

Throwback: Roy Hargrove-Juicy



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Roy Hargrove's *Hard Groove* album was a tribute to his childhood affection for hip-hop. He credited the project to his band The RH Factor. As a young star trumpet player in the '90s, he was recognized for his roots in bebop and hard bop styles of jazz. He quickly expanded his palette and would successfully record Latin jazz which won him a Grammy and later started his own big band. Genre-crossing came naturally for him and *Hard Groove* was more than hip-hop as it included R&B and funk influences. "Juicy" was a slow-simmering ballad featuring vocalist Renée Neufville who was one-half of the R&B woman duo Zhané. Hargrove's masterful control of his horn's entry with a blast then an immediate retreat into soft melodic lines and Neufville's lyrics about romantic attraction radiated with a building sensuality. Anthony Hamilton, Common,

Meshell Ndegeocello, Erykah Badu, D'Angelo, Stephanie McKay, Q-Tip, Bernard Wright, Pino Palladino and James Poyser also were contributors to *Hard Groove*. The title was self-explanatory as the music was groove-centric using space and bits of improvisation to create a mood. Hargrove once stated to an interviewer that genre choice was secondary but how the music makes an artist feel should be the goal. *Hard Groove* was Grammy-nominated for Best Performance By a Duo or Group with Vocals and had already received a warm critical reception. It was the first of three RH Factor albums to come out between 2003-2006. Roy Hargrove's "Juicy" celebrated attraction and love connection with a seductive tonal fluency and Neufville's bubbling emotion.

In 2021, Hargrove's estate released his first posthumous album, the duet album *In Harmony* with pianist Mulgrew Miller. In 2020, Hargrove's widow Aide Brandes-Hargrove and daughter Kamala established the official [Roy Hargrove website](#) and the company Roy Hargrove Legacy LLC to preserve his life's work, as well as Instagram ([@groveydean](#)) and Twitter ([@groveydean](#)), accounts for him. The documentary *Hargrove* debuted at the Tribeca Film Festival. They were critical of the film but still grateful for its celebration of Hargrove's life and music.

