

Throwback: Eddie Hazel - California Dreamin'



Eddie Hazel is a funk metal guitar hero who provided Parliament/Funkadelic with their six-string prototype most famously on the weeping eclipses of ["Maggot Brain."](#) The Brooklyn-born but Plainfield, New Jersey raised Hazel became the heart of Funkadelic's rhythm section in the late '60s along with drummer Tiki Fulwood and childhood friend Billy Nelson on bass. Hazel's psychedelic funk sound that could easily streamline into bluesy melodicism established itself on Funkadelic's first trilogy of albums. He proved to be more than a celestial instrumentalist as evidenced by his co-writing credit for most of *Standing On The Verge Of Getting It On*. ["Red Hot Mama"](#) from that album has Hazel playing an exalted solo of lithesome notes with the intensity of a

volcanic rupture. The Hazel sound also soloed like liquid fire on [“Comin Round The Mountain”](#) from the *Hardcore Jollies* album. In 1975 he worked with The Temptations co-writing and playing lead guitar on [“Shakey Ground”](#) from their *A Song For You* album. “California Dreamin'” is from Hazel’s 1977 solo album *Game, Dames and Guitar Things*. [“Pumping It Up”](#) from the P-Funk All Stars *Urban Dancefloor Guerrillas* was his last recording with George Clinton and company. Hazel passed in 1992 of liver failure and internal bleeding after years of stomach problems and drug abuse. Bill Laswell posthumously released some of Hazel’s work on the '95 *Funkcromicon* album. Hazel’s legacy places him as a priest of the soulful Black volume inherited by Fishbone, Vernon Reid, Prince, Van Hunt and Meshell Ndgeocello.