



PHILIP MICHAEL THOMAS

Philip Michael Thomas: The Composer by Jeanette Stephens-El

This issue of *Musicman Magazine* is aptly titled because its cover features the incomparable Philip Michael Thomas. Born in Columbus, Ohio on May 26, 1949, Thomas was a precocious and energetic child who began exploring his musical imagination at age four, when his stepfather, welterweight boxer George William Liggins introduced him to the piano. His mother, Lula McMorris nurtured his musical attributes through the power of her remarkable soprano voice. This newfound freedom of artistic expression burst like a riot in his heart and soul, and his budding talent, tenacity, and quick wit was a winning formula for success that took Philip on the journey of a thousand seasons.

At 11, Thomas wrote his first song, *Troubled Child*, a harbinger of his future in music and performance. His first album, *Living the Book of My Life* (1985) opened the door for a look inside the house where he has lived his entire existence -- a cathedral with towering walls made of musical notes, melodies of Reggae, R&B, funk, gospel, jazz, hip-hop, rap, ballads, children's sunshine, and musical theater.

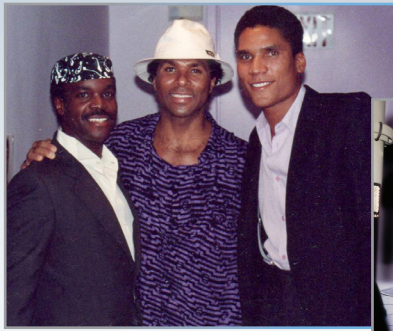
While many came to know him as Ricardo Tubbs in the 1980s NBC television juggernaut *Miami Vice*, Thomas' true love was music, from his childhood rendition of *Rockin' Robin* in a talent show to serving as a fiery Pentecostal minister at 16. Thomas showed his musical prowess at 19, in the San Francisco production of the Broadway musical *Hair*.

Philip won critical acclaim in other dramatic Broadway plays, like Charles Gordon's 1970 Pulitzer Prize winning *No Place To Be Somebody*. Thomas had a close association with Motown royalty Berry Gordy and Company, but the 1976 groundbreaking film *Sparkle*, where he starred opposite young Irene Cara, closely mirrored the depth of Thomas' enthusiasm for music, all the while leading to more acting roles.

Years later, Thomas returned to New York to produce his original children's play, *Sacha On Broadway*, co-written with Sandi Morais and showcasing his musical score.

In 1988, he released a second album, *Somebody*. Recorded in his Spaceship Records studio by Atlantic Records, that album featured music legends, including the late great Nick Ashford and his wife Valerie Simpson, and Amir Bayan, brother of Robert Kool Bell, who produced songs for the *Somebody* LP. Hitmaker Leroy Hutson produced Thomas singing the powerhouse love ballad *Magic Man*.

In 1991, the *Diva* -- Grammy Award winner Dionne Warwick spent days in Spaceship Records' studio with Thomas as the executive producer of original compositions for her album, *Love Is Dionne*. That album of love



LeRoy Hutson, music producer, and Paxton Baker, former producer of the BET Awards

Recording with Nick Ashford in Spaceship Records recording studio



Spaceship Records recording studio with Dionne Warwick and Jeanette Stephens-El



Emmy Awards with his mother Lula McMorris Thomas



songs included the duet for which Philip and Dionne created their own magic with *Love Wrote This Song*, *Bridge to Forever*, *Love Is*, and *Don't (Touch Me Like This If You Don't Mean It)*.

In 1998, Thomas and Warwick took their talents to South Africa where they met with Nelson Mandela. Thomas recorded his original *Brother-2-Brother* with jazz pioneer Hugh Masekela and an array of South African musicians. Written as an anthem for uniting people in an increasingly polarized world, Thomas combined various musical genres in this cohesive tune that would encourage anyone to find their groove.

“Music is my mistress” has been a theme of Thomas’ life journey for most of his career and his daughter Ima followed in his footsteps, albeit in Country music. His compositions are celebrated for their timeless quality and unique approach, reflecting his deep-seated love for the art form. Thomas embodies each composition. With the reverence of an epic book, he challenges himself to condense the pages of a story into a three to five-minute classic song that will resonate on a subliminal, mathematical, and creative level. Each note and lyric must elicit perfect pitch and passion, energizing the performers, inspiring them to infuse their heart and soul into every keystroke and beat. Thomas believes that his songs are like planted seeds, growing into orchards of lifetime experiences, dazzling one’s imagination and fueling a desire for creative collaboration.

Not concerned solely with his creative music projects, Thomas generously provided a platform for emerging artists to flourish by claiming ownership of a multiplex in North Miami that housed *The Miamiway Theater* and the state-of-the-art *Spaceship Records* recording studio. A true visionary, who just celebrated his 75th Diamond Jubilee Birthday on May 26, 2024, Thomas shows no signs of slowing down. A composer to the core, he uses his extensive knowledge of music in his compositions due to the span of time and genres experienced in his musical development. With a similar work ethic as the late virtuoso Prince, when Thomas isn’t sleeping, he’s making music.

To share in his wealth of musicology, one should take a listen and remember what he wrote in *Brother-2-Brother*:

*We’ve got to be an example, so the little ones don’t fall.
They’re the pioneers of tomorrow with a universal call.
They ride the wings of time, developing their minds,
Reaching into inner space, new discoveries they must face.
Brother-2-Brother*

This is Philip Michael Thomas – a music maker and the ultimate Musicman.

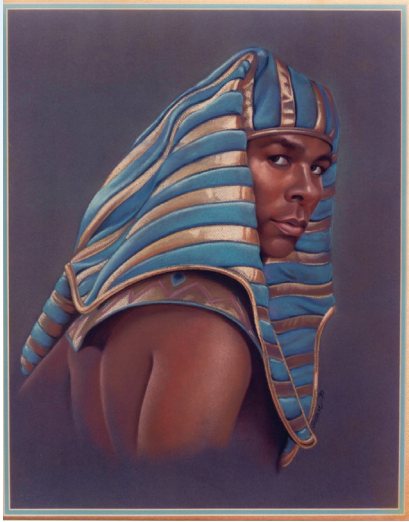
Prepare yourself for the upcoming release from Philip Michael Thomas’ Spaceship Records label, featuring one of his signed artists performing Thomas’ first song, *Troubled Child*. The release of this heartfelt song marks the genesis of an inspiring music career, promising to deeply resonate and transform all listeners with its poignant message.

Sample more of Philip Michael Thomas’ music at <https://www.philipmichaelthomas.info>

Philip Michael Thomas: Magic Man, Musicman!

Brother 2 Brother © 1990 PMT Music, Inc.

Music by Philip Michael Thomas | Lyrics by Philip Michael Thomas & Kassandra J. Thomas



We hold these truths to be self-evident
We hold these truths to be self-evident
We hold these truths to be self-evident
We hold these truths to be self-evident

Brother 2 brother, working side by side as friends
Harvesting crops for the betterment of man (horn solo)
Sister 2 Brother it's time to stand up tall
Brother to Sister we can share it all

We've got to be an example
So the little ones won't fall
They are the pioneers of tomorrow
With a universal call
They ride the wings of time

Developing their minds (horn solo)
Reaching into inners-space
New discoveries they must face

(Chorus) Brother 2 Brother
Oh, it's time to take a stand
(Chorus) Brother 2 Brother
You hold the key in your hand
(Chorus) Sister 2 Brother
Ooo...ooo...we all embrace
(Chorus) Sister 2 Brother

With love and understanding
For the whole human race
Brother 2 Brother
We've got to live by the golden rule

(Chorus) By the golden rule
Do unto others as you would have
them to do unto you (horn solo)

(Chorus) (ooo...ooo...ooo)

Sister 2 Brother...we all embrace
With love and understanding
For the whole human race
We've got to be an example
So the little ones don't fall

(Chorus) (haa.... aaah)
They are the pioneers of tomorrow
With a universal call
They ride the wings of time
Developing their minds
Reaching into inner-space
New discoveries they must face

You've got to love it to get it
You've got to give it to have it
Do you hear what I say?

(Chorus) (You've got to love is to get it.
You've got to give it)
(Chorus) (Brother 2 brother)
Working side by side as friends
(Chorus) (Brother 2 brother)
For the betterment of man
(Chorus) (Sister 2 brother...
Sister 2 brother, it's time to stand up tall
(Chorus) (Sister 2 brother)...
Brother 2 sister can share it all

(Rap)

We hold these truths to be self-evident
That all men and women are created equal
To have life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness
Mothers and fathers...daughters and sons
Loving each other in unity as one

(Eight bars of music)

(Chorus) (Brother 2 Brother.)

Oh.... ooo its time to take control
(Chorus) (Brother 2 brother)
Let the revelation of God fill your soul
(Chorus) (Sister 2 brother)

Sisters, friends and mothers...
(Chorus) (Sisters to brothers)

We have to respect each other
Oh...ooo...Fathers and mothers
You're the procreators of lovers

(Chorus) (Brother 2 brother)

Ooo ...ooo...ooo...yes you are
Ooo ...ooo...ooo ...yeah

(Chorus) (Sister 2 brother)
Ooo...ooo... yeah... yeah...sidd..did.... it.

(Scat and ad lib out)



Thomas' English
Muffin promotion