

Patryce “Choc’let” Banks
*(Original female lead singer of **Graham Central Station**)*

FUNK DIVA

Bio

“Upon hooking up with Larry Graham and living my fantasies, I was too caught up in the experience to realize I was a part of the birth of a new, universal groove called "Funk". It was a magical time in the holy land of the East Bay. Bands like **Sly, Graham Central Station, Tower of Power, and Santana**, were prophets.”

~ Patryce “Choc’Let” Banks

Patryce “Choc’Let” Banks was an original member of the celebrated Grammy-nominated group **Graham Central Station**. In the 70s, she was involved in the birth of the American music phenomenon of funk music. Patryce played percussion and shared the spotlight as lead singer alongside Larry Graham. (Fans and music industry insiders alike have credited Graham as an innovator, most notably for inventing the percussive "slap bass technique.")

Graham was also her lover and mentor. *Choc’Let* was nothing less than a sex symbol, a young successful, beautiful black woman.

In discussing the genesis of GCS, Choc’Let voices, “Originally Larry was producing my band, **Hot Chocolate**. I was the featured lead vocalist. During this time he was still with Sly. However, fate would have it another way. Larry ended up leaving **Sly and the Family Stone**, and joined Hot Chocolate. With his addition to the group, he brought a transformation. The name was changed from Hot Chocolate to **Graham Central Station**.

With Graham Central Station, Choc’Let recorded a moniker song, ***The Jam***, where she spelled out her name on the record. *It became so popular that black women throughout the country from coast to coast could be heard in their own voices mimicking the way in which she spelled her name on the song.* Even today, nearly three decades after the Tyler, Texas native ostentatiously spelled out her name in song, black women still reminisce about songs from the funk era and sing out, “*My name is C .H. O. C. L. E. T.!*”

After her departure from Graham Central Station, she went solo, and released the album **She's Back and Ready**, for T-Electric Records. She has lent her voice on tour and recordings to **B.B. King, Chaka Khan, Wayne Henderson and the Cru-**

saders, Stephanie Mills and Ronnie Laws, to name a few. She also collaborated with celebrated rap and hip-hop producer **Dr. Dre**. As lead vocalist, Patryce joined **Rose Royce** of **Car Wash** fame, performing worldwide. She continues to do studio work, entertain, lecture, and is showing signs of becoming a nascent novelist!

Choc'Let is currently gearing up to take her show back out on the road. "The funk is demanding to be released!" she declares. "Graham Central Station never reached the universe, we stopped short at the stars. It's obvious to me that there is a void in today's music that only funk can fulfill. I am calling into service some of the "Souljahs" who cut their teeth on funk and we will continue the legacy. Look for us, we will be rolling through your city soon...stay tuned!"