

Throwback: Melvin Bliss-Synthetic Substitution



[youtube id="JDHwtC5iv1U"] Melvin Bliss's "Synthetic Substitution" was originally thought of as an obligatory B-Side to the song "Reward." But Bernard Purdie's drums and Bliss's sentiment about the dangers of too much technology took the song beyond 1973 and conventional ideas of a successful record. "Synthetic Substitution" became one of the skeletal pieces of hip-hop's sound beginning in the '80s and was eventually sampled in more than 700 songs. The Wu-Tang Clan, Ultramagnetic MCs and Gang Starr are just a few of the artists to use Bliss's song. Herb Rooney wrote "Synthetic Substitution" and his mother had a chance meeting with Bliss which led to him recording her son's composition. Bliss died in 2010 and in 2011 the documentary *Synthetic Substitution: The Life Story Of Melvin Bliss* was released by Peripheral Enterprises.

Indiegogo Campaign For A Purdy Good Life Documentary About Drummer Bernard Purdie's Career

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Bernard “Pretty” Purdie has played drums for a long line of soul and jazz legends including, but not limited to, Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Nina Simone, Miles Davis and Gil Scott-Heron over his 6-decade career. He started recording as a bandleader in the '60's with the album *Soul Drums*. His Purdie Shuffle drumming technique which he perfected with the use of triplets against a half-time backbeat is credited for being a major influence on funk. Filmmakers Marc Manseau & Helgi Piccinin launched an Indiegogo campaign this month to raise \$50,000 for the completion of the *Purdy Good Life* Documentary. They have a few more weeks to reach their goal and there are perks ranging from production crew membership to executive producer credits. The campaign is an opportunity for music fans to not only see the history but become a part of documenting it with their contributions. See the campaign [here](#) and listen to Bernard Purdie [here](#).