

# Motown from page E1

Mon. Bobby Rogers of The Miracles said he wouldn't have missed watching the show "for the world. It reminded me of a miniature Motown revue."

Strong, however, had mixed feelings.

"It's OK. It's great. I enjoy watching my friends and everything. But I'm a person like this: The music business is a youth-oriented business. At some point you have to stand back and look at yourself and figure out what you got to do."

The yearlong celebration will also include a four-hour, prime-time special "Motown 40: The Music Is Forever," hosted by Diana Ross, on ABC Sunday, Feb. 16, and Thursday, Feb. 19.

In conjunction with the special, the Motown Museum and radio station WMXD-FM (92.3) are having a party 8-11 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 15, at the Rooster-tail where patrons can learn Motown dances, mingle with alumni, VIPs and celebrity guests, listen to Motown music and watch the television special.

The parties continue at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 4; when the museum will pay tribute to the late Ewart Abner, the former president of Motown Records, at its annual 28th Celebration at the Rooster-tail, which is also celebrating its 40th anniversary.

"We encourage people to really recognize the impact of Motown and this culture," said Kristina King, who works in development at the Motown Museum. "When you really learn about the history of Motown and its extraordinary achievements, you'll see that it has uplifted people for 40 years and I'm sure it will go on forever. It was a remarkable thing to happen."

Strong isn't planning on celebrating the anniversary. "I haven't made plans except to congratulate them and talk to them about how great it was, how good it was that we made a

sound and how good it feels to be part of such a successful story." Motown was founded in 1958 by Gordy, who referred to Motown as "the sound of young America," with \$800 he borrowed from his family.

One of the first groups he worked with was Smokey Robinson and the Matadors, later known as the Miracles, whom he discovered in 1958. He recorded their songs as an independent producer and leased the first Miracles' record "Got a Job/My Mama Done Told Me" to the New York label End.

Rogers and Bill Baran, his Dearborn-based manager, contend that 1958 is actually the 40th anniversary of the Miracles not necessarily Motown.

"We released 'Got a Job' Feb. 19, 1958. Motown wasn't really in existence at that time. I guess the plan was in motion," said Rogers who lives in Southfield. "That was our first recording but since it was recorded by Berry Gordy who is like Motown, I guess that's why we say it's Motown's 40th anniversary."

For Rogers, the 40 years have flown by.

"No, I can't believe it's been 40 years. I still think I'm about 25," he said with a laugh. Rogers along with fellow Miracles David Finley, who joined the group in 1978, and Sidney Justin, the former lead singer of Shalamar, will perform at The Fox Theatre in June with The Temptations and the Four Tops.

## Modest career

The Miracles were the first band signed to Motown but the label's first hit came courtesy of Strong and his single "Money (That's What I Want)" in 1959. Strong, who met Gordy in a Detroit nightclub, is modest about his years at Motown.

"I was just a writer there. As an artist I recorded the song 'Money.' That was pretty much it."

# Eliza from page E1

Rolling Stone.

"I never thought I'd meet someone like that in the store," said Eliza, pronounced Eleeza.

The two hit it off and have since become writing partners. The result is her debut album "I Want More," on which she covers Strong's hit single "Money (That's What I Want)." The album, which couples acoustically-based music with hip-hop beats, was released on Strong's Blarrie Records last year. It is available in Harmony House stores.

She will perform the first single, the upbeat dance song "I Said You Be My Only Love," on the "Jenny Jones Show" at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10, on WDIV.

"That is such a big thing. It was fun. I did a warm up and

then Jenny Jones came in and said hi. She said she really loved the song."

Strong was just as impressed. "She did a heck of a job. She's a very talented lady. I think she's going to prove to be a real force in the industry if she gets a chance. We're going to do everything we can to make that happen."

A songwriter since she was in her mid-teens, Eliza grew up in a musical family. She and her sisters, Valerie and Michelle, frequently performed in their Armenian church. At home their father played the guitar and harmonica.

Although her parents discouraged a career in music, describing it as an "unstable lifestyle," Eliza entered Wayne State Uni-

versity to study opera and piano. When her pop music ambitions took a toll on her vocal chords, she was forced to choose between rock and opera. She concentrated on pop and earned a bachelor's degree in music from Wayne State University in 1992.

She now works as a full-time musician performing her music acoustically in coffeehouses, and singing top 40 songs with the "corporate-type wedding band" Royce.

Eliza said it is difficult to book shows in the Detroit area so she and Strong, who recently released the single "Cold Hearted Woman/I Can't Love Again," are considering a tour of Japan.

"They say they love American music over there."

It doesn't end there. Strong worked with Gordy for 10 years before leaving to work for Veerday Records in Chicago, the studio which was the first to have masters of music by the Beatles.

"While I was there I wrote a song called 'Stay in My Corner' for The Delta. Then I came back to Motown where I became partners with Norman Whitfield. We wrote songs for The Temptations and 'I Heard it Through the Grapevine.'"

For two years Strong has been running the appropriately named Grapevine Co. in Southfield, of which Blarrie Records and Studio B are a part. He started the label as a way of releasing his and Eliza's music.

"The music business today is so strange you never know what's going to happen. No matter what philosophy you have you have to believe in yourself and go for it. It's basically the same thing that Mr. Gordy did. He put the records out and he

made it happen for him."

Strong recently released his single "Cold Hearted Woman/I Can't Love Again" and Eliza's album "I Want More." They are available at all Harmony House stores.

The Detroit music scene, Strong said, lacks the camaraderie between acts it had in the '60s.

"It was a great experience that

I'll always remember," he said of his Motown days. "We were just one big old family. There were a lot of laughs, a lot of fun. There were a lot of tears shed. But it worked out great."

Kim Weston, who took part in the second and third National Motor Town Revues, said that was one of the highlights of her years at Motown.

"One of the things that proba-

bly was the best experience for me was the family that the artists became," said Weston who released her first record "Love Me All the Way" in 1963.

Now living in a "black Hebrew community" in Israel, Weston is scheduled to tour with the musical "Sound and the Kidnapped African," an anthology of black history. She is portraying herself in the 1960s when she sang the "black national anthem" "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

Weston attributes Motown with her success in "secular" music but sounds bitter about its anniversary. After mentioning that she will receive the R&B Foundation's Pioneer Award this month she explained, "That's because of Motown but unfortunately they did not include me in the celebration. At least somebody's recognizing me."

Leaning back in his chair and glancing around the room nervously, Strong had nothing but praise for his years at Motown.

"I learned from the guy who to me was the master, as far as like picking a hit record and like motivating and making things happen. It was a great experience for me because it gives me something to teach the new people that come through my studio," he said.

"I'd love to do it again. If I die and come back, I'd come back doing the same thing."

# Horses from page E1

an equine ballet. Their routines are accompanied by music.

"Every horse is working together, which is very rare for stallions," said Lashinsky. "These horses mirror one another so they have the same look, like the Rockettes."

The riders are all dressage trained, and come from all over the world including the United States.

Dressage is a French word for "schooling of the horse," and means harmony between horse and rider. Riders guide their mount through a set of maneuvers, without the perceptible use of hands or reins. Dressage can also be thought of as an equestrian ballet or acrobatics where horse and rider work together.

"They're very dedicated, and in their 20s and 30s," said Lashinsky.

sky. "We have the only outlet for exhibiting these horses. We're only competing for applause and the enjoyment of the audience."

With increased understanding and appreciation of the Lipizzan breed have come renewed efforts to save it.

The Spanish Andalusian and the Arabian are the ancestral forefathers of the Lipizzan. Archduke Maximilian, later Emperor of Austria, began breeding Spanish horses around 1562. Eighteen years later, Archduke Karl, ruler of four Austrian provinces, established a royal stud farm in Lipizza. The horses became the property of nobility and the military aristocracy. The stallions were trained for battle, and the gentle white mares became the coach horses of the elite.

After the break up of the old

Austrian Empire, Lipizza became a part of Italy. The Italian and Austrian governments divided the Lipizzan herd equally. The Republic of Austria took their horses to Piber in Steiermark. Piber, a privately owned stud farm, was founded in 1789 to breed cavalry mounts for the army. In 1858 it became a government breeding farm, and produced Lipizzans of another and lighter strain for stud purposes in the provinces. A number of the Lipizzans appearing in the show were purchased from the Spanish Riding School of Vienna, or born at the Piber Stud Farm.

The Lipizzan is usually born black and changes slowly over a period of six to 10 years to final, pure white color. Their average life span is 30 to 35 years.

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