



This is the first in a series of artist biographies aimed at illuminating the depth of talent, creative and productivity Minnesota artists bring to their craft and to our community and culture in the broadest sense. We begin focusing on the stellar, Grammy Award-winning Sounds of Blackness and its leader and founder, Gary Dennis Hines.

Since January of 1971, the Grammy Award-winning Sounds of Blackness have consistently performed and proclaimed the music, culture and history of African Americans to audiences all over the world.

From Jazz and Blues, to Rock & Roll, R&B, Gospel, Spirituals, Hip-Hop, Reggae and Soul, the group colors each and every "sound of blackness" with uplifting messages of hope, unity, love and peace for all humankind - and then works passionately to achieve it. These are the milestones marking 35 years of tireless endeavor, creative genius, and business excellence:

1. Performing on five continents before homeless persons, prison inmates, and orphans, kings, queens, presidents and heads of state. Sounds of Blackness headlined at "The Denver Summit of Eight", The World Music Awards, at various Embassy events and over the years the group has made five White House appearances.

2. Worldwide benefit concerts and recordings that have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for such causes as, The United Nations Telefood Concert (Jamaica), The United Nations 50th Anniversary - "People/Children of the World", The United Negro College Fund, Scholarship America, The NAACP, The Children's Heart Fund, the Lupus Foundation, The Opportunities Industrialization Centers, AmeriCorps, 'Border Babies', The National Urban League, Hale House, "HBO Comic Relief V (For The Homeless)", participation in Grammy in The Schools, and countless others.

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3. Theatrical productions, seminars, master classes, workshops and lecture-demonstrations on African American Music, culture and history at every level from pre-school to post-graduate including at The Smithsonian Institute and at The Kennedy Center. They educate while entertaining at schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, men's and women's prisons, youth correctional facilities, half-way houses, battered women's shelters, synagogues, mosques, temples, churches, community centers, and for corporations such as, General Motors, General Mills, Northwest Airlines, Target Corp, 3M, IBM, A&M, American Family Insurance, The NBA, The NFL, CBS, Polygram, Disney, and NARAS.

4. Pioneering the world-wide presence and proliferation of Inspirational Soul Music at radio, dance clubs, television, and theater and on film - which has in turn substantially changed and continues to change the very face of each of those entities forever. Soundtracks from, *Batman and, Demolition Man, to Panther, House Party II, The Posse, Down in the Delta, Moses in Egypt, John Henry, The First Kid, Mo' Money, Justice and, The Apostle.*

5. Appearing/recording with or for Quincy Jones, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Sting, Santana, Eric Clapton, Usher, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, LA & Babyface, Elton John, Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber, Luther Vandross, Aretha Franklin, Anita Baker, Ashanti, Dolly Parton, Vince Gill, Lyle Lovette, Bob Dylan, John Cougar, Patti LaBelle, Earth, Wind & Fire, Shirley Caesar, Yolanda Adams, Kirk Franklin, Kenny 'G', President Bill Clinton, Jay Leno, Lena Horne, Isaac Hayes, Little Richard, BB King, The Minnesota Orchestra, Johnny Mathis, Billy Crystal, Robin Williams, Jim Carrey, Whoopi Goldberg, Robert Duvall, Maya Angelou and many others.

6. On at least four occasions performing for over one billion people; The 1992 Grammy Awards, "The 1994 World Cup, the 1996 Olympics and, the 1998 World Figure Skating Championships.

7. Winning its first Grammy Award (1992), Soul Train Award, International Time for Peace Award, five Stellar Awards, The International Dance Music Award, and being nominated for an Emmy, NAACP Image Awards and others. Most importantly the message, motivation and music of Sounds of Blackness touches, saves, enriches and inspires the lives of millions worldwide.

8. Creating and launching the "Kings & Queens Movement" in June, 2007 to help stop the violence in the streets, to increase dignity and self-respect in our youth and, to end the disrespect and denigration of women in music.

Keyboardist/songwriter/director/producer/arranger/playwright, Dr. Gary D. Hines, a native of Yonkers New York, began his musical training with drum and bugle corps at five, and expanded in junior high school to include orchestral percussion, jazz, stage and R&B band and choral music.

In 1974, he graduated from Macalester College in St. Paul, MN with honors in Sociology.

Since 1975, he has been a clinician with the National Black Gospel College Choir Workshop.

Leading Sounds of Blackness, Hines has performed in every major city in the United States,

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and abroad in Africa, England, Holland, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Bermuda, Jamaica, Martinique and The Bahamas.

Hines has earned three Grammy Awards: *The Evolution of Gospel*, by The Sounds of Blackness, *Handel's Messiah* - A
Soulful Celebration and The *Apostle Soundtrack*.

His arrangement of Santa's Comin' to Town was nominated for a Grammy ('93).

Hines and The Sounds of Blackness performed on the Tonight Show, The Today Show, The Arsenio Hall Show, The '92 & '93 Grammy Awards, Entertainment Tonight, The 1994 World Cup, The Stellar Awards, The Soul Train Awards and the 1995 World Music Awards.

In 1997, Gary received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree from his alma mater, Macalester College and the Sounds of Blackness received two Gold records for *Evolution of Gospel and Africa to America: The Journey of the Drum*.

Hines gives God the highest praise and thanks for all things.