

American R&B singer, songwriter and musician, Johnny Gill began his career at the young age of 5. He started singing alongside his brothers in his family's gospel group, Wings of Faith, at his father's church. At 16, Johnny landed a record demo through a family friend, Stacy Lattisaw. Gill had a deep mature voice for such a young age, allowing him to stand out among other artists. His first single, "Super Love" was a number 29 R&B hit. He began to get more attention after a duo album with Stacy, when their single "Perfect Combination" became a hit.

In 1987, Johnny became the lead singer for the group, New Edition. Though the group already had quite a few hits, incorporating Johnny's deep voice created a more mature sound for the group who were now young men. New Edition released the album "Heart Break" just one year later in 1988. Their single "Can You Stand the Rain" featured on the album went to No. 1 on the R&B charts.

Johnny released hit solo album, "Johnny Gill" in 1990 reaching No. 1 on Billboard's Top 100 R&B Albums and Top 10 on the Pop Albums chart. This album was the first to be produced by duos: L.A. Reid and Babyface, and Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, some of the top producers.

Years later Johnny collaborated with Keith Sweat and Gerald Levert to form LSG, a group which released albums in 1997 and 2003.

In January of this year, "The New Edition Story" directed by Chris Robinson was aired on BET network. The three-part miniseries portrays the lives of Johnny Gill and New Edition members and their journey to stardom.

Gill is the CEO of his own label J Skillz Entertainment, which released "This One's For Me and You," his third straight Top 10 hit on the adult R&B chart and one of his most successful solo singles since the Nineties.

Indiana Black Expo Music Heritage Award acknowledges someone who has dedicated much of his time to maintaining R&B music. Not many artists are still landing hits on radio three decades after their initial encounter with success, but Johnny Gill is one notable exception.

This year's 2017 Music Heritage Honoree and the headliner for this year's Outdoor Concert, Mr. Johnny Gill.