

MAKE IT FUNKY



1. **MAKE IT FUNKY, PT. I**
James Brown
2. **IT'S YOUR THING**
The Isley Brothers
3. **UP FOR THE DOWN STROKE**
Parliament
4. **CISCO KID**
War
5. **MIGHTY MIGHTY**
Earth, Wind & Fire
6. **EARLY IN THE MORNING**
The Gap Band
7. **OUTA-SPACE**
Billy Preston
8. **GIVE IT TO ME BABY**
Rick James
9. **FUNKIN' FOR JAMAICA**
Tom Browne
10. **I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE**
Roger
11. **HOT PANTS, PT. I**
James Brown
12. **PICK UP THE PIECES**
Average White Band
13. **PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC**
Wild Cherry
14. **FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY**
The O'jays
15. **YOU AND I**
Rick James
16. **HOLLYWOOD SWINGING**
Kool & the Gang
17. **MAMA USED TO SAY**
Junior
18. **SHE'S A BAD MAMA JAMA (SHE'S BUILT, SHE'S STACKED)**
Carl Carlton
19. **DANCE FLOOR**
Zapp
20. **BOOTZILLA**
Bootsy's Rubber Band

SOLID GOLD SOUL

MAKE IT FUNKY

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MAKE IT FUNKY



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17. SHE'S A BAD MAMA
(JAMA) SHE'S BUILT
SHE'S STACKED

18. DANCE FLOOR

19. BOOTSILLA

JAMES BROWN WAS A FIXTURE on the R&B charts for the quarter century following his 1956 debut, *Please, Please, Please*. But in many ways his influence on other black artists was strongest in the '70s. It was during that decade that Brown moved his soul music into the funk arena, and any number of other artists hit the charts by following his example.

Hot Pants, Pt. 1 and **Make It Funky, Pt. 1** define Brown's '70s sound. *Hot Pants*, from 1971, was the last record he cut for King Records, where he'd spent all but about a year of his career. While it was still on the charts the single switched over to People, the custom label Brown had been granted when he jumped ship to Polydor. The group that recorded *Hot*

Pants was equal parts veterans and newcomers. Bassist Bootsy Collins and his brother, rhythm guitarist Catfish Collins, had split after helping Brown lay the groundwork for his new sound. Trombonist Fred Wesley, who had been key to Brown's earlier successes but had clashed frequently with his boss, returned to take over as bandleader after a self-imposed 18-month hiatus. As usual, Brown came up with the idea for the song and Wesley worked with the band to flesh it out. Then Brown joined them in the studio to fine-tune the track, cutting his vocals and calling for solos as the band played. This party-down groove worked equally well for *Make It Funky*, with its improvised litany of soul-food references.

Bootsy Collins, meanwhile, had become one of the star attractions in George Clinton's Parliament-Funkadelic juggernaut, which expanded on Brown's



**JAMES
BROWN**



preference for coming down hard “on the one”—the first beat of a four-beat measure. Parliament, the more vocally oriented of the two groups, dedicated a song to that motif in **Up for the Down Stroke**. Collins was so highly regarded within the P-Funk camp that his fellow musicians often described him as a monster. He went solo in 1976 (though he continued to work with both bands), and two years later his **Bootzilla**, which celebrated that monster image, replaced Parliament’s *Aqua Boogie* at the top of the soul charts.

Zapp, an Ohio band consisting of leader Roger Troutman and his brothers Lester, Terry and Larry, was very much in the P-Funk mold. Indeed, its big break came when Clinton heard its independently made album (featuring a heavily vocoderized sound) and finagled a deal with Warner, already home to Funkadelic. Zapp was an instant success nationally, but fans complained that the vocoder box so distorted the vocals that they couldn’t make out

the words. When Roger made his first solo album, he decided to neutralize that objection by cutting a song that everybody already knew. Using an arrangement influenced by Cameo and Weather Report, he topped the charts in 1981 with **I Heard It through the Grapevine**, making it the only song ever to hit No. 1 three times (the two previous versions were by Motown’s Marvin Gaye and Gladys Knight and the Pips). Zapp came back the following year with **Dance Floor**, which Roger wrote while imagining a shy guy at a disco who fantasizes on the sidelines instead of getting down himself. Roger sent a copy of the finished track to a DJ friend in Cleveland for feedback; when the jock began airing it as an exclusive instead, Warner rush-released a single to avoid offending rival stations.

The Isley Brothers put Stax horns to a Sly and the Family Stone groove for **It’s Your Thing**, the first release on their own T-Neck label. The folks at Motown

DISCOGRAPHY

*Indicates highest *Billboard* R&B chart position

1. MAKE IT FUNKY, PT. 1

James Brown • Music and lyrics by Charles Bobbit and James Brown. Polydor 140888 (1971) No. 1* Dynatone Publishing Co. BMI. © 1991 Universal Records, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

2. IT'S YOUR THING

The Isley Brothers • Music and lyrics by Ronald Isley, O'Kelly Isley and Rudolph Isley. T-Neck 901 (1969) No. 1* EMI Blackwood Music Inc./Triple Three Music Inc. BMI. Originally Released 1969 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A division of Sony Music, A group of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

3. UP FOR THE DOWN STROKE

Parliament • Music and lyrics by George Clinton, William Collins, Bernard Worrell and Clarence Haskins. Casablanca 0104 (1974) No. 10* Bridgeport Music Inc. BMI. © 1974 The Island Def Jam Music Group.

4. CISCO KID

War • Music and lyrics by Thomas Allen, Harold Brown, Morris

Dickerson, Lonnie Jordan, Charles Miller, Lee Oskar and Howard Scott. United Artists 163 (1973) No. 5* Far Out Music Inc. ASCAP. © 1972 Avenue Records/Far Out Productions. Courtesy of Avenue Records/Far Out Productions.

5. MIGHTY MIGHTY

Earth, Wind & Fire • Music and lyrics by Maurice White and Verdine White. Columbia 46007 (1974) No. 4* EMI April Music Inc. ASCAP. © 1974 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A division of Sony Music, A group of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

6. EARLY IN THE MORNING

The Gap Band • Music and lyrics by Lonnie Simmons, Charles Wilson and Rudy Taylor. Total Experience 8201 (1982) No. 1* Taking Care of Business Music. BMI. © 1982 The Island Def Jam Music Group.

7. OUTA-SPACE

Billy Preston • Music by Joe Greene and Billy Preston. A&M 1320 (1972) No. 1* Irving Music. BMI. Courtesy of A&M Records under license from Universal Music Enterprises.

8. GIVE IT TO ME BABY

Rick James • Music and lyrics by Rick James. Gordy 7197 (1981) No. 1* Jobete Music Co. Inc. ASCAP. © 1981 Motown Records, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

9. FUNKIN' FOR JAMAICA

Tom Browne • Music and lyrics by Tom Browne and Toni Smith. Arista/GRP 2506 (1980) No. 1* Roaring Fork Music/Thomas Browne Publishing Inc. BMI. © 1980 Arista Records, Inc. Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc. Under License from BMG Special Products.

10. I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Roger • Music and lyrics by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong. Warner 49786 (1981) No. 1* Stone Agate Music. BMI. © 1981 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced Under License From Warner Bros. Records Inc.

11. HOT PANTS, PT. 1

James Brown • Music and lyrics by James Brown and Fred Wesley. People 2501 (1971) No. 1* Cited Music Inc. BMI. © 1991 Universal Records, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

12. PICK UP THE PIECES

Average White Band • Music by Roger Ball, Malcolm Duncan, Alan Gorrie, Robbie McIntosh, Onnie McIntyre and Stuart Hamish. Atlantic 3229 (1975) No. 5* Joe's Songs Inc./Average Music. ASCAP. © 1975 Atlantic Recording Corp. Produced Under License From Atlantic Recording Corp.

13. PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC

Wild Cherry • Music and lyrics by Robert Parissi. Epic 50225 (1976) No. 1* RWP Music/Sweet City Records Inc. ASCAP. © 1976 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A division of Sony Music, A group of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

14. FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY

The O'Jays • Music and lyrics by Kenneth Gamble, Leon Huff and Anthony Jackson. Philadelphia International 3544 (1974) No. 3* Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. © 1973 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, A division of Sony Music, A group of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

15. YOU AND I

Rick James • Music and lyrics by Rick James. Gordy 7156 (1978) No. 1* Jobete Music Co. Inc.

ASCAP. © 1978 Motown Records, a Division of UMG Recordings, Inc.

16. HOLLYWOOD SWINGING

Kool & the Gang • Music and lyrics by Robert Bell, Ronald Bell, Robert Mickens, Claydes Smith, Dennis Thomas, George Brown and Richard Westfield. De-Lite 561 (1974) No. 1* Second Decade Music Co./Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp. BMI. © 1973 The Island Def Jam Music Group.

17. MAMA USED TO SAY

Junior • Music and lyrics by Robert Carter and Norman Giscombe. Mercury 76132 (1982) No. 2* Colgems EMI Music Inc. ASCAP. © 1982 Mercury Records Ltd. (London).

18. SHE'S A BAD MAMA JAMA (SHE'S BUILT, SHE'S STACKED)

Carl Carlton • Music and lyrics by Leon Haywood. 20th Century 2488 (1981) No. 2* Irving Music/Jim-Edd Music. BMI. © 1981 The Island Def Jam Music Group.

19. DANCE FLOOR

Zapp • Music and lyrics by Larry Troutman and Roger Troutman. Warner 29961 (1982) No. 1* Saja Music Company/Songs of Lastrada/Sony/ATV Songs LLC. BMI. © 1982 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced Under License From Warner Bros. Records Inc.

20. BOOTZILLA

Bootsy's Rubber Band • Music and lyrics by William Collins and George Clinton. Warner 8512 (1978) No. 1* Bridgeport Music Inc./Rubber Band Music Inc./Universal Songs of PolyGram Inc. BMI. © 1977 Warner Bros. Records Inc. Produced Under License From Warner Bros. Records Inc.



BOOTSY
COLLINS

immediately sued, claiming that the Isleys had cut the song while still under contract to them; decisions went back and forth in the courts several times before the group finally won. Former child gospel star Billy Preston, the favorite sideman of the Beatles, cut two albums for the Fab Four's Apple label before that company faltered. Back home in the U.S., he improvised the instrumental **Outa-Space** on a clavinet played through a wa-wa pedal; it was the first time he'd ever picked up the instrument.

Though the song was released as the B side to *I Wrote a Simple Song*, *Outa-Space* became the hit after DJs began flipping the single en masse. War, Eric Burdon's onetime backing band, had its first real success with Latino audiences with *Cisco Kid*, and has cut similarly flavored material ever since.

With *For the Love of Money* the O'Jays continued to pack dance floors with their combination of topical

lyrics and the Philadelphia International sound. Kool and the Gang's **Hollywood Swinging** was inspired by African sax man Manu Dibango's *Soul Makossa*, another dance favorite. **Mighty Mighty** marked Earth, Wind and Fire's first trip to the R&B top 10. The Average White Band (whose members were Scottish, and which was given its name by singer Bonnie Bramlett) scored big with the instrumental *Pick Up the Pieces*, produced by Arif Mardin in a Jazz



Messengers vein. Wild Cherry was another group of white boys, this time from Ohio. Singer-guitarist Bob Parissi had failed with another band named after a cough-drop flavor, so when he tried again he wanted to make sure he did something commercial. At a disco in Pittsburgh, customers responded to his band's heavy rock by demanding that he "play some funky music, white boy." Parissi wrote the lyrics to **Play That Funky Music** on a napkin in the dressing room between sets.

Rick James hit No. 1 with his debut single, **You and I**, written about his former wife and built around an indestructible bass line. The track came from a self-financed album that James sold to Motown, where he'd previously toiled as a writer-producer. Following a relatively poor-selling album of ballads, James began working back toward his super-freak image with **Give It to Me Baby**.

Charter airline pilot and fusion-jazz trumpet player Tom Browne wrote **Funkin' for Jamaica** in honor of his Queens neighborhood. The single had the rare distinction of topping the R&B

charts while missing the pop charts completely. When former gospel singer Carl Carlton launched what proved to be a journeyman's secular career in 1966, he patterned himself after Little Stevie Wonder. But his only top-10 success came when he talked dirty on **She's a Bad Mama Jama (She's Built, She's Stacked)** 15 years later. Junior was a British funkateer who scored his biggest hit with his debut, **Mama Used to Say**. The Gap Band had a well-established track record when it reached No. 1 for the first time in 1981 with *Burn Rubber*, which began with the line, "I gotta get up early in the morning..." When the next two singles experienced a drop-off in sales, the band made that line the basis for **Early in the Morning**, which was meant to appeal to drive-time morning DJs, who often doubled as their station's program director. The result was another No. 1, proving that radio "got the funk."

—JOHN MORTHLAND

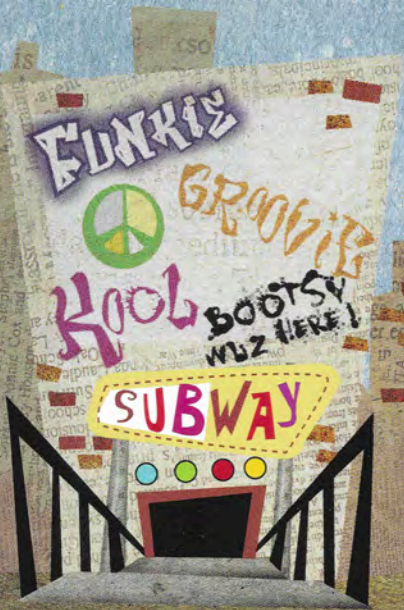
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