



BIOGRAPHY

THE BAND A.K.A.

For Jaeson James Jarrett and his Band A.K.A. their recent British tour, that culminated with two sell-out shows in London, was more than a public airing of their two pop hits, 'Grace' and 'Joy,' it was an opportunity for them to indulge in a little nostalgia; they performed in front of servicemen at the U.S.A.F. base in Lakenheath, where Jarrett formed the band 16 years ago.

In those days musician songwriter, producer, arranger Jae Jarrett was a sergeant in the U.S. Airforce, serving in helicopter rescue. To break the monotony of airforce routine he assembled The Band A.K.A. (Also Known As) on the base and supplemented military life by churning out the late Sixties hits of Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, James Brown and The Beatles. They played in Bedford and at neighbouring airforce bases, including one at Milden Hall.

It was an uncertain time for members of the U.S. military. Three of the band were posted to Vietnam, never to return. The band dissolved when Jae James was discharged from the service in 1969. James is an astute, quick witted man with a strong entrepreneurial streak in him. Graduating from two universities, he spent eight years in American industry, satisfying his enthusiasm for music by helping promote such tours as The Isley Brothers and The Ohio Players.

During one memorably tedious company meeting, "I was bored to death," he recalls. "I found myself thinking about songs - and at that same meeting I resigned." He set out for the West Coast where he soon formed Platinum Plus Limited, an umbrella company that signed up a variety of diverse R&B acts, each employing backing tracks from the reconstructed Band A.K.A.

The label's fortunes were slight until Jarrett locked himself inside a Los Angeles studio to write and produce the Band A.K.A.'s self-titled debut album in 1981. American soon took notice and Britain followed when Epic Records released the track 'Grace' as a single.

Earlier this year Jarrett completed work on a second album, 'Men Of The Music,' with an entirely new set of musicians, with exception of his long standing trumpet player, Jack E.O. Holmes; James Cartier (saxophone), Zac Harmon (bass & guitar), Benny Murray (drums), Marvin Valentine (lead vocals and keyboards), Ronald Riley (guitar) and Milton 'Micky' Smith (lead vocals and keyboards). The celebratory 'Joy' was lifted for single release and it quickly retraced the journey of 'Grace' into the British Top 40.



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