



Guitars, Bars, and Motown Superstars

Dennis Coffey

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"Guitarist Dennis Coffey was in that elite band of musicians who helped to create the Motown Sound."

---Edwin Starr

"There can never be enough stories told from the vantage point of Motown's fabled Snake Pit, from one of the journeyman musicians working behind the scenes. *Guitars, Bars, and Motown Superstars* also shows just how frenetic and creative the Detroit music scene was in the '60s and '70s. But it's Dennis Coffey's personal story that's most gripping: the journey from Motown, to Billboard's Top Ten, to working the line at Chevrolet."

---Susan Whitall, *Detroit News*; author of *Women of Motown*

Under Berry Gordy, Motown was a place where studio musicians usually stood in the shadows, unlike the solo stars whose names appeared on the albums. Gordy held a tight rein on his musicians, forbidding them from playing for other record companies and denying them credit on his records.

In *Guitars, Bars, and Motown Superstars*, author and guitarist Dennis Coffey tells how he slipped Gordy's draconian rules and went on to success as both a Motown musician and a million-selling solo artist. He offers a fascinating backstage look at the Detroit, L.A., and New York music scenes in the '60s and '70s, with side trips to the smoky clubs and funky studios where the Motown sound was born.

Coffey is credited with creating a lot of that sound, including the famous guitar intro to the Temptations' classic "Cloud Nine." He played on hundreds of Motown albums, and introduced such innovations as the Wah Wah pedal into the Motown recording studio.

Guitars, Bars, and Motown Superstars is an entertaining and amusing memoir of one of the most dynamic and influential periods in contemporary pop culture, and a unique insight into the ups and downs of the studio guitar-for-hire. It's also a look at the dizzying rags-to-riches-and-back-again career of a rock musician who went from million-seller with a house in the Hollywood Hills, and ultimately back to his roots in the Detroit area. A must for fans of Motown, rock, and you-are-there pop-culture history.

From "rock & roll kid" to honorary member of Motown's elite rhythm section the Funk Brothers, Dennis Coffey was one of Detroit's most in-demand session guitarists. After leaving Motown, Coffey became a regular at Hitsville USA, playing on records for Marvin Gaye, the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, and Junior Walker. Most recently he appeared in the documentary *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*.

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