

THE TEMPTATIONS

R·E·U·N·I·O·N

RICHARD STREET

Melvin Franklin sometimes expresses concern that his cousin Richard Street doesn't always get the credit that's due him as a top-notch and highly versatile tenor. But check out Richard's "forgotten" hit, "Hey, Girl" or any of a number of ensemble-type tunes in which he's played a part and you'll see that Richard cooks with the best of 'em.

Richard is from Detroit, where he and Melvin were part of the Distant's, one of the groups that contributed members to what would one day be the Temptations. At the time, things weren't moving for the Distant's as fast as Richard wanted them to, so he dropped out of the act.

The early '60s found Richard dabbling in a variety of pursuits, even as the Tempts were first making a name for themselves. For one, he says he would "run 17 blocks" from his home to the studio when he was called to fill-in on sessions for the Temptations and others.

Richard also worked at Motown as a Quality Control Evaluator, rating new records by Motown artists. Perhaps most importantly, Richard joined the Mointors, a Motown act that hit big in the middle-'60s with hits like "Say You" and "Greetings (This Is Uncle Sam)"

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By 1968, Paul Williams was battling the illness that would eventually force him out of the Temptations. Richard was recruited as a "sixth Tempt", singing from backstage for Paul, who was becoming increasingly weaker and disoriented. Richard wasn't especially fond of the position; he says it made him feel like a buzzard.

When Paul Williams left the Tempts around the turn of the decade, Richard stepped in and has been with the group ever since. Offstage, he enjoys advising young would-be singers and watching the Los Angeles Lakers.