

# New Musical 'One More Love Song' Celebrates R&B Pioneers Amid Industry's Diversity Focus and Post-Pandemic Resurgence

*Spotlighting Unsung Black Women in Music History*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, June 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At a pivotal moment for live theater's post-pandemic resurgence and renewed industry focus on racial equity, 57 Years Of Soul Music Radio announces the premiere of "One More Love Song (We Could Have Been Stars)" – a groundbreaking musical celebrating trailblazing R&B trio Hodges, James & Smith and Motown visionary Mickey Stevenson.

The production debuts as Broadway and regional theaters report a 16% attendance surge in 2024, with biographical musicals dominating recent successes (e.g., MJ: The Musical, Ain't Too Proud).

Set in the soul era of the 1960s and 70s, the play tackles enduring social issues like the overlooking of Black women's contributions to music, exploitation in the industry, and the power of creative resilience. Its narrative resonates amid today's #MeToo and DEI movements, echoing recent documentaries like Summer of Soul that redress historical marginalization. The story memorializes Pat Hodges (1947–2025), whose soaring vocals defied an industry that often silenced women of color.



A man and a woman walking on a neon lite street

"This isn't just history – it's a mirror to today's fight for representation," says Artistic Director H. Vince Reid-Finlay. "As theaters prioritize diverse storytelling post-2020, we honor Hodges, James & Smith – artists who shaped Motown's DNA yet were denied stardom. Their struggle reflects ongoing equity gaps in music and theater."

Industry Context:

nostalgic productions and rediscovered narratives. Trend Spotlight: Jukebox musicals comprise

32% of new productions (Playbill 2024), wTheater's Rebound: Broadway grossed \$1.58B in 2023–24 (up 8% YoY), fueled by hile audiences crave live-band experiences over digital streams.Social Relevance: Productions like Soul Train: The Musical (2024) prove demand for Black music histories amid culture-wide reckonings.

#### Production Highlights:

Live Orchestra & Choreography: A 12-piece band recreates HJS's harmonies and Stevenson's hits ("Dancing in the Street")Rare Music: Includes deep cuts from HJS's overlooked discography and unreleased tracks from the 2021 compilation. 20% of proceeds support music programs for underserved youth. Premiering in Spring 2026 in Vancouver, Toronto, and Detroit..

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[William "Mickey" Stevenson joined Motown in 1959](#) as its very first Head of A&R, responsible for building its roster of songwriters, musicians, and artists, writing hit songs, and producing its superstar roster. Notably, Stevenson is responsible for helping develop Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, The Four Tops, and Martha Reeves. He was one of the principal architects of the "Motown Sound," having personally assembled the ["Funk Brothers," Motown's famous](#) house band for most of the label's timeless 1960's hits. Stevenson also discovered many of Motown's legendary songwriters, including Ron Miller, George Ivy "Jo" Hunter, Norman Whitfield, and Frederick "Shorty" Long.

Described by Motown founder [Berry Gordy Jr](#) as "the best A&R man who leads the list of [Motown's] unsung heroes" and by Smokey Robinson as "never having received his props," Stevenson was also a prolific songwriter and producer during Motown's golden era. " Songwriters Hall Of Fame "

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