

# Throwback: Madlib-Please Set Me At Ease Feat. M.E.D.

Madlib's *Shades Of Blue: Madlib Invades Blue Note* album was a rare opportunity for the producer to remix and reinterpret music from the label's catalog. Bobbi Humphrey recorded "Please Put Me At Ease" for her 1975 album *Fancy Dancer*. The flutist made jazz and funk amicably meet each other with the help of The Mizell Brothers. In the hands of Madlib, the beats are denser and rapper M.E.D. adds his verses to the mix. Madlib made M.E.D.'s rap and the groove the nucleus of a sampled and revamped "Please Put Me At Ease." The musical conversation that started with Humphrey in the '70s and others like Roy Ayers was answered by hip-hop again in 2003. Blue Note's decision to give Madlib access to their catalog introduced the legendary jazz label to a new generation. *Shades Of Blue* was a slick history lesson and Madlib's answer to Humphrey was another bridge between hip-hop and jazz. Madlib's *Sound Ancestors* album was released in 2021.

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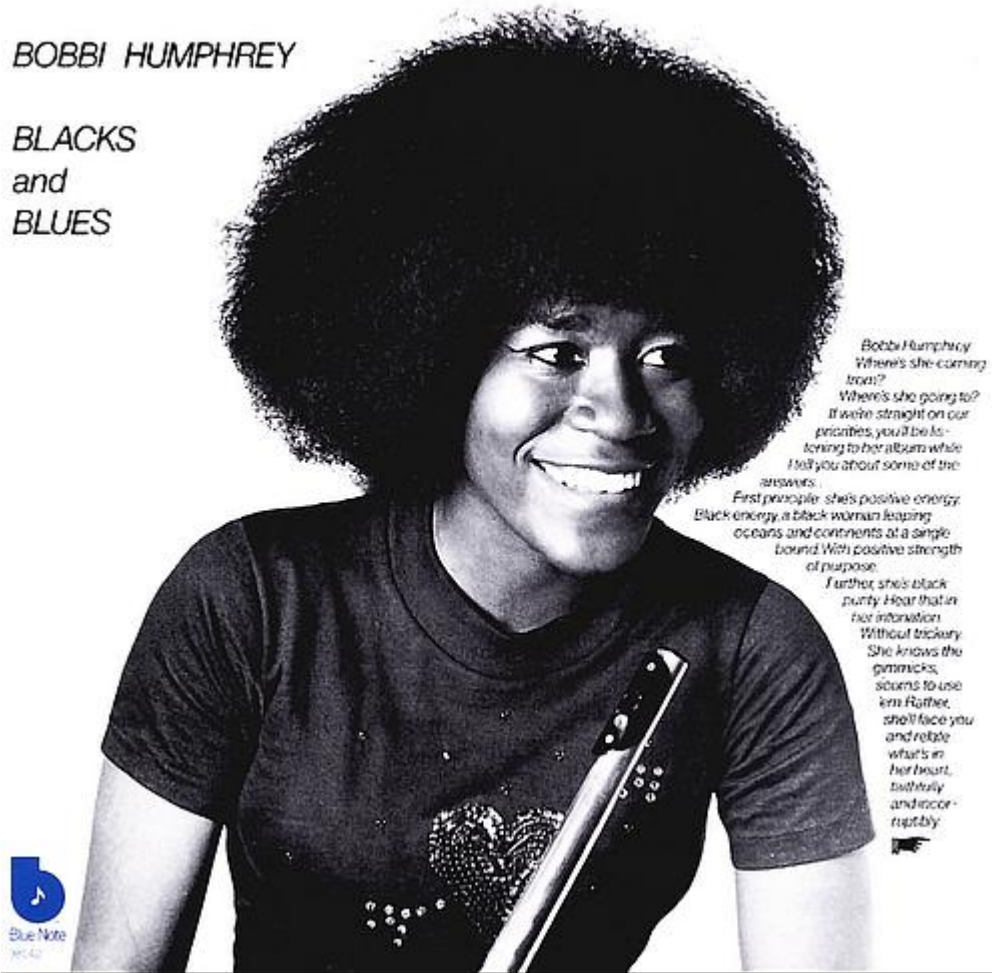
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**Throwback: Bobbi Humphrey -  
Blacks And Blues**

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BOBBI HUMPHREY

BLACKS  
and  
BLUES



Bobbi Humphrey  
Where's she coming  
from?  
Where's she going to?  
If we're straight on our  
pitches, you'll be lis-  
tening to her album while  
I tell you about some of the  
answers.  
First principle: she's positive energy.  
Black energy, a black woman leaping  
oceans and continents at a single  
bound. With positive strength  
of purpose.  
Further, she's black  
purity. Hear that in  
her intonation.  
Without trickery.  
She knows the  
gymnastics,  
seems to use  
them. Rather,  
she'll face you  
and role  
what's in  
her heart,  
tastefully  
and incor-  
ruptibly.

Bobbi Humphrey started playing the flute while attending high school in her native Dallas, Texas. Dizzy Gillespie heard her play when she was a student at Southern Methodist University and encouraged her to move to New York City to make a career for herself. She took his advice and she relocated to the city in 1971 and became the first woman artist to get a deal with Blue Note Records. *Black and Blues* was the third of her six recordings for Blue Note and it put her at the front of the jazz/R&B fusion vanguard. Larry Mizell wrote and produced all of the songs while his brother Fonce played the trumpet, clavinet and added vocals. Their street smart soul infusions into the jazz idiom took Humphrey's flute into her widest market and got her recognition from Billboard and the Montreux Jazz Festival. "Blacks and Blues" the single, has been reworked by MF Doom, Digable Planets, Madlib and Eric B & Rakim. ["Harlem River Drive"](#) from the *Blacks and Blues* album is

another essential source of hip-hop samples that embedded Humphrey's music into another generation. *Fancy Dancer* was her last time working with the Mizells and they produced more sublime jazzy funk with the songs ["Uno Esta,"](#) ["Please Set Me At Ease"](#) and ["The Trip"](#) with Chuck Davis. Humphrey's contract ended with Blue Note and she went to Epic where she continued to make stellar fusion records. ["Sunset Burgundy"](#) from her 1978 *Freestyle* album is the first recorded composition by Marcus Miller. ["Lover To Lover"](#) from her 1977 *Tailor Made* album was another sterling piece of fusion recorded during the same year she played on Stevie Wonder's *Songs In The Key Of Life*. Humphrey eventually established her own independent label in 1994 to release her *Passion Flute* album. In 2006 she did a rare video interview with [CUNY.TV](#) and in April of 2013 she appeared at The Schomburg Center for a 40th anniversary celebration of the song "Harlem River Drive."