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Rhythm Ride: A Road Trip Through The Motown Sound



Synopsis

From award-winning author Andrea Davis Pinkney comes the story of the music that defined a generation and a movement that changed the world. Berry Gordy began Motown in 1959 with an \$800 loan from his family. He converted the garage of a residential house into a studio and recruited teenagers from the neighborhood-like Smokey Robinson, Mary Wells, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, and Diana Ross to sing for his new label. Meanwhile, the country was on the brink of a cultural revolution, and one of the most powerful agents of change in the following decade would be this group of young black performers from urban Detroit. From Berry Gordy and his remarkable vision to the Civil Rights movement, from the behind-the-scenes musicians, choreographers, and songwriters to the most famous recording artists of the century, Andrea Davis Pinkney takes readers on a Rhythm Ride through the story of Motown.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 5 Up "A tour of the musical powerhouse's history done with verve and panache. "The Groove" takes readers through the birth and demise of Motown, one of the most influential African American-owned enterprises in the world's social and musical history. Centering around Gordy Berry, the talented tastemaker and eventual mogul, the ingenious narration highlights the company's humble beginnings—a pipe dream financed by Berry family's investment of \$800—and embeds the stories of the many legends and stars that were born in its studios into the social upheavals and landmark events of the time. From the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and the Vietnam protests of the 1970s, these important milestones are interspersed throughout, bringing

home the important place Motown had not only in the proliferation of rhythm and blues, rock, and disco into American culture but also its integration into the African American identity. The funky and melodic narrative style never wears thin and the familiar conceit helps make the darker parts of history age-appropriate for the audience. The thorough and detailed resources, photos, time line, and discography will encourage readers to want to learn more about the well-known Jackson Five, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, and Marvin Gaye, and the not-so-well-known Funk BrothersâMotown's official studio band. VERDICT A well-crafted spin that will reverberate in the hearts of music, African American culture, and history buffs.âShelley Diaz, School Library Journal

âA well-crafted spin that will reverberate in the hearts of music, African American culture, and history buffs.â
• School Library Journal, starred review
âVeteran author Pinkney takes readers on a road trip to Motown in a book that catches the excitement of Hitsville U.S.A.â
• Booklist, starred review
âAn ebullient, wonderfully told introduction to music that had an indelible influence on a generation and its times.â
• Kirkus "Pinkney [...] delivers a memorable spin on Motownâs unparalleled cultural and musical heritage." âThe Washington Post

This is a stunner of a book. I didn't expect it to be so beautifully produced and illustrated with photos, and the result is that you're transported into the heart of the Motown scene. If only this is how history was taught in school. Pinkney is a dazzling writer: sophisticated and humane. This is a book that will delight both young readers and the ones who're grown (and have always loved Motown music). I highly recommend it. And it would make an absolutely beautiful gift.

I may use this for my 6th grade classes' nonfiction next year.

Interesting addition for a Motown book collection.

Book is in good condition as far as I can tell, but it arrived without a dust jacket.

Have you ever heard of Marvin Gaye, the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, or Michael Jackson? They are all pop sensations that arose from a music company called Motown Sound or Hitsville U.S.A. In the story, *Rhythm Ride* â New York Times- Bestselling author Andrea Davis Pinkney wonderfully describes the fascinating story of the birth of this famous record company. It started out small in a hometown, where a young ambitious man named Berry Gordy quit his job at Ford Motor

Company. The appeal of the music industry was pulling him and he could not resist it. This is the story of how a loaned \$8 hundred changed the life of a person and the world. There were many difficulties to the success of Motown, which the author skillfully turns into an ongoing metaphor of a road trip. "A road trip through Motown Sound" is the subtitle. The laid-back style of writing and the hometown vibes cause you to feel the emotion as if you were there at the studio, and give a personal story that everyone can relate to. If you are interested in music, pop culture, or entrepreneurship, this is definitely the perfect book for you. "Rhythm Ride" is a great book for everyone to enjoy. It is a short and easy read, with big charisma. I would recommend this story to readers ages 10 and up. A great thing about this novel is that there is a real photograph on almost every page complete with a caption that relates it with what is going on in the story. This makes it even more exciting and helps you visualize what is going on. Additionally, this story is filled with important themes and it describes what it was really like during the civil rights movement for African Americans. The author inlays themes like hard work, perseverance, bravery, sacrifice, and doing what you love, that teach kids and adults alike significant morals. Almost everyone working for Gordy at Motown was black, which really made a statement back in the 60s. The company went through some hard times, and were discriminated, but came out on top. This story shows that anyone can do anything, and not to judge people for their situations. Overall, a great book for everyone to read, a wonderful learning experience, and a part of history worth learning about. Berry Gordy said, "Motown was about music for all people - white and black, blue and green, cops and the robbers." As well as, "I have this ability to find this hidden talent in people that sometimes even they didn't know they had." Kate D, 13, Central Pennsylvania Mensa

Astounding! I had no idea this was the book it turned out to be. Expecting a juvenile history of the Motown years I was floored with the in-depth narrative of the history of not only Motown music but the whole Motown scene, a biography of Barry Goldie himself and even more interesting a discourse of US African-American history from the 50s to 80s through the voice of their music. An extremely interesting book with tons of history I knew nothing about. I knew all the songs, but everything else was eye-opening to me. Narrated in a most unusual and unique style by an entity called "The Groove", claiming to be neither male nor female, The Groove simply exists. However, I quickly related to the narrator by thinking of "her" as an elderly black Grandma, speaking in the vernacular of the day and consistently calling the reader "Child". The Afterward related who the author styled "The Groove" after and my own perception couldn't have been further from the author's intent! This book deals with every possible subject you could imagine about the times, the

stars and the music but it does take two hard-hitting historical detours which are necessary when telling the African-American story from any point of view, even through its music. These are Southern segregation and the Race Riots of the early 70s, both of these are part of the Civil Rights Movement. These sections are dealt with in a particularly sensitive yet no punches held manner for the middle-grade audience. To paraphrase "The Groove", the general atmosphere used to introduce these topics is: 'Now, Child, we are coming to some dark, disturbing times. I'm sorry. I don't like this part of our history, but it happened and is an important part of the Groove. Close your eyes if you must, but make sure you listen as this story must be told and not forgotten. You are safe and I am with you.' Doesn't that sound like your Grandma telling you stories about her past?! Totally 100% loved the book. The back matter is incredible as well with a Discography, recommended TV/Movie watching, Bibliography plus Recommended Reading List. A must read on the topic for young and old!

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