

R.I.P. George Duke

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Jazz fusion legend [George Duke](#) passed away last night at the age of 67 at a Los Angeles hospital according to Motown alum Scherrie Payne. Duke's career spanned four decades and started in the '60's when he recorded his first album as The George Duke Quartet. The San Rafael, California native soon developed diverse musical chops playing with the likes of Sonny Rollins, Jean Luc Ponty, Frank Zappa and Dexter Gordon. He came closest to the mainstream with his '70's funk hits ["Reach For It"](#) and ["Dukey Stick"](#) but most fans adore his jazz R&B output that has featured Rachelle Ferrell, Stanley Clarke, Deniece Williams, Regina Belle, Chaka Khan, Anita Baker, Teena Marie, Jill Scott and his cousin Dianne Reeves. Songs like ["No Rhyme, No Reason"](#) and ["Sweet Baby"](#) proved that the meeting between jazz and R&B was not always contrived but could be classy and emotionally sincere. ["I Want You For Myself"](#) was another funk tune of his from the '70's that spread his legend in the dance music world. Duke also worked with Miles Davis on the albums *Tutu* and *Amandla*. His music has also been a sample mine for Madlib, Daft Punk, Kanye West, 9th Wonder and Ice Cube. Last month he released his final album [Dreamweaver](#) as a tribute to his wife Corinne who died of cancer one year ago.