

# Hit Me, Fred: Recollections of a Sideman

By [Your Name]

In the annals of music history, the role of the sideman is often overlooked. Yet, these unsung heroes play a vital role in shaping the sound and success of the artists they support. One such sideman was Fred Wesley, a trombonist who graced the stages and recordings of some of the most iconic musicians of the 20th century.



## Hit Me, Fred: Recollections of a Sideman by Fred Wesley

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3274 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 344 pages



In his memoir, "Hit Me, Fred," Wesley paints a vivid and entertaining picture of his life as a sideman. From his early days as a member of James Brown's legendary band to his collaborations with George Clinton and Bootsy Collins, Wesley offers a unique perspective on the music industry and the personalities that shaped it.

## Early Years



Fred Wesley was born in Mobile, Alabama, in 1943. His musical journey began at a young age, when he joined his school band. By the time he was a teenager, Wesley was already an accomplished trombonist. In 1962, he joined James Brown's band, The James Brown Revue, and quickly became one of its most valuable members.

With James Brown, Wesley helped create the sound that would define funk music. His powerful trombone solos and innovative use of the wah-wah pedal became essential ingredients of Brown's signature style. Wesley also played a key role in the development of Brown's stage show, which was known for its high energy and audience participation.

### **Collaboration with George Clinton and Bootsy Collins**



Fred Wesley performing with Parliament-Funkadelic

In the late 1960s, Wesley left James Brown's band to join George Clinton's Parliament-Funkadelic collective. Clinton's music was even more experimental than Brown's, and Wesley quickly embraced the freedom to explore new sounds and styles.

With Parliament-Funkadelic, Wesley helped create some of the most iconic funk albums of all time, including "Mothership Connection" and "One Nation Under a Groove." His trombone became an essential part of the band's sound, and his solos were often the highlight of their live performances.

Wesley also collaborated with Bootsy Collins, another former member of James Brown's band. Collins' music was more soulful and melodic than Clinton's, and Wesley's trombone playing adapted accordingly. Together, they created some of the most memorable funk recordings of the 1970s.

### **Later Career**



In the 1980s and 1990s, Wesley continued to work as a sideman for a variety of artists, including Maceo Parker, Pee Wee Ellis, and The Gap

Band. He also released several solo albums, which showcased his versatility and his ability to adapt to different musical styles.

In 2014, Wesley was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of Parliament-Funkadelic. This was a fitting tribute to a musician who had played a major role in shaping the sound of funk music and who had inspired generations of musicians.

Fred Wesley was one of the most talented and influential sidemen in music history. His trombone playing was a major force in the development of funk music, and his collaborations with James Brown, George Clinton, and Bootsy Collins produced some of the most iconic recordings of the 20th century.

Wesley's memoir, "Hit Me, Fred," is a valuable document that provides a unique glimpse into the life and career of a true musical legend. It is a must-read for anyone interested in funk music or the behind-the-scenes stories of the music industry.



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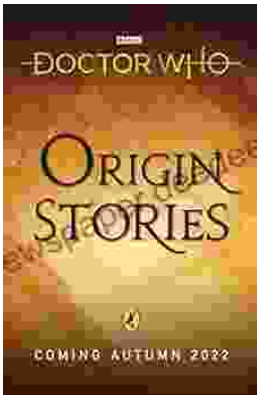
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