

00:00:00	Oliver Wang	Promo	Hey, heat rockers. We are in the final stretch of the Max Fun Drive, where we ask you, our audience members, to support the show. And we know that times are tough for many of you and that you're being constantly asked to make sacrifices for the common good, including for some of you, extraordinary sacrifices of your time, health, and energy. At its best, we'd like to think that the Max Fun Drive is a demonstration of what all of us collectively can do when we come together. And that is something worth celebrating right now. We wanted to take this opportunity to come together as a community of tens of thousands of people who rely on each other to make some magical things happen in the world.
00:00:40	Morgan Rhodes	Promo	Joining Max Fun is quick and easy. Visit MaximumFun.org/join and you'll see all the different levels and the thank you gifts we can offer with each. You get all the great bonus content, which is now a pretty large library, at just \$5 per month. At \$10 per month, you get to choose a cool, enamel pin from your favorite show—which we know is <i>Heat Rocks</i> . And you'll have the option to purchase others with proceeds from additional pins going to charity. At \$20 per month, you get the Max Fun custom game pack with Max Fun dice in a velvet bag. You need that. With the rocket logo and a deck of custom Max Fun playing cards with podcast inspired designs. Check all of this out and more at MaximumFun.org/join . Let's start the show.
00:01:24	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs.
			<i>[Music continues under the dialogue, then fades out.]</i>
00:01:29	Oliver	Host	Hello! I'm Oliver Wang.
00:01:31	Morgan	Host	And I'm Morgan Rhodes. You're listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> .
00:01:33	Oliver	Host	Every episode, we invite a guest to join us to talk about a Heat Rock. You know, an album that burns its way into our collective memory. And today, we will be heading to the loneliest house on the block to talk about the 1975 album by the Philly soul group Blue Magic, <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> .
00:01:50	Music	Music	"Chasing Rainbows" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.
			<i>Need someone to talk to, guess I'm feeling I'm lost Find myself just running away, chasing rainbows in the dark And until the day the eagle flies...</i>
			<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:02:05	Oliver	Host	Spooky soul isn't an actual genre but give Blue Magic some credit. They singlehandedly tried to speak the idea into existence on their third album, <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> . With the haunted house on the cover and a group photo on the back shot in a cemetery, Blue Magic apparently wanted their music to <i>[clears throat]</i> haunt listeners. For fans of '70s soul, Blue Magic were already phantasmic—largely off the strength of their early hit, "Sideshow". And <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> was a smart blend of the lush ballads that brought the group to fame, but also peppering it with disco-flavored dance tracks. All of it shimmered with classic Gamble and Huff era Philly soul production that buoyed the sugary sweet falsetto of lead singer, Ted Mills, and the rest of the group.

00:03:11	Music	Music	<p><i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> wasn't a world-beater. It didn't put Philly on the map, nor was it the group's biggest album. But it was a surprisingly ambitious concept LP, trying to thrill before <i>Thriller</i> by sprinkling us with some of that good old magic of the Blue.</p> <p>"The Loneliest House on the Block" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.</p> <p><i>... and the doors are always locked The loneliest house on the block</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:03:27	Morgan	Host	<p>I owe this man a hug. Our guest today is from one of my favorite places in the world: my hometown, the golden state, and from the same part of the same city of my favorite city, which is LA.</p> <p><i>[Duckwrth agrees.]</i></p> <p>I owe this man a hug for his hybridization of sounds, his gift for blending genres but not being defined or confined by one particular sound. His sound is the sum of all its parts. His output contributes to LA's reputation for eclecticism and sonic liberty. I owe this man a hug. It was a good day for me when I stumbled on his song, "Wake Up". An even better day when I found a place for it on <i>Dear White People</i> season three.</p> <p><i>[Duckwrth gasps.]</i></p>
00:04:16	Music	Music	<p>So, I owe this man a hug. There's a lot of fire in his discography. I came to know him on a song called "Psycho".</p> <p>"Psycho" from the album <i>Nowhere</i> by Duckwrth.</p> <p><i>How in the fuck we got here? I've seen more rain than the deer You can make rain in the club But you can't make your skies clear And you said this was your year But you let the Devil interfere Projecting every fear You say you never care But all I see is care You let your ass show Commando underwear</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:04:31	Morgan	Host	<p>The album was <i>Nowhere</i>, and in the five years since, he's been doing it well, including a feature on a little movie called <i>Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse</i> with song "Start a Riot". I'm so glad to have him on the show. And pretty much I owe this man a hug. Welcome to <i>Heat Rocks</i>, Duckwrth.</p>
00:04:48	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>Good to be here! I feel like Muhammad Ali or—you know, he'd get the—when they come out and they give him the intro?</p> <p><i>[Oliver and Morgan laugh.]</i></p>

[Whisper-yelling.] The greatest in the world! The man! *[Inaudible].*

00:05:01	Morgan	Host	Like daaamn! <i>[Laughs.]</i> I love it. Oooh maaan. What was your—we have to ask. What was your introduction to Blue Magic, and this album in particular?
00:05:11	Duckwrth	Guest	Okay, so, I heard “Sideshow” when I was little, but I didn’t know who it was.
00:05:17	Music	Music	“Sideshow” from the album <i>Blue Magic</i> by Blue Magic.

*Stand in line, get your tickets
I hope you will attend
It'll only cost you 50 cents to see*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:05:34	Duckwrth	Guest	And then, making this new album I’m about to drop in August, there is like this certain tone that only certain artists like really touch. It’s like something that has to do with like—it’s synthesizers. It’s like this shiny type of magical sound. And I know that the Jacksons did it. I know that Stevie Wonder—sometimes Frank Ocean touches on it in certain places.
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[Morgan agrees.]

But it’s just a magical sound. So, I was just going on a hunt to find more people who had this like wonderous, euphoric, childlike imagination sound. Whatever. So, I stumbled across Blue Magic. I don’t even remember how I stumbled across them. But—oh! I was on tour. That’s what it was. I was on tour. And there was this one cover that had these two dragons. And I’m a dragon and my brother’s a dragon, so we always like do like the little double like dragon thing. So, I was like, “Oh, look! Hey, dragons, look!” ‘Cause we call him dragon, too. I was like, “Look at this album with two dragons!”

And I played it, and it was Blue Magic, and it was magic! It was insane! It was like insane! So, then I start going through their discography and I found *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane*. I liked it, because it reminds me of that like creepy, dark feeling of “Thriller”.

[They agree.]

00:07:02	Morgan	Host	That’s what it reminds me of. It reminds me of Halloween. Like, but just soulful and magical. I love that album so much. My introduction to Blue Magic was the same, through “Sideshow”. I was one of my dad’s favorite cuts and I wanna shout him out, ‘cause he could hit those high notes. And he used to bump this in the car. So, yeah, I loved Blue Magic and that was my introduction.
00:07:20	Oliver	Host	We just taped an episode about Outkast’s <i>Aquemini</i> . And on that episode, I was remarking about how third albums for artists tend to be like the middle children of discographies, because they rarely get as much attention compared to, let’s say, debut albums or sophomore albums. And by coincidence, here we are again with another third album.

So, why *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane*? Because, you know, their first debut album was their big kind of hit album. It's what put them on the map. But here we are with their third album. What is it about this LP that's a Heat Rock for you?

00:07:50 Duckwrth Guest Off top, the one that goes [*singing*], "I'm haunted by your love, never felt this way before. I'm haunted by your loooove!" Like, bro! Like, that—it's set and it's like the whole album is themed off of creepy shit.

00:08:09 Music Music "Haunted (By Your Love)" from the album *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane* by Blue Magic.

*You're always [inaudible]
I'm under your spell until eternity*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:08:25 Duckwrth Guest [*Laughs.*] It is so tight! It feels—like I said, it feels like "Thriller" to me. It feels like—it feels like when you listen to "Off the Wall"—the actual song, "Off the Wall", and there's like ghouls that's in the beginning of the song, like [*high pitched cackle*]. Like, Halloween music—Halloween's my favorite season, or my favorite holiday. But it's just that—I don't know. It's something very like adolescent and imaginative and magical. And it's slept because nobody—first of all, a lot of people don't even know—like, my generation don't know about Blue Magic. You know, they've probably heard "Sideshow" from they aunties and something like that. But I mean, let alone like they discography—a lot of people just do not know. I mean, but you gotta dig! Sometimes the magic is like underground, so you gotta go. You gotta dig hard.

00:09:09 Oliver Host It's funny, because besides being a DJ, I collect records. And so, Blue Magic LPs are—they sold well enough it's that if you're going through the B section, you know, at a record store, you're almost guaranteed to see at least one of their albums pop up.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

But I realized in prepping for today, I had never bought a Blue Magic LP in my life.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

We can get into this a little bit later, but I think it's something about this era of Philly soul, as distinctive and as signature as it is, I just—it never really—I never really gelled with it. And so, it occurred to me that I kind of missed out on this whole wave of mid-'70s soul LPs that all have this really rich production to it. And somehow, I managed to sleep on this for 25+ years since I've been collecting soul LPs. So, I'm really thankful that you picked this, because it gave me an excuse to go back to something that I probably should have been listening to all along, in some ways.

00:10:01 Duckwrth Guest Yeah. I mean, the scary thought is you can have like flames. You can have straight fire ass music, and it's like 20 years down the road, nobody will even remember you name. Don't even remember not but one thing. And that's a scary thought, especially being an artist. You know. We in this rat race, and it's like now, music is like—the threshold's gone. So, like, it's so—it's like a flood of so

many different artists. It's just like how do you actually stand up? Not only just now, but 20 years later. You know? Because once again, we're hearing an album like *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane*, and it's like fire. Or just Blue Magic in general. And not enough people know the magic that they created. So. Yeah.

00:10:42 Oliver Host We're already getting so existential about this.

[Morgan laughs.]

What does it mean to have longevity in, you know, this certain moment. But anyways, Morgan, you had something you wanted to ask.

00:10:49 Morgan Host Well, I just wanted to take it a little bit more existential, because I have to shoutout Blue Magic Hair Conditioner.

[Duckwrth laughs.]

Which has also had a very long run. You know what I'm saying? It's still stood the test of time. So, there's something magic about Blue Magic, both the conditioning oil—precious to the Black community—and Blue Magic the group. So, it's all this—it's what's in your product. You know what I mean? And for this album, it has—it stands up just like the hair conditioner. I just wanna shoutout—I just wanna shoutout that product.

00:11:19 Duckwrth Guest On time.

00:11:20 Morgan Host We generally ask this later in the episode. But I'm gonna ask it now.

00:11:25 Duckwrth Guest What's that?

00:11:26 Morgan Host Complete this sentence for me. Thirteen Blue Magic is for people who...?

00:11:30 Duckwrth Guest I was about to "like to get high". But, um.

[They laugh.]

00:11:33 Morgan Host That's cool. That's cool. That's cool. *Thirteen—*

00:11:37 Oliver Host This album would—I'm sure this album would sound great under the influence. I'm just saying.

00:11:42 Duckwrth Guest I think that's what it is, for them. They know it. That's why they call themselves Blue Magic. Like, even in like the first 30 seconds that you played of "Sideshow", like you heard that xylophone. *[Sings a few notes.]* "Step right up." Like, bro, if I—if I was on some dank? Like, if—man. I—get me on like some shrooms or something like that? When I'm there? Ooooooh!

00:12:01 Morgan Host This is it for you? *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane* is it? *[Laugh.]*

00:12:02 Duckwrth Guest This is it! *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane*—see, okay, but if I'm on shrooms, I may not listen to Blue Magic Lane, 'cause it could take me to a darker place that I—

00:12:11 Oliver Host Yeah. It's a little creepy.

00:12:12 Duckwrth Guest It's a little creepy!

[Oliver agrees.]

00:12:15 Music Music "Haunted (By Your Love)" from the album *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane* by Blue Magic.

*I'm haunted by your love
Never felt this way before
I'm haunted by your love*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:12:30 Oliver Host All these songs that we're talking about—I mean, the sounds are so much—as I was alluding to a little bit earlier, it's about the sound of what Philadelphia soul was like in the mid-1970s. And there's a pretty—I think a well-known quote from Fred Wesley, who described this particular—that the sound of Philly soul, right? So, we're talking Gamble and Huff by this time that we're in in the mid-'70s. This is, you know, post-MFSB and their big hit from '74, "TSOP". And what he described, kind of that blend of lush orchestration and hyper-polished production, which you definitely hear on this LP. Fred Wesley described it as, quote, "Putting the bowtie on funk." Unquote.

[Morgan "mmm"s in agreement and Duckwrth laughs.]

Which I thought it was such a great way of describing what Philly soul sounded like in this moment. Because it is soulful. It's certainly funky. But there's a—there's a classy elegance. It's grown, in a way. And I can't really articulate exactly what's going on, musically, that conveys that, but in the same way that you think about Blue Magic, in the same era you've got—what?—the Stylistics, the Delfonics. If we leave Philly and go a little bit up towards New Jersey, New York, you would get into the Moments and, you know, groups that were on All Platinum. And they all had that kind of tristate—that bowtie soul sound.

00:13:47 Morgan Host *[They agree.]*
 Super grown. And when your groups are named stuff like Double Exposure, you know what I'm saying? Ecstasy, Passion & Pain.

[Duckwrth laughs.]

You know what I'm saying? The People's Choice—Instant Funk! You know what I'm saying? And The Intruders.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

Grown, titled band names. That's it, period. Not just the sound but the name of the bands. The Tramps. Come on. The Three Degrees. The Soul Survivors. All that stuff is grown sounding music for grown folks.

00:14:11 Duckwrth Guest That's crazy. I've never heard of the band Instant Funk. That's—just even thinking about that. Like, just—like, you don't even waste time with the funk. Like, you just go straight into it.

00:14:21 Morgan Host Instant!

00:14:22 Duckwrth Guest Like, you come—like, you—it's just like you at a function and somebody just like pop in the door and it's like instantly turned up. It's just like Instant Funk—like, come onnn. That's an amazing name.

00:14:33 Morgan Host But imagine being the MC that has to introduce Ecstasy, Passion & Pain. Like, what's your cover art looking like? You know what I'm saying? That's some intense—we—I hope—I hope someone wants to talk about that, that day where, uh—but yeah.

00:14:45 Duckwrth Guest Ecstasy, Passion & Pain.

00:14:47 Morgan Host That's it. But to Oliver's point, which is well taken, it is a grown sound.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

00:14:56	Music	Music	It is Philly soul's grown—for grown folks. "Chasing Rainbows" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic. <i>And I finally found it's true (just chasing rainbows) Love no one but you, (I'm chasing you) so bad losing you (Like a butterfly) I'm (zooming through the sky)</i> <i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:15:13	Morgan	Host	You know, all those groups that Oliver mentioned, and I mentioned—and there's others, including—just in that sound, bands like The Dramatics and The Delfonics. I heard that music a lot in the neighborhood. I grew up in Southcentral, also. So, I'm from here, also. <i>[Duckwrth affirms.]</i> So, a lot of these—you know—were considered oldies that I heard—you know, with brothers driving down the streets in cars. That was just part of the sound of the neighborhood. You know, everything else—I heard a lot of stuff. But this was a staple in the neighborhood. <i>[Duckwrth agrees.]</i> I'm just curious about what was the sound of your neighborhood? What type of music did you hear getting bumped the most? Or did you hear some of this coming up?
00:15:47	Duckwrth	Guest	I heard it. I heard it. It was a mix. It was a mix. I would hear, definitely, like—I'd definitely hear Blue Magic, Delfonics, Temptations, O'Jays. A lot of O'Jays for sure. Every once in a while, you hear some funk. Like, you hear like some Bootsy Collins. Like, but that was like if you was like—Bootsy Collins was like more alleyway music. Like, if I was on a main street or something like that, that's more so like O'Jays. But like, if you're going down a alleyway <i>[laughs]</i> , that's when you hear the funk. You hear the Bootsy, and you hear like the—
00:16:17	Morgan	Host	Parliament. Parliament Funkadelic.
00:16:18	Duckwrth	Guest	Yeah, I mean yeah, Parliament. Oh, uh, what was his— <i>[snapping his fingers]</i> uh, I forgot his name. But yeah, so—but that was mixed in with G funk. So, then we were hearing like Nat10. We was hearing like 213. Like, Chorus in the Dark. DJ Quik. Uuuh, Nate Dogg. And in some ways, it kind of scared me. Because it was—we was always afraid it was gonna be a drive-by. And for some reason, like it was just—if you seen an old-school car, like an old Cadillac, and it was bumping some like Nac10, it's just like, "Oh, somebody about to get shot." So, it was very triggering <i>[chuckles]</i> for a good, long moment in my life. That's how the music was, but I like—I adjusted to it when I got older. But it was crazy, though.
00:16:55	Oliver	Host	I love that distinction between main street music and the alleyway music and that you're gonna hear a different soundtrack just based

on like the type of street you're on. I mean, it makes sense, but I just love thinking about that kind of metaphor.

00:17:06 Duckwrth Guest Yeah, yeah. No, that's—I do—I don't remember, quite frankly, hearing like funk-funk on the main street. Like ever. But that's what it is! Like, funk to me is punk in that way where it was a derivative of like soul, you know, but just dirty. Just dirty. That's that. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:23 Oliver Host We've been talking about the sound and the production of this album and of Blue Magic and of Philly soul. Let's get into some of the singing. Because Ted Mills, who was—you know—lead singer for Blue Magic, I wonder where does he rank for y'all amongst the great falsetto soul singers? And I mean, that is a murderer's row of people that you can talk about. You got Russell Thompkins Jr. of The Stylistics. You've got William Hart of The Delfonics. You've got Eddie Holman. And I'm just talking about people out of Philly, let alone Detroit, Chicago, New York, LA. You know, wherever else.

I mean, Mills—as you can hear on this album, as you can certainly hear on “Sideshow”, as we heard earlier. I mean, he had that high falsetto voice down to a T.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

00:18:05 Morgan Host Yeah, he did. He did. And for me, he ranks. He ranks up there. You know, my favorites though would be—

00:18:12 Duckwrth Guest I know what you're gonna say.

00:18:13 Morgan Host Sylvester.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

Philip Bailey.

00:18:16 Duckwrth Guest Philip—I knew Philip Bailey! You gotta mention Philip Bailey!

00:18:17 Morgan Host Philip Bailey, gotta be! That's hall of fame, first ballot.

[They both agree emphatically.]

You know, he's getting the gold jacket. Curtis Mayfield. Eddie Kendricks.

[Duckwrth hums excitedly.]

And of the contemporary news, I'd have to put in—I have to go with D'Angelo or Shawn Patterson. That would be. And actually, Duckwrth was nice on “Nobody Falls”. I heard you!

[Duckwrth screams in delight and then blows a raspberry.]

I heard your falsetto up in there!

[They laugh.]

00:18:43 Duckwrth Guest Whaaaaat?!

00:18:45 Morgan Host You were nice on “Nobody Falls”. So, yeah.

00:18:47 Duckwrth Guest I appreciate that. My little rusty falsetto. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:50 Morgan Host Hey, man, it wasn't rusty that day. Wasn't rusty the other day!

00:18:52 Duckwrth Guest It was—that's my alleyway. That's my alleyway falsetto.

00:18:54 Morgan Host Is it?! Okay. Alright. True, true.

[They laugh.]

00:18:58	Music	Music	<p>“Nobody Falls” from the album <i>The Falling Man</i> by Duckwrth.</p> <p><i>I can be your bread and butter Sugar daddy, undercover Secret Santa, hidden lover Long as we don't love each other I'm a fan of non-commitment Last relationship Had me feeling like a jail sentence Stuck on lunatic</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:19:13	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>I will say Carl from Blue Magic, his was like—his falsetto was creamy! I think that was the difference for me.</p> <p><i>[They agree.]</i></p> <p>Like, his was—it was smooth. Like, with falsettos, sometimes they can get sharp. It's a higher note. But it's like he was able to control it and it still felt round at the top. Like, it was—oh no, it was crazy. I loved it.</p>
00:19:29	Music	Music	<p>“The Loneliest House on the Block” from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.</p> <p><i>I watch the street from end to end Waiting for the day to let you in to</i></p> <p><i>The loneliest house on the...</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:19:47	Morgan	Host	<p>I like a singer named Daryl Coley. Right?</p> <p><i>[Duckwrth repeats the name excitedly.]</i></p>
00:19:51	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>You like Daryl Coley?</p> <p>I love—come on, I was raised in the church. So, I know about some Daryl Coley. He had a mean falsetto.</p>
00:19:56	Morgan	Host	<p>Yooooo!</p>
00:19:58	Music	Music	<p>“Chariot is a Comin” by The Gospel Music Workshop Mass Choir.</p> <p><i>Because they're only taking those [inaudible]</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:20:18	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>Well, I will say, if you wanna talk about a falsetto competition, I feel that Karen Clark Shears could probably win that.</p> <p><i>[Morgan affirms.]</i></p>
00:20:35	Morgan	Host	<p>On just strength, 'cause she held it—she held her falsetto for twenty-six seconds on “Jesus is a Love Song”. Like, just— Did sheee?!</p>
00:20:36	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>Yes she did. I counted it.</p>

[They laugh.]

00:20:40 Morgan Host
00:20:41 Music Music

Count it!
Yooooo!
“Jesus is a Love Song” from the album *Finally Karen* by Karen Clark Sheard.

Jesus is a love song, love song
Jesus is a love song, love song
Jesus is a love song, love song

00:21:11 Morgan Host

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

Whole body singing.

[Duckwrth echoes her.]

I’m sorry, we digressed on here, Oliver.

[Duckwrth laughs.]

00:21:18 Oliver Host

You know we had to go there. I’m churchy.
No, I love this tangent, because I would love to pick both of your brains, as someone who did not grow up in the church. And if I did, it probably was not one where there’s gonna be people singing falsetto. At least, not amongst my people. But my question here is what is the role of the falsetto voice within church singing? In other words, how does it get deployed? Why’s it a choice that singers make in terms of what is it meant to evoke?

00:21:40 Morgan Host

[Duckwrth hums thoughtfully.]

That’s a good question. And I think I’ll just jump in a little bit here. Sometimes, it is that you are taken there over the journey of the song. So, sometimes the falsetto is the end point. Right? Sometimes, in the case of Karen Clark Sheard and other singers—right?—you just have that in your pocket. So, that’s a starting point. But I’ve heard—and there are men that have that falsetto, that they start off that way. And then the surprise is that they’ve got this lower register that you weren’t even looking for. But I do think it represents in some scenarios, the tipping point of praise or the tipping point of worship—you have sang all the way through, and the emotion takes you to the falsetto.

00:22:29 Duckwrth Guest

[They affirm.]

What I think it is, is like—even if you look at like chakras, you know? Like, what—the crown is like the closest to divinity? That’s when you get to like divinity, and I think that frequency is reflective of the crown of like the highest. You know? That’s a high frequency! So, it takes you. It’s kind of like—I mean, but I feel, either with like a baritone voice or even with like bass, it like hits you in like a lower place. So, it’s convicting. It’s just like ooooh.

[Morgan agrees.]

But then it's just like—I haven't really cried from hearing bass. Or I haven't really cried from hearing the baritone. But if somebody hit me with that correct, higher frequency, I'ma shed a tear.

[They agree.]

00:23:10 Oliver Host I'ma for sure shed a tear.
And I think it makes sense how so many soul singers—specifically on ballads—break out the falsetto. I mean, I'm sure there's probably some up-tempo funk songs that have a falsetto going with it, but really it's a sound that you associate with people who are getting into that sweetness. Right? The sweet soul of the ballads. And of course, I mean, Blue Magic basically—even though they did more mid-tempo, up-tempo, more disco-era stuff, I mean really what they're known for are the slow jams.

[Morgan agrees.]

And that's when, you know, Ted Mills is pulling out that falsetto that just get that sweetness going in there. Right?

[They agree several times.]

00:23:43 Duckwrth Guest Sweetness is the correct word. *[Chuckles.]*
00:23:45 Morgan Host Yeah. Yeah. And I think an elegance, too. Because in that type of falsetto, when you that type of falsetto, even if you don't know the band, you just have to assume, okay, it's probably gonna be four brothers. Everyone's gonna have on suits. They're gonna be real—you know, everyone's gonna be fresh. It conjures up images. That falsetto conjures up images, elegant images of the '60s and '70s.
So.

00:24:06 Oliver Host Choreographed moves when they're onstage. Everything's in sync.
You know.

00:24:08 Morgan Host That's it! That's it.

00:24:10 Oliver Host Right. It's the—it goes back to the elegance, right? And it's classy.
Right?

[Morgan agrees.]

And the sound of it and also—as you're pointing out, Morgan—the visual accompaniment that we associate especially with Philly soul and just '70s soul in general. Right?

[Morgan agrees.]

00:24:23 Duckwrth Guest We can call it audio decadence. That's what I call—

[Oliver "ooh!"s and Morgan laughs a few excited "okay!"s.]

That's what I call Blue Magic. It's audio decadence. You have to—you have to put your pinky up when you listen to these tracks. You can't—*[laughs]*.

[Morgan "eeey"s and Oliver laughs.]

[Laughing.] You gotta put your pinky up! Straight up audio decadence. It's creamy.

00:24:39 Oliver Host Pinky soul. Okay.

00:24:40	Duckwrth	Guest	<i>[Morgan agrees.]</i> It's pinky soul, pinky yo' soul, baby. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:43	Morgan	Host	Yoooo!
00:24:44	Oliver	Host	Duckwrth, that's your next mixtape title right there. You just came up with it right there.
00:24:47	Duckwrth	Guest	Audio decadence? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:49	Oliver	Host	No, no, no. Pinky soul.
00:24:50	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Morgan & Duckwrth: It's pinky soul!
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
00:24:53	Duckwrth	Guest	Morgan: Pinky soul out here! Only thing is, some people may think of it as <i>Next Friday</i> and they might think of it as Pinky that's in <i>Next Friday</i> with the Jheri curl and the pink suit. Now, I don't know if I wanna be—
00:25:03	Morgan	Host	See, but you gotta—your fit's gotta be so correct on the cover. You know what I'm saying? And you gotta have your tea or whatever you're gonna be drinking so the people know.
00:25:11	Duckwrth	Guest	Mm-hm. Yeah, I mean, look, I'm like caught off guard. Like, "Oh, I didn't see you there!" Pinky up. You know what I mean?
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
00:25:22	Music	Music	It's gotta be one of those type situations. It's gotta be one of them. "Born on Halloween" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.
			<i>Scorpio so true, Never thought that you would hurt me, hurt me With your witch's brew</i>
			<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:25:38	Oliver	Host	We will be back with more of our conversation with Duckwrth about <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> after a brief word from some of our sibling Max Fun podcasts. Keep it locked.
00:25:47	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs.
00:25:49	Oliver	Promo	It's the Max Fun Drive, folks, and we are so lucky to have this podcast as an outlet for us, for our creative expression, for a way to connect with one another and a way to connect with you all. We feel like this show hopefully helps our larger community by at least providing some sonic companionship and much-needed diversion for these times. How you join and how you upgrade is going to be a big way in which we are enabled to keep doing what we do, which is to make this podcast that hopefully you get something out of.
00:26:20	Morgan	Promo	Membership at Max Fun starts at \$5 a month. That gets you all the bonus content. You'll be able to access that as long as you're a member, and there's a whole lot of it already waiting for you right now. If you choose to join at \$10 a month, you'll get a Max Fun membership card, a cool pin, and you also get the bonus content. And if you join at \$20 a month or more, you get this year's special gift: a Max Fun game pack featuring a custom dice set and custom deck of playing cards all with Max Fun designs. Just visit MaximumFun.org/join to become a member.

00:26:55	Oliver	Promo	You can get a subscription for a friend for a year, so that both of you can enjoy the bonus content and swag. But you can also gift a subscription to someone that maybe you've never met before, as we do have former members who've had to cancel their membership this year because of covid. Purchasing a subscription for them would be paying the bonus content and Max Fun gifts forward to someone who could use a little extra cheer. Just check the anonymous Max Funster box when filling out the online form at MaximumFun.org/join .
00:27:29	Morgan	Promo	We wanna give a huge thanks to all of our members who've made it possible for us to keep doing this through all this time. Because of you, we've been able to adapt to remote production, and we can't thank you enough for that. If you're ready to become a member to help support the show, visit MaximumFun.org/join . Let's get back into the show.
00:27:47	Music	Transition	"Crown Ones" off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs.
00:27:49	Morgan	Host	Yo! And we're back on <i>Heat Rocks</i> talking about Blue Magic's 1975 album, <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> with our guest, Duckwrth.
00:27:58	Oliver	Host	If I may take us on a little bit of a tangent. Duckwrth, in interviews, you oftentimes talk about the importance of your mother who raised you and the fact that you were raised specifically in the Pentecostal tradition and that secular music—pop music—wasn't always something that you had easy access to. And whether you knew it or not, this is actually a very common theme on our show, because Morgan—as someone who grew up also with a very churchy mom—had to be very careful about which records she could bring home. Some of the stuff could make it past the threshold. Other stuff didn't.
			So, I'm wondering, Duckwrth, in your household what was the cutting line? Like what were the records that just barely made it over, and what were the ones that just you knew you couldn't bring home? And importantly, where does Prince fall in terms of that line?
00:28:45	Duckwrth	Guest	<i>[Morgan and Duckwrth hum thoughtfully.]</i> <i>[Laughs.]</i> Okay! Alright! Tight. So, and this may be more my dad's effort; my mom is more of the conservative one. My dad was listening to Bob Marley and secretly smoking. You know what I'm saying? In his cream Mercedes when, you know, Mom wasn't around type vibe. You feeling me? <i>[They laugh.]</i> But I remember going into the living room—no, he really has a cream Mercedes. It's maybe—alright, I'ma tell you a real quick. So, I was on Google Maps one time, and my dad used to like park his car two blocks from my house. So, this is like back in the day, maybe like ten years ago. So, I was looking—I was going past on our street, and I kept going forward on Google Maps. And Google Maps caught my dad in his cream Mercedes. He has a cream on the inside and cream on the outside, and he has a Jheri curl, and his name is Jerry. And he was spraying his Jheri curl. And this all was captured on Google Maps. <i>[Morgan laughs.]</i>

00:29:40 Morgan Host It was the best day of my life. I swear. I swear. Oh, it was amazing. *[Laughs.]* And very real. Very real story. But anyway, *[laughs]*. Shoutout to your dad. Shoutout to your—*[laughing]* shoutout to your dad, right now.

00:29:45 Duckwrth Guest Yo, he's something else, man. He's something else. I could tell y'all stories for days about that man. But um, so I remember going into the living room. And I would check out the vinyls. And the ones that slipped through was Earth, Wind & Fire. I think it's the album—I don't if it's *All in One* or—

00:30:00 Morgan Host *All in All.*

00:30:01 Duckwrth Guest *All in All!* Thank you, *All in All.* It was Stevie Wonder. I don't know if it was—um, *Inner Visions*. Which, by the way, that title just clicked to me like two weeks ago. I was just like, "Oh, shit. 'Cause like he's blind, so inner vision."

[Oliver wheezes a laugh.]

00:30:20 Oliver Host That—it never hit me. Like for years. I'm like, "Oh, okay." I'm not sure I even thought about it until now, either. So, there you go. Boom.

00:30:24 Duckwrth Guest Inner—'cause he—you know, he doesn't particularly have like a vision. But it's like a inner vision, which you—yeah, that's different. But what else got through? I think Whitney. Whitney got through for sure. It was all like the stuff that was like we can like have a clean album. You know? Like, you wouldn't have a specifically a parental advisory on it. None of the nasty stuff. Like, it wasn't like—like Cameo. You know what I'm saying? Or like Child of Wilson, like Gatman or nothing like that. *[Laughs.]* It was like all the nicer music. That was the stuff that slid. And then it was really my sister was the one that was smuggling music in and stuff, 'cause she would smuggle in like Erykah Badu, The Roots, Common, Jill Scott, Outkast. All in. Oh, and then D'Angelo. And D'Angelo—yeah, he was like my introduction to like nasty, freaky R&B.

00:31:19 Morgan Host And I remember *[laughing]*—I remember seeing the—I remember seeing the music video, for, uh—

00:31:20 Duckwrth Guest What, for "Untitled"?

For "Untitled"! And I didn't expect it. I was like, okay cool. You know what I'm saying? Like, it's my introduction to R&B in this way. And then like the camera keep going down, and I'm just like, "Uuh—oh, oh! Oh! OOH!"

00:31:32 Music Music *[They laugh.]*
"Untitled (How Does It Feel)" from the album *Voodoo* by D'Angelo.

How does it feel? (Said I gotta know right now, yeah)
How does it feel? (Let me take off your clothes and I'll)
How does it feel? (I'll-I'll-I'll, I'll-I'll, yeah, yeah, baby)

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:31:52 Duckwrth Guest And then, so I was off of it for a little bit, but then I finally listened to the album, and I was like, "Oooh. Okay. This makes sense. This is insane." Now, I don't know if that was *Brown Sugar* or if that was the one after it.

00:32:05 Morgan Host Oh, *Voodoo*.

00:32:06	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>Voodoo. It was <i>Voodoo</i>. It was <i>Voodoo</i>. Oooh!</p> <p>Since we're talking about churchiness, I just have to say from this album, I think "Stop and Get a Hold of Yourself" is one of the churchiest songs on here. It's definitely got gospel elements. I love a changeup. I love a changeup. So, they got a real change in tempo that sounds to me a lot like a specific era in gospel, and that's that '70s funk gospel. So, I just want Christian to play a little bit of it so you can see what I'm talking about, Duckwrth.</p>
00:32:08	Morgan	Host	
00:32:34	Music	Music	<p><i>[Duckwrth agrees.]</i></p> <p>"Stop and Get a Hold of Yourself" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.</p> <p><i>Only then will you find a real love in your real life</i></p> <p><i>Stop and get a hold of yourself</i></p> <p><i>Check love out</i></p> <p><i>It's alright</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:32:54	Duckwrth	Guest	<p><i>[Chuckles.]</i> Then it got real funky.</p> <p>So, it does have a lot of that little '70s funk gospel that I like about it. And it's got a message.</p> <p><i>[Duckwrth agrees.]</i></p> <p>And of course, we can't come away from any conversation about Blue Magic without talking about Margie Joseph. Right? And her singing on this album. And she ended up being a gospel singer. So, she—you know, she came to prominence with her song—with her song with Blue Magic. But now, she sings gospel music. So, I just wanted to shout her out.</p>
00:32:57	Morgan	Host	
00:33:25	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>Crazy.</p> <p>So, there are church-esques on this album. It's not a—it's secular music, but there's always, if there's Black folks, there's gonna be a little bit of churchy.</p>
00:33:26	Morgan	Host	
00:33:36	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>But it makes sense, because that's where you advance your musicianship. It's just like you're like at the church, like three o'clock. You know, and you're just playing on the drums, playing on the keys. You're just like—you know, they let you like stay there for a bit and just like, you know, fiddle with the instruments. And a lot of us learned how to play music or sing or—you know, a little bit about composition wherever we may be through church. And like, especially them in like the '60s and '70s. 'Cause church was like a main—it was the spinal cord to the Black experience. <i>[Chuckles.]</i></p> <p><i>[Morgan agrees.]</i></p> <p>Especially in those times. You know what I'm saying? So. It makes sense.</p>
00:34:10	Oliver	Host	<p>If you're starting out and you want an audience, I mean, the church provides you with a built-in, you know, captured audience—</p> <p><i>[They agree.]</i></p>

—you get to play to. And so, you can—that’s a way—as both of you have been talking about, it’s a way that you can practice your chops. Kind of sneak some stuff in.

[Morgan agrees.]

And then see what the response is like. I mean, again, I didn’t grow up in the church, but I can imagine the appeal of having that. Because I mean especially if you’re on the younger end—you know, it’s not like venues—I mean, especially in a lot of neighborhoods, venues just don’t exist. And so, school music programs have been slashed, and so the church remains as like a quasi-venue as a space in which you can get your performance on, and then—you know, try these little things out and tinker with them.

[They agree.]

00:35:03	Duckwrth	Guest	So, bringing this back to Blue Magic and <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> : Duckwrth, what is your fire track off of this album? What’s the song that just gets you hyped even now when you hear it? It’s either gonna be “Chasing Rainbows” or—
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[Morgan “ooh”s.]

00:35:42	Music	Music	Hmm. But then “I Like You” is crazy. It has like a disco type of flare. And then they—and they whisper like, <i>[whispering]</i> “I like you.” Like that! Like, <i>[whispering.]</i> “I like you.” Like! I love when you can whisper on a song, besides like—what you call it?—Ying Yang Twins. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I like when you can whisper on a song, but beyond that, the chord progressions on that song—it’s beautiful. The synths that they use. It’s once again creamy. It’s creamy. It’s once again creamy. It’s creamy. But “I Like You”’s amazing on there. “I Like You” from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.
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*Please remember the day, that I said
I like you!
Sure like you, sure like you
I like you!
Sure like you*

00:36:03	Duckwrth	Guest	<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i> But uh, even on the slower ballad—or slower song, “Chasing Rainbows”, it’s fire.
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[Morgan “ooh”s.]

00:36:17	Music	Music	<i>[Singing.]</i> “You’re chasing rainbows. Flying in the sky.” Man. “Chasing Rainbows” from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.
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*I’m chasing rainbows
She passed away and I was so afraid*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:36:34 Oliver Host
00:36:35 Duckwrth Guest
00:36:37 Oliver Host

“I Like You” is my fire track. And—
“I Like You”. “I Like You” is crazy.
I think for very similar reasons to what you’re talking about—you know, for one, it has this really nice mid-tempo crossover soul feel to it.

[Morgan agrees.]

And it’s certainly not the flashiest song on here, either musically or vocally. But it’s the one that, for whatever reason, I just found most appealing. And I think partly for me, is that the arrangement reminded me ever so slightly of the 1960s hit, “Stormy” by Classics IV, which just is one of my favorite ’60s songs. And I think it’s just a coincidence, but both songs kind of have that same groove and feel to it, which I can never get enough of.

00:37:15 Music Music

“Stormy” by Classics IV.

*But I call you Stormy today
All of a sudden, that ol' rain's falling down*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:37:31 Oliver Host

And I love that you brought up the whisper thing, because to me—I mean, I think about this album, as I was saying in the first half of the show, is that there’s so much on here that just is so signature mid-’70s.

[They agree.]

And sometimes we describe albums as being timeless. And I don’t mean to disrespect this album at all when I say, I don’t think of this album as timeless, because to me, it is so—it marks this very particular moment. And you know, I was born in ’72. So, I was born the year that Blue Magic formed. And so, even though I didn’t listen to this book at, you know, age three, but I know what the music of that first decade of my existence sounded like. And so, hearing this stuff—and specifically that whisper thing that you just associate with disco and soul records of that time.

It was just like that Proustian, you know, mandolin where it just took me back to just growing up in the ’70s. And yeah, listening to people whisper on songs. Like, bring back the whispering. Morgan’s always talking about we gotta bring back voicemails. We gotta bring back answering machine. Interludes.

00:38:30 Morgan Host
00:38:32 Oliver Host

Yep. Skits. Yep.
We gotta bring back—we gotta bring back whispering on tracks. Duckwrth, do you got—you gotta make this happen. You’re the one recording artist of the three here. So, you gotta bring back the whisper, man.

00:38:40 Duckwrth Guest

Well, I would say the album I’m about to drop has two skits on it, actually. Like very—

[Morgan agrees emphatically.]

			Yeah. Yeah, it has two skits on it. So, I mean, I'm definitely gonna be on the skit lane. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> And then, like we have—we tried a whisper moment. It didn't work out on this album. But I'm gonna keep trying to whisper. 'Cause I think it's a really tight texture. You know? To be able to—you can hear in the arrangement. If you can go up, down, middle, and you can whisper and it still like—it still translates? <i>[Whistles.]</i> You know what I'm saying? That's a great moment. That's a great moment. But I didn't—
00:39:12	Morgan	Host	I'm gonna hold you to that. I'm gonna be looking for that on the next album.
00:39:14	Duckwrth	Guest	Mm-hm. There's definitely gonna be some whispering.
			<i>[They affirm.]</i>
00:39:17	Morgan	Host	I was gonna say to you, Oliver, that the song "I Like You" sounds to me a lot like—the groove and the beat of it sounds a lot like The Intruder's "I'll Always Love My Mama". It's sort of the same. It's got the same sort of bounce.
00:39:31	Oliver	Host	Makes sense.
00:39:32	Music	Music	"I'll Always Love My Mama" from the album <i>Save the Children</i> by The Intruders.
			<i>I'll always love my mama She brought me in this world</i>
			<i>Sometimes I feel so bad When I think of all the things I used to do</i>
			<i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i>
00:39:47	Morgan	Host	My favorite song, my fire track is "Born on Halloween". That does it for me. "Born on Halloween", the best way for me to describe it is it's thick. It's got a lot of moving parts in the beginning. You know, like Duckwrth said, it's like really got a howl going on which intrigues you. And you're like wait a minute! Wait a minute. What's going on? He starts off talking about, you know, she's a Scorpio. And I'm like, okay, wait a minute, I know Scorpios.
00:40:12	Duckwrth	Guest	Come on! I know some Scorpios.
00:40:14	Morgan	Host	Right? So, I know what you mean. You know? The drama starts off. And it's on brand, considering the cover art. Because let's not get away from it. It's no brothers on the cover. It's a haunted, spooky house in the back.
			<i>[Duckwrth agrees several times.]</i>
			And it's a track called "Born on Halloween". I thought—I mean, as a music supervisor, I'd love to sync this. I don't know where I'd put it, but I'd love to put it somewhere. And just these lyrics took me out: "You were born on Halloween, a queen of witchcraft. October 31 st must have put a curse on me. Fell in love with you, then away you flew without me.
00:40:50	Music	Music	"Born on Halloween" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.
			<i>... left me Had a bag of tricks, put me in a fix, you tricked me it's true I'm so alone since you've been gone</i>

You keep haunting me cause you were born on Halloween

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:41:09 Oliver Host

[Duckwrth sings the next few lines as Oliver speaks.]

The multipart harmony they just did? Mm!

00:41:13 Morgan Host

[Duckwrth “ooh!”s excitedly.]

Come oooooon!

[They laugh.]

00:41:17 Duckwrth Guest

Come ooon.

[Singing.] “Born, I said born on Halloween. Witchcraft.”

00:41:19 Morgan Host

I mean, it’s just so goood. And it’s worth noting that that track was also sampled by Dilated Peoples on “Right and Exact”. And I really like what they did at the beginning of it. And Christian, if you could just play just a little bit of the beginning so you can just hear the sample.

00:41:34 Music Music

“Right and Exact” from the album *Deta Lideracy Project: Dilated Classics* by Dilated Peoples.

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:41:48 Morgan Host

[Duckwrth hums thoughtfully.]

00:41:49 Duckwrth Guest

I like that. Right?

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah! I haven’t even heard that one before, and that’s fire.

[Morgan agrees.]

I mean, if you wanna find some crazy progressions, all you gotta do is you go crate digging. That’s why for so long, that was the thing, was to sample. Ah! Sample all hip-hop. You know what I’m saying? ‘Cause they were just locked in. Like, we didn’t have like—it’s not because I’m not classically trained, but it’s just not the same ears. You know? And it’s like those progressions. Yo. And they call it like musical when you like wanna, you know, try some different progressions. Or when you wanna go from a major to a minor chord. Or if you wanna throw a bridge in there. But it’s just like this is—this is classical music. Like, you can play—you can still slap Michael. You can still slap Prince. You can still slap so many of these different artists and albums and stuff. Like, in the future.

[Morgan agrees.]

Like, in 2155, you know what I’m saying? It’s just because it feel good. It feel good, and I think there’s something about classical music and classical composition that—I don’t know. I don’t know.

[Laughs.]

00:42:43 Morgan Host

[Oliver agrees.]

I feel what you’re saying, though. I feel you.

00:42:44 Duckwrth Guest

You know what I’m saying?

[They confirm.]

00:42:46 Oliver Host But no.
We're talking a lot about all the different changeups on this album. And in terms of favorite moments on this LP, I think for a lot of us it sounds like it's where you have these changeups and shifts in the track. I know for me, my favorite moment on the LP was on "We're On the Right Track", which is another like very like mid-'70s, you know, early disco kind of track. And it comes really during the bridge in the electric piano solo, midway through the song.

00:43:14 Music Music "We're On the Right Track" from the album *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane* by Blue Magic.

We're on the right track, now

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:43:36 Oliver Host *[They react with excitement.]*

I mean, I love a good—I love a good piano solo. I especially love a good electric piano solo. And I wish they had credited who played what on that song, because there's four different keyboardists on the album. I don't know if that's Mills. I wanna say maybe it's Dexter Wenzel, because I associate Wenzel with playing the electric piano. But whoever's doing it, I mean, they give the keyboardist a full 90 seconds to kind of work their solo out. And as I was saying before, there's just something about that bridge which just takes me back to my early childhood, because it just has that mid-'70s sound.

[Morgan agrees.]

00:44:16 Morgan Host So, that's my favorite moment. Morgan, how about you?
Man, I love that part. And I actually was gonna pick that. I love that song and I love that changeup. But since I love a changeup, my pick would have to be the pillow talk—the dialogue/parlay/whisper/banter that comes on the end of "What's Come Over Me". I mean, my god, it gets into some real spitting game at low decibels.

00:44:42 Music Music *[Duckwrth laughs.]*
"What's Come Over Me" from the album *Thirteen Blue Magic Lane* by Blue Magic.

*You see, I must have gone through some changes when I kissed your picture
And hey, my mind just keeps on wondering when you only left me yesterday
I've never been to heaven, instead I spent the night with you
Maybe that's the reason I don't know what to do*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:45:07 Duckwrth Guest Okay, so he compared heaven to spending the night with shorty. Okay, that make sense. That makes sense. That makes sense.

[Oliver laughs.]

00:45:12 Morgan Host That's tight.
He's kind of—so, yeah, but then to bring this back on records, as well, this does remind me a lot of Rick James on "Fire and Desire".
00:45:20 Music Music "Fire and Desire" from the album *Street Songs* by Rick James.

*You know, I think back to when we met
The way I used to be and the cold way I used to act
But more than that, I think of how you changed me with your love
and sensitivity
Remember when I used to*

Love...

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:45:42 Duckwrth Guest That's crazy. He said, *[enunciating]* "Your love and sensitivity changed me."

[Morgan laughs.]

00:45:50 Morgan Host That's fire. *[Laughs.]* That's fire!
So, I love that part of the track, 'cause there's nothing—I love that part of the song, 'cause there's nothing else on the album like this. And I just love that it comes towards the end of the album, 'cause I wasn't expecting that. So, in addition to bringing back skits and interludes, bring back this pillow talk. Bring back the whispering and the pillow talk to songs. Period.

[Duckwrth agrees.]

00:46:09 Oliver Host Duckwrth, do you have any favorite moments off of this LP?
00:46:13 Duckwrth Guest I mean, y'all pretty much just—y'all reminded me of all of them. I haven't listened to this album in probably like two months. But there is this one moment, but it's not on the audio side. It's more on the visual side. If you look at the album, on the right side of this like creepy haunted house, behind you is nighttime, it's a rainbow. It's a actual rainbow on the right side of the house, going into these trees. And it's—

00:46:37 Oliver Host I'm looking at the cover right now. I didn't even notice that!
00:46:39 Duckwrth Guest It's a rainbow. You know what I'm saying? And then, what? The second song is called "Chasing Rainbows".

[Morgan echoes the title.]

00:46:57 Morgan Host So, I mean like, it could be a hint to—you know—the narrative of the album. Like, the *[sighs]*—but maybe that's what it is, too. Maybe the whole story is just like he was chasing this I guess lady—
00:46:59 Duckwrth Guest I'm looking at it too. Wooooow!
You know what I'm saying? You know what I'm saying? And it's just like—and she presented herself in such a wonderful way. And it was just like, "Oh man." Like, she's beautiful like a rainbow and stuff. And then, the whole time, he didn't know that like she was like casting this spell on him. You know what I'm saying? With her love and her *[enunciating]* sensitivity. You know what I'm saying?

[They laugh.]

And it's just like—and he kind of realizes like, “Damn, I gotta—you know. I'm enchanted by her love.” It's actually a rainbow, ain't it?! That's crazy!

00:47:25 Morgan Host
00:47:28 Duckwrth Guest
00:47:31 Oliver Host

Yeeeah! I just didn't see it!

Mm-hm! It's there. Nighttime rainbow.

For folks who are checking out this episode when it airs, go to [discogs.com](https://www.discogs.com), look up this album, and look at the cover art. Because I realized, I didn't even look at the back of the LP. They are standing in a cemetery.

[Morgan laughs.]

Which—and they're all smiling, so it's not that spooky. And there's even two people dressed as ghosts in the background, which just makes it a little bit cheesy. But I mean, they really—I don't know if this was meant to be—I mean, I kind of feel like it is a bit of a concept album.

[They agree.]

Because you have the visual themes. You have the musical themes that we're talking about, and they kind of went the full distance. I mean, they shot—they did their press photo in a cemetery just to kind of accent that point. So.

00:48:08 Duckwrth Guest
00:48:13 Oliver Host

That's crazy. See, I didn't even know that. Woow! Woow!

I don't know why they had to have the ghosts in there. They should've just left that out. But—

00:48:15 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Duckwrth: Yeah, me neither.

Morgan: I didn't see that!

Duckwrth: They didn't need to put that there.

00:48:18 Duckwrth Guest
00:48:24 Oliver Host
00:48:25 Duckwrth Guest

Oliver: Then that would have made that that look better.

Oh! And Kurt with the cream suit has a skull *[inaudible]*.

There you go. There you go.

Maaaaan. This is—this is one of my top albums. Like, this is definitely one of my top albums. The further that we go into it, and like just what y'all played—it just reminded me—'cause every moment—

My manager said this. You know you have a good song when you can go to any second or like five seconds or ten second of a song and it's just like amazing, no matter what part of the song you go to.

[They agree.]

And it's just like y'all are just picking like random moments. You can like sneeze and land at like 5:45 and it's still funky. Like *[laughs]* that's crazy! And then it's a concept album. They give you all these little sneaky little hints, easter eggs. And then on the back of it, they're all in these suits at the cemetery with the two ghosts, holding it down. *[Laughs.]*

00:49:01	Music	Music	<p>"Loneliest House on the Block" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.</p> <p><i>... mean so much to me Now you've gone and set me free</i></p> <p><i>I watch the street from end to end Waiting for the day to let you in to</i></p> <p><i>The loneliest house...</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:49:27	Morgan	Host	If you had to describe this album in three words, what would they be?
00:49:32	Duckwrth	Guest	Haunting.
			<i>[Morgan hums in agreement.]</i>
00:49:40	Morgan	Host	Magical. Decadent.
00:49:42	Duckwrth	Guest	Decadeeeeent!
			Decadent! Them synths! The—ooh, my gosh. From the vocals—like the vocals that are treated so well, form the falsetto that was controlled so professionally, from the synthesizers that just hit you in all the right pockets. Oh man! And then all the—man, come on. <i>[Laughs.]</i> This is a crazy album. I think more people should know about this album, really.
00:50:05	Music	Music	<p>"I Like You" from the album <i>Thirteen Blue Magic Lane</i> by Blue Magic.</p> <p><i>Just remember the day that I said! I like you</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:50:18	Duckwrth	Guest	There should be like a playlist of like just creepy, soulful music. Like you said, put it in a thriller or something.
00:50:23	Morgan	Host	For sure.
00:50:24	Oliver	Host	Well, you know, the next question is we always wanna leave our audience with something else to listen to next. So, you know, in the next track on the playlist, so to say. Morgan, what do you—what would you recommend our audience check out next, after this?
00:50:36	Morgan	Host	Well, I'd stay in this vibe, but I would take it over to Memphis and Stax Records and get into Ron Banks and The Dramatics, 1973.
			<i>[They agree.]</i>
			Same sort of falsetto. Same brothers, gliding, sliding over the tracks. And I would start with "I Made Myself Lonely". Heavily sampled song, but one of my favorites. And go from there.
00:50:58	Music	Music	<p>"I Made Myself Lonely" from the album <i>Dramatically Yours</i> by The Dramatics.</p> <p><i>I should have known then We'd never stay just friends 'Cause the minute you leave, she comes by</i></p>

*When I need to be loved, look in her eye
I held back*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:51:14 Oliver Host My favorite era of Philly soul predates the actual popularization of the term itself. And we're talking about Philadelphia soul in the late '60s, which is during the rise of Gamble and Huff, but before they become the kingmakers of the city. And in particular, I'm thinking about the group that really brought them to fame, which is the intruders and their 1967 album, *The Intruders Are Together*. And I could be wrong, but I think the string of hits that Gamble and Huff wrote and produced for that album is really what launched their entire career.

And in hindsight, this album in some ways sounds like a greatest hits compilation, even though it's a debut album. Which tells you how good The Intruders—you know—slew of initial 45 singles were in that era. Because there's so much heat on this album. You know, it's all killer no filler, as they say. Though, if I had to pick one that really stands out, it's gotta be the title track "Together", which is one of my all-time favorite songs out of Philadelphia. And it's the way that that song opens with the horns is so incredible.

00:52:22 Music Music "Together" from the album *The Intruders are Together* by The Intruders.

Together

*Oh, oh we could be on a desert
Lost without a place to go (place to go)
And we're so in love*

[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]

00:52:38 Oliver Host I mean, out here in LA—even though it's a Philly song—that is lowrider classic, right there.

[They agree emphatically.]

You will still hear this bumped. You know, Duckwrth was telling us you live in east LA, guaranteed you're gonna hear "Together" at some point, somewhere on the block.

[Duckwrth laughs.]

00:52:54 Duckwrth Guest On the main street, maybe in the alleyway. I don't know, but you're gonna hear it someplace out here in the southland. It's definitely main street. That's a main street one. Them horns!

[Oliver agrees.]

00:53:01 Oliver Host And everything like that. And they used—I think that I heard a xylophone in there. That's a main street. Mm-hm. Yeah. So, what would you—Duckwrth, what would you recommend our audience folks check out next, after Blue Magic?

00:53:07	Duckwrth	Guest	<p>As far as like piano-wise and like mood-wise, “You’ve Got It Bad Girl” by Stevie Wonder.</p> <p><i>[Morgan hums with interest.]</i></p> <p>That—yeah, like man, <i>[singing]</i>, “You got it bad, girl. You got it bad, girl. Do-do-do, do-dododo-do-do-dodo!” Like, it’s just some crazy progressions on there.</p>
00:53:28	Music	Music	<p>“You Got It Bad Girl” from the album <i>Talking Book</i> by Stevie Wonder.</p> <p><i>Through which an escape can be found Then you’ve got it bad girl, you’ve got it bad girl If you don’t see there’s no way out</i></p> <p><i>[Volume decreases and continues under the dialogue then fades out.]</i></p>
00:53:48	Morgan	Host	<p>Welp, that’ll do it for this episode of <i>Heat Rocks</i> with our special guest Duckwrth, whose new single, “Coming Closer”, just came out. Let us know what you’re working on now and where can people find you in these streets?</p>
00:53:59	Duckwrth	Guest	<p><i>[Theme music fades in.]</i></p> <p>Cool, yeah. So, like she said, “Coming Closer” just came out. It’s kind of like a... well, I guess I would say this. In my new album, it’s not only a celebration of Black music—whether it be R&B, house, Afrobeat, hip-hop, or R&B. There’s one more—oh, gospel too. But I wanted to put an undertone of Afrobeat at least in 50% of the album. Or not even just Afrobeat specifically to that region, but just like just a certain like just African sound. And so, we like actually brought in like African drums for certain songs or like, you know what I’m saying, there’s these certain like vocal chants that I did that are like very reminiscent of like something you would hear in like Congo or Cameroon and everything.</p> <p>So, in “Coming Closer”, I’d say that was a mix of house, but then like with certain chants bringing in some of that African sound to it. But it’s just something to check out. And then, I’m working on the album—well, I just—I finished it in January, but it’s an album called <i>SuperGood</i> that’s supposed to come out later August. And it’s, once again, a celebration of all these different types of Black music, but all in one album, crazy enough. <i>[Chuckles.]</i></p>
00:55:15	Oliver	Host	<p>Mm-hm. To everyone who listens and talks about our show, we wanna thank you so much for being part of <i>Heat Rocks</i>’ community. If you’ve taken that extra step to become a Max Fun member, thank you so much for helping make the show possible, and please know that we are absolutely grateful for all of the support that you’ve given us over the years.</p>
00:55:35	Morgan	Host	<p>If you haven’t had a chance to become a member yet, you can do so at MaximumFun.org/join.</p>
00:55:40	Music	Transition	<p>“Crown Ones” off the album <i>Stepfather</i> by People Under the Stairs.</p>
00:55:41	Oliver	Host	<p>You’ve been listening to <i>Heat Rocks</i> with me, Oliver Wang, and Morgan Rhodes.</p>
00:55:45	Morgan	Host	<p>Our theme music is “Crown Ones” by Thes One of People Under the Stairs. Shout out to Thes for the hookup.</p>

00:55:51	Oliver	Host	<i>Heat Rocks</i> is produced by myself and Morgan, alongside Christian Dueñas, who also edits, engineers, and does the booking for our shows.
00:55:58	Morgan	Host	Our senior producer is Laura Swisher, and our executive producer is Jesse Thorn.
00:56:03	Oliver	Host	We are part of the Maximum Fun family, taping every week live in their studios in the Westlake neighborhood of Los Angeles.
00:56:14	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> Cheerful ukulele chord.
00:56:15	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
00:56:17	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
00:56:18	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
00:56:19	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.