

## **THE PERSUASIONS: A CAPPELLA'S KINGS**

New U2 Tribute CD Bows in September

*"I can't call it 'covering' those tunes because The Persuasions **transform** songs." [Soultracks.com](http://Soultracks.com)*

For over four decades, The Persuasions have defied conventional record business wisdom with their soulful a cappella sound grown from deep gospel roots. As pioneers of the popular a cappella scene, groups from Boys II Men to Take 6 to Rockapella have benefited from the Persuasions' legacy. With over 8000 live performances, 20+ album releases spanning gospel, Christmas music, children's music, the music of Frank Zappa, The Beatles and The Grateful Dead, and multiple television specials, The Persuasions continue to represent the gold standard of a cappella music.

The 'kings of contemporary a capella' first met on a basketball court in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section Brooklyn, New York in the early 'sixties. In 1968, The Persuasions landed their first recording contract with Frank Zappa, who signed them on the strength of a vocal performance over the telephone. This inaugurated a prolific recording career for the group, landing them two singles on the R&B charts in 1974 and 1975. The Persuasions' seminal album **Chirpin'** was reported as one of the Top 100 albums of the 1970's by Rolling Stone Magazine. Throughout their career, The Persuasions have also been highly sought-after collaborators, recording with such artists as Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, B. B. King, Joni Mitchell, The Neville Brothers, and more. The 1980's brought the group continued success that included having a track featured in the blockbuster movie ET.

The Persuasions have been the subject of a feature-length documentary film describing their career entitled "Spread The Word: The Persuasions Sing A Cappella", which continued to expose the world to the art of a cappella, Persuasions-style. In 1990, The Persuasions were invited by Spike Lee to perform in a television special he directed entitled "Do It A Cappella".

In 2000, the group began recording projects that focused on the repertoire of one artist or band. They released **Frankly A Cappella:**

**The Persuasions Sing Zappa and Might As Well...The Persuasions Sing Grateful Dead.** On the heels of these recordings, The Persuasions teamed with Chesky Records' proprietary recording process to achieve what critics have called the best sound of their career.

In 2001 Chesky released **The Persuasions Sing The Beatles**. The group created renditions that cut to the very essence of the original Lennon and McCartney songs, selecting such tunes as "Eight Days a Week", "Come Together" and "Imagine" for their reverential homage to the revolutionary Fab Four. As the Washington Post reported, "The venerable a cappella quartet The Persuasions are simply brilliant, applying their incredible, octave-skipping street corner harmonies to a collection of classics."

**A Cappella Dreams**, released in 2003, was a collection of songs The Persuasions liked to sing while riding on the tour bus -- old favorites, songs they perform in their shows, their own versions of current hits and, of course, the good old stuff from childhood. They included familiar songs such as Percy Mayfield's "Please Send Me Someone to Love", three songs associated with Elvis Presley ("Good Luck Charm", "Don't", and "In the Ghetto"), Bill Withers's "Ain't No Sunshine" and Otis Redding's "Dock of the Bay". The Sun News called the album: "...a superlatively cool and soulful hour from the smoothest vocal group in America."

In September 2005, The Persuasions will release their third Chesky project, **The Persuasions Sing U2**. Current bandmembers Jimmy Hayes, Jayotis Washington, B.J. Jones and Joe Russell, give some of U2's best known tunes a rich 'spiritual' interpretation that fits perfectly with the original intention of these great rock 'n roll songs. **The Persuasions Sing U2** is a collection of 11 tracks including "Even Better Than The Real Thing", "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For", "When Love Comes to Town", "One", and "Mysterious Ways".

With no signs of slowing down now, the acclaimed deans of street corner singing continue preaching their gospel of a cappella music to the fans with riveting live performances and provocative recording projects.