

Throwback: Bob James - Feel Like Makin' Love



[youtube]0oQghNiELHE[/youtube]

Bob James is a fusion keyboard player from Marshall, Missouri who received his first big break in 1963 when Quincy Jones discovered him at the Notre Dame Jazz Festival. Jones was an executive at Mercury Records and he arranged for James to make his first recording, *Bold Conceptions*, for the label that year. He recorded another album the following year for the ESP imprint but it is his work from the '70's on the CTI and Columbia labels that made him famous. One from 1974 was his first album for the CTI label and it is known for ["Nautilus"](#) that has been sampled vigorously by the hip-hop community and other genres. "Feel Like Makin' Love" is on this album and James coincidentally played on the well-known version by Robert Flack also released in 1974. Subsequent output in the '70's produced more influential music that lead the way for smooth jazz and hip-hop. ["Take Me To The Mardi Gras,"](#) ["Storm King,"](#) ["Westchester Lady,"](#) ["One Mint Julep,"](#) ["Heads,"](#) ["Night Crawler,"](#) ["Blue Lick"](#) and ["Valley of The Shadows"](#) were some of the major songs that came from his '70's albums to form a wellspring for pop. ["Angela"](#) from the 1978 release *Touchdown* became the theme song to the popular TV show "Taxi." In 1979 James began making collaborations with the jazz guitarist Earl Klugh. These albums were non-threatening muzik-style pieces that did well commercially. A 1986 album with David Sanborn did much better sonically with the smooth jazz concept but was equally boring. James solo output in the '80's stayed in the watery jazz sound with more soulful moments like ["Brighton By The Sea"](#) from the *H* collection and ["The Steamin' Feelin'"](#) from *Sign of the Times* LP. The former featured Grover Washington Jr. and the latter had the benefit of Patti Austin and Luther

Vandross singing back-up. He took a departure from his usual fare and recorded a few classical pieces starting with 1984's *Rameau*. Hip-hoppers had more music to sample from with '82's ["Shamboozie"](#) and ["Spunky."](#) During the making of his 1990 project *Grand Piano Canyon* he re-connected with Harvey Mason, Jr. and worked with bassist Nathan East and guitarist Lee Ritenour for the first time. The band would be the lineup of his new lineup Fourplay. To date Fourplay has recorded and released 11 albums with 2010's *Let's Touch The Sky* being the most recent. James has continued to record as a solo artist and in 1995 he partnered with his daughter Hilary on *Flesh and Blood*. His solo productions have been on the Koch label since 2004 and the last CD released was *Christmas Eyes* from 2008.