

# Black

## Atlanta Artists Keeps Growing Blackmon's Firm Expands With Help From Ga. Bank

ATLANTA—"This is the key city in the South, yet it has never had a major entertainment company. We plan to fill that void."

The man with the ambition is James Mason, newly named executive director of Atlanta Artists, the company formed two years ago by Larry Blackmon of Cameo. Since then, Atlanta Artists has grown to embrace not only that PolyGram-signed recording act, but also a record label, a management company, and a production firm with four staff producers.

Atlanta Artists is among the first labels to be distributed by two majors, claims Mason, who was formerly business manager of the Bar-

Kays. Recording for the enterprise and distributed via a logo deal with PolyGram are Cameo and Midnight Blue, the latter a South Carolina band. Two other bands, L.A. Connection from Louisiana and Silver Platinum from Florida, are distributed by MCA Records under a similar pact, along with ex-Cameo lead singer Wayne Cooper.

Chocolate Milk, signed to RCA, is managed by Mason and Atlanta Artists. In addition, Blackmon, Cameo guitarist Charlie Singleton, ex-Slave and Aura member Steve Washington, and ex-Switch producer and lead singer Bobby DeBarge are staff producers. Atlanta Artists has a full-time staff of six em-

ployees.

The National Bank of Georgia has played a key role in helping the company grow. "They have given us the loan power to do whatever we need," says Mason. Banking institutions have traditionally been leery of getting involved in financing entertainment concerns. Mason claims, "We overcame that by being very professional and not selling the glamor of the record business, but its financial potential."

"We showed them the kind of monies a Cameo and the other groups can bring in. They also saw we are involved with two major companies, PolyGram and MCA, both committed to our operation. We showed them that with these sources of income, plus touring and our publishing company, we won't have a cash flow problem."

Another factor influencing the bank's involvement, says Mason, was Atlanta Artists' commitment to the city and to the South as a whole. "Most of the talent is from the South, and we intend to continue utilizing young talent from this region. We hope in this way to stimulate the growth of entertainment-related businesses here, such as studios and so on."

With new product from Cameo, Midnight Blue and L.A. Connection due early in 1983, Mason says it's likely some acts by Atlanta Artists will tour as a package next spring.



**BLUE DEBUT**—Midnight Blue, a new group signed to the Atlanta Artists label, are shown performing at the VIP 2001 Entertainment Complex in Atlanta.

## The Rhythm & The Blues Some Seasonal Sounds Of Soul

By NELSON GEORGE

Christmas this year is prompting the release of seasonal product by a number of prominent black artists: a newly recorded package from QAG Records, a compilation of vintage Stax tunes from Fantasy Records, an eight-album addition to the Motown midline series, and a new Gladys Knight & the Pips package.

"Christmas Soul Special" is the name of the first release from New York's QAG (Quantum Arts Group) label, and it's a tasty selection of holiday chestnuts recorded specifically for this album.

Among those participating are Wilson Pickett ("Silver Bells," "Jingle Bells"), Mary Wells ("Silent Night," "Jingle Bell Rock"), Ben E. King ("Drummer Boy," "The Christmas Song"), Sam Moore, formerly of Sam & Dave ("Santa Claus Is Coming To Town," "Oh, Come All Ye Faithful"), former Shirelles leader Shirley Alston ("Winter Wonderland," "Frosty The Snowman") and Martha Reeves ("Noel," "Oh Holy Night").

The album is in the traditional '60s soul style, a sound QAG owners David Fieberman and Doug Pell grew up with. Pell has been booking most of the acts represented on the album into rock clubs for the past three years.

"Christmas Soul Special" was recorded in New York in August. Peter Gideon is handling promotion and

merchandising, while Roy Norman is working with independent distributor for QAG. Schwartz Bros., MJS and Malverne are already committed to the record in their areas.

"It's Christmas Time Again" on Stax via Fantasy is a collection of 10 Yuletide items from the now-defunct Memphis label, some of them previously unreleased. Albert King ("Christmas Comes But Once A Year," "Santa Claus Wants Some Loving"), Mack Rice ("Santa Claus Wants Some Loving," which he wrote), Rance Allen ("White Christmas"), Little Johnny Taylor ("Please Come Home For Christmas"), Isaac Hayes ("Mistletoe & Me"), the Emotions ("What Do The Lonely Do At Christmas"), the Temprees ("It's Christmas Time Again"), the Staple Singers ("Who Took The Merry Out Of Christmas") and Rufus Thomas ("I'll Be Your Santa, Baby") are represented.

The Motown albums are midline

reissues of Christmas titles which, with one exception, were first available in the '60s and '70s.

Two by the Temptations are "Christmas Card" (from 1968) and "Give Love At Christmas" (1980), and there are also two by the Miracles (including an early '60s title, "Season For Miracles") and one each by the Supremes, the Jackson Five and Stevie Wonder. The eighth is a various artists package.

The Supremes' LP ("Merry Christmas") dates from 1965, and this reissue represents its third time in the market; the second was through Motown's Natural Resources line several years back. Wonder's "Someday At Christmas" originates from 1966, while the Jacksons' album first appeared in 1970.

Finally, CBS Records has a collection of 10 Yule tunes from Gladys Knight & the Pips, entitled "That Special Time Of Year." These are

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**GIFT GIVERS**—Members of the Canadian National Institute For The Blind visited with Stevie Wonder following his recent appearance in Toronto at the Canadian National Exhibition. Student sculptor Cecil Waters, center, presented a bust to the Tamla/Motown artist at a reception hosted by Quality Records.

Luther Vandross in performance in New York City. Review, page 34.

# Billboard Black LPs

Survey For Week Ending 11/27/82  
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This Week	Last Week	Weeks on Chart	TITLE Artist, Label & Number (Dist. Label)	This Week	Last Week	Weeks on Chart	TITLE Artist, Label & Number (Dist. Label)
1	2	5	<b>LIONEL RICHIE</b> Lionel Richie, Motown 6007ML	38	41	4	<b>CASINO LIGHTS</b> Various Artists, Warner Bros. 23718-1
2	1	7	<b>FOREVER, FOR ALWAYS, FOR LOVE</b> Luther Vandross, Epic FE 38235	39	42	4	<b>INCOGNITO</b> Spyro Gyra, MCA MCA 5368
3	15	2	<b>MIDNIGHT LOVE</b> Marvin Gaye, Columbia FC 38197	NEW ENTRY	41	21	<b>SKYYJAMMER</b> Skyy, Salsoul SA 8555 (RCA)
4	3	12	<b>GET LOOSE</b> Evelyn King, RCA AFL1- 4337	41	39	7	<b>HERE WE GO AGAIN</b> Bobby Bland, MCA MCA 5297
5	5	6	<b>SILK ELECTRIC</b> Diana Ross, RCA AFL1-4384	42	46	7	<b>ALL THIS LOVE</b> DeBarge, Gordy 60126L (Motown)
6	6	9	<b>VANITY 6</b> Vanity 6 Warner Bros. 1-23716	43	47	4	<b>GRAND SLAM</b> The Spinners, Atlantic 80020-1
7	4	11	<b>WHAT TIME IS IT?</b> The Time, Warner Bros. 23701-1	44	50	4	<b>DISTANT LOVER</b> Alphonse Mouzon, High Rise HR 100AE
8	8	8	<b>AS ONE</b> Kool & The Gang, De-Lite DSR 8505 (Polygram)	45	30	16	<b>DONNA SUMMER</b> Donna Summer, Geffen GHS 2005 (Warner Bros.)
9	9	6	<b>THE MESSAGE</b> Grand Master Flash And The Furious Five, Sugar HillSH 268	46	31	12	<b>CHANGE</b> Barry White, Unimiled Gold FZ 38048 (Epic)
10	32	2	<b>1999</b> Prince, Warner Bros. 23720-1	47	35	11	<b>NEW DIRECTIONS</b> Tavares, RCA AFL1-4357
11	7	16	<b>JUMP TO IT</b> Aetha Franklin, Arista AL 9602	48	52	2	<b>TWO OF A KIND</b> Earl Klugh/Bob James, Capitol ST-12244
12	12	24	<b>JEFFREY OSBORNE</b> Jeffrey Osborne, A&M SP- 4896	49	51	27	<b>STEVIE WONDER'S ORIGINAL MUSIQUARIUM I</b> Stevie Wonder, Tamla 6002TL2 (Motown)
13	18	4	<b>JANET JACKSON</b> Janet Jackson, A&M SP- 4907	50	37	21	<b>WE GO A LONG WAY BACK</b> Bloodstone, T-Neck FZ 38115 (Epic)
14	14	8	<b>SECOND TO NUNN</b> Bobby Nunn, Motown 6022ML	51	56	3	<b>IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT</b> Imagination, MCA MCA 5373
15	10	24	<b>GAP BAND IV</b> The Gap Band, Total Experience TE-1-3001 (Polygram)	52	40	15	<b>THE REAL DEAL</b> The Isley Brothers, T-Neck FZ 38047 (Epic)
16	13	17	<b>ZAPP II</b> Zapp, Warner Bros. 23583-1	53	53	18	<b>KEEPIN' LOVE NEW</b> Howard Johnson, A&M SP- 4895
17	16	16	<b>TANTALIZINGLY HOT</b> Stephanie Mills, Casablanca NBLP 7265 (Polygram)	54	44	11	<b>GWEN GUTHRIE</b> Gwen Guthrie, Island 90004-1 (Atlantic)
18	23	4	<b>THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAINBOW</b> Melba Moore, EMI-America ST-12243	55	55	3	<b>NIGHTBIRDS</b> Shakatak, Polydor PD-1- 6354 (Polygram)
19	22	5	<b>HEARTBREAKER</b> Dionne Warwick, Arista AL 9609	56	48	8	<b>SUNRIZE</b> Sunrize, Boardwalk NB-332- 56-1
20	11	13	<b>IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES</b> Michael McDonald, Warner Bros. 23703-1	57	57	9	<b>UPSTAIRS AT ERIC'S</b> Yaz, Sire 1-23737 (Warner Bros.)
21	21	6	<b>THE BAD C.C.</b> Carl Carlton, RCA AFL1- 4425	58	60	63	<b>USED TO BE</b> Charlene, Motown 6027ML
22	17	14	<b>SNEAKIN' OUT</b> Stacy Lattisaw, Cotillion 90002-1 (Atlantic)	59	60	63	<b>NEVER TOO MUCH</b> Luther Vandross, Epic FE 37451
23	25	5	<b>JUST AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH</b> Johnnie Taylor, Beverly Glen BG 10001	60	54	8	<b>TOUGH</b> Kurtis Blow, Mercury MX-1- 505 (Polygram)
24	20	15	<b>THIS ONE'S FOR YOU</b> Teddy Pendergrass, P.I.R. FZ 38118 (Epic)	61	61	36	<b>BRILLIANCE</b> Atlantic Starr, A&M SP- 4883
25	43	2	<b>PROPOSITIONS</b> The Bar-Kays, Mercury SRM-1-4065 (Polygram)	62	67	19	<b>SO EXCITED</b> Pointer Sisters, Planet BX11-4355 (RCA)
26	28	5	<b>WILD NIGHT</b> One Way, MCA MCA 5369	63	62	8	<b>HONESTY</b> Curtis Mayfield, Boardwalk NB-332-57-1
27	27	9	<b>I FOOLED YOU THIS TIME</b> Alicia Meyers, MCA MCA- 5361	64	63	7	<b>ABRACADABRA</b> The Steve Miller Band, Capitol ST-12216
28	34	3	<b>THE NIGHTFLY</b> Donald Fagen, Warner Bros. 23730-1	65	65	24	<b>I'M THE ONE</b> Roberta Flack, Atlantic SD 19354
29	19	20	<b>INSTANT LOVE</b> Cheryl Lynn, Columbia FC 38057	66	58	29	<b>MY FAVORITE PERSON</b> The O'Jays, P.I.R. FZ 37999 (Epic)
30	26	16	<b>LET ME TICKLE YOUR FANCY</b> Jermaine Jackson, Motown 6017ML	67	64	26	<b>STREET OPERA</b> Ashford & Simpson, Capitol ST-12207
31	24	26	<b>THROWIN' DOWN</b> Rick James, Gordy 6005GL (Motown)	68	66	36	<b>KEEP IT LIVE</b> Dazz Band, Motown 6004ML
32	38	3	<b>SEVENTEEN</b> Bill Summers & Summers Heat, MCA MCA 5367	69	69	20	<b>AS WE SPEAK</b> David Sanborn, Warner Bros. 1-23650
33	33	6	<b>EVERY HOME SHOULD HAVE ONE</b> Patti Austin, Q West QWS 3691 (Warner Bros.)	70	70	32	<b>D TRAIN</b> D Train, Prelude PRL 14105
34	36	42	<b>DOWN HOME</b> Z.Z. Hill, Malaco MAL 7406	71	72	6	<b>TRAVELIN'</b> L.J. Reynolds, Capitol ST- 12223
35	49	2	<b>TO THE MAX</b> Con Funk Shun, Mercury SRM-1-4067 (Polygram)	72	73	32	<b>ALLIGATOR WOMAN</b> Cameo, Chocolate City CCLP 2021 (Polygram)
36	29	20	<b>WE ARE ONE</b> Pieces Of A Dream, Elektra 60142-1	73	59	10	<b>MOVING TARGET</b> Gil Scott-Heron, Arista AL 9606
37	45	2	<b>HARD TIMES</b> Millie Jackson, Spring SP- 1-6737 (Polygram)	74	74	67	<b>BREAKIN' AWAY</b> Al Jarreau, Warner Bros. BSK 3576
				75	68	23	<b>WINDSONG</b> Randy Crawford, Warner Bros. 1-23687

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