



WE WANT THE FUNK!

ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

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Letter from the Filmmaker

I've been focused for many years on documenting the African American experience through our shared — and often under-explored — past, where defining political and sociological events intersect with cultural history and the stories of the people who lived through these times. Music has always been a key component of my films, in how it contextualizes and brings these historical moments to life. To put it simply, music really sets the vibe of the stories we are telling.

The story of funk has all of these elements that I love to explore. Born in the Midwest scene in the heat of post-Civil Rights energy, it became a form of joyful resistance and an integral part of the revolution of the era, while redefining pop culture in the U.S. and globally.

Funk music — and the larger aesthetic culture that surrounds it — is of course vital cultural history and it is important to look back at the historical record and the archival footage that tracks its wildly entertaining evolution. But funk is no cultural artifact. It is a living and breathing art form that continues to transcend the concepts of genre and of time itself. Now and forever funk is always going to fulfill its ultimate purpose for the people: to make us dance.

My co-director Nicole London and I feel truly honored and exhilarated to have made this film and I'm grateful to all of the incredible artists who made funk what it is, many of whom enlightened us with their singular perspectives. My hope is that this film pays tribute to the everlasting and contagious spirit of funk, and that it makes audiences feel alive. Most importantly I hope it makes everyone get up and dance to the music!

Stanley Nelson, director of *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

About the Film

FILM SYNOPSIS

WE WANT THE FUNK! is a syncopated voyage through the history of funk music, spanning from African, soul, and early jazz roots, to its rise into the public consciousness. Featuring James Brown's dynamism, the extraterrestrial funk of George Clinton's Parliament-Funkadelic, transformed girl group Labelle, and Fela Kuti's Afrobeat, the story also traces funk's influences on both new wave and hip-hop.

SCREENING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Making room for joy is at the center of the music in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*—the documentary presents the roots, foundations, landscape, ingredients, inspirations, and aspirations that redefined popular music in the United States and made the funk genre a joyful global phenomenon. The musicians and songwriters knew the power of rhythm and grooves. They were committed to defining themselves, the music, and their world view on funk's terms. Funk became a form of joyful resistance to the racial and political repression of the times. As George Clinton says in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, “You’re free of all the rules and you just let go and let the groove take over.”

We’ve created this guide to help you plan and facilitate your Indie Lens Pop-Up screening event of *WE WANT THE FUNK!* This is an opportunity to bring the feel-good of funk to your community and audience, keeping the following impact goals in mind:

- Recognize funk’s foundations, trailblazers, and influencers and what makes music “funky.”
- Create a shared experience of joy through music, dance, and movement.
- Connect with the music community where you live.
- Share the love for funk music in all its manifestations across genres and generations.

“Funk is a reminder that it’s a joy to be in this world.”

—RICKEY VINCENT, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*



Topics and Themes

FUNK FOUNDATIONS

“The definition for funk, it would be James Brown.”

—NONA HENDRYX, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

The foundations of funk are rooted in African American music traditions, including gospel, jazz, rhythm and blues (R&B), and soul.¹ Combined, these music genres produced a sound and performances that didn't resemble Motown, which was considered to be Black soul and R&B packaged to be presentable to the larger young white American audiences and mainstream tastes.² Funk breaks out with its distinct mix of the music traditions (the rhythm, the grooves) and movement with dramatic style, sweat, power, and infectious energy, or, as Scot Brown says in the film, “moving away from this idea of a certain kind of respectability.”

Trailblazers

James Brown

“James Brown was funky in a pocket. Then Sly jumped off the stage and just took it to a whole other psychedelic rock, funk level.”

—FREDDIE WASHINGTON, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

In the 1960s, James Brown was dubbed the “Godfather of Soul” for fusing Black gospel music and R&B with rhythmic, vocal, and physical intensity and virtuosity. Brown laid the foundation for funk music.³ Some may say it was as simple as Brown putting the emphasis on “the One,” or downbeat, in a four-beat rhythm.⁴ As former Brown trombone player Fred Wesley says in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, “James Brown found out that if you hit “the One” strong, that what comes after that is funky.”

¹ [History of Funk](#). Retrieved from Carnegie Hall on January 28, 2025.

² Nelson, S. (Director). (2025). *WE WANT THE FUNK!* [Film]. Firelight Films.

³ [James Brown: Godfather of Soul](#). Retrieved from The Smithsonian on January 28, 2025.

⁴ [James Brown and the Birth of Funk](#). Retrieved from 360° Sound on January 28, 2025.

Sly and the Family Stone

In the film, Brown is credited for being the “innovator, inventor, and architect” of 1960s funk music. Sly and the Family Stone and Parliament-Funkadelic were the trailblazers for funk’s next chapter. These two bands kept “the One” standard and transformed the music with their distinctive sound and style, which added more funk to Billboard’s “Hot 100” music charts.^{5,6}

The formation of Sly and the Family Stone in 1966 was nothing short of a family affair—Sly (Sylvester Stewart) Stone's sister Rose was the keyboardist and brother Freddie was on guitar, with Jerry Martini on saxophone, Cynthia Robinson on trumpet, and Greg Errico on drums.⁷ Band member Larry Graham changed the sound of the electric bass in bands for all time by introducing the “slap,” the bass player striking the strings with their thumb for a percussive sound.⁸

George Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic

In 1970, veteran songwriter, musician, and producer George Clinton fused his 1950s doo-wop group, Parliament, with Funkadelic to form Parliament-Funkadelic, or P-Funk, a 50+-member band that offered not just a performance for concert fans, but a performance experience.⁹ P-Funk performances were over the top, from the psychedelic sets and futuristic costumes to the comic book-like personas of some of the band members, like Dr. Funkenstein, Sir Nose, Star Child, and Uncle Jam.¹⁰

Bernie Worrell

Parliament founding member and keyboardist Bernie Worrell was a classically trained musician. He studied at both Juilliard and the New England Conservatory of Music. Worrell revolutionized funk music with his mini long synthesizer. In the 1980s, Worrell performed with David Byrne’s rock band, the Talking Heads.¹¹

⁵ [Sly & the Family Stone](#). Retrieved from Billboard on January 28, 2025.

⁶ [Parliament](#). Retrieved from Billboard Database on January 28, 2025.

⁷ [Behind the Band Name: Sly and the Family Stone](#).

Retrieved from American Songwriter on January 28, 2025.

⁸ [How Larry Graham Invented Slap Bass](#). Retrieved from Guitar World on January 28, 2025.

⁹ [George Clinton: Biography](#). Retrieved from George Clinton on January 28, 2025.

¹⁰ [Funk Folks! \(George Clinton's Characters & Mythology of P-Funk\)](#).

Retrieved from PRX on January 28, 2025.

¹¹ [Bernie Worrell, 'Wizard Of Woo,' Dies At 72](#). Retrieved from NPR on January 28, 2025.

“Women push the boundaries in funk.”

–MIKKI TAYLOR, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

Women and Labelle

Sly and the Family Stone was one of the few major funk bands in which women were key players: Rose Stone on keyboards and Cynthia Robinson on trumpet.¹² Many women who performed funk were backup dancers and/or vocalists, like Jeanette Washington for P-Funk. Washington, along with Mallia Franklin and Debbie Wright, formed P-Funk’s spin-off all-female group, Parlet.¹³ The Brides of Funkenstein was another P-Funk spin-off all-female group. It was formed by Lynn Mabry and Dawn Silva, background singers for Sly and the Family Stone in the 1970s.¹⁴

Labelle would be a funk breakthrough in the 1970s during feminism’s second wave. Labelle was an autonomous all-female funk group that began as a 1960s girl group, The Blue Belles. The Blue Belles included Patricia Holt (Patti LaBelle), Cindy Birdsong (who would later join The Supremes), Nona Hendryx, and Sarah Dash. Hendryx, Dash, and Holt/LaBelle would become the flashy, futuristic powerhouse Labelle.

Labelle gained global attention for their 1974 song “Lady Marmalade,” by Kenny Nolan and Robert Crewe, produced by Allen Toussaint and recorded in New Orleans.¹⁵

Gospel Music

As discussed in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, funk draws on gospel’s spirituals, repetitious vamps, and call and response to create music that makes an emotional connection and invokes a response. But some Black religious leaders initially rejected drums, guitars, horns, or anything resembling secular music in the church.

Eventually, attitudes changed as popular music’s influence overwhelmed and permeated every corner of life. Gospel singers and choir directors like Kirk Franklin saw the profound potential for impact by fusing contemporary secular and sacred music together in what Franklin describes as funk gospel. Franklin notes in the film, “Gospel is going to give you that moment to just kind of change the emotion a little bit. That’s what gospel did to funk.”

“A bass player that played at a local church is probably the same bass player that played in a local funk band.”

–KIRK FRANKLIN, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

¹² [Sly and the Family Stone: Shaping Funk’s Awesome Sound.](#)

Retrieved from Funk Retrospect on January 28, 2025.

¹³ [George Clinton: Jeanette Washington.](#) Retrieved from George Clinton on January 28, 2025.

¹⁴ [Brides Of Funkenstein.](#) Retrieved from Discogs on January 28, 2025.

¹⁵ [The Blue Belles.](#) Retrieved from History of Rock on January 28, 2025.

“I got all my musical education from the church,” says guitarist, songwriter, and PK (preacher’s kid) Carlos Alomar in the film and credits finding the “dominant seventh chord” with changing everything for him. Alomar brought Black music culture to David Bowie¹⁶ when he assembled the band and vocals — Luther Vandross and Robin Clark (Simple Minds) for the recording of “Young Americans” in the mid-1970s. Alomar, Bowie and John Lennon also co-wrote the hit song “Fame.”¹⁷

“Funk’s primary purpose is to get people moving, get people dancing, shaking their behinds. Having a good time.”

—MARCUS MILLER, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

DANCE TO THE MUSIC!

Funk is inherently dance music. Musician testimonials and a scientific explanation in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* explain why the body is in tune with funk music and “makes you want to dance.” *WE WANT THE FUNK!* also tells the story of the impact of the TV dance shows that raised the visibility and popularity of new pop music groups, performers, and dance moves for a national audience.

American Bandstand was hosted by Dick Clark from 1956 to 1989.¹⁸ The show, which premiered in Philadelphia, was popular with teens, but it reflected the segregated and conformist society that was America in the 1950s.¹⁹ The dancers on the show were white; on occasion, popular Black performers, like the Motown groups would appear on the show. These performers had smooth moves and a glamorous style. But as Thomas F. DeFrantz notes in the film, “They needed to be trained in how to be presentable to a general, overwhelmingly white audience.”

FUNK, NONCONFORMITY, AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION

The phrases *Black Power* and *Black Is Beautiful* aligned with the beats of funk music, dance, art, theater, literature, and fashion. These phrases reflected a generational shift among young African Americans from conforming to a white mainstream culture based on what is acceptable to being “unapologetically who you are,” says Adrienne Jones in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

¹⁶ [Carlos Alomar on the Black Engine That Powered Bowie at His Artistic Peak](#). Retrieved from Spin on January 28, 2025.

¹⁷ [Carlos Alomar](#). Retrieved from Carolos Alomar on January 28, 2025.

¹⁸ [American Bandstand](#). Retrieved from Dick Clark Productions on January 28, 2025.

¹⁹ [February 8-9, 1964: When the Music Died in Philly](#). Retrieved from Hidden City on February 6, 2025.

One pop culture reflection of the shift was *Soul Train*—the show premiered in 1971 and ran through 2006.²⁰ Using the American Bandstand model, creator and host Don Cornelius featured primarily Black bands and soloists, with dancers doing their unique moves on the dance floor. The “Soul Train Line” showcased dancers’ individual styles in movement and fashion, following the “conformity is not the priority” funk ethos.²¹

FUNK AND OTHER GENRES

Regional Funk

In the spirit of artistic exchange and innovation, funk doesn’t conform to its own genre.

Funk music has a distinctive regional sound and groove. Rickey Vincent, who appears in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, is the author of *Funk: The Music, the People, and the Rhythm of the One* (1996). Vincent’s book maps out funk’s regional roots and the musicians who exchanged funk traditions while making the music their own, including Prince, De La Soul, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Afrobeat

The emergence of the music genre Afrobeat and other popular music from West Africa in the 1960s was the result of a back-and-forth cultural exchange of vinyl records, artists from the United States, and a heightened curiosity among African Americans to connect with the arts and culture of African countries.²²

James Brown arrived in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1970.²³ “People looked at James Brown as if he was an African. People really felt that he was one of their own,” says Uchenna Ikonke in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* But Black R&B, soul, and funk were being consumed and replicated long before Brown’s arrival. Nigeria’s Fela Aníkúlápó-Kuti, known as Fela, is credited with introducing Afrobeat, a fusion of West African rhythms, jazz, soul, and funk.²⁴

Hip-Hop

When musical instruments and music lessons were no longer available or affordable to Black and Latinx youth, audio playback devices and sound technology filled the need to create music for

“Funk was the domain of Black folks in the early seventies, but once you put it out there into the world, you don’t know who it’s going to affect.”

—MARCUS MILLER, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

²⁰ [Soul Train](#). Retrieved from IMDB on January 28, 2025.

²¹ [The Revolutionary Spirit of Soul Train](#). Retrieved from Vox on January 28, 2025.

²² [Guide to Afrobeat Music: A Brief History of Afrobeat](#). Retrieved from MasterClass on January 28, 2025.

²³ [James Brown, Kaduna Airport, Nigeria, 1970](#). Retrieved from Bermuda National Gallery on January 28, 2025.

²⁴ [Fela Kuti](#). Retrieved from Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. on January 28, 2025.

dancing.²⁵ Hip-hop was built on the “bass sample, the drums” of funk, says P-Funk’s George Clinton in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* P-Funk is said to be the most sampled funk by hip-hop artists, including De La Soul, Digital Underground, Snoop Dogg, Busta Rhymes, Missy Elliott, Tupac, and others.²⁶

Turntables, mixers, a TR 808 drum machine, and some old vinyl— “[With] these tools, and a lot of ingenuity, hip hop entered its golden age of beats and rhymes, of boom bap, with another generation’s melodies, choruses, and grooves reshaped,” wrote Nelson George on his blog in 2023 when hip-hop turned 50.²⁷ The best hip-hop DJs and emcees have an extensive musical vocabulary beyond their own genre. No doubt much of the vinyl in their collection is funky.

MUSIC EDUCATION – A HOTBED OF FUNK MUSIC

Music education, access to instruments, and home spaces that included basements and garages for bands to practice created a hotbed for funk music, especially in the Midwest. Free music lessons were available in school. Music education in public schools was “required, it wasn’t optional” says Ed Warren in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* “You have to learn an instrument.”

However, by 1985 childhood access to arts education declined nationwide according to a 2011 report commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts. And by 2008, states the report, “the decline of childhood arts education among white children is relatively insignificant, while the declines for African American and Hispanic children are quite substantial— 49 percent for African American and 40 percent for Hispanic children.”²⁸ Whereas a healthy job market and school music programs created the hotbed for funk music, a dramatic jobless surge in 1981 and cuts in music/arts programs in schools created a hotbed for the emergence of hip-hop.^{29,30}

“Their public school had a band. They could be handed the instrument, take it home for free.”

—FREDARA HADLEY, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

²⁵ [How defunding the school systems shaped hip-hop culture.](#)
Retrieved from The Nelson George Mixtape on January 28, 2025.

²⁶ [George Clinton has produced some of the most sampled funk beats in the history of music and Berklee College of Music is showing him a little love.](#)
Retrieved from The Bay State Banner on January 28, 2025.

²⁷ [How defunding the school systems shaped hip-hop culture.](#)
Retrieved from The Nelson George Mixtape on January 28, 2025.

²⁸ [Arts education in America: What the declines mean for arts participation.](#)
Retrieved from National Endowment for the Arts on January 28, 2025.

²⁹ [How defunding the school systems shaped hip-hop culture.](#)
Retrieved from The Nelson George Mixtape on January 28, 2025.

³⁰ [The employment situation in 1981: new recession takes its toll.](#)
Retrieved from U.S. Bureau of Statistics on January 28, 2025.



“Black people have had to continuously make something out of nothing, to make something not just necessary, but to make something fly.”

—FREDARA HADLEY, *WE WANT THE FUNK!*

Engaging with the Film

WE WANT THE FUNK! is your opportunity to celebrate funk music and connect not only with the music, but also with the musicians, dancers, enthusiasts, arts educators, presenters, and people in your community who simply love the music.

PLANNING YOUR EVENT

Here are tips for planning your Indie Lens Pop-Up event:

- If you are incorporating music in your event, be mindful that some music may not be suitable for younger audiences (17 and under). Review the lyrics prior to your event. Have links to or printouts of the lyrics available to provide to your audience at their request. If needed, include an advisory in your announcements and programs.
- Check with your venue to make sure they are licensed to play copyrighted music for a public event.
- Use music platforms to access licensed tracks for in-person and virtual events. Be mindful that licensing agreements for the platforms may not extend to recording your event for future playback. Do your homework about recording copyrighted music.
- For dance activities, have water available for participants to rehydrate. Light refreshments are nice, but optional. Check with your venue provider regarding food or concessions at your event.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR YOUR EVENT

Plan your event for the access needs of your audience. Include access information in your announcement and registration. Here are additional recommendations and resources:

- Indie Lens Pop-Up will provide you with a link to *WE WANT THE FUNK!* with open captions. You may wish to include this information in your announcements and promotion.
- For those who are visually impaired, use live AD for previewing *WE WANT THE FUNK!* [Contact Indie Lens Pop-Up for more information.](#)
- If you are featuring music, display the lyrics on screen.
- [Use balloons at your event:](#) By holding an inflated balloon, audiences can feel the musical vibrations from the film.
- For dance activities, keep the dance floor well-lit for deaf and hard of hearing participants to see and interpret visual clues.
- Avoid overcrowding. Have a clear pathway and space for participants to use mobility devices.
- Set up wheelchair space prior to your event. Persons familiar with chair dancing may come to your event. Also, please have chairs for people to sit and rest.

Use the [Indie Lens Accessibility Guide](#) and [Accessibility Checklist](#) for more suggestions and tips for planning in-person and virtual events for audiences with various disabilities and access needs.

SUGGESTED SPEAKERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

This is a list of suggested partners for your Indie Lens Pop-Up event with *WE WANT THE FUNK!*:

- Live music performance venues, including performing arts centers, radio stations, on-air talent, music programmers, DJs with an extensive music library and a love for funk music
- Music stores specializing in guitars and band instruments, especially those that offer lessons; vinyl record store owners, collectors, and enthusiasts
- Museums (to visit virtually or in person), museum directors, and curators (arts, music, history, culture, historic sites) (see list of museums in the [Resources](#) section of this guide)
- High school and college band directors (especially HBCU band directors), music teachers in your community (some may have YouTube lessons or offer virtual lessons), members/leaders of the [National Association for Music Education](#) if there is an affiliate chapter in your state/community

- Musicians in your community, including members of house bands and church musicians; [local chapters of the Recording Academy](#) (best known for the Grammys)
- Dance studios and gyms, dance and aerobics instructors, choreographers
- Former dancers from *Soul Train* or other TV dance shows
- Vintage clothing store owners, collectors, and stylists (for funk fashion)
- Photographers who captured the funk era (1960s–1980s)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- After previewing *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, how do you define “funk”?
- What makes music “funky”?
- What will you be adding to your playlist from this documentary? What’s on your playlist? Why did you choose those songs?
- James Brown was the “Godfather of Soul,” but also, as musician Nona Hendryx says in *WE WANT THE FUNK!*, is considered “the definition for funk.” Which elements of Brown’s music and performance style can you identify in musicians and performers today?
- Todd Boyd says that the era of the Civil Rights Movement was focused on “assimilating ... to be accepted in mainstream society.” Scot Brown says, “A lot of people identified with moving away from this idea of a certain kind of respectability. ... Black folks have finally reached a point where we’re not trying to impress you.” What do these two quotes tell us about how events in the 1960s and 1970s changed perspectives around acceptance in mainstream society? How does current music reflect the shifting perceptions and aspirations in the United States today?
- A “mother ship” is described as the primary carrier that serves as a launch and support to smaller vessels in space, in the air, and at sea. In 1975, Parliament released the album *The Mothership Connection*. What does science fiction bring to funk?
- How has social dance changed since *Soul Train* and the 1970s? Invite participants to share their memories and moves during the conversation.
- What makes you want to dance? What do you feel when you’re dancing or moving to the music?
- What makes a great dance party? What were your favorite experiences at dance parties or venues? Can you name some of the dance venues?
- Are you a practicing musician (at any level)? Have you ever played an instrument or participated in a music group when you were in school (K–12)? What is the value of music education? Is music a requirement in schools in your community? Why or why not?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Music

- **In-person or virtual listening party:** Curate a playlist and ask your audience what they would add to the list.
- **Live music**
 - Invite musicians to break down the components for funk music. Test attendees' ability to identify "the One" in the song, the groove.
 - Invite musicians who can break down Afrobeat.
 - Host a jam session. *WE WANT THE FUNK!* shows that musicians are often in search of rehearsal space. Even the church served as an incubator to try new grooves. Jam sessions offer musicians the space to be in community and learn from each other without criticism and judgment. It's about the pure joy of creating music together.

Food

- **Get funky in the kitchen.** Chef Bryant Terry's cookbooks *Vegan Soul Kitchen* and *The Inspired Vegan* include a music soundtrack for every dish. What's on your funk music menu? How would you pair music to food?
 - Invite a chef to give a demonstration with the appropriate funky soundtrack playing while food is being prepared.
 - Use an Afrobeat soundtrack and sample the flavors of Nigeria at your event. *New York Times* writer and recipe developer [Yewande Komolafe](#)'s cookbook, *My Everyday Lagos* (2023) can be your culinary and cultural guide. Take a virtual tour of Lagos.

Dance

- An impact goal for filmmaker Stanley Nelson is to get audiences on the dance floor after seeing *WE WANT THE FUNK!* Your Indie Lens Pop-Up event can include the film *and* a dance party.
- Spotlight dance and the impact of the TV dance show *Soul Train*. Invite your audience to bring their "funky style" because "conformity is not the priority." The goals for dancing are to participate, have fun, and feel the joy.
- Share *Soul Train* videos from the [Soul Train YouTube channel](#) as part of the event to get the party started.
- Invite professional dancers or dance instructors to give a demonstration to get the party started.

- **Start a Soul Train Line.** The Soul Train Line was inspired by *American Bandstand's* Stroll, as you see in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* Have participants form two parallel lines facing each other with space in the middle. Participants can “bust their moves” down the line, solo or partnered.
- **Bring line dancing into the event.** People enjoy line dancing at family events, at parties, and with line dancing groups. Line dancing does not require a partner, and it's great to have someone lead the line dance. Line dance videos are available on YouTube. Preview these two videos by Big Mucci and try them out before your event or save them for your own enjoyment (other videos are available on Big Mucci's YouTube channel):
 - [“Cowboi Boogie”](#)
 - [“The Sip”](#)
- If your audience wants to share their moves with the world, invite them to create an Instagram Reel or social media video. Be sure to display and share relevant hashtags, including #IndieLensPBS, for participants to include in their posts about your event.

Fashion

- **Make your event a fashion statement.** Find inspiration from bands and shows featured in *WE WANT THE FUNK!* (e.g., Parliament-Funkadelic, Labelle, Sly and the Family Stone, *Soul Train*). Invite designers, vintage clothing collectors, and store owners to display and model their funkier fashions.
- **Cosplay** – Encourage attendees to dress for the event. Give prizes for the funkier attire.



Resources

PUBLICATIONS

- Rickey Vincent, *Funk: The Music, the People and the Rhythm of The One* (St. Martin's Press, 1996)
- Nelson George, *The Hippest Trip in America: Soul Train and the Evolution of Culture and Style* (William Morrow, 2014)
- Nelson George and Alan Leeds (Eds.), *The James Brown Reader: Fifty Years of Writing About the Godfather of Soul* (Penguin Publishing Group, 2008)
- Labelle's futuristic metallic costumes were designed by Larry LeGaspi (1950–2001), who also designed costumes for George Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic and the rock band Kiss. Read more about LeGaspi in this article published in *The Atlantic*, "[The 1970s Fashion Designer Who Was Outlandishly Ahead of His Time](#)"

PODCASTS AND RADIO

- The Funk Music Hall of Fame & Exhibition Center in Dayton, Ohio, produces the podcast [The Funk Chronicles](#), available on YouTube.
- [Aced Out](#) is a podcast hosted by bassist, vocalist, and writer Ace Alan aka Barack Wayne and guitarist/vocalist Jay Stone, both from the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Rickey Vincent hosts the radio program [The History of Funk](#) on KPFA.

MUSEUMS

Visit music, African American history, and local history museums in person or take a virtual tour of their online exhibits, collections, and resources.

- [Rock & Roll Hall of Fame](#) (Cleveland, Ohio)
- [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) (NMAAHC) (Washington, D.C.)
 - [George Clinton's The Mother Ship](#)
 - [NMAAHC's Afrofuturism collections](#)
- [Hip Hop Museum](#) (New York, New York)
- [Stax Museum of American Soul Music](#) (Memphis, Tennessee)
- [Museum of Pop Culture](#) (Seattle, Washington)
- [National Museum of African American Music](#) (Nashville, Tennessee)
- [Kalakuta Museum](#) (Ikeja, Lagos) – the museum is housed in one of Fela's former residences. Read more about the museum and Fela Kuti's story on the webpage.
- [Go-Go Museum & Café](#) (Washington, D.C.) – Opening in February 2025

Credits

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INDIE LENS POP-UP

Indie Lens Pop-Up is a neighborhood series that brings people together for film screenings and community-driven conversations. Featuring documentaries seen on PBS's *Independent Lens*, Indie Lens Pop-Up draws local residents, leaders, and organizations to discuss what matters most, from newsworthy topics and social issues to family and community relationships. Since its inception in 2005, more than 7,200 Indie Lens Pop-Up events have brought an estimated 430,000 participants together to discuss issues that impact local communities. For more information, visit the [Indie Lens Pop-Up website](#).

INDEPENDENT LENS

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning PBS documentary series. With founding executive producer Lois Vossen, the series has been honored with 10 Academy Award nominations and features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, *Independent Lens* is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Park Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts. Stream anytime on the PBS app. For more information, visit the [Independent Lens website](#).

Join the conversation with #IndieLens on Facebook and Instagram at @IndependentLens.

ITVS

Independent Television Services (ITVS) is the largest co-producer of independent documentaries in the United States. For more than 30 years the San Francisco non-profit has funded and partnered with documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning titles and premieres them on our Emmy® Award-winning PBS series, *Independent Lens*. ITVS titles appear on PBS, WORLD, NETA, and can be streamed on various digital platforms including the PBS app. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Acton Family Giving, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Park Foundation, and Wyncote Foundation. For more information, visit the [ITVS website](#).

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