



## Resume

### “Calling Your Name” b/w “Must Get Funky”

(T-Sound) 1988

It came from a place called Dixie Broadway. Whether you're imagining a neon Confederate flag or the Drifters tune performed on solo banjo, you are following the nominal logic most do when they notice this inconsequential avenue on Winston-Salem, North Carolina's south side. However, brothers Rayvon and Terry Howell thought that using Ray's intriguing home address might give their group that extra push—the second look needed to obtain profitable attention.

They were close. En route to sign with the budding Tropicque label in New York City, the Brothers Howell and keyboardist Michael Williams were pulled over on the New Jersey Turnpike for speeding, and subsequently arrested on gun charges. Once label owner Phillip Goldstein caught wind of the infraction, he quickly canceled his appointment with Resume.

The crew returned to Winston-Salem, releasing two singles on Terry's own T-Sound label. Each side is special, but “Must Get Funky” is a masterpiece and an oddity that stands out against their catalog of informal R&B. The band interpolates Bobby Byrd's “I Know You Got Soul” and Rush's “Tom Sawyer” simultaneously as swarthy power chords billow out over a programmed shuffle. Terry fillets a trio of eight-bar verses addressing familiar themes including, but not limited to, moving,

grooving, doing it on the beat, and going 'head. Once the cordial smoke clears from Terry's rap demonstration, the band cuts loose their anchors; the synthesizer choir lets their mod wheels fly as Gary Phillips lobbs cannonballs of slap bass over the bow. The talented crew claps their synthetic hands at irregular intervals, signifying a hard-fought victory for the funk.

Resume's recorded fare was getting play on Black radio throughout the Carolinas, while the band's touring itinerary never took them farther than “some little place in High Point,” about twenty miles east. After vocalist Chris Murrell left for Count Basie's Orchestra and Sam “Duke” Starks picked up a sax gig with singer Thelma Houston, Resume became less of a priority for the peripheral players.

As you may have guessed, their long play, *Request for Hire*, was never made commercially available at the time, although the Brothers Howell recently returned to Wonder Horse studios in High Point to get a CD-R of the final tracks from engineer Lin Howard, who holds the distinction of first recording noteworthy native Fantasia Barrino. The band still plays together in odd incarnations, often as Resume, but the chances of hearing a “Must Get Funky” encore are unlikely, at best. ● **Jon Kirby**