Stevie Wonder In Wonderland

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continuously get away with it," he

"When we talk about blindness," he continued, "the thing I talk about is doing things that would make things easier for not only sighted people but for the blind. Things that could help a man become self sufficient."

In 1963, his first album "Little Stevie Wonder" caused national attention and "Fingertips" recorded live hinted at his musical prowess on the instrument he became known for, the harmonica.

His first harmonica was given to him by his uncle. It was a simple four hole one and Wonder use to wear it on a string around his neck. He would sit by the radio and play along with bluesman Little Walter ande

Wonder grew up fast. He had to. He began turning out hit single after single. He wrote most of his own material but Motown handled most of the production.

When some young men become of age they either register to vote, show their own ID for a change in a local bar, or take the grand tour. Wonder at the age of 21 in 1971 legally received all of his childhood earnings previously held by a state appointed guardian. He moved out of his parents home, got married and started to do some heavy thinking.

'It was time for a change musically . Spiritually I had gone as far as I could have gone ... "he said.

"I then asked the question again of where am I going, what am I going to do," said Wonder. "I had to see and feel what I wanted to do and feel what my destiny was; the direction of destiny anyway and we got into 'Music of My Mind."

This was a radical departure from anything Wonder had previously done. The album was even recorded independently at the Electric Lady studios in New York with Wonder playing all the instruments (with added work by his band) and emphasis work on the then new Moog and Arp syn-

The result was his first gold album. "I'm not trying to be different," he said about breaking the established style Motown established for him. "I'm just trying to be myself."

"Music" was co-written by Wonder's wife of one year, Syreeta Wright. The two met while she was a Motown secretary. "Although we're not married Page 10

now, we're still very close," he said "She is a beautiful person."

Syreeta was among the friends who joined him on some of the numbers in "Songs." The other friends include Carole Cole, daughter of Nat King Cole, Herbie Hancock, George Benson, the Al Fann Theatrical Ensemble of Harlem, Minnie Riperton and the West Angles Church of God Choir.

Looking for a broader audience, Wonder joined a tour with a white rock group, the Rolling Stones.

"I felt it was the kind of people that we could get to . . . so I thought we should do it," he said. He did and they too love the new Wonder.

Entertainment super stars in this country, and Wonder definitely qualifies, are not locked into any particular racial music market. Talents of superstars from Nat King Cole, Duke Ellington to the Beatles generally cross age, race and sex barriers.

While on tour, Wonder debuted his second million selling album "Talking Book" with its three chart-topping singles "Super Woman, "Superstition" and "You Are The Sunshine of My

Wonder loves to grow and his next extention was "Innervisions." The concepts in the album of Wonder speaking of himself in relation to the world and to his closeness to music and his involvement was tested just two short months later.

On August 6, 1973, Wonder lay near death in a coma after a head on collision with a logging truck in North

It's hard to believe that barely seven months later Wonder recuperated and resumed his rise to the zenith of his "second career."

In 1974, he was nominated for seven Grammy Awards and walked off with an impressive five for "Innervisions." In 1975, he won another five Grammys for his "Fullfillingness' First Finale album. Unheard of.

During the spring, 1976 Grammy Award Telecast. Paul Simon upon winning a Grammy for his album stated that he only won because, "Stevie Wonder did not produce an album that

Wonder was busy with entertaining over 50,000 fans in a concert after being honored for his "humanitarian efforts and artistic brilliance" on the annual Human Kindness Day in May. 1975 in Washington, D.C.

which he and mother Yolanda named

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He became a father to his baby girl A record crowd of 50,000 hear Stevie Wonder in Washington, D.C. Kindness Day celebration.

