

Characters in the music of Marvin Gaye

BY KEVIN LEWIS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Senior communications major Kelcey A. West wrote, produced and directed tonight's 32nd Street Theater's season opener, "If This World Were Mine."

West's production is a theatrical tribute to the music of the legendary Marvin Gaye. "The plot of the non-biographical play is based on the numerous themes that Marvin Gaye's music gave the world. The drama/comedy/musical play will shed light on the effects of unity, humanity, friendship and the loss of love," West said. "The play evolves around characters who are based in Gaye's music." he continued.

During Motown's zenith 1960s, Gaye battled with founder Barry Gordy for artistic freedom to spiritually ponder on a world gone seemingly mad. Following the death of singing partner Tammi Terrell in 1970 of brain cancer, he shuddered at the notion of singing silly love songs.

The duet had run a string of Top 10 hits up the charts which include "You're All I Need (To Get By)," "If This World Were Mine," and "Ain't No Mountain (High Enough)."

Gaye's platonic studio relationship with Terrell seemed to flow from the pages of 18th century poet, William Blake's

"Songs of Innocence." Her untimely death forced him to look at the cruel realities of life on this earth. The result was the hallmark 1971 album "What's Going On?" a 42-minute masterpiece that includes references to everything right and wrong in the world.

Gaye's brother, Frankie, wrote vivid letters that detailed, for example, the carnage in Southeast Asia. They later inspired Gaye to write "What's Happening, Brother?"

"Although I have been researching the play and dissecting Marvin Gaye's music for over eight years, the actual writing of the script took an amazing two months to complete," said West. "To showcase the works while painting my theatrical portrait of this genius on a stage is a dream come true."

West, 24, has written, directed and produced several productions in Las Vegas including "Two-Sided Coins," "A Gift Called Tomorrow" and "Quiet Time To Play."

"If This World Were Mine" will be presented tonight and Friday at the Clark County Library, 1401 E. Flamingo Rd. Anthony Rankin, Sandra West, Zenja Dunn and Jermaine Dykes are featured..

32nd Street Theatre is a non-profit theater company that was established in 1992 by West. The theatre company presents original material.

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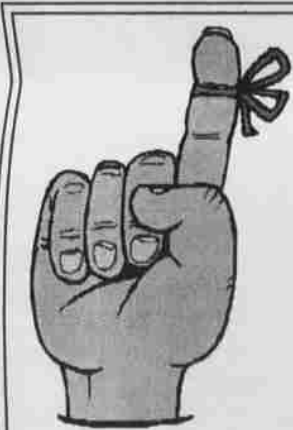
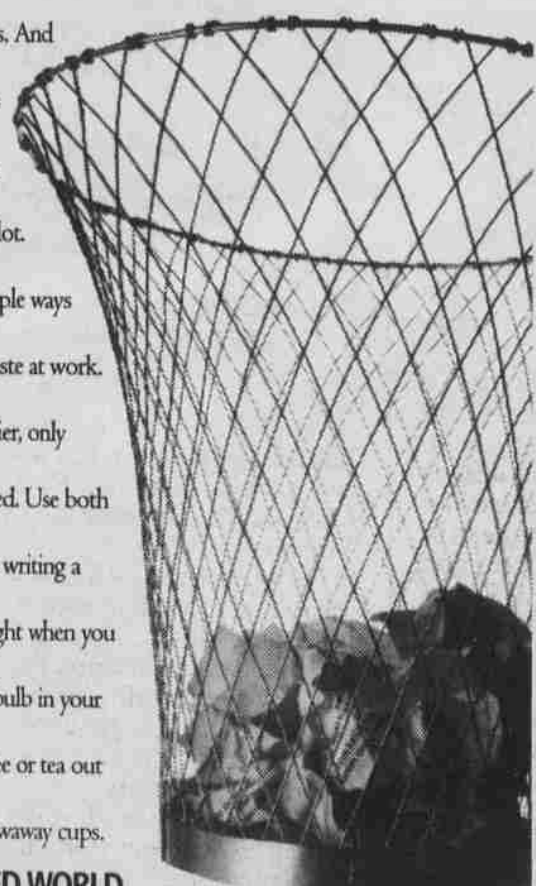


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