The House That Frankie Built

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The “Godfather of House Music” Frankie Knuckles died March 31 at age 59 of diabetes complications, but his legacy will live on beyond the dance floor. The Elton John AIDS Foundation, Judy Weinstein and Def Mix Productions created the Frankie Knuckles Fund to support HIV/AIDS education, testing and treatment for black men at high risk of the virus in Africa, the United States and the United Kingdom. It’s a pitch-perfect pairing. Knuckles’ influential sound—his classic tracks include “The Whistle Song” and “Your Love”—took off in ’70s and ’80s dance clubs popular among gay black men in Chicago and New York. “His legacy,” says Sir Elton John, “provides a powerful voice to reach out to people, particularly men of color, about their essential role in helping to create an AIDS-free future.”

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