitol Records on Hollywood and Vine. At Capitol, under the stewardship of guitarist/arranger René Hall who set out the musical arrangements, the group re-recorded 'Sooner Or Later' and 'I Confess.' Capitol was extremely pleased with the way the session turned out and wanted to release the songs. However, as they were checking the legalities of doing so, word got back to Montague who went through the roof. After the Magnificent One's threats, Capitol dropped the Soul Brothers like a ton of hot bricks. 'If we had got with Capitol,' Ken asserts, 'we would have had the right people behind us and the record might have taken off.'

Freelancing, René Hall also conducted sessions for Sam Cooke and J.W. Alexander over at Sar Records on West 27th Street. Unbeknownst to the Soul Brothers, René Hall took his 'I Confess' chart, reworked it a little, and switching lyrics, had Bobby Womack and the Valentinos record it as 'I'll Make It Alright' released as Sar 137. Hall covered himself by having the label credit ascribed to Curtis Womack, one of the Valentinos. The waxing met with considerable, favorable airplay. This only resulted in further vexing The Magnificent One. Making sure this sort of thing would not happen again, M.M. registered the copyright for the two songs to himself. After insisting on a name change to the Four Rivers, Dobard and Montague had 'I Confess' and 'Sooner Or Later' placed with Josie Records out of New York. The 45rpm release, although one of the best late R&B vocal group recordings ever to originate in the Bay Area, never took flight. Stiff competition, lack of promotion and good management all contributed to its sad demise.

Dance craze and novelty vocal group recordings were dominating the charts at this point. Gospel-based soul music was still in its infancy. Only KSAN and KWBR played the single with any measure of regularity, thus generating live engagements in the local area. As the Four Rivers, the quartet shared gigs with Ike & Tina Turner and landed back-up vocal track work on Music City sessions behind Lynn (Dee?) as well as supporting visiting talent in concert such as

Richard Berry, James Brown, and Big Mama Thornton. Freddie even got to sing duet with Jimmy Norman of 'Here Comes The Night' fame at the Music City studios.

Most of the Four Rivers' work was generated by Montague and Dobard. Independently, Ken Pleasents created keyboard accompaniment behind a host of vocal groups at the Music City studios. Through San Francisco gospel record producer Dick Vance, the group, who had reverted back to the Soul Brothers moniker, were introduced to David T. Walker who along with René Hall backed the fellas on six songs cut at L.A.'s Universal Recorders. However, nothing got released, and after a month's search for work in L.A., Ken Pleasents and Freddie Hughes split from the group and, forming a Sam & Dave-sounding duet, went out as the Music City Soul Brothers.

Meanwhile, the tiny Red Fire label issued 'Watcha Wanna Do,' a two-parter that the Four Rivers had recorded with the Johnny Talbot Band. Under contract with Music City, the Music City Soul Brothers enjoyed two singles released during 1965. The first pitched 'Looking For My baby,' a solid mid-tempo stomper (in no way related to Solomon Burke's charter) with 'Something In My Eye,' a wailing, deep-soul ballad. 'Something In



photo courtesy Freddie Hughes

Freddie preached, hollered, screamed and sang lead

'My Eye' is either recorded using a vocal group background or is multi-tracked. To my ear, the former seems the most likely.

The duo's second release found 'Every Night I See Your Face,' an Impressions-type composition, matched with the equally impressionistic 'Let Our Love Go On.' 'We sang double falsettos on the melody and harmonized on the bridge and at the breaks,' recalls Ken.

The duo received a small degree of recognition and a taste of success. 'It was easier and more economical for us to get work as a duet than to go out as a quartet,' says Ken.

Before the duo could establish a consistent body of work, Freddie was drafted. When he returned, things had changed. Although both Ken and Freddie opted to stay in popular music, each now chose to go their separate ways. As individuals, both arranged, produced, wrote songs, and served as back-up musicians when required. They did briefly get together to record as the Music City All Stars at the Music City studios on a cover version of 'The Philly,' a dance craze made popular at the time by Alvin Cash. The surprising success of 'The Philly' generated a flurry of engagements for the Music City All Stars, and it looked as if the pair might stick this time. But things did not work out that way.

During the intermission of one of their club dates in March 1966, things started to unravel. Ken, in a fit of joy, asserted he had received God's calling and that as a consequence had to quit singing 'the devil's music' right there and then. Freddie, who had risen out of a strong gospel background, understood all this and with regret accepted his partner's resignation.

With Ken gone and Connie Bailey out of the business, Freddie hooked up with Wylie Trass to form the Casanova Two who recorded under Lonnie Hewitt's production set-up, two singles in all, for the Early Bird label in 1966 and 1967. The first of these matched the punchy 'We Got To Keep On' with the tough Sam & Dave-sounding 'I Was A Fool' (written by Hewitt). Early Bird Records was owned and distributed by Fantasy Records in Berkeley. Producer, songwriter and arranger Lonnie Hewitt's involvement with Fantasy harkened back to a time when he played piano for Cal Tjader, a longtime fixture on Fantasy's artists roster.

The duo's second offering pitched the poetically reflective but intensely rendered 'Love's Philosophy' (a song Freddie had sung in public with Ken as the Music City Soul Brothers) with Northern Soul-sounding nugget 'Maybe They're Right.' Both singles were strong on vocals and current production values and should have generated more sales. However, in 1967, both Motown and Atlantic dominated the R&B charts, making it difficult for a multitude of small fry on lesser labels to gain recognition. There was just too much stiff competition. With a little persuasion from Lonnie Hewitt, who had just set up his own label, Wee, Freddie decided to try his luck as a solo item, under the guidance and supervision of Hewitt himself.

Freddie cut two single releases for Wee before departing for a major label — less output than Lonnie Hewitt himself, who used his own company to put over his own album. 'Keepin' It Together,' (extremely difficult to find today) emerged in 1977 (Wee LP 8484), issued out of Novice Music on 42nd Street in Oakland and recorded at the Different Fur & Wally Heider studios in San Francisco. The album contains some beautiful sounds and soulful raps centering around black social issues of the time. Vocal backups are shared by the Hartfield Brothers, Barry Starr and Fran White, the Promatics, Wylie Trass, Eddie Foster, Cal Valentine, Ernie Marbray, Freddie Hughes and others.

Freddie's first Wee release in early 1968 really lit up the phones. 'Send My Baby Back,' a smooth, soulfully infectious ballad, lingered in *Billboard's* R&B charts for 10 weeks, having risen to number 20. But that was after a deal made with Scepter Records



labels courtesy
Martin Goggin



left: Freddie at Lake Merritt,
Oakland courtesy Dan Bacon

to have it placed in national circulation (more on that in a moment). The reverse was the equally pleasing 'Where's My Baby,' rendered in the same urgent, anguished fashion with whoops, squeals and predominant brass arrangements.

When Freddie made his first solo performance on a bill with Morrie & The Kidds from Alameda for Fat Daddy Lyons at the Oakland Auditorium, he had no idea of how well he would be received. 'Send My Baby Back,' written by Freddie, Lonnie Hewitt and Ernie Marbray, sold strongly in the Southlands and throughout California. Lonnie Hewitt now saw the possibility of capitalizing on Freddie's good fortune. Promoter Danny Ziegler and Jack Salinger, president of the Independent Distributors Corporation, offered Lonnie Hewitt \$5,000 for Freddie's recording contract. Somewhere in the small print was a complex clause involving escrow payments which in plain terms meant that Freddie would have to sell 100,000 copies of his records before receiving royalties, a typical ploy to gyp the artist out of his money.

Freddie soon found himself on New York's Broadway-based Scepter Records subsidiary, Wand, where he enjoyed the coast-to-coast reissue and blanket-play of 'Send My Baby Back,' which, as one would imagine, helped to keep him in steady, remunerative employment for a while. This did not stop Lonnie Hewitt from releasing on Wee Freddie's answer record entitled 'My Baby Came Back'

(Wee 1010.) 'My Baby Came Back' was a funky jumper rendered in the usual high tenor vein with group background, possibly supplied by the Bay Area's own Ballads of 'God Bless Our Love' fame. Freddie had for years shared both friendship and concert billing with John Foster and the Ballads of Oakland. The girlie group-supported gospel-tinged, deep-soul opus 'Love Can't Be Understood' was chosen for the flipside.

Scepter issued an album entitled 'Send My Baby Back' (Wand LP 664) the content of which was made up of songs culled from singles on the Wand and Wee labels. Much of the material had been created under Lonnie Hewitt's production supervision at the Coast Recording Studios in San Francisco. Included were the high energy 'Tonight, I Want To See My Baby,' the vocally ethereal 'We Gotta Keep On,' the complexly arranged 'He's No Good,' the answer record to Aretha Franklin's 'Natural Woman' entitled 'Natural Man' on which Freddie stretches his chops beautifully, the wailing 'I Gotta Keep My Bluff In' (with possible backgrounding from the Ballads), the supercharged 'You're My Everything,' which could possibly be a reject from the old Music City Soul Brothers days with Ken Pleasents assisting on vocals, and the busy groover 'What Am I Gonna Do Without Your Sweet Lovin'.'

Freddie continued to perform on venues with the Ballads and Whispers and cut the odd one or two single records for a variety of labels. Here follows a survey of some that I

another chance as he had it re-pressed on the Happy Fox label a short while later.

Then came the hauntingly beautiful 'Sarah Mae' on Greg-Uh-Rudy (002) with its moody string arrangements, multi-tracking and Johnnie Taylor-inflected mannerisms. 'Sarah Mae' was striking for its original arrangements and killer vocal pyrotechnics. The underside, 'Don't You Leave,' was sadly little more than disco fodder. Somewhere in here came the pounding, wailing 'Take Me As I Am' for the tiny Hip Star label. This was an unused instrumental track over which Freddie dubbed his voice for the topside.

In 1977 drummer Paul Smith (second lead tenor), 'Lady' Bianca Thornton, and second lead David Gardner got together to form 'Vitamin E.' All members of Vitamin E were from the Bay Area. Paul Smith and Lonnie Hewitt collaborated on song material for the group. An album collection came together under Norman Conner's direction after he had discovered them. The album was later leased to Buddah Records.

During the recording sessions, for one reason or another, Paul Smith was unable to make an appearance, so Freddie was asked to fill in. Freddie was paid \$1,000 plus a round-trip air ticket to New York to record the title track called 'Sharing' at Jimmy Hendrix's Electric Lady studio. Buddah also chose to issue 'Sharing' as the top side of a single release which turned out to be one of Freddie's finest moments. 'Sharing,' a deep-soul weeper, really showed the music world

have been able to track down. In 1972-73 Freddie cut at least two singles for Ron Carson on the Janus label supported by the Chevelles. The first of these sandwiches the jazz-colored 'I've Got My Own Mind,' on which Freddie sails up and down the musical scale with ease and grace, with the lavishly orchestrated 'I Just Found Out.'

The second release (of which I have only heard the single-sided promotional copy) is yet another mid-paced ballad with strong female choral support called 'Will You Be Here.' Both singles fit with the prevailing production values of the day but fail to offer anything out of the ordinary. Ron Carson must have felt that 'Will You Be Here' deserved

how elastic Freddie's range could be and, like a gospel-trouper, how well he could use it. 'Sharing' was reissued on CD by Sequel Records in England on a various artists collection called 'Yes My Goodness Yes!' (NEM CD 781) in 1995.

Vitamin E evolved into a group called Bridge. In the liner notes to Bridge's CD cut in England on the F.E.R. (First Enterprise Records) label entitled 'Crying For Love,' writer Lee Hildebrand explains how Bridge came about: 'When 'Sharing' failed to have much commercial impact, the group began falling apart. Gardner quickly lost interest, and Bianca left to work with Sly Stone.' Finding a replacement for Gardner was easy. Smith turned to Freddie's 18-year-old son Derrick who had had mainly church singing experience. Derrick's vocal virtuosity recalled his father's. Derrick and others were enlisted, and Freddie ended up appearing as guest soloist on the CD's closing song, 'Listen.'

'Listen' is a mellow lounge-ballad on which Freddie in signature fashion sails into the upper tenor registers he so thoroughly masters. He was supported on the song by Paul Smith, drums, Jon Bendick, congas and percussion, Adrian Barrios, bass, Pat Duffey, guitar, Michael Robinson, keyboards, and Sonny Lewis, sax.

Some time during 1978 Freddie hitched up with premier ex-Bay Area guitarist Bobby Murray for what would turn out to be a very warm friendship and lasting, decade-long working relationship. Bobby Murray was born in Nagoya, Japan on June 9, 1953. After moving to the Bay Area from Tacoma, Washington, he honed his guitar skills by playing back-up behind Sonny Rhodes and Frankie Lee. He went on to become a fixture in Etta James's touring band. Bobby Murray was Freddie's introduction to singing straight blues, and he soon realized he had a definite affinity for the music. With Bobby, Freddie played at Biscuits & Blues, Lou's at Pier 41, with Robert Cray at Slim's in San Francisco and The Great American Music Hall.

In September 1981 Freddie's father remarried. With Iwine Hill, Fred Sr found a new lease of life which rubbed off on his son. Eight years later Freddie remade 'Send My Baby Back' for the minuscule Hattie's label with (Lee) Ashford Ashford's group. This remake delivered what one might expect from an update — airy keyboard and background vocal arrangements and clever colorings. The B-side featured a remake of the follow-up, 'My Baby Came Back,' which has a few interesting things going on, such as Donnie Elbert-style vocal inflections and pleasing vocal background harmonics. Unfortunately, the record proved little more than a sentimental tribute to days gone by.

Freddie worked with Bobby Murray on Bobby's debut album, 'The Blues Is Now,' released in 1996 on the New York-based Viceroots label. Other guests besides Freddie were Frankie Lee and organist Jimmy Pugh. Freddie worked the House of Blues in L.A. and opened for Etta James at Redondo Beach.

In 1992 Tom Mazzolini, KPFA's blues radio show host and sole organizer of the annual San Francisco Blues Festival, took Freddie, Bobby and Richard Cousins (18-year-old veteran bass player with the Robert Cray Band) along with Maurice McKinnis, keyboardist Dave Matthews, Ron Thompson, and drummer Bobby Cochran to Europe where they played Bordeaux, Amsterdam and Zurich, a 24-day tour sponsored and organized by the French Cultural Attaché. With travel, the package was gone for three weeks during which time the French paid

Freddie \$600 per week plus room and board, transportation and one meal a day.

In 1996 Freddie spent some time at the Chastain Theatre in Georgia where he opened for both Bobby Murray and Etta James. He followed this by being one of the opening acts for Bobby Bland and Otis Clay at the Russian River Festival. In 1997 Freddie formed his own band, with George Brooks, tenor sax, Richard Cousins, bass, and Bobby Cochran on drums. With Marlon



Freddie with Henry Clemens & The Gumbo Band

'Sharing,' a deep-soul weeper, really showed the music world how elastic Freddie's range could be and, like a gospel-trouper, how well he could use it

Hunter handling his management and multi-instrumentalist Chris Burns taking care of the musical direction, Freddie cut his first CD entitled 'The Soul Of Freddie Hughes' (IFGAM Media Cat #197). IFGAM stands for I Feel Good About Myself.

The collection (which features the guest appearance of Bobby Murray on guitar) includes a sweet and mellow reading of 'Save Our Love,' a deep, smoldering, soulful interpretation of 'Future Is Now,' the tearful 'Rock My Soul,' plus six other compositions

penned by Freddie, Bonnie Raitt, Charles Wright, Chris Burns and Bobby Murray. When Marlon Hunter moved to Georgia, Freddie also went along, traveling with his House Of Hughes Band. After a few months the band returned to the Bay Area but Freddie remained and joined up with the Theodis Ealey Band. Every Tuesday and Wednesday, Freddie and the band played in Buckhead, a tiny place just outside the Atlanta area. Freddie traveled with Theodis to Tallahassee and Tampa, Florida. In Tampa Freddie and Theodis took part in the Mardi Gras parade. The streets were lined with a crowd of some 250,000 celebrants.

In early 1998 Freddie toured the UK as the vocalist with keyboards player and ex-John Lee Hooker Coast to Coast Blues Band member Deacon Jones.

After Theodis, Freddie hooked up with Georgia-born singer/guitarist Chick Willis, cousin of the great R&B shouter Chuck Willis. Freddie and Chick were recorded live at Stone Mountain's Rib Shack in Georgia in early 1999.

Having returned to the Bay Area later that year, Freddie formed his second unit called the International Alpha Band. Some of the band's members had played with John Lee Hooker. The International Alpha Band consisted of Freddie, guitarist Rick Hersch, bassist Ron Perry, singer/drummer Calvin Dixon and keyboardist/arranger Chris Burns. The aggregation played regularly every Saturday at the A&C Club on Nineteenth and San Pablo Avenue in Berkeley, opposite Sweet Jimmie's. Together they produced 'The Future Is Now' CD on OK Land [reviewed in *JB* 53, page 49].

Apart from working with his son Derrick on his CD release 'For The Love', Freddie has a new song coming out on Chump Change Records titled 'Higher Power', written and composed by Paul Smith. The song is to be released as single, and is also on a CD called 'The Invisible Man' by Park Place. Under the new, sympathetic management of Diane Anderson-Rawls, he has a stunning new CD ready titled 'Absolute Hughes — The Best Of Freddie Hughes' on his own label. Music City Soul Brother Ken Pleasents has indicated that he wants to collaborate with Freddie on writing a bunch of new gospel songs for possible release.

Freddie is now in Oakland and plays with the Gerald Mathis Band at the Serenader Club. He also appears around the Bay Area with his original House Of Hughes Band, consisting of Tony Simon on guitar, Lennard Thompson on drums, Kevin Allen on bass and Brian F. West on keyboards, performing at venues like the R&B festival hosted by Budweiser and the City of Oakland, Discovery Bay Yacht Club, Monterey Blues Festival and numerous North & South Bay Area clubs.

Things are looking real bright for East Bay soul shouter Freddie Hughes, not to be confused of course with anyone coming remotely close to his unique and awesome talent. ■

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