

Throwback: Rufus Featuring Chaka Khan: Stop On By



Rufus featuring Chaka Khan, covered Bobby Womack's "Stop On By" for their 1974 album, *Rufusized*. The band had broken through with their sophomore album, *Rags to Rufus*, thanks to the Stevie Wonder composition "Tell Me Something Good" and "You Got The Love," written by Khan and Ray Parker Jr. They didn't want to lose their momentum so they quickly recorded *Rufusized*. Womack and Truman Thomas wrote "You're Welcome, Stop On By," which appeared on Womack's 1974 album, *Lookin' for a Love Again*. Commercially speaking, *Rufusized* was driven

by the singles “Once You Get Started” and “Please Pardon Me (You Remind Me Of A Friend)” leaving the band’s cover of “Stop On By” as an album cut. Black radio played the song during night programming and fans were happy to compare both versions since they came out the same year.

Rufus went platinum and hit the Top Ten on the pop and R&B charts. Their third album announced their arrival as a certified mainstream attraction and tour headliner. Rufus dissolved after their 1983 final studio album, *Seal in Red*. Chaka Khan had started her solo career in 1978 and those obligations made her role in Rufus difficult. Khan released her 11th studio album, *Hello Happiness*, in 2019. In 2023, Chaka Khan was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Khan is part of The Queens Tour lineup with Stephanie Mills, Patti LaBelle, and Gladys Knight kicking off in the spring of 2025.

Chaka Khan, Patti LaBelle, Gladys Knight, and Stephanie Mills Going On Tour Together



Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Patti LaBelle, and Stephanie Mills are going on The Queens Tour together. The singing legends will kick off their history-making songfest in May. They will wrap up the first string of dates in June and the second half of the tour will start in September. The four legends are excited to bring their songfest to fans who have loved them and followed their careers for decades. They had a resurgence in popularity during their appearances in the Verzuz online showcase during the pandemic. All of them shared their excitement in statements from a press release:

“Sharing the stage with my amazing sisters is an absolute honor,” says Chaka Khan. “Music is about connection, and this will be a celebration of the joy, power, and love that it brings to us all.”

“I am so excited to join these icons, who I call sisters, on this tour! It’s going to be something special. And I can’t wait to see everyone there,” states Patti Labelle.

“I’m excited to tour with my beautiful sisters! Our different styles unite in love, compassion, and understanding, and it’s important to come together now. Performing with Chaka, Patti,

and Gladys for you will be electrifying. We can't wait to see you," says Stephanie Mills

Tickets for The Queens Tour are on sale now via BlackPromotersCollective.com.

The Queens Tour Dates

- Friday, May 9 – Las Vegas
- Saturday, May 10 – Oakland
- Sunday, May 11 – Los Angeles
- Friday, May 16 – Columbia, SC
- Saturday, May 17 – Birmingham
- Sunday, May 18 – Nashville
- Friday, May 23 – Baltimore
- Saturday, May 24 – Brooklyn
- Friday, May 30 – Chicago
- Saturday, May 31 – Cincinnati
- Sunday, June 1 – Indianapolis

R.I.P. Roy Ayers



Credit: Edwardx

Roy Ayers died March 4th in New York City at the age of 84 after a long illness. Ayers' work as a vibraphonist, composer, and producer is always cited as a wellspring of the Acid Jazz scene of the '90s. The Los Angeles native came from a musical family and was blessed with his first pair of mallets at the age of five from legendary jazz vibes player Lionel Hampton. He started his career in the '60s playing bebop but his work on the 1973 film *Coffy*, starring Pam Grier, took him into the direction of funk and R&B. The discovery of his sonic home was informed by a desire to put a happy feeling into all of music.

The reinvention of his sound produced several key albums from Ayers in the '70s and '80s, including *Mystic Voyage*, *Everybody Loves The Sunshine*, *You Send Me*, and *Africa, Center Of The World*. Jazz players like Miles Davis and Weather Report opted for a more rock-oriented sound in their fusion. Others, like

Lou Donaldson, blended jazz with blues and soul. Ayers had found a style somewhere between funk, R&B and jazz that was more accessible to the average listener. This sensibility was picked up on by people like Jamiroquai, Sade, The Brand New Heavies, Omar, Erykah Badu, and Digable Planets. When he named his band Ubiquity in the '70s, he achieved the goal of being everywhere with an influence on every artist that tapped into feel-good grooves from the jazz, funk, and soul nucleus.

In the '80s, he appeared on Rick James' *Throwin Down* album and produced Sylvia Striplin's much-loved debut album, *Give Me Your Love*. Ayers released new music in the '90s and several popular compilations came out, including the Polydor Anthology. He also managed to have his vibes heard on two of the decade's seminal albums: the Red Hot Organization's *Stolen Moments: Red Hot + Cool* and Guru's *Jazzmatazz Vol. 1*. In the 2000s, he started working with house music artists, including Masters At Work and Kerri Chandler. His connection to rap made it to another generation with an appearance on Tyler, The Creator's 2015 *Cherry Bomb* album. Ali Shaheed Muhammad and Adrian Younge fulfilled their wish and had Ayers on a 2020 release from their Jazz Is Dead project. Ayers' reach continues to grow because he is one of the most sampled artists. His last collection as a leader was *Mahogany Vibe*, which was his 40th studio album released in 2004.

Bootsy Collins Remembers

Clyde Stubblefield & Jabo Starks On New Single

Bootsy Collins remembers drummers Clyde Stubblefield and Jabo Starks on his latest single, "The JB's Tribute Pastor P." They all worked together in James Brown's band and helped Brown create some of his funk classics. Stubblefield will be forever remembered for creating the famous break from "Funky Drummer." His drums were also immortalized on "Cold Sweat," "Ain't It Funky Now," "Mother Popcorn," "Say It Loud- I'm Black and I'm Proud," "Give It Up Or Turn It Loose," "Get Into It, Get Involved," "There Was A Time," and the *Sex Machine* album. Starks played on "The Payback," "Sex Machine," "Soul Power," "Papa Don't Take No Mess," "Licking Stick-Licking Stick," "Super Bad," "Talkin' Loud and Sayin' Nothing" and "Doing It To Death." Collin's tribute has Harry Mack rapping and the band, which includes Brown alumni Fred Wesley on the trombone. Collins' 23rd album, *Album of the Year #1 Funkateer*, is due any day now.