

Throwback: George Benson-Give Me The Night



[youtube id="imYJpr09IgQ"]George Benson's "Give Me The Night" was the apex of his success in the world of pop. Benson was criticized by jazz purists for moving away from the genre to make pop records with mass appeal. But "Give Me The Night" was the work of Quincy Jones as the producer, late songwriter and former Heatwave keyboard player Rod Temperton and Benson's brilliant playing and vocals. Patti Austin provided the scat singing on "Give Me The Night" and guitarist Lee Ritenour also played on the song. Benson had already successfully moved into the world of pop in 1976 with the single "This Masquerade." Audiences outside of the jazz world did not know his roots as a traditional jazz artist and were happy to discover him as a new pop star. "Give Me The Night" had multiple accomplishments charting at number one on the soul and jazz charts and number three on the pop charts. Benson's song even made number two on the Hot Disco Singles chart. The album won Benson Grammys for Best R&B Vocal Performance, Best Jazz Vocal Performance and Best R&B Instrumental Performance.

The success of *Give Me The Night* in multiple genre spaces was unusual for a jazz artist with Benson's pedigree. Critics misunderstood the combined genius of Benson and crew who were able to take their consummate skills and craft something that charmed a huge audience. Quincy Jones knew how to use jazz ideas in pop by 1980 as he had just produced Michael Jackson's *Off The Wall* and was on the verge of producing *Thriller*. George Benson's *Give Me The Night* was an artistic coup that endeared him to the public and showcased the versatility of his gifts. In 2018, George Benson appeared on The Gorillaz single "Humility." On April 26, 2019, Benson's 45th album, which is a tribute to Fats Domino and Chuck Berry, [*Walking To New Orleans*](#)

will be released on the Mascot Label Group. The Walking To New Orleans tour will start May 17th in Hammond, Indiana.Â