

The Lost Tapes

Somewhere, in a secret location in the USA, is a musical treasure trove waiting to be unearthed.

Thousands of tape canisters are stacked floor to ceiling featuring recordings from some of the biggest names in the history of soul, unreleased and unheard for nearly half a century.

This is the real Motown gold.

Now, on the fiftieth anniversary of 1966 - the peak year for the world's favourite record label, the UK's best loved funk and soul DJ

Craig Charles is being given unique access to this priceless archive as part of a documentary film.



He's going to use this once in a lifetime opportunity to find the best lost classics from the Motown hit factory and then set off across America to discover the stories behind the performances. Then Craig will head back to Britain and showcase the songs at a spectacular one-off event for fans of all ages.





The Motown Sound

is still one of the cornerstones of contemporary music influencing artists as diverse as Mark Ronson, Kanye West, Paul Weller and Pharrell Williams.

Craig Charles knows from the response Motown still gets from devoted listeners to his BBC 6Music Funk and Soul Show that there's still a huge amount of love and interest in the Detroit-based label.

He's been a devoted fan all his life but has never been to Detroit. This documentary follows him as he sets off for the States and the start of an extraordinary adventure.



1966 was the year that Motown adopted the famous tagline 'The Sound of Young America'. With fourteen worldwide top ten hits that year with classic tracks like The Supremes' 'You Can't Hurry Love' and The Four Tops' 'Reach Out (I'll Be There)' it was a claim the label could make very confidently.

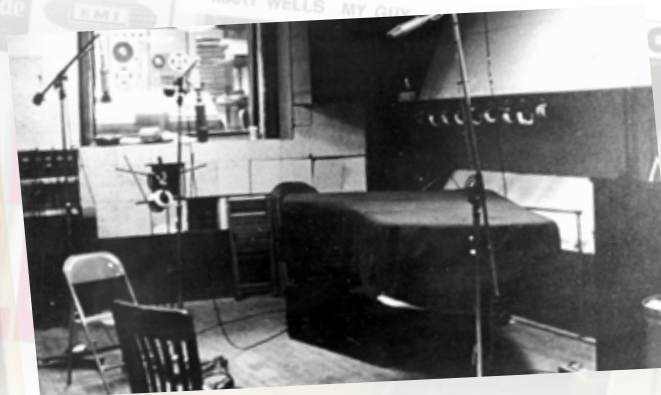


Craig has a deep knowledge of the label's back catalogue. He knows that during this hugely creative period the hit factory was working at full capacity with a roster of established talent and lots of lesser known artists who dreamt of being the next Temptations, Marvin Gaye or Diana Ross.

The label was recording so much amazing music at the time that some sensational songs and incredibly talented artists found their work consigned to the vaults, ready for release but forgotten as the next wave of hits was given priority. So much music was recorded that Motown themselves even now don't know quite what is in their archives and that's why Craig is so excited.

The man who can help Craig unearth Motown's lost classics is Harry Weinger. Working out of the label's New York office he's been given the job of trying to bring order to Motown's sprawling back catalogue.

Our documentary will capture Craig's excitement as he takes a trip back to 1966 and immerses himself in the extraordinary music waiting for him in the archive. Every can of tape is potential gold, their labels giving only sketchy hints of what might be within.



This is music that shook the world," says Weinger. "And there's still a lot of great stuff waiting to be mined. Because of the way things were logged and recorded we're still not sure what is in the vaults, but we know there will be gems for sure"



Every indication suggests that there will be many more astonishing discoveries along the way and Craig's next step will be to find the stories behind this lost music. Why did these fantastic tracks never see the light of day? Where are the barely known artists who went to Motown dreaming of fame and fortune but until now became only a footnote in the story of 'The Sound of Young America'?

Craig sets off across America with his newly-discovered Motown tracks to meet the people responsible for the magic.



He'll get the chance to meet superstars like Smokey Robinson – who originally kept the bulk of the archive in his basement garage - and Stevie Wonder, and play them their music, sounds they haven't heard for half a century and get their reactions. He'll interview Motown's legendary label boss Berry Gordy and find out what it was like to run America's most successful label and why so much amazing music didn't make the cut.

He'll also track down some of the stars-that-never-were and play them songs that they may only have ever heard once - when they recorded them in a Detroit studio in the 60s - and try to get permission from them to play their music to an eager UK audience.

Finally his mission complete, Craig will head back to the UK and the most thrilling moment of all - the chance to reveal a full playlist of lost Motown classics to an invited audience of fans and musicians who love this music. Our documentary will capture all the excitement of this unique party.



We see opportunities here to involve Craig's loyal audience in his Motown adventure from the beginning by revealing his planned trip on 6Music and via his social media following.

We can ask his audience to get involved before he travels to America, suggesting performances or artists that might be in the 1966 archive or offering tips about more obscure performers who were on the label.

There is also scope to make the UK event featured in the documentary invitation only with 6Music competition winners being given the opportunity to attend the party.

