

Throwback: Roger-So Ruff So Tuff



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Roger Troutman is a Hamilton, Ohio native famous for using the talkbox and being the leader of his family's funk band Zapp. Brothers Roger, Larry, Lester, Tony, Terry and Ohio keyboardist Gregory Jackson were introduced to George Clinton by Bootsy Collins who was a friend of Roger's. The meeting resulted in a deal with Warner Brothers Records and Zapp's debut LP went gold. Zapp recorded five studio albums for the label and became another sonic backbone of hip-hop after racking up numerous hits. ["More Bounce To The Ounce,"](#) ["Dancefloor,"](#) ["Be Alright,"](#) ["Doo Waa Ditty \(Blow That Thing\)"](#) and ["I Can Make You Dance"](#) were just a handful of the all the tunes they created that defined funk for the era. Roger had also played on Funkadelic's *The Electric Spanking Of War Babies* in 1981. "So Ruff So Tuff" would be one of the singles from Roger's first solo album *The Many Facets Of Roger*. A cover of Motown's ["I Heard It Through The Grapevine"](#) from this album was also seminal and infiltrated radio. Of his 4 solo projects the 3rd one *Unlimited*, would have the most success because of the crossover hit ["I Want To Be Your Man."](#) ["Everybody \(Get Up\)"](#) would be his first time working with rappers when EPMD made a guest appearance on the track. ["California Love"](#) with Tupac and Dr. Dre in 1995 would be his last high profile work and he earned a Grammy nomination from his participation on the song. Roger would also provide vocals for H-Town's cover of ["A Thin Line Between Love And Hate"](#) for the soundtrack of the same name. Roger passed in 1999 after his brother Larry fatally shot him and then committed suicide. Zapp and Roger continue to influence, inspire and make people dance around the world.