



The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard

By Peter Benjaminson

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In the months before she died, Florence Ballard, the spunky teenager who founded the most successful female vocal group in history—the Supremes—told her own side of the story. Recorded on tape, Flo shed light on all areas of her life, including the surprising identity of the man by whom she was raped prior to her entering the music business, the details of her love-hate relationship with Motown Records czar Berry Gordy, her drinking problem and pleas for help, a never-ending desire to be the Supremes' lead singer, and her attempts to get her life back on track after being brutally expelled from the group. This is a tumultuous and heartbreaking story of a world-famous performer whose life ended at the age of 32 as a lonely mother of three who had only recently recovered from years of poverty and despair.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Journalist and author Benjaminson (*The Story of Motown*) attempts valiantly, painstakingly to resurrect the reputation of founding Supreme member Florence Ballard, who left the group early on and descended into litigiousness and alcoholism. Then a reporter with the *Detroit Free Press*, Benjaminson interviewed Ballard a year before her death in 1976 and elicited a sad story of a starry-eyed, single-minded high school dropout whose dream, and fortune, was co-opted by Berry Gordy's Motown empire. Growing up together in Detroit's black working-class Brewster Projects, gospel-singing Ballard and Mary Wilson first formed the Primettes, joined by Diane (as she was then known) Ross and Betty McGlown, who eventually dropped out. In 1961, the teenagers auditioned for Berry Gordy, who kept them doing backup as they matured, touring with the Motortown Review across country by bus until the newly configured Supremes (Ballard chose the name) had their first hit in 1964 with *Where Did Our Love Go?* The boom-boom beat coupled with the nasaly sound of Ross's voice prompted Gordy to promote Ross rather than Ballard as lead. Over the Supremes' several heady years in the spotlight, Benjaminson explains in this engaging biography, gobs of money vanished through flimsy contracts and the fingers of unscrupulous managers, costly clothes and glamorous acquaintances, and Ballard's resentment of Ross's ambition and Gordy's manipulation got her fired. (*Apr.*)

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Review

"Readers who are familiar with the group and even those who are not will definitely enjoy this well-written biography." —*Library Journal*

"An unmatched snapshot of the exhilarating yet often ugly 1960s soul music scene." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"Peter Benjaminson's sardonic, hard-nosed series of vignettes from the white-collar world of Tweed-like municipal corruption is the dramatic story of a city unraveling from the top." —*Village Voice*

"Get to know the real Flo, from the beginning to the end. A must read." —Otis Williams, *The Temptations*

"Benjaminson tells Flo's story masterfully, with all the drama and empathy her life deserves." —Gerald Posner, author, *Motown* and *Why America Slept*

"Ballard's voice was never prominently featured in the group's hits. Yet in *The Lost Supreme*, we finally hear Ballard." —*The Boston Globe*

"Benjaminson holds back nothing, sharing with the reader the thoughts and moods of the various figures who

came and went during the early years." —*Soul Magazine*

"Flo was a beautiful person—loving and warm. . . . She was down-to-earth, she loved to laugh, and everyone loved her." —Marvin Gaye

About the Author

Peter Benjaminson is the author of *Death in the Afternoon: America's Newspaper Giants Struggle for Survival*, *Secret Police: Inside the New York City Department of Investigation*, and *The Story of Motown*, and is the coauthor of *Investigative Reporting*. He is a former reporter for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and the *Detroit Free Press*. *The Lost Supreme's* website can be found at www.thelostsupreme.com

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Leticia Simmons:

This *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard* book is simply not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you obtain by reading this book is usually information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper you actually read a lot of information you will get. This specific *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard* without we comprehend teach the one who reading it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard* can bring whenever you are and not make your handbag space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even cell phone. This *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard* having fine arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

Larry Gutierrez:

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Celia Robertson:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them family or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day every day to reading a guide. The book *The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard* it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These folks were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the particular e-book. You

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John Harris:

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