

THE MAIN INGREDIENT BIO

The rising popularity of R&B was prevalent throughout the U.S. in the late 60s. It was only appropriate for a band from the nation's largest city, New York, to ride that wave into stardom. Sure enough, came along The Main Ingredient, who notched Three-Top 40 songs during the early 70s as well as a No. 3 hit.

In 1964, singers Donald McPherson, Luther Simmons, Jr. and Tony Silvester formed the Harlem-based trio known as The Poets. The group, which was slowly gaining local popularity, changed their name to the Main Ingredient. They eventually made the move to RCA records and recorded their first album, *The Main Ingredient L.T. D.* . They followed their debut album with their 1971 release, *Tasteful Soul* . With their sophomore effort, they began to transcend the New York scene and catch on nationally. The songs *Spinning Around* and *I'm So Proud* , featured their silky smooth melodies set to mesmerizing strings.

It was under unfortunate circumstances that the group would truly take off. McPherson's death in 1971 paved the way for Cuba Gooding to become the band's new lead vocalist. Gooding added flair and power to the mellow background sounds of Simmons and Silvester. The addition of Gooding proved to be monumental in the group's success. Their 1972 release, *Everybody Plays the Fool* , which was featured on the *Bittersweet Album* , made an immediate impact on the nation, rising to No. 3 on the pop charts. The song became an instant classic. It was later covered by many prominent artists and featured on several compilation albums of R&B's greatest hits.

With the releases of the *Afrodisiac* and *Euphrates Rivers* , albums in 1973 and 1974 respectively, The Main Ingredient maintained the sweet, suave sounds that were associated with the 70s R&B bands, while using their own distinct subject matter. They focused on more mature love ballads, rather than the straightforward adolescent ballads that dominated the era. The group proved to be masters of the cover song. Their remake of the Isley Brothers, *Summer Breeze* and Stevie Wonder's *Don't You Worry About a Thing* , not only matched but also exceeded the popularity of the originals.

In 1975, the group suffered another loss when Simmons left the group to head for Wall Street, to become a stockbroker. Simmons returned in 1980, only to leave for Wall Street again. Jerome Jackson, who stands as the group's current member, replaced Simmons. In 1986, the return of Gooding signified the group was ready to regain their old form and in 1989, under their new label, Polydor, they released their first album in 12 years, *I Just Wanna Love You* . Even after a 12-year hiatus, The Main Ingredient still had that special something.

In 1996, they released two albums, *Quiet Storm* , a compilation of their greatest soft hits, and their newest and final release, *When We Need It Bad* .

The Main Ingredient proved that in an age where soul bands were popping up in hordes throughout the country, the music world would have to make space for the handsome trio from New York. They suffered through the loss of their good friend and lead vocalist/songwriter, only to emerge more stronger, sweeter and more soulful than ever.