



Mercy, Mercy Me: The Art, Loves, and Demons of Marvin Gaye

Michael Eric Dyson

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Twenty years after his murder at the hands of his own father, Marvin Gaye continues to define the hopes and shattered dreams of the Motown generation. A performer whose career spanned the history of rhythm and blues, from doo-wop to the sultriest of soul music, Gaye's artistry magnified the contradictions that defined America's coming of age in the tumultuous 1970s. In his most searching and ambitious work to date, acclaimed critic Michael Eric Dyson illuminates both Marvin Gaye's stellar achievements and stunning personal decline--and offers an unparalleled assessment of the cultural and political legacy of R&B on American culture. Through interviews with those close to Gaye--from his musical beginnings in a black church in Washington, D.C., to his days as a "ladies' man" in Motown's stable of young singers, from the artistic heights of the landmark album *What's Going On?* to his struggles with addiction and domestic violence--Dyson draws an indelible portrait of the tensions that shaped contemporary urban America: economic adversity, the drug industry, racism, and the long legacy of hardship. Published to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of Gaye's death in 1984, and infused with the soulful prose that has become Michael Eric Dyson's trademark, *Mercy, Mercy Me* is at once a celebration of an American icon whose work continues to inspire, and a revelatory and incisive look at how a lost generation's moods, music, and moral vision continue to resonate today.

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