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DISCO RECHARGE-BORIS MIDNEY VOLUME 1: BEAUTIFUL BLEND-MAKE THAT FEELING COME AGAIN AND BORIS MIDNEY-CARESS.

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DISCO RECHARGE-BORIS MIDNEY VOLUME 1: BEAUTIFUL BLEND-MAKE THAT FEELING COME AGAIN AND BORIS MIDNEY-CARESS.

As usual, Mr. Pinks has been the hardest working man in disco, compiling not one, not two, but five instalments of Harmless Records' Disco Recharge series. His hard work has certainly paid off, with him rediscovering some glittering disco gems. The first of these five release sees Mr. Pinks look at one of Euro Disco's greatest producers, Boris Midney and two albums he released in 1978 and 1979. They are Beautiful Blend's Make That Feeling Come Again and Boris Midney's Caress. This is the first of two double-albums release looking at Boris Midney's music with Disco Recharge-Boris Midney Volume 1-Beautiful Blend and Caress released by Harmless Records' subsidiary label Disco Recharge on 1st October 2012. For me, this is a very welcome release, not just because of how important Boris Midney's music was during disco's heyday, and how important a part he played in creating the Euro Disco sound, but because of Boris Midney's life story. Truly, Boris Midney's story is a fascinating one and one that deserves to be told. I'll tell you that story and then tell you about Beautiful Blend's Make That Feeling Come Again and Boris Midney's Caress.

Boris Midney was born in Moscow, Russia, in the shadow of the Kremlin. Growing up, the Kremlin parks became Boris' playground. Both his parents were musicians, his mother an opera singer, his father an orchestra conductor. So it's no surprise that from an early age, Boris was fascinated with music, how it worked and how it moved you. It was rhythm that interested him, even obsessed him. How and why did it move you like it did? Soon, Boris was training at the respected Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. This would stand Boris in good stead, as he'd become a multi-instrumentalist, who'd later, play keyboards, synths, drums, saxophone, clarinet

and percussion on his albums. All this came from his classical training. At home, although jazz music was forbidden in the Soviet era, Boris immersed himself in jazz music. While it looked as if Boris was destined to become a musician, his career took a twist, when he was invited to study at the Moscow House of Photography. Even this helped his future career in disco, as it allowed him to design his own album covers. Then when Boris wrote an award-winning soundtrack, and wasn't allowed to collect his award, his life changed forever.

Having written the soundtrack to the film *Staircase*, which won an award at the Monte Carlo Film Festival, Boris wasn't allowed to collect his award. By then he was a teenager and growing restless. Unlike other teenagers, he'd learnt about the idea of being a "winner" and liked and believed in the idea. He was wasn't content to stay put in Russia, accepting the status quo as handed down by the state. So, having joined an ensemble that was going to tour Japan, Boris decided to defect. In Tokyo, Boris headed for the American Embassy and a new life.

Now living in America, he settled in to his new life. He was met by Helen Keane, the manager of jazz pianist Bill Evans at the airport. Helen had heard about Boris and with her help, was signed to ABC/Impulse Records. The result of this was the Russian Quartet jazz group. Soon, people were looking Boris up, having heard his story. Quickly job offers came his way and the Russian Quartet's Kellaway was nominated for the best adaptation at the Oscars in 1976. Gradually, the Russian Quartet started working within the music industry. Rather than working for other people, Boris would work for himself.

Success came Boris' way almost immediately. His debut album was *USA-European Connection's Come Into My Heart*, which launched Boris career. It seemed a disco legend had been born when *Come Into My Heart* reached number one in the US Dance Charts. Proving lightning can strike twice in the same place, Boris second album, *Beautiful Blend's Here Come That Feeling Again*, released in 1978, reached number one in the US Dance Charts and number fourteen in the US Billboard R&B Charts. After the success of *Beautiful Blend's Here Come That Feeling Again*, Boris decided to move studios to 226 East 54th Street in Manhattan. However, before he could record any music he'd have to build his new studio from scratch.

In Manhattan, Boris Midney started building his own studios from scratch. This was no ordinary studio though, this was America's very first forty-eight track studio, which he christened Eras, after the new dawn of a new era in dance music. Eventually, Boris would have studios in New York and Philadelphia. The first album recorded in Eras was Boris Midney's 1979 album *Caress*, which was released on a subsidiary of Warner Bros, RFC Records. *Caress* was every bit as innovative and inventive as *Beautiful Blend's Here Come That Feeling Again* had been. Although by 1979 disco's popularity was waning, this was disco taken to the next level as you'll discover when I tell you about *Beautiful Blend's Here Come That Feeling Again* and Boris Midney's *Caress*.

BEAUTIFUL BLEND MAKE THAT FEELING COME AGAIN.

Opening *Beautiful Blend's Make That Feeling Come Again* is *That's the Meaning*. Boris teases the

listener as the track opens, using his full musical palette. Distant hissing hi-hats, flourishes of harpsichord, rasping horns and stabs keyboards create a moody backdrop, before pulsating drums and swathes dancing strings and growling horns take you on a dramatic eight minute musical journey. Soon it's all change, when strings cascade, horns rasp and joyous, soaring harmonies enter. These harmonies are swept above the strings while Boris creates an innovative, complex, multilayered arrangement. It's impossible to second guess him, as fuses disco, drama, Latin percussion and soulful harmonies. In doing so, he becomes a one-man disco orchestra, playing most of the instruments. The only thing that you can say with any doubt is that pulsating beat will be omnipresent. Apart from that, the only other thing you can say with any certainty is if the rest of Make That Feeling Come Again is as good, this will definitely be a disco classic.

Boogie Motion sees the same pounding at the heart of the arrangement, while melodic keyboards and flourishes of strings joined by harmonies which give the track a real Euro Disco sound. This is no surprise, given Boris' role as one of Euro Disco's architects. Bursts of guitars and harp are joined by percussion from Larry Washington, as growling horns drift in and out, while the Euro Disco harmonies become breathy and sensual. Soon, they're delivered in a punchy style. When they drop out the swirling strings and rasping horns take charge, as keyboards and pounding drums play a vital role in the arrangement's sound and success. Although more Euro Disco than the opening track, Boogie Motion is a prime example of why Boris Midney played such an important part in the creation of Euro Disco. If anyone asks why, just play this track.

Larry Washington's percussion joins the drums that provide Make That Feeling Come Again's heartbeat. Keyboards provide a sense of urgency, as if the arrangement is desperate to reveal its secrets and subtleties. Boris continues to tease and tantalize, before revealing bold, impressive disco soundscape. With flourishes of strings and harp, braying horns, a thunderous rhythm section it sounds like the soundtrack to a yet unmade movie. Moody, broody, bold and dramatic are ways of describing this eleven-minute epic. Elegant harmonies provide a contrast before a sultry saxophone and lush strings signal that the track's about to reveal its delights. Not quite yet, it's as if Boris isn't quite ready. Relentlessly, Boris toys with you, creating a dramatic disco soundscape. Gradually, Boris reveals the track's drama, delights and not inconsiderable beauty, and in doing so, references everything from disco right through movie soundtracks, jazz and classical music. Describing a track this good as a Magnus Opus is almost a disservice, it's even better than that.

Closing Make That Feeling Come Again is the sensual, dramatic Ah-Do It. From the opening bars Boris sets the mood, and again it's dramatic. The pounding drums are augmented by keyboards, guitars and moody, needy harmonies. They create a Euro Disco backdrop that isn't just dramatic but moody, and somewhat sensual. Strings sweep in, bursts of funky wah-way guitars and growling horns all provide the backdrop for the sensuous harmonies, before a short percussive break adds to what is an already uber moody, dramatic arrangement and one that you always expect will change and reveal another side. This doesn't happen and shows you should never second guess Boris Midney, Euro Disco's very own master of suspense and sensuality, as this track shows.

Make That Feeling Come Again might only be four tracks long, but is twice as good as albums with triple the amount of tracks. Back in 1978, **Make That Feeling Come Again** was spread over two sides of vinyl and was one of the most successful disco albums of 1978, giving Boris Midney another number one in the US Dance Charts. It also reached number fourteen in the US R&B Charts. This is no surprise, given how innovative and cutting-edge an album it was. Truly, **Make That Feeling Come Again** was an inventive four track soundscape from one of the founding father's of Euro Disco, one that showcased his creativity, imagination and his many musical talents. Boris a true multi-instrumentalist, playing most of the instruments on **Make That Feeling Come Again** and wrote, arranged and produced the four tracks. Now thirty-five years after its original release, **Make That Feeling Come Again** is available again, along with two bonus tracks on **Disco Recharge-Boris Midney Volume 1-Beautiful Blend and Caress**. By the time Boris Midney released his next album **Caress**, he'd have built a new studio from scratch in Manhattan.

BORIS MIDNEY CARESS.

Although **Caress** was the followup album to **Make That Feeling Come Again**, it was released as a Boris Midney album. It an even more innovative, inventive and creative side of Boris come to the fore. This is disco draped in Gucci and Armani, opening with **Catch the Rhythm** with its breathy vocal accompanied by Boris' pounding disco beat, sinuous, funky rhythms, flourishes of the lushest strings and keyboards from Boris. It's a glorious track, breathtaking in its elegance and beauty. With percussion and piano joining the breathy, sensual vocals elegantly glide in. A Euro Disco beat meets classic American Disco and jazz. Lush strings are classic American disco, while the jazz influence comes courtesy of the lone rasping saxophone and guitar. Later, the guitars become rockier, as Boris digs deeper into his musical palette as this compelling, beautiful and elegant seven-minute mixture of musical genres reveals its many secrets and influences.

Charmed By You features more of the jazz influence of the opening track. Like that track the arrangement has an understated sound, with instruments drifting in and out of the arrangement. The only thing that isn't subtle is the pulsating disco beat. Everything else is understated and indeed elegant. Lush strings cascade, while a pounding, slap bass is joined by bursts of rasping horns and tender, heartfelt harmonies. Handclaps help provide the track's heartbeat, while strings canter along as percussion, keyboards and guitars add a jazzy sound. Later, horns woodwind and guitar take the arrangement further in the direction of jazz, sometimes, referencing a real old school jazzy sound. Meanwhile, the bass provides the track's funky side and drums are disco through and through. This fusion of influences and genres is quite simply the sophisticated side of disco, very different from much of what back in 1979, was being referred to as disco. If more disco music had been like this, then disco might not have nearly died.

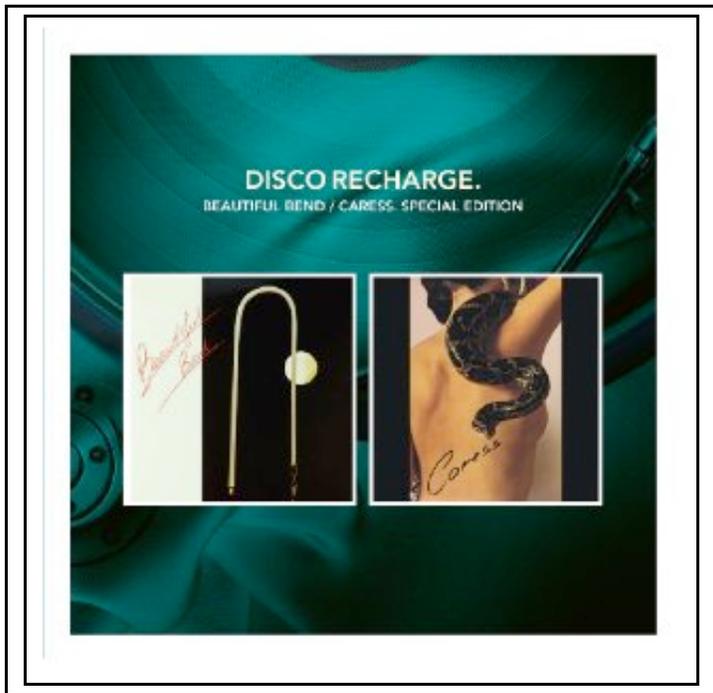
When You Got It Too Uptight opens you realize straight away, how catchy the track is. Describing the track as hook-laden, is almost an understatement. The drums are punchier and louder joined and are joined by piano, flourishes of strings, keyboards and breathy harmonies. They play their part in creating a hugely catchy arrangement that sweeps you along in its midst. Strings cascade, with flourishes adding elegance and beauty, while the rhythm section are responsible for the Euro

Disco heartbeat. Key to the arrangement are beautiful, tender and breathy harmonies plus a myriad of percussion and keyboards. Together, they're responsible for not only the catchiest track on *Caress*, but the best. It certainly won't leave you feeling uptight.

Love Spell closes *Caress* and is another track where Boris decides to tease you. Stabs of jazzy keyboards, percussion and a pulsating Latin-flavored beat combine as an eight minute jittery, jumpy journey unfolds. Soon the innovative side of Boris comes to the fore, with the track having a sound that would influence a whole new generation of producers. This is down to his arrangement and the way he uses the percussion, keyboards and synths in combination with the drums. Punchy Euro Disco harmonies are added, while synths that have an Acid House sound are joined by disco strings, funky bass, jazzy keyboards and Latin percussion. Although this is firmly a Euro Disco track, it's one influenced by a whole melting pot of styles and influences. However, it takes someone with the vision and creativity of Boris Midney to stir the pot and create a dish as good and tasty as this.

Caress has been described as "designer disco" and this is a fitting description. If music wore clothes, then *Caress* would be draped in the finest clothes from Versace, Armani and Gucci. During the four tracks on *Caress*, Boris sets about reinventing Euro Disco, adding jazz, Latin music, funk and soulful harmonies. Boris uses every color in his musical palette, blending genres and influences in his musical melting pot. The result is the tastiest of musical treats, one that's a compelling, timeless and hook-laden Euro Disco classic, like *Make That Feeling Come Again*. As if these four tracks aren't enough, Mr. Pinks has added two bonus tracks, including the original promo only twelve inches of *Catch the Rhythm*. Together *Make That Feeling Come Again* and *Caress* feature on the first of *Disco Recharge's* Boris Midney retrospectives, *Disco Recharge-Boris Midney Volume 1-Beautiful Blend* and *Caress*, which will be released by Harmless Records' subsidiary label *Disco Recharge* on 1st October 2012. This is a very welcome look back at Boris Midney's career, given he was one of the founding father's of Euro Disco, and one whose music was inventive, imaginative and took disco in a new direction. For anyone whose yet to discover the disco delights of Boris Midney, then *Disco Recharge-Boris Midney Volume 1-Beautiful Blend* and *Caress* is a good-starting point in discovering this musical visionary's music. **Standout Tracks:** *That's the Meaning*, *Boogie Motion*, *You Got It Too Uptight* and *Catch the Rhythm*.

[DISCO RECHARGE-BORIS MIDNEY VOLUME 1: BEAUTIFUL BLEND-MAKE THAT FEELING COME AGAIN AND BORIS MIDNEY-CARESS.](http://dereksmusicblog.wordpress.com/2012/10/05/disco-recharge-boris-midney-volume-1-beautiful-blend-make-that-feeling-come-again-and-boris-midney-caress/)



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