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Marvin Gaye, Elvis Presley and Otis Redding. Bradley moved to Michigan with his parents in the 1960s, when he said "Detroit was hip." "There was a lot of good music going on."

So he started singing on the streets of Motown, finding some good spots where his voice would echo beneath the buildings. He was singing for almost 10 years before brothers Michael (guitar) and Andrew Nehra (bass) and drummer Jeff Fowlkes ever caught sight or sound of his talent.

"They were suburban guys," explained Bradley. "When asked to join the band, he first said no, 'I didn't believe a word they said.'"

About six months later, he changed his tune and picked up the phone. It was the early 1990s, and Bradley was making \$500 to \$600 singing in Detroit's Eastern Market — he didn't exactly need another gig. But he split his time between singing for himself and jamming at White Room Studio with the band. That's where he met Kid Rock — who appears in two songs on *Time To Discover*. "He was Bob, just a white boy trying to rap," recalled Bradley.

In 1995, the band went from the studio to a music showcase in New York City. "Bob went with us," said Bradley. "He was the emcee at the show."

What's happened since then is of no consequence to this music-made man. "I'm living for what's happening right now," he said with conviction. "I was always singing in my head. This here is just fame. That's all it is."

On *Time To Discover*, RBBS takes its recipe for success one step further, with 11 solid songs loaded with old-school soul and modern style. Bassist and Royal Oak resident Andrew Nehra was basking in the band's success and the flood of good press RBBS has received while at the Detroit Music Awards.

He said the new album took seven months to complete. "It was all pretty spiritual," he said. "To get the perfect, it's a time to find the magic and go that extra step."

Nehra, whose influences include The Temptations and Stone Roses, said notoriety for the Detroit bands is "way overdone." "People have been asleep."

"We just want to be happy with the music first," said Bradley of this album. "That's

the way we feel about it." Two of his favorite songs on the album remind him of his fiancée, *You and Me* and *Ultimate Sacrifice*. "They reflect their relationship and impending May wedding," Bradley said it's all about being "for real."

Another change reflected by the album is the addition of Tim Diaz, whom Bradley said fit right in. "He's one of the most talented musicians in the state of Michigan," said Bradley. "I ain't talkin' no jive."

And he ain't the only one talkin'. Scott Forbes, singer and guitarist of The Forbes Brothers, couldn't say enough about friend and musical colleague Tim Diaz, either. "He's so deserving," said the Farmington Hills resident after Diaz won the Detroit Music Award for outstanding rock instrumentalist. "He is extraordinary. He writes great songs and plays several different instruments."

Forbes predicts RBBS will be "the next big thing" out of Detroit.

"Detroit is in my soul," said Bradley. "When I come to Detroit things happened." The band with his name on it is one reason the city is on this musical upswing.

"Back in the '60s, it was booming. Now it's jogging. We're hoping to get it running. We need to keep moving to really pump it up."

Take it from someone who's seen it before, Robert Bradley: "Detroit City, The Motor City, it's gonna rise again."

Stephanie Casola writes about popular music for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.



Time to Discover: Robert Bradley's Blackwater Surprise is Tim Diaz, Jeff Fowlkes, Michael Nehra, Robert Bradley and Andrew Nehra.

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nicated her support for the play.)

Dreams of Martha Stewart is Parker's first one-person play. She incorporated the stories of 12 characters with her friend and collaborator, actress Sally Bondi, in mind. Bondi has received a long list of impressive critical reviews for her portrayals.

The play, on a three-year run since debuting at the 1997 Ficcio Spalato Arts Festival in Charleston, S.C., follows a wife/mother searching for perfection. She's intent on living the "perfect life," including antiquing her bathroom, building her own loom and styling her hair ala Martha.

Unsatisfied without the real thing, the unhappy housewife sets out for Turkey Hill, Conn. to come face-to-face with the real deal. The journey is more of a confrontation of the myriad faces of America, and an uncovering of the illusion behind the notion of perfection.

Among Parker's other plays is *A Higher Place in Heaven*, nominated for a 1995 Pulitzer Prize. Her work has been called distinctively in the southern literary tradition of writers such as Carson McCullers, William Faulkner and Harper Lee.

Clearly, Parker's most recent play is a more adventurous statement about American culture than her other stories, typically set in a southern milieu.

Dreams of Martha Stewart doesn't offer a *Saturday Night Live*-type spoof. Rather, Parker has set out to illuminate what's behind Stewart's immense appeal.

"Since the beginning of time, there's been symbols of perfection," said Parker. "I want to show that we are good enough with who we are, if we can learn to appreciate and accept ourselves."

Similar to Parker's lead character, the protagonist in *Male Intellect*... is searching to discover what lies beyond the notion of perfection. In Dubac's story, however, it's the ideal of romantic love.

Jilted by the girl of his dreams, the lead character, Bobby, is all-too-ready to hear some homespun wisdom from five male characters who apparently know what women really want. Of course, they have their own illusions about how to avoid dealing with what women really want.

The advice ranges from the benefits of admitting that men are jerks to the attitude of "love 'em fast and leave them first." None of the five characters, Dubac was quick to point out, are autobiographical.

Clearly, *Male Intellect*... has struck a chord with audiences. Dubac has played to sold-out houses in Denver, and had an 18-month run in Chicago and a 10-month run in Boston before heading into Detroit for seven performances.

The show, which is part stand-up comedy and part dramatic theater, has been called by some critics as "too stereotypical." Dubac simply cites the roaring approval of audiences as proof that his characters have more than one dimension. The appeal, he said, is that each of the characters represents a distinctive male perspective.

But the key is that Dubac's message — "Men can't live in the past and have to change" — is delivered with a heavy dose of humor.

"Men are so blatantly maladjusted," said Dubac. "It's not that we're lost, it's just that the tools we're using are outdated."

Dubac has been approached by television producers about adapting his play for a sit-com. Until now, however, he hasn't been pleased that producers have wanted to "dumb down" the material.

"They're looking at demographics, rather than the comedy," he said. "Hey, I know I'm not breaking new intellectual ground here. This isn't the *Yogi Berra Monologues*. I simply wrote the play. My wife explained it to me."

And what about the ideal male role model?

"Hold on," said Dubac, "let me ask my wife."

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