

Watch: Nite Bjuti Mood (Liberation Walk)



Credit: Maciek Jasik

Candice Hoyes, Val Jeanty and Mimi Jones are Nite Bjuti. They are an Afro-Caribbean Brooklyn-based trio having chosen their name from Haitian folklore called “Night Beauty” about a girl who sings for justice in the afterlife. Their debut in 2018 at Jazz at Lincoln Center to celebrate International Women’s Day was followed by performances at the NYC Winter Jazzfest, Nublu Jazz Fest, WBG0 and The Schomburg. Today they share their first single [“Mood \(Liberation Walk\).”](#) The avant-garde musing flips the “Miss Mary Mack” nursery rhyme into a slightly eerie

modern fusion. Hoyes questions false feelings of freedom as Jeanty's drumsticks click like a bondage chain. The visuals are a montage of them taking the walk, jump-roping and performing as they are seen through a psychedelic filter. Some scholars have pegged the rhyme as originating from a game created by slave children. Hoyes explained the imagery of them jump-roping in a statement:

"What good is freedom if you don't really feel free? Black girlhood maturation brings a range of evocative contradictory experiences. In 'Mood (Liberation Walk)' we express the sudden sensation of a girl jumping/jumped into puberty, roped into a new emotional reality, physicality and societal positionality. As explored in the music video, she jumps through the portals of her own design right until the foreboding street lights flicker. Jumping is tied to shared childhood experiences, embodies connectivity and the chasmic leaps of growth in the Black womanly experience."

Watch Nite Bjugi's Afrofuturist breakdown of contemporary questions of Black freedom in "Mood (Liberation Walk)." The trio are currently working on their full-length album after becoming recipients of the 2020 NYC Women's Fund In Jazz.

Throwback: **Fletcher**
Henderson-New King Porter

Stomp



Fletcher Henderson recorded Jelly Roll Morton's "King Porter Stomp" multiple times with his orchestra starting in 1925. Morton introduced the song with his inaugural 1923 recording but the popularity of Henderson's version led the way to it becoming a jazz standard. Henderson was a known bandleader who had been pioneering swing music with Dewey Redman during his residency at the Roseland Ballroom in New York in 1923. His band became very influential with stars like Duke Ellington referencing them as inspiration. Henderson and Redman's jazz innovations included the addition of a young Louis Armstrong in the group for a year. The work of Henderson and Redman helped kick off dances like the Lindy Hop and the jitterbug which outlived the swing era.

"King Porter Stomp" was essential to the development of jazz music but it was Benny Goodman's recording of Henderson's arrangement that made it a hit. Henderson's influence as an arranger grew after he went to work providing charts for Goodman's band during their job on NBC's *Let's Dance*. His own band was the best in the state but it was difficult for them to survive because of economic struggles. The pianist,

composer and bandleader did not become famous but his work as an arranger helped jazz evolve from the Dixie to the swing era. The rhythmic cohesion of swing music was a prelude to the musical concept of the groove which is found most pop music such as R&B, hip-hop and funk. Fletcher Henderson died in 1952 and in 1982 his childhood home in Cuthbert, Georgia was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Throwback: Cassandra Wilson- You Move Me



Cassandra Wilson's "You Move Me" appears on the soundtrack to the 1997 film *Love Jones*. The jazz singer's nuanced lower register projected an earthy desire that matched the movie's bohemian aesthetic and love story. Lyrics describing trembling thighs and eyes blinded by rainfall captured the quintessence of romantic love with poetic virtue. Wilson guided every note of "You Move Me" as the writer, producer and performer of the song. Her voice soothed in its appeal to the senses with soulful intonations acknowledging a primal love. "You Move Me" was exclusive to the soundtrack and the most favored of the three jazz songs on the compilation that is often cited as one of the most admired of the decade. Cassandra Wilson released her 19th studio album *Coming Forth By Day* in 2015. In 2022, Wilson became a recipient of the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship.

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.

