

R.I.P. Raynoma Gordy Singleton



Raynoma Gordy Singleton, who was the second wife of Berry Gordy and a Motown contributor, passed November 11th of brain cancer. Ms. Singleton married Berry Gordy in 1960 after giving birth to their son Kerry in 1959. She originally auditioned for Gordy with her sister as a singer but she became his business partner and wife. They worked together on Gordy's Jobete publishing company and she found the famous Hitsville USA building on Detroit's West Grand Boulevard to house Motown. Ms. Singleton knew music theory and could play 11 instruments and she used her skills to arrange songs for Motown.

In those early days of the label, she also worked as a backup singer on many of the songs and she taught music theory to many of the artists like Smokey Robinson. Singleton and Gordy divorced in 1961 and she eventually left the label coming back later to manage the group Apollo and to be an executive

producer her son's song "Somebody's Watching Me" under his recording name Rockwell. The former couple experienced a post-divorce rift when Singleton bootlegged Mary Wells' "My Guy." She also published her 1990 memoir, *Berry, Me, and Motown: The Untold Story* where she accused Gordy of not giving her credit for helping to start the label. Gordy said later in his own book that her claims were not true and he and Singleton had reconciled. In later years Singleton attended at least one fundraiser for the Motown Museum.